

The Association of Future Time Perspective with Learning Engagement

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Abstract: *This study was aimed to investigate the relationship between Future Time Perspective (FTP) and learning engagements. Employing a methodological approach centered around volunteer sampling, the study enlisted the participation of seventeen teenagers enrolled in an international education context. These participants, navigating their educational journeys in the digital landscape, completed both the Future Time Perspective scale and the learning engagement questionnaire through an online platform. The discerned results unveiled a positive correlation between FTP and learning engagement, affirming the initially hypothesized relationship. The study identified that school could guide students to establish a clear view of future time to achieve future goals as a vision, prompting learners to adjust their learning, positively affecting their learning motivation, encouraging individuals to invest more efforts, and producing better learning performance.*

Keywords: *Future Time Perspective; Learning engagement; Senior high school student; Teenager; International school*

1. Introduction

Time is an essential element for everyone as it operates under the confines of limitation, prompting the necessity for efficient time management in juggling diverse tasks. Beyond mere limitations, time stands as a pivotal resource that delineates and shapes individuals. The recurring psychological and behavioral characteristics significantly influence an individual's efficacy and intellectual capacity (Du & Lyu, 2017) [3]. Particularly in the realm of learning, adept time management plays a pivotal role in accomplishing multiple tasks within constraints.[5] Consequently, delving into the intricacies of efficient time organization becomes a pivotal focus in this research endeavor.

In this study, we introduce and elucidate the concept of Future Time Perspective (FTP), which Husman and Lens (1999) defined it as the present anticipation of future objectives [4]. FTP pertains to the variances discernible among individuals in their envisaged future goals, extending beyond mere cognitive-motivation paradigms characterized by valence and the pragmatic representation in human behavior (Lens, 1986; Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999) [12]. It serves as a guiding beacon, elucidating individuals' trajectories (Du & Lv, 2017) [3].

In accordance with De Volder and Lens's seminal work in 1982, the expectancy-value theory serves as an illuminating framework for elucidating the motivational foundations of Future Time Perspective (FTP) [5]. FTP, a multifaceted construct, encompasses two pivotal aspects. Firstly, the cognitive facet delves into the profound ability to envision and project oneself into the future. Secondly, the dynamic dimension revolves around the intricate capacity to attribute enduring value to long-term goals and aspirations [2]. This intricate interplay between cognitive and dynamic dimensions underscores the complexity and richness inherent in the concept of FTP. Remarkably, FTP not only amplifies individual motivation and endeavor but also exhibits substantive correlations with a myriad of activities (Simons, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Lacante, 2004) [9].

The concept of learning engagement encompasses the temporal and effortful investments that students make throughout the educational process, involving not only the quantitative aspects of time spent but also the qualitative dimensions of behavior, emotions, and cognitive processes during the learning experience (Kuh, 2003; Lee & Lin, 2022) [6]. This multifaceted definition provides a comprehensive lens through which to examine the intricate dynamics at play in students' educational journeys. Studies have given some evidence to prove that students' FTP predominantly revolves around envisioning aspects related to career, marriage, and academic pursuits (Song, 2004; Du & Lyu, 2017) [3]. As a consequential outcome, FTP emerges as a potent determinant, wielding a profound influence on

students' cognitive prowess. This influence extends beyond the immediate realms of knowledge and skills, permeating into the intricacies of study habits within a given course and the efficacy with which students apply these acquired competencies in practical settings [10]. Building on previous research, scholars have uncovered a notable correlation between students who set relatively long-term goals and their propensity not only to persist in their studies but also to derive greater satisfaction from the academic experience [1]. This empirical observation emphasizes the intricate interplay between FTP, goal-setting, and the overall satisfaction derived from academic pursuits. The multifaceted impact of FTP underscores its significance as a determinant factor shaping not only students' educational outcomes but also their broader success in various spheres of life.

Teenagers, which is generalized defined as 12 to 21 years old (Tang & Tung, 2010), often experience a loss of confidence and passion in their studies [11], making Future Time Perspective (FTP) a valuable perspective to reignite their interest in learning. The act of contemplating future consequences is intricately linked to self-regulation and strategic approaches in education (Miller et al., 1996) [8]. Furthermore, the majority of preceding studies categorize participants based on geographical regions, focusing on specific areas like high school students in particular regions [7]. However, limited attention has been given to learners within diverse learning systems. Building upon the observed interplay between Future Time Perspective (FTP) and learning behavior, this study uniquely selects adolescents enrolled in an international school in Wuhan, China as the subjects of investigation. The intent is to delve into the correlation between these two variables, offering an exploration beyond the conventional regional classifications prevalent in previous research.

In embarking on an exploration of the intricate relationship between Future Time Perspective (FTP) and learning engagement, the formulated hypothesis posits the following assertion: Among teenagers enrolled in international schools, there exists a positive relationship between Future Time Perspective and learning engagement. This hypothesis serves as the guiding framework for our inquiry into the dynamics that underlie the connection between FTP and the active involvement of adolescents in the learning process within an international school setting.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants and Procedures

In the course of this research endeavor, a recruitment comprising seventeen participants was assembled utilizing a volunteer sampling approach. Each participant, having willingly volunteered for the study, was entrusted with the task of not only receiving but also completing a set of questionnaires. This dynamic group of individuals seamlessly navigated their involvement in the study by gaining access to an intricately designed online survey platform. This platform, thoughtfully facilitated by a streamlined and efficient compact program, provided a seamless interface for the participants to engage with the survey instruments. It is noteworthy that the chosen participants exclusively hailed from the student body of an international school situated in the city of Wuhan, China. The age spectrum of these participants ranged between 15 and 19 years old, with a discernible average age of 16.58 years. This deliberate attention to demographic details ensures that the findings of the study are rooted in the experiences and perspectives of this specific age group, try to contribute depth and context to the research outcomes.

2.2 Measures

2.2.1 Future Time Perspective

In this study, the evaluation of participants' Future Time Perspective (FTP) scores was meticulously conducted utilizing the well-established Adolescent Future Time Perspective Scale, crafted by Lyu and Huang in 2016. This comprehensive scale, consisting of a total of 28 thoughtfully designed questions, is strategically organized into six distinct dimensions, each offering insights into individuals' perceptions of their future. [7]

Delving into the specifics of these dimensions, the negative future dimension comprises 7 questions, corresponding to items 1, 10, 15, 18, 19, 21, and 24. On the flip side, the positive future dimension involves 5 questions, corresponding to items 6, 17, 25, 27, and 28. Navigating further into the dimensions, the future confusion dimension intricately weaves together 4 insightful questions (items 5, 7, 20, 23), probing into the participants' sense of clarity or ambiguity regarding their future trajectories.

Meanwhile, the future persistence dimension delves into 5 carefully crafted questions (items 4, 8, 13, 22, 26), shedding light on the individuals' determination and commitment to their envisioned futures. Adding another layer of complexity, the future clarity dimension, consisting of 3 probing questions (items 2, 9, 11), seeks to unravel the participants' level of clarity and coherence in envisioning their future paths. Finally, the future planning comprises 5 questions, which are items 3, 12, 14, 16.

Employing a 5-point scoring system, wherein a rating of 1 corresponds to 'strongly disagree,' and 5 indicates 'strongly agree,' a judicious application of reverse scoring is implemented to capture the nuances of the negative and confused future dimensions. Higher cumulative scores across all dimensions signify a heightened level of insight and contemplation regarding one's future. Crucially, the internal consistency coefficients for each of the six dimensions were rigorously calculated in this study, yielding values of 0.817, 0.806, 0.776, 0.615, 0.654, and 0.716, respectively. These robust coefficients serve as a testament to the reliability of the assessment tool, assuring the precision and consistency of the measurements employed in capturing participants' Future Time Perspective scores within the multifaceted dimensions.

2.2.2 Learning Engagement

In the fabric of our research, participants assumed a pivotal role as active contributors to the evaluation of their own learning engagement. This involved an exploration facilitated by a comprehensive questionnaire, thoughtfully curated with ten close-ended questions. The employed scale integrates a point-based system, where assessments are contingent upon either the standalone frequency of observed behaviors or the intensity of underlying intentions. A higher final score indicates a greater level of learning engagement. Illustrative examples of these probing inquiries include meticulously crafted prompts such as 'Do you proactively take detailed notes during class?' and 'Have you actively and enthusiastically participated in after-school tutoring activities?' These questions transcend the superficial and serve as intentional probes, strategically designed to elicit nuanced responses. Each query, carefully chosen, acts as a window into the cognitive and affective realms of participants, offering valuable insights into their perspectives on learning and their overall learning engagement experiences.

3. Results

The table below (Table 1) provides a detailed presentation of the descriptive statistics and data, offering a comprehensive overview of the scores obtained from both the Future Time Perspective (FTP) scale and the learning engagement questionnaires. An analysis reveals a correlation coefficient of 0.57 between FTP scores and learning engagement, indicating a noteworthy trend: participants with elevated FTP scores also exhibit higher levels of learning engagement. This discovery underscores a positive relationship between FTP and learning engagement. Moreover, the correlation coefficient between FTP scores and participants' academic grades stands at 0.27, indicating a moderate positive correlation. Specifically, a correlation coefficient of 0.27 indicates that as Future Time Perspective scores increase, there is a noticeable tendency for participants' academic grades to also increase. This moderate positive correlation may suggest that a more positive time perspective towards the future contributes to improved academic performance.

Table 1: Participants' FTP score and learning engagement questionnaires.

Participants	FTP total score	Learning Engagement score	Age (study grade)
1	83	19	AS
2	82	22	AS
3	89	19	AS
4	105	25	AS
5	93	25	AS
6	102	23	IG
7	106	21	A2
8	94	19	AS
9	91	20	AS
10	90	18	AS
11	95	21	AS
12	93	21	A2
13	104	21	AS
14	79	16	AS
15	94	20	AS
16	93	22	IG
17	74	19	IG

4. Conclusions

This study has explored the correlation between Future Time Perspective (FTP) and learning engagement, drawing insights from a quantitative analysis of data obtained from a modest sample size of seventeen teenage participants. Despite the inherent limitations stemming from a relatively modest sample size, this study successfully validated the research hypothesis, firmly establishing a positive relationship between Future Time Perspective (FTP) and learning engagement. Moreover, adding an intriguing layer to our findings, we observed a positive correlation between FTP scores and the ages of the participating individuals. These correlation findings not only contribute to the academic discourse but also hold notable implications for educational institutions. The notable positive correlation identified between Future Time Perspective (FTP) and learning engagement not only affirms the established hypothesis but also accentuates the pivotal role that educational institutions can assume in shaping students' developmental trajectories. Within this paradigm, schools emerge as dynamic environments capable of fostering a transformative impact on students' attitudes and behaviors. In this context, educational institutions are poised to actively cultivate an empowering atmosphere that encourages students to proactively initiate and delineate their future learning objectives and strategies, even from an early stage. This forward-thinking and proactive educational approach, founded on the principles of Future Time Perspective, holds the potential to exert a positive and lasting influence on students' commitment to their present learning activities [3]. Moreover, the proactive educational approach has the potential to extend its impact beyond immediate academic realms. It may potentially catalyze a ripple effect on adolescents, contributing to improvements in their time management skills and fostering a positive impact on their subjective well-being (Boniwell, Osin, & Sircova, 2014; Du & Lyu, 2017).

In essence, this study not only reaffirms the hypothesized correlation but also unveils a narrative about the interconnected dynamics between FTP, age, and their collective influence on students' engagement and well-being. These insights, while contributing to the academic discourse, advocate for a more holistic and future-oriented approach within educational settings, emphasizing the potential for schools to shape not only academic trajectories but also broader aspects of students' personal and developmental journeys.

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