

Effects of choice options on task performance and mental stress

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This study examined effects of choice options on task performance and mental stress for student participants. Forty two student participants attended the experiment. They worked on tasks with two conditions. One was they decided when they start to work and when they rest. The other is they did not decide either. A 5-minute free time was set between the two conditions. They were instructed that they could work during the free time but they did not have to. The two tasks were also prepared. One was an addition and subtraction, and the other was a linguistic task. The correct number they answered and the feeling during work were used as the dependent variables. Analysis of variance revealed that choice options had no effect on task performance and mental stress. However, the number of people on the linguistic task was larger than those on the other task during the free time. People on the linguistic task might get more reinforcement than on the other task and naturally set a goal when they work. This might contribute to the difference of number of participant who worked during the free time. Furthermore, participants' feedback suggested the relation of choice options and time-management skills.