Longitudinal analysis of future time perspective in Japanese school children

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Japanese educational system
- Compulsory education
- Elementary school (ES) → 6 years
- Junior high school (JHS) → 3 years
- Higher education
- High school → 3 years
- University → 4 years

Transition from ES to JHS
This transition has two meanings.
1) Educational system transition
   elementary school → junior high school
   at ease, relax → stressful, competitive
2) Developmental transition
   late childhood → early adolescence
   period of developmental crisis

Purpose of this study
1) To examine whether children’s future time perspective change at intervals of one year.
2) To examine whether future time perspective are affected by level of children’s academic ability.

Method
- Participants
  2000(Time 1)
  ES 4th (n=278)
  5th (n=279)
  6th (n=234)
  JHS 7th (n=276)
  8th (n=253)
  9th
  2001(Time 2)
  ES 4th
  5th (n=278)
  6th (n=279)
  JHS 7th (n=234)
  8th (n=276)
  9th (n=253)

Measures
1) Future time perspective: four subscales
   - hope for the future
   - desire for having future goals
   - emptiness
   - time management & planning
2) Academic ability: self rating scale
   - the degree of understanding school subject
Independent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic ability</th>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th>Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
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</tbody>
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**Summary of study results**

1) Hope for the future and desire for having future goals decreased at intervals of one year and contrary emptiness increased.

2) In Improvement group, hope for the future, desire for having future goals, and time management & planning remarkably increased at Time 2, and emptiness remarkably decreased.

3) In Fall group, hope for the future, desire for having future goals, and time management & planning remarkably decreased at Time 2, and emptiness remarkably increased.

**Discussion**

1) Children gradually tended to see their future hopelessly and uneasily with grade. These tendencies are very striking between the transition from elementary school to junior high school.

2) The differences between two contrasting academic ability groups suggested that future time perspective are affected by children’s self confidence about understanding their school subjects.