A More Informed Sender Benefits the Receiver When the Sender Has Transparent Motives

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A sender (S) with state-independent preferences (i.e., **transparent motives**, Lipnowski and Ravid (2020)) privately observes a signal, π, about the state of the world, before sending a message to a receiver (R), who subsequently takes an action. Regardless of whether R can **mediate**–and commit to a garbling of S's message–or **delegate**–commit to a stochastic decision rule as a function of S's message–and understanding the statement "R is better off as a result of an improvement of S's information from π to π'," where π is a garbling of π', to mean that her maximal and minimal equilibrium payoffs (weakly) increase,

Theorem 1. *If S is more informed, R is better off.*

Proof. Regardless of whether R can delegate or mediate, S's strategy induces an arbitrary garbling of his signal; and as transparent motives mean that S must be indifferent over all on-path messages, she is, therefore, willing to mix (at equilibrium) in a way that produces garbling ρ, where $\pi = \rho \circ \pi'$. ∎

This result is related to the remarkable finding of Lichtig and Weksler (2022) that R's payoff in the truth-leaning equilibrium in a class of games with hard evidence and transparent motives improves as S's becomes more informed. This positive relationship (between S's information and R's welfare) is not generally present in cheap-talk and signaling games; nor must transparently motivated S's maximal payoff improve as he becomes more informed.

References

AVi Lichtig and Ran Weksler. Information transmission in voluntary disclosure games. *Mimeo*, 2022.

Elliot Lipnowski and Doron Ravid. Cheap talk with transparent motives. *Econometrica*, 88(4), 2020.

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