

## Abstract

This study examines an anticommons dilemma in which multiple owners of a resource are each endowed with a right to exclude others from a scarce resource. The resource may be underused when no one exercises an effective privilege of use. We propose that this study is concerned with the effect of communication and information presentation under the situation of anticommons dilemma. We used an old-building acquisition scenario to stimulate an anticommons dilemma. Participants role-played owners of apartments in an old-building that they decided on the price of selling their apartments to a property redeveloper. We hypothesized that information sharing on selling decisions and discussion would allow their resources be better utilized, i.e., successfully selling their apartments at a higher price. The 2×2 experimental design manipulated communication (i.e., discussion vs. no discussion) and information sharing (i.e., a real-time protocol updating the number of apartments sold vs. a positional protocol without such information) as between-subject variables. 200 students participated in groups of ten players. Participants in the discussion had a ten-minute face-to-face discussion before deciding on their individual selling prices. All participants then entered their selling prices on the computer. If their selling prices were accepted by the property redeveloper that was determined by a computer algorithm, participants earned a profit as a difference between the selling price and the

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value of their apartment. Participants who could not sell their apartments in this first round could then revise and submit their selling prices in the next round. In the real-time protocol condition the property redeveloper would announce the number of apartments successfully sold after each round. In the positional protocol condition this information was not available. If the apartment could not be sold after a certain number of rounds, the apartment owners would take a loss. The major dependent variables were the selling prices and the profits made by the apartment owners. We found that group members who had a discussion requested significantly a higher selling price and in turn earned a higher profit. However, real-time information updating the number of players selling their apartments significantly decreased the selling price and lowered the profits.