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Ingvild Almås, Maximilian Auffhammer, Tessa Bold, Ian Bolliger, Aluma Dembo,
Solomon M Hsiang, Shuhei Kitamura, Edward Miguel, Robert Pickmans
**Destructive Behaviour, Judgement, and Economic
Decision-making under Thermal Stress**



PUBLICATION IN THE ECONOMIC JOURNAL

A recent study published in The Economic Journal investigates the direct impact of temperature on economic decision-making and destructive behavior by Ingvild Almås, Maximilian Auffhammer, Tessa Bold, Ian Bolliger, Aluma Dembo, Solomon M Hsiang, Shuhei Kitamura, Edward

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dimensions of economic decision-making, judgment, and destructive behavior. The study involved 2,000 participants from Kenya and the United States, who were randomly assigned to different temperatures in a laboratory setting.

The main finding is that most major dimensions of economic decision-making are unaffected by temperature. However, the study also found that heat significantly increases the willingness to voluntarily destroy other participants' assets in the Kenyan sample. This suggests that while thermal stress may not impair economic decision-making processes, it can elevate tendencies toward destructive behavior in certain contexts.

The study's authors highlight the importance of understanding the behavioral effects of thermal stress, especially in regions prone to high temperatures. They suggest that policymakers and organizations should consider these findings when developing strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of heat on social behavior. Further research is needed to explore the underlying mechanisms driving the increase in destructive behavior under thermal stress and to determine whether similar patterns are observed in other populations.

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