TIME PERSPECTIVE AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANT OF ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Odilbekov Mansurbek Maxmudjon o‘g‘li
Bukhara International University
Oriental University
mansurbekodilbekov85@gmail.com

Annotatsiya. *Maqolada universitet talabalarining vaqt istiqboli akademik prokrastinatsiyaning psixologik determinanti sifatida nazariy-konseptual jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Vaqt istiqboli shaxsning o‘tmish tajribasi, hozirgi xulqi va kelajak maqsadlarini o‘zaro bog‘lab, qaror va harakatlarini tartibga soluvchi kognitiv-motivatsion tizim sifatida talqin etiladi. Kelajakka ijobiy yo‘nalganlik, hozirgi gedonistik va fatalistik yo‘nalishlar, shuningdek, o‘tmishga ijobiy va salbiy munosabatning akademik vazifalarni kechiktirish bilan aloqasi yoritiladi. Kelajakdagi “men” bilan psixologik uzviylik, mukofotni kechiktirish, maqsadning aniqligi va o‘zini nazorat qilish mazkur munosabatni tushuntiruvchi asosiy mexanizmlar sifatida ajratiladi. Tahlil asosida “kelajak ma’nosi — psixologik masofa — o‘zini nazorat qilish — harakat” modeli taklif etilib, oliy ta’lim amaliyoti uchun tavsiyalar ishlab chiqiladi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *vaqt istiqboli, kelajak vaqt istiqboli, akademik prokrastinatsiya, kelajakdagi “men”, mukofotni kechiktirish, o‘zini nazorat qilish, talabalar.*

Аннотация. *В статье с теоретико-концептуальных позиций анализируется временная перспектива студентов как психологическая детерминанта академической прокрастинации. Временная перспектива рассматривается как когнитивно-мотивационная система, связывающая прошлый опыт, настоящее поведение и будущие цели личности. Раскрывается связь позитивной ориентации на будущее, гедонистической и фаталистической ориентаций на настоящее, а также позитивного и негативного отношения к прошлому с откладыванием учебных задач. В качестве ключевых механизмов выделяются психологическая непрерывность с будущим «Я», отсрочка вознаграждения, ясность цели и самоконтроль. На основе анализа предложена модель «смысл будущего — психологическая дистанция — самоконтроль — действие» и сформулированы рекомендации для практики высшего образования.*

Ключевые слова: *временная перспектива, временная перспектива будущего, академическая прокрастинация, будущее «Я», отсрочка вознаграждения, самоконтроль, студенты.*

Abstract. *The article provides a theoretical and conceptual analysis of university students’ time perspective as a psychological determinant of academic procrastination. Time perspective is interpreted as a cognitive-motivational system that connects past experience, present behaviour and future goals and thereby regulates decisions and actions. The paper examines how a positive future orientation, present-hedonistic and present-fatalistic orientations, and positive or negative attitudes towards the past may be related to the postponement of academic tasks. Psychological continuity with the future self, delay of gratification, goal clarity and self-control are identified as the main explanatory mechanisms. On this basis, a “future meaning–psychological distance–self-control–action” model is proposed, and practical recommendations for higher education are formulated.*

Keywords: *time perspective, future time perspective, academic procrastination, future self, delay of gratification, self-control, university students.*

INTRODUCTION

Academic procrastination is commonly understood as the voluntary and irrational postponement of an intended academic activity despite anticipating that the delay may lead to unfavourable consequences [1]. It includes late initiation of independent study, avoidance of writing assignments, postponement of examination preparation and repeated displacement of important tasks by less valuable activities. The phenomenon cannot be reduced to poor scheduling alone. It reflects a self-regulatory conflict in which immediate emotional relief or pleasure outweighs a delayed academic benefit.

The temporal structure of university learning makes this conflict particularly visible. Students are required to invest effort today, while the most important outcomes—competence, a qualification, professional identity and career opportunities—are realised much later. A distant result may therefore lose motivational force in comparison with an immediately available alternative. Digital entertainment, social communication and avoidance of task-related discomfort provide fast rewards, whereas academic work demands sustained effort without an instant return.

Time perspective offers an appropriate framework for explaining why students respond differently to the same deadlines. It denotes the way in which individuals organise experience into past, present and future temporal frames and use those frames when making decisions [2]. Temporal orientations influence goal setting, planning, risk

perception, persistence and the readiness to sacrifice an immediate reward for a larger future benefit. The purpose of this article is to systematise the psychological mechanisms connecting time perspective with academic procrastination and to formulate practical directions for strengthening adaptive temporal self-regulation in higher education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study uses a theoretical-conceptual design. Scientific publications on procrastination, time perspective, future self-continuity, academic delay of gratification and self-regulated learning were selected according to their relevance to the stated problem. Comparative analysis was used to distinguish the expected functions of different temporal orientations; synthesis was used to integrate the identified relationships into a single explanatory model; and psychological interpretation was used to translate the model into recommendations for educational practice. No original empirical data are reported in this article. Consequently, the conclusions describe theoretically grounded tendencies and mechanisms rather than causal effects established in a new sample.

TIME PERSPECTIVE AND ACADEMIC DELAY

A positive future orientation is characterised by the ability to anticipate consequences, set meaningful long-term goals and coordinate present behaviour with them. In the academic context, it helps a student perceive a current task not as an isolated obligation but as part of a larger developmental trajectory. The deadline becomes connected to the acquisition of competence, completion of a degree and construction of a professional identity. This connection can increase the subjective value of the task and support earlier initiation.

Temporal motivation theory explains why such a connection matters. The motivational value of a task depends on expectancy and value, while delay and impulsiveness reduce that value [1]. A valuable result scheduled several weeks later may have less influence on present behaviour than a small but immediate reward. Future-oriented students may partially overcome this temporal discounting by mentally bringing the outcome closer and translating a remote aim into proximal milestones. However, future orientation is protective only when it is realistic and operationalised. Abstract idealisation of future success without concrete action may coexist with avoidance.

Present-hedonistic orientation increases sensitivity to immediate pleasure and stimulation. It may shift attention from a difficult assignment to entertainment or social interaction, especially when the academic task evokes boredom, uncertainty or anxiety.

Present-fatalistic orientation is potentially more detrimental because it weakens perceived control: if the student assumes that effort will not change the result, task initiation loses meaning. A negative orientation towards the past may contribute indirectly through rumination, fear of repeating failure and reduced academic self-efficacy. A positive past orientation can support continuity and confidence, although its influence depends on whether previous success is converted into present action.

Table 1. Theoretical links between temporal orientations and academic procrastination

Temporal orientation	Dominant psychological pathway	Expected relation to procrastination
Future-positive	Goal meaning, planning, delayed reward and persistent action	Generally negative
Present-hedonistic	Preference for immediate pleasure and susceptibility to distraction	Positive
Present-fatalistic	Low perceived control, passivity and non-initiation	Strongly positive
Past-positive	Continuity, confidence and access to successful experience	Indirectly negative
Past-negative	Rumination, failure expectancy and avoidance	Indirectly positive

PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS

Future self-continuity is one of the central links between temporal orientation and behaviour. It refers to the perceived connectedness between one’s present and future selves [3]. When this continuity is strong, the person who will receive the later benefit is experienced as the same self rather than as a psychologically distant stranger. Present effort consequently becomes an investment in one’s own future. When continuity is weak, sacrificing comfort for a distant version of the self is less compelling, and postponement becomes easier to justify.

Academic delay of gratification performs a related function. It is the willingness to postpone an immediately available attraction in order to achieve a more valuable educational outcome. Bembenutty and Karabenick demonstrate that future time perspective, delay of gratification and self-regulated learning are inherently connected [4]. In a learning environment rich in immediate digital rewards, this capacity becomes

especially important. It allows the student to tolerate temporary discomfort and maintain behaviour that serves a delayed objective.

Self-control converts temporal meaning into action. Evidence from secondary-school students indicates that the association between attitudes towards time and academic procrastination can be mediated by self-control [5]. Although this finding should not be generalised automatically to university populations, it supports a mechanism that merits testing in higher education. A meaningful future does not automatically complete an assignment; the student must protect attention, inhibit competing impulses and begin the task. Clear proximal goals reduce the amount of control required at any single moment. Instead of confronting the vague demand to “finish the article,” the student can perform a specific action such as locating two sources, writing one paragraph or revising one subsection.

The integrated mechanism proposed here can be expressed as follows: future meaning reduces psychological distance; reduced distance increases the current value of the academic outcome; this supports self-control and task initiation; successful action then strengthens efficacy and confidence in the future. The reverse cycle is also possible. Weak future meaning makes the reward abstract, an immediate alternative becomes more attractive, delay increases stress and undermines performance, and repeated failure reinforces a fatalistic view of the future. Time perspective should therefore be understood not only as a cause but also as a psychological system that can be reshaped by repeated patterns of action.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Interventions should combine time-management techniques with work on meaning, agency and temporal identity. First, students can be asked to connect each major academic task with a specific future competence or professional responsibility. The question “What will completing this task enable me to do?” is more effective than an abstract reminder that the deadline is important. Second, distant deadlines should be divided into visible weekly and daily milestones. This makes progress measurable and narrows the psychological distance to the final outcome.

Third, future-self exercises can strengthen continuity. Students may write a brief message from the perspective of their future professional self, compare the likely consequences of regular action and repeated postponement, or create a timeline linking current study behaviours to later outcomes. Fourth, implementation intentions should specify when, where and how the first minimum action will occur. A statement such as “At 18:00 in the library, I will work on the introduction for twenty minutes” reduces ambiguity at the point of action.

Fifth, reflection diaries can reveal individual temporal biases by comparing planned and actual use of time and identifying the emotions that precede avoidance. Sixth, instructors can provide intermediate feedback and visible progress indicators rather than relying exclusively on one final deadline. Finally, students with fatalistic beliefs require support aimed at restoring perceived control, building realistic expectations and accumulating small mastery experiences. These measures should be adapted to the educational context and should not be treated as substitutes for psychological support when procrastination is accompanied by severe distress.

DISCUSSION

The analysis suggests that academic procrastination emerges partly from how students represent the temporal relationship between present effort and future benefit. A positive future perspective can serve as a self-regulatory resource because it makes long-term consequences psychologically available during present decision-making. Yet balance is essential. Excessive future worry can increase anxiety, while abstract ambitions can produce intention without behaviour. Adaptive orientation combines meaningful long-term direction with realistic proximal action and sufficient attention to present experience.

The proposed model is consistent with the view of procrastination as a context-sensitive self-regulatory failure [6, 7]. It also clarifies why standard advice about schedules may have limited effects when the student does not experience the future as controllable or personally continuous. Educational programmes may be more effective when they address temporal meaning and agency before introducing planning tools. At the same time, the present article is conceptual. Its propositions require empirical testing in culturally diverse student samples through validated measures, longitudinal designs and models that distinguish direct, mediated and reciprocal relationships.

CONCLUSION

Time perspective is a meaningful psychological determinant of academic procrastination among university students. A positive and realistic future orientation may reduce postponement by increasing goal clarity, strengthening continuity with the future self, supporting delay of gratification and mobilising self-control. Present-hedonistic and present-fatalistic orientations may increase delay by privileging immediate relief or weakening perceived agency, while past orientations can influence avoidance through confidence or rumination.

The “future meaning–psychological distance–self-control–action” model integrates these processes into a practical framework. It indicates that preventing procrastination requires more than teaching students how to allocate hours. Higher

education should help them construct meaningful future goals, convert distant outcomes into proximal tasks, experience control over progress and repeatedly translate intention into manageable action. Empirical examination of this model in Uzbekistan and other cultural contexts constitutes a relevant direction for further research.

REFERENCES

1. Steel P. The nature of procrastination: A meta-analytic and theoretical review of quintessential self-regulatory failure // Psychological Bulletin. — 2007. — Vol. 133, No. 1. — P. 65–94. — DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.133.1.65.

2. Zimbardo P. G., Boyd J. N. Putting time in perspective: A valid, reliable individual-differences metric // Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. — 1999. — Vol. 77, No. 6. — P. 1271–1288. — DOI: 10.1037/0022-3514.77.6.1271.

3. Hershfield H. E. Future self-continuity: How conceptions of the future self transform intertemporal choice // Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences. — 2011. — Vol. 1235, No. 1. — P. 30–43. — DOI: 10.1111/j.1749-6632.2011.06201.x.

4. Bembenutty H., Karabenick S. A. Inherent association between academic delay of gratification, future time perspective, and self-regulated learning // Educational Psychology Review. — 2004. — Vol. 16, No. 1. — P. 35–57. — DOI: 10.1023/B:EDPR.0000012344.34008.5c.

5. Wang J., Sun Y. Time flies, but you’re in control: the mediating effect of self-control between time attitude and academic procrastination // BMC Psychology. — 2023. — Vol. 11. — Art. 393. — DOI: 10.1186/s40359-023-01438-2.

6. Sirois F. M. Procrastination and stress: A conceptual review of why context matters // International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. — 2023. — Vol. 20, No. 6. — Art. 5031. — DOI: 10.3390/ijerph20065031.

7. Svartdal F., Dahl T. I., Gamst-Klaussen T. et al. The ABC of academic procrastination: Functional analysis of a detrimental habit // Frontiers in Psychology. — 2022. — Vol. 13. — Art. 1019261. — DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1019261.

8. Kostić A., Chadee D. (eds.). Time Perspective: Theory and Practice. — London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. — 443 p.