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### Cognitive Load Effect on Moral Decision Making

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## Cognitive Load Effect on Moral Decision Making

*Elise Crause, Merry Bailey, Liz Eisenga, Caroline Hopper*

Choices are made each day to determine the outcome of our lives. To better understand the human process of decision making, philosophers and psychologists have examined moral dilemmas. Cognitive load is a type of stress that alters decision-making and the likelihood of choosing a self-motivated behavior over a behavior that benefits another person or group. For this study, moral dilemmas were given in sets of two before and after a cognitive-load-inducing task. The cognitive-load-inducing task required participants to verbally answer subtraction problems until the answer was correct or time had run out, and the level of stress was measured using two physiological predictors of stress, heartrate and skin conductivity. Our study aimed to determine the effect of an increased cognitive load on the level of selfishness that the participants exhibited when making decisions for a series of moral dilemmas. We conducted our research through the measures of moral dilemmas, heartrate, and skin conductance (Bauer et al., 2022).