

**Put Yourself in their Shoes: Do Self-Control Beliefs Impact the Effects of Perspective
Taking**

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Abstract

The strength model of self-control proposes it can be depleted vicariously if an individual takes the perspective of another person utilizing self-control (Ackerman et al., 2009, Baumeister et al., 1998). However, an alternative theory contends that self-control is only a limited resource if you believe it is labelling the theory as: limited and nonlimited resource theory (Job et al., 2010). Only a few studies that focus on self-control beliefs and perspective taking are reported in the literature. Therefore, this study investigates whether self-control beliefs impact the effects of perspective taking. The study participants were randomly assigned to conditions where they were either biased to believe that self-control is limited or nonlimited. All the participants were asked to take the perspective of the target in the story who either exercised self-control or not. Participants then completed a stimulus detection (e-crossing) task to deplete their ego resources. Finally, an ego depletion task (cognitive performance test) was provided to measure the two dependent variables – score on the test and time (used to measure persistence). Preliminary evidence suggests that the relationship between the time and proportion of questions answered on the cognitive performance test shows no evidence that it is related to the participants manipulated belief about willpower or the story. The findings in this study do not support those reported in the literature and should be investigated in future research.

Keywords: strength model, ego depletion, limited resource theory, nonlimited resource theory, perspective taking.