

ALI JE V PRIHODNOST ZAZRTA MLADINA MANJ NAGNJENA K PROBLEMATIČNEMU VEDENJU? IZSLEDKI IZ NACIONALNE ŠTUDIJE SLOVENSKE MLADINE

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Povzetek

Pričujoča študija na osnovi reprezentativnega vzorca slovenske mladine analizira ali mladi, zazrti v prihodnost, redkeje kršijo družbene norme od tistih, ki so primarno usmerjeni v sedanjost. Natančneje, prispevek predstavlja rezultate analize povezav med tremi časovnimi usmeritvami (prihodnost, hedonistična sedanjost in fatalistična sedanjost; Zimbardo in Boyd, 1999) in tremi oblikami problematičnega vedenja (uporaba/zloraba substanc, kraja, nasilnost). Poleg tega prispevek analizira še povezave med časovnimi orientacijami in različnimi socializacijskimi stili (avtoritarni, avtoritativni, permissivni). Rezultati pokažejo, da so vse tri oblike problematičnega vedenja negativno in statistično značilno ($p < .001$) povezane z usmerjenostjo v prihodnost in pozitivno in statistično značilno ($p < .001$) povezane s fatalistično in hedonistično usmerjenostjo v sedanjost. Povezave med usmerjenostjo v prihodnost in različnimi tipi problematičnega vedenja so ostale statistično značilne ($p < .001$) tudi v primeru, ko se je te povezave kontroliralo s spolom, starostjo, prevladujočo delovno aktivnostjo respondenta in njegovim dohodkom. Nadaljnja analiza je sicer pokazala, da je usmerjenost v prihodnost pozitivno in statistično značilno ($p < .001$) povezana z avtoritativnim socializacijskim stilom in da je ta povezava robustna.

ARE FUTURE ORIENTED ADOLESCENTS LESS PRONE TO PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR? EVIDENCE FROM A NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF SLOVENIAN YOUTH.

Abstract

The current study tested whether future oriented adolescents are less prone to break social norms than those who are more presently oriented. Specifically, the relationships between three time orientations (future, present hedonistic and present fatalistic; Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999) and three types of problem behavior (substance use, theft, violence) were analyzed. In addition, the current study also analyzed the relationships between different parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive) and time orientations. Results indicated that all three types of problem behavior were negatively correlated ($p < .001$) with future time orientation. The relationships between both present time orientations (fatalistic, hedonistic) and different types of problem behavior were also significant ($p < .001$) but positive. Relationships between future orientation and all three types of problem behavior remained significant even after they were controlled for age, gender, respondents working status (employed, unemployed, student, etc.), and income. Second set of analyses indicated that the level of future orientation in young adults is positively related ($p < .001$) to authoritative socialization, again regardless of respondents age, gender, respondents activity and income.

Introduction

Time perspective is defined as a psychological construct that describes how one's perception or weighing of the past, present, and future guides and influences individual's behavior (i.e., decision making) (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). As noted by Ward and colleagues (2009, 2), it represents a subconscious cognitive structure that one accesses when making decisions about short-term and long-term actions and goals. Although many people adopt and meld different perspectives depending on circumstances, some individuals may preferentially have a past, present, or future orientation (Boyd and Zimbardo, 2005). Past research (see for e.g. Henson et al., 2006; Hodgins and Engel, 2002; Zimbardo and Boyd, 1997; Wills, Sandy, and Yeager, 2001) has indicated that time perspective is related with risky behavior. More specifically, while present time orientation was found to be positively related to risky driving (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1997), substance use (Wills et al., 2001), pathological gambling (Hodgins and Engel, 2002), future time orientation was found to increase protective and decrease risky behavior (Henson et al., 2006). It thus seems that the relationship between time perspective and problem behavior is well documented and that past research offers consistent pattern of findings. However, it is worthwhile mentioning that majority of studies used student samples, and that only few studies (e.g. Apostolidis et al. 2006) were carried out in non-English speaking

surroundings. In addition, only few studies have examined: a) the independent contribution of each time perspective component in the prediction of risky behavior; and b) whether and how different parenting styles influence the formation of each time perspective component.

The aim of the current study was to address some of the above mentioned issues. Using data from a nationally representative sample of Slovenian youth, the current study tested whether future oriented adolescents are less prone to break social norms than those who are more presently oriented. Specifically, the relationships between three time orientations (future, present hedonistic and present fatalistic; Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999) and three types of problem behavior (substance use, theft, violence) were analyzed. In addition, the current study also analyzed the relationships between different parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive) and time orientations, i.e., whether and how the formation of this “fundamental and vital psychological construct” (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999, 1284) is related to different patterns of parental socialization.

Method

Sample

Data were obtained from the national study of Slovenian youth (Mladina 2010; Lavrič et al., 2011), funded by the Slovenian Ministry of Schooling, and carried out by the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor. The study was conducted between July and September 2010, and it included $N = 1,257$ participants (48.8% females, 51.2% males), aged between 15 and 29 years ($M = 22.5$; $SD = 4.25$). Sampling was based on the data, provided by the Slovenian Central Population Register. Respondents were selected by means of a two stage sampling, proportional-to-size sample design (for more details about sampling procedures and sample, see Lavrič et al., in press). The survey was administered by trained lay interviews in the households of respondents, with an overall response rate of 62.9 percent.

Measures

Time perspective

Time perspective (TP) was assessed by nine items, taken from the ZTPI (*Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory*), operationalized and validated by Zimbardo and Boyd (1999). All items were rated by participants on a 5-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. Using factor analysis, three subdimensions emerged. The factor matrix corresponded to the three TPs that Zimbardo and Boyd (1999) termed as *future TP*, *present-hedonistic TP* and *present fatalistic TP*. Consequently, three subscales were formed (each consisted three items): *future TP* ($\alpha = .76$), *present-hedonistic TP* ($\alpha = .62$) and *present-fatalistic TP* ($\alpha = .71$). See Appendix for each item/scale description.

Problem behavior

Problem behavior (PB) was assessed by six items, taken from 55-item Normative Deviance Scale (NDS) (Vazsonyi et al., 2001), used to measure lifetime deviance.). All items were rated by participants on a 4-point Likert-type scale: 1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = always. To tap into different dimensions of problem behavior, three subscales were formed (each consisted two items): substance use ($\alpha = .63$), theft ($\alpha = .65$), and violence/vandalism ($\alpha = .57$). See Appendix for each item/scale description.

Parenting styles

Parenting styles (PS) were assessed by nine items. All items were rated by participants on a 5-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. Using factor analysis three factors emerged. Again, three subscales were formed (each consisted three items), indicating three parenting styles: authoritarian ($\alpha = 0.80$), authoritative ($\alpha = .64$), and permissive ($\alpha = .59$). See Appendix for each item/scale description.

Demographics

Age. Participants were asked to indicate their age in years.

Sex. A single item, “What is your sex”, was used to indicate participants’ sex. Responses were given as 1 = “female” and 2 = “male”.

Working status A single item, “What is your current working status” was used to indicate participants’ working status. Responses were given as 1 = employed full-time (temporarily), 2 = employed full-time (not limited), 3 = employed full-time (self-employed), 4 = employed full-time (contract), 5 = not employed (secondary school students, university students and other who are not employed), 6 = other.

Income. Income was assessed by a single item, where respondents were asked to indicate their average monthly disposable income (in EUR).

Plan of Analysis

First, descriptive analyses were completed for all items and scales. This also included an evaluation of scale reliabilities (omitted). Second, zero order and partial correlations (controlling for demographics) were computed between TP and PB. Third, zero-order and partial correlations (again controlling for demographics) between TP and PS were completed.

Results

Results from the first set of analyses indicated that all three types of problem behavior were negatively correlated ($p < .001$) with future time orientation. The relationships between both present time orientations (fatalistic, hedonistic) and different types of problem behavior were also significant ($p < .001$) but positive (Table 1).

Table 1: Zero-order and partial correlations between three time perspectives and three types of problem behavior

	TP – future	TP – present (hedonistic)	TP – present (fatalistic)	Substance use	Theft	Violence/ Vandalism
Zero-order correlations						
TP – future	1	-.03	-.06	-.20**	-.24**	-.17**
TP – present (hedonistic)	-.03	1	.42**	.26**	.21**	.24**
TP – present (fatalistic)	-.06	.42**	1	.11*	.16**	.16**
Partial correlations						
TP – future	1	-.02	-.04	-.21**	-.24**	-.18**
TP – present (hedonistic)	-.02	1	.40**	.26**	.19**	.20**
TP – present (fatalistic)	-.04	.40**	1	.12**	.15**	.13**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$.

Relationships between future orientation and all three types of problem behavior remained significant even after they were controlled for age, gender, respondents working status, and income.

Second set of analyses indicated that future orientation in young adults was positively related ($p < .001$) to authoritative parental socialization. On the other side, both, authoritarian and permissive parenting style was negatively related to future orientation and positively related to present (hedonistic and fatalistic) time orientation (Table 2).

Table 2: Zero-order and partial correlations between three types of parenting styles and three time perspectives

	TP – future	TP – present (hedonistic)	TP – present (fatalistic)
Zero-order correlations			
Authoritarian PS	-.15**	.13**	.11**
Authoritative PS	.29**	-.01	-.02
Permissive PS	-.08*	.24**	.20**
Partial correlations			

Authoritarian PS	-.16**	.13**	.11**
Authoritative PS	.29**	-.01	-.03**
Permissive PS	-.08*	.20**	.17**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$.

Relationships between three parenting styles and three time orientations did not change (i.e., the direction and strength of associations remained virtually unchanged) even after they were controlled for age, gender, respondents working status, and income.

Conclusion

The aim of the current study was to address some of the above mentioned issues. Using data from a nationally representative sample of Slovenian youth, the current study tested whether future oriented adolescents are less prone to break social norms than those who are more presently oriented. Specifically, the relationships between three time orientations (future, present hedonistic and present fatalistic; Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999) and three types of problem behavior (substance use, theft, violence) were analyzed. In addition, the current study also analyzed the relationships between different parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive) and time orientations, i.e., whether and how the formation of this “fundamental and vital psychological construct” (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999, 1284) is related to different patterns of parental socialization.

Results from the first set of analyses indicated that all three types of problem behavior were negatively correlated ($p < .001$) with future time orientation. The relationships between both present time orientations (fatalistic, hedonistic) and different types of problem behavior were also significant ($p < .001$) but positive. Relationships between future orientation and all three types of problem behavior remained significant even after they were controlled for age, gender, respondents working status, and income.

Second set of analyses indicated that future orientation in young adults was positively related ($p < .001$) to authoritative parental socialization. On the other side, both, authoritarian and permissive parenting style was negatively related to future orientation and positively related to present (hedonistic and fatalistic) time orientation. Relationships between three parenting styles and three time orientations did not change (i.e., the direction and strength of associations remained virtually unchanged) even after they were controlled for age, gender, respondents working status, and income.

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Appendix – Scale Items/Descriptions

Time Perspective (TP)

TP – Future

I complete projects on time by making steady progress.

I am able to resist temptations when I know that there is work to be done.

When I want to achieve something, I set goals and consider specific means for reaching those goals.

TP – Present hedonistic

It doesn't make sense to worry about the future, since there is nothing that I can do about it anyway.

I take each day as it is rather than try to plan it out.

I make decisions on the spur of the moment.

TP – Present fatalistic

I take risks to put excitement in my life.

I find myself getting swept up in the excitement of the moment.

I feel that it's more important to enjoy what you're doing than to get work done on time.

Problem Behavior (PB)

PB – Substance use

Have you ever used "hard" drugs such as crack, cocaine, or heroin?

Have you ever gone to school/work when you were drunk or high on drugs?

PB – Theft

Have you ever stolen, taken, or tried to take something?

Avoided paying for something?

PB – Vandalism/Violence

Have you ever intentionally damaged or destroyed property?

Have you ever hit or threatened to hit a person?

Parenting Styles (PS)

Authoritarian PS

If I was not behaving, I was often physically punished.

If my behavior was not in line with my parents' expectations, my parents yelled/screamed at me.

At least one of my parents often yelled or screamed at me.

Authoritative PS

My parents usually explained to me why I have to follow rules.

In my family, I was allowed to participate in the process of rule-making.

My parents mostly knew about my school related problems and issues.

Permissive PS

At least one of my parents gave in if I persistently demanded something or rebelled against something.

I often got what I wanted.

Even if one of my parents threatened to punish me, they rarely carried out the punishment.