



Steady-state of preferences in a society and a suggested social preference

Shiri Alon¹ and Ehud Lehrer²

¹Bar Ilan University, Israel

²Durham University, Israel

ABSTRACT

This paper employs a model, due to Friedkin and Johnsen [15], describing preference formation where individuals in a society repeatedly adjust their preferences based on the preferences of others, while always maintaining a fixed portion of their original core preferences. This process generates a steady state of preferences, which may vary across individuals but are more similar than their original preferences. We identify a unique social preference function that emerges from the primitives and dynamics of the process, if individuals may internalize their steady-state preferences and repeat the adjustment process, reaching a new steady state, and so on. We further consider the preferences that obtain when individuals gradually eliminate the reliance on their core preferences.

Keywords: Other-regarding preferences, subjective utilitarianism, social context, axiomatization, social choice