

# Factors Affecting Cognitive Decision Making Essay

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## Introduction

Decision making is an important area of study in psychology, because it ultimately affects behavior, as is demonstrated in studies discussing gambling and risky decisions. The research on factors affecting decision making is crucial, not just for the overall advancement of psychology, but because it has strong application value. It can be used for helping certain individuals make better decisions in important or stressful situations, and to decrease risky behavior overall.

Decision making is affected by a variety of factors. [Gender](#) seems to have the strongest effect on decisions regarding impulsivity, as is shown in studies using the Iowa Gambling task (e.g. Dretsch and Tipples, 2011). Gender differences are also present when making reward-related decisions under stress (Lighthall et al., 2012). Decision making is an executive function (Del Missier, Mantyla, and Bruine de Bruin, 2012). Demands on executive functioning are often considered more costly, closely connected with the conveyed costs of self control (Kool, McGuire, Wang, and Botvinick, 2013). Self-control requires looking past momentary gain for possible future rewards. Thus, the capacity for self-control influences decision making (Kool, McGuire, Wang, and Botvinick, 2013). In addition, several studies focus on age-related changes in decision making. Children showed a change between age groups in the use of sequential decision making rules

(Jansen, van Duijvenvoorde, and Huizenga, 2012). Adolescents were reported as making decisions based on [risk](#) and valence, much the way adults do. However, the research showed that while the amount of risky decisions made did not change throughout adolescence, decisions based on valence did change (Wolf, Wright, Kilford,...

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