



Honors Research Assistant Program

Title: Temporal Constraints on Decision Making: A Natural Field Experiment of Career Selection Decisions

Description of the Research: Managers often make high stakes decisions under the duress of deadlines and time pressure, with limited control over the timing and duration of access to relevant information. We refer to these factors as temporal constraints on decision making, or factors beyond an individual's control, and suggest that they play an important role in decision making. Using a natural field experiment, this study investigates the role of rotation order and duration on the career selections of internal medicine residents. Selecting a subspecialty is arguably one of the most important decisions for a new physician. It is a decision with long term consequences of tremendous magnitude where abundant information is available regarding the choice set. Characteristics of the subspecialty such as training requirements, salary, work duties or lifestyle should play a pivotal role in these decisions, yet our preliminary research finds that the order and duration of rotation exposure were the most significant factors influencing selection decisions, even when residents had no input in their schedules. In this follow-up study we examine the career selection decisions of residents who have input into their schedules to determine the role individual discretion on temporal factors influencing decision making.

Responsibilities of the Student:

Collection (entering and cleaning data) and literature review

Approximate Number of Hours/Schedule:

2-4 hours/week

Qualifications:

Microsoft Office (especially Excel)