Past research examining the relationship between applicant reactions to selection tests and selection test performance has largely consisted of correlational studies built around linear models.

Some studies, however, have proposed that there is a curvilinear relationship between test reactions and performance that is in the shape of an inverse U, suggesting that moderate levels of anxiety produce optimal performance.

This has seldom been tested in an experimental design.

The Resource Allocation Model may help to explain how different levels of anxiety can help or hurt performance through two concepts: Self-regulatory Processing and Off-task Cognition.

**Hypothesis 1**: There will be a curvilinear relationship between selection test anxiety and selection test performance in the shape of an inverse U.

**Hypothesis 2**: Self-regulatory processing will mediate the curvilinear relationship between selection test anxiety and selection test performance.

**Hypothesis 3**: Off-task cognition will mediate the curvilinear relationship between selection test anxiety and selection test performance.

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**PROCEDURE**

1. Participants will complete an initial survey measuring dispositional test-anxiety.

2. Participants will then be randomly assigned to one of three anxiety conditions before beginning the selection test.

   - **High anxiety**: Time pressure, researcher pressure, and social pressure
   - **Moderate anxiety**: Moderate time pressure, moderate researcher pressure, and moderate social pressure
   - **Low anxiety**: No pressure

3. Participants will complete a logical reasoning task that is designed to be easy to complete but take varying amounts of time depending on concentration. (They will believe this is a selection test for a paid follow-up study).

4. Following test completion, participant state test-anxiety, self-regulatory processing, and off-task cognition will be measured via an online survey.

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**IMPLICATIONS**

- Our research will allow for a more robust test of the relationship between applicant reactions to selection procedures and test performance.
- Understanding the effect of anxiety on an applicant’s selection test performance will allow staffing practitioners to make more informed hiring decisions and think more critically about the weight that selection test scores should carry in the selection process.