

# The Short-Term Self-Control Stability of College Students

by,

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## Abstract

Since the *stability problem* was first outlined by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) in their influential work *A General Theory of Crime* it has received a steady stream of attention from the academic community. Researchers have studied juveniles and adults and have implemented a variety of methodological and statistical approaches. Many of these studies do not show support for the theoretical concept outlined by Gottfredson and Hirschi; yet, there were exceptions. The current study used a slightly different theoretical approach accompanied with research methodology that is still in its infancy. While most studies testing the relative stability of self-control use longitudinal datasets with months or years between waves the current study uses days. The logic behind this is due to the nature low self-control and its manifestations. If individuals who have low self-control make momentary, snap decisions without thought of the consequences those decisions have the next day, why study low-control over such a broad timeframe? The current study explored the short-term relative stability of low self-control. The findings showed strong relative self-control among multiple self-control measures. However, among other discoveries, interesting changes were witnessed in absolute stability of the sample.