

Blood-types and Blood Donation Behaviors: Empirical Tests for Pure Altruism Theory*

Shusaku Sasaki¹ Yoshifumi Funasaki² Hirofumi Kurokawa³ Fumio Ohtake⁴

This version: January 2018

Abstract We empirically investigate how blood types influence blood donation behaviors. Using a nationally representative survey in Japan, Preference Parameters Study of Osaka University, we find that people with blood type O are more likely to have donated their blood at least once within the past few years than those with the other blood types. This association is strongly observed in the sample, who believe that blood type O medically can be transfused into all blood groups. In contrast, we do not find any significant relationship between the blood type O and any other altruistic behaviors, including registration of bone marrow donation, intention of organ donation, and monetary donations. Also, we do not find the relationship between the blood type O and any altruistic personalities and characteristics, including altruism, trust, reciprocity, and cooperativeness. We discuss these results imply that people with blood type O more likely donate their blood, not because they are more altruistic, but because the blood type O is a public good with a larger number of potential subjects for blood transfusion. This study provides a unique field evidence of Andreoni (2007).

JEL Classification Codes: I10, D64, C30

Keywords: *blood type, blood donation, public goods, pure altruism*

¹ Faculty of Economics, Keio University, Postdoctoral Research Fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (PD), ssasaki.econ@gmail.com

² Graduate School of Economics, Osaka University, tge020fy@student.econ.osaka-u.ac.jp

³ Faculty of Policy Studies, Doshisha University, Postdoctoral Research Fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (PD), hirofumi.96kawa@gmail.com

⁴ Institute of Social and Economic Research, Osaka University, ohtake@iser.osaka-u.ac.jp

* We use the data of "Preference Parameters Study" (2017) conducted by Osaka University, which carried out the 21st Century Center of Excellence Program "Behavioral Macro-Dynamics Based on Surveys and Experiments"(2003-2007), the Global Center of Excellence Program "Human Behavior and Socioeconomic Dynamics"(2008-2013), and Grands-in-Aid for Scientific Research (S) Humanities and Social Sciences (Social Sciences) "Behavioral-Economic Analysis of Long-Run Stagnation (15H05728)"(2016-). In preparing this paper, Sasaki is financially supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (17J07242).