

Learning Self-Control

Nageeb Ali

Abstract

In facing temptations over time, individuals use their experiences to forecast future self-control problems and choose the appropriate level of commitment. This paper examines how a decisionmaker who is only partially aware of his temptations learns about it over time. I demonstrate that learning can lead to perpetually inefficient dynamic choices, and that partial awareness therefore can have long lasting implications. I characterize conditions under which learning is complete. I apply the framework of partial awareness and learning to consumption-savings and addiction.