

# CONFORMISM, NONCONFORMISM AND VOTING EQUILIBRIA

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## ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to investigate the consequences for voting equilibria when some individuals do not possess intrinsic preferences and instead endeavour to relate their preferences to social preferences by conforming or nonconforming. Nonconformist behaviour (desire to have preferences which are opposite or converse of social preferences) on the part of some individuals can lead to nonexistence of equilibrium. Conformist behaviour (desire to have the same preferences as social preferences) can lead to multiple equilibria; in particular, it can lead to two mutually converse linear orderings of social alternatives emerging as equilibria.

For the class of neutral and monotonic binary social decision rules we show that : (i) the possibility of nonconformist behaviour leading to nonexistence of equilibrium exists if and only if the social decision rule is not a simple game, and (ii) the possibility of conformist behaviour leading to two mutually converse linear orderings of social alternatives emerging as equilibria exists if and only if the social decision rule is non-null.

For the method of majority decision we obtain a complete characterization of situations (i) corresponding to which there is no equilibrium, and (ii) corresponding to which two mutually converse linear orderings of social alternatives are equilibria.

Key Words : Conformism, Nonconformism, Voting Equilibria, Simple Games, The Method of Majority Decision.

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