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Cultural Values Determining Students' Time Management

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Dedication

I dedicate this modest research work to my wife, Samia and children Amina, Asmaa, Seifeddine, Abdessabour, Douaa, and Nour el Imane for their love and support throughout this research journey.

B. H.

I dedicate this research to my parents, my wife Amina and children Djawad, Israa , brothers and sisters.

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Abstract

The aim of this research study entitled *Cultural Values Determining Students' Time Management* is to investigate the influence of cultural values on the time management of EFL Master 2 students of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University. In other words, the attempt to study whether cultural values are indispensable for students' success in managing time has been initiated. Moreover, the study attempts to find out what of these cultural values, be they native or foreign, are more influential among students. This study is driven by the assumption that cultural values determine students' time management, and that these values will manifest in the way time is managed. Therefore, a questionnaire was designed and administered to 25 Master 2 students. A quantitative research methodology has been used to explore the issue of cultural values to understand the underlying reasons of the students' behaviors related to how they manage their time. The findings show that Master 2 students have been influenced by both native and foreign culture values (66.36 % for the former and 79.20 % for the latter) which means that cultural values determine students' time management with a slight preference of (12.84 %) to managing time via English cultural values.

Key Words : Cultural Values, Students' Time Management, EFL Students.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

% : Percentage

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

ICTs : Information and Communication Technologies

GTD : Getting Things Done

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General Introduction

1- Statement of the Problem and Background of the Study

Algerian learners of English are influenced by a variety of cultural values. The latter stems from native culture making the authentic ones as governed by religious principles shown in individual behaviors. Moreover, foreign culture drives students to adopt its values throughout the acquisition of language and its cultural meanings. These cultural values grow with the students and accompany them within society in general, and institutional settings, in particular. They subsequently become interrelated and, at varying degrees, determine the way students manage their time. Accordingly, they have an impact not only on the students' perception of time, but also on the way they manage it to gain momentum and be more productive. In fact, the values students hold strongly influence their behavior and establish a disposition to act (Frey, 1994, pp. 19-24). EFL students should develop time management plans where priorities based on cultural values are to be taken into consideration. In other words, they need a value-based time management plan (Walsh, 2008, p. 251).

It is generally agreed upon that an efficient time management is very important for students who aspire success and distinction. "In general, time management has positive effect on the academic success of students" (Powell 2004 as cited in Jinalee & Singh, 2018). But the success our students are driven to it, is it based only on the issue of time management ? According to Maxwell (2004), the values are critical to success (p.206). Tracy (2013), also, said " It is not possible to manage time properly unless you know exactly what your values are" (p.17).

The literature review, almost represented in self-help books, has dealt with time management being referred to as a variable which is very important in general and in the student's life in particular. In the same context, cultural values have been considered as guides, motivators, and source of inspiration and behavior. In fact, each variable has been studied in different contexts. However, the issue of cultural values and their impact on students' time management has not been tackled much as far as we know. In this respect, if time management is considered as important for students' success, cultural values, from the other side, are considered not only important but also necessary and are the basis for efficient students' time management.

2-Aims of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the influence that cultural values could have on Master 2 students' time management, and finding out which cultural values are more influential among them i.e., the native culture or the foreign culture values.

3-Hypothesis and Research Questions

This study is driven by the hypothesis that cultural values determine students' time management. If the learners adopt particular cultural values, the latter will manifest in the quality of their time management. The considered hypothesis will be sustained by considering the given following research questions:

1. To what extent do cultural values, be they native or foreign, determine Master 2 students' time management?
2. Which of these cultural values of both native and foreign culture perspectives influence more the students in their management of time ?

4-Research Methodology

a-Research Method and Research Tool

A quantitative research methodology is used to explore the issue of cultural values to understand the underlying reasons of the students' behaviors related to how they manage their time. In order to achieve this, a close-ended questionnaire, administered to second year EFL Master students, has been used to collect data eventually analyzed and interpreted according to the already covered review of literature.

b-Research Population and Sample

We have targeted in our research a population of EFL Master 2 students of Jijel University Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. 25 students from the department of English have been randomly selected as our research sample.

5-The Structure of the Study

The present research study is divided into two chapters, the theoretical chapter and the practical one. The former consists of three sections: the first section includes time management, namely the definition of time management, time management strategies, skills, and techniques and finally the importance of time management for students. The second section includes cultural values, namely the definition of culture and cultural values, elements of culture, cultural determinism, and some types of cultural values and their importance in the students' study life. The third section, encompasses culture-specific time management involving both native and foreign culture perspectives. The practical chapter contains three

sections : the first section deals with methodology and includes the research method, sample, and tool; the second section contains data analysis and interpretation; and the third section includes implications, limitations, and suggestions for further research followed by a general conclusion.

Chapter one : Literature Review

Section one: Time Management

Introduction

This section starts with brief definitions of time management, then, exposes some time management skills, strategies, and techniques followed by the importance of time management for students.

1-Definition of Time Management

“Time management involves the process of determining needs, setting goals to achieve these needs, prioritizing and planning tasks required to achieve these goals” (Lakein as cited in Claessens B.J et al.,2007). Claessens (2007) defined time management as “behaviors that aim at achieving an effective use of time while performing certain goal–directed activities” (p.262).

2-Time Management Skills, Strategies and Techniques

Time management skills, strategies and techniques are very important to increase students’ success and productivity.

2-1-Time Management Skills

Time management skills include a variety of skills that help students to manage well their time. Some of these skills include the following :

a- Planning and Organizing Time

Intelligent planning is the main factor influencing the introduction of productivity into students' workflow. It does not only increase productivity, but eliminates waste of time. It will save resources and respect deadlines. In the context of learning, its usefulness lies in setting clear short and long-term goals and means for achieving them. "The number one reason why some people get more work done faster is because they are absolutely clear about their goals and objectives" (Tracy,2017,p.22).

b-Managing Stress

"The stress that needs managing is when your reaction to something causes you to feel negative , and that can be highly destructive" (Lomas , 2000, p.19). Students feel less stressed when they are more organized, every student experiences stress occasionally. In fact, too much stress causes the students downfall physically and mentally. It follows that dealing with stress is an important part of time management. .

c-Avoiding Distraction

Getting rid of all distractions, such as cell phones, social media, or even people is what students struggle with when trying to manage time. Distractions cause the lack of attention and concentration "lack of concentration means victory by the many different distractions. Distractions come in three forms: those from the outside environment (street noise, poor light...), those from inside you (lack of sleep, illness...) , and those that are a result of not having a clear idea of what you are supposed to be doing (lack of focus or goals) " (Paul, 2012, p.125).

d- Carry Out One Task at a Time

The students should avoid multi-tasking. They should focus on one specific task at a time in order to get rid of clutter, being organized, complete the task in appropriate time, and as a result increase their productivity. “Multitasking is tempting, but it is an insidious use of time, it can actually sabotage your career and undermine your ability to accomplish the most important task upon which all your success depends” (Tracy, 2013, p. 65). “ what expert have discovered is that multitasking is actually task shifting. The fact is that you can only do one thing at a time” (Tracy, 2013, p. 64).

e- Stop Procrastination

“Procrastination is the huge daunting tasks that are easy to put off ” (Paul, 2012, p.179). Students may be putting off tasks for a variety of reasons such as the task seems overwhelming or unpleasant. In order to avoid this problem, they should break down the task into smaller segments that require less time commitment and result in specific, realistic deadlines. If there is a difficulty to start they may need to complete a preparatory task such as collecting materials or organizing their notes. “There are five things you must do to overcome procrastination each time it threatens to rob you of your study time: you must prepare, set study goals, imagine the pain, imagine the pleasure, and give yourself permission to procrastinate on some things” (Paul, 2012, p.178).

f- Set Priorities

“Prioritizing is a component of planning behavior and refers to the determination of the order in which the planned tasks or goals will be processed or executed” (Claessens, 2004, p.59). One of the easiest ways to prioritize is to make a “to-do” list, whether the students need

a daily or weekly list depends on their study. Setting priorities for each time frame helps students accomplish their goals.

g –Focus on Tasks of High Value

“ There is nothing more efficient than spending time doing what is related to your goals and priorities” (Paul, 2012, p.177). Many students’ tasks require concentration on details : when the students are attempting to do too many different tasks at one time, each individual task would suffer as a result. So, the best solution is to focus on tasks of high value.

2.2-Time Management Strategies

There are many time management strategies, students can practice to manage their time.

2.2.1- Pomodoro

Pomodoro was developed in the late 1980s by Francesco Cirillo. According to him (2006), the principle of this method is 25 minutes work sessions followed by 5 minutes breaks. It is strong with its simplicity and is based on the following steps :

- 1- Get to-do list and a timer
- 2- Set the timer for 25 minutes, and focus on a single task until the timer rings.
- 3- When the session ends, mark off one Pomodoro and record what you complete.
- 4- Enjoy 5 minutes breaks.

2.2.2- Getting Things Done

According to Allen (2001), the principle of this technique is getting things done by managing ideas and priorities. It is a time management method created by Davis Allen. It is based on a simple truth: the more information bouncing around inside your head, the harder it

is to decide what needs attention. As a result, the students spend more time thinking about their tasks than actually doing them. According to Allen (2001), this method is made up of the following practices :

- 1- Capturing everything that crosses mind..
- 2- Clarifying by process what have been captured into clear and concrete action steps.
- 3- Organizing by putting everything into the right place.
- 4- Reviewing by look over, update and revise lists
- 5-Engaging to work .

2.2.3- Eat That Frog

The principle of this method is to prioritize tasks by difficulty, urgency and importance, as proposed by Brain Tracy. According to him in his book 'Eat that Frog', "your frog is your biggest, most important task, the one you are most likely to procrastinate on if you don't do something about it. It is also the one task that can have the greatest positive impact on your life and results at the moment" (Tracy, 2017, p.18). It is based on the following rules :

a –"The first rule of frog-eating is if you have to eat two frogs, eat the ugliest one first" (Tracy, 2017, p.19). In other words, if the students have two important tasks, they should start with the biggest, hardest and most important task first.

b- "The second rule of frog eating is if you have to eat a live frog at all, it doesn't pay to sit and look at it for very long" (Tracy, 2017, P.18). In other words, once the students start their important task, they should discipline their selves to persevere without diversion or distractions until it is 100 percent completed.

According to Tracy (2017), the key to reaching high level of performance and productivity is for you to develop the lifelong habit of tackling your major task first thing each morning. You must develop the routine of eating your frog before you do anything else, and without taking too much time to think about it (p. 11).

2.2.4-Time Blocking

According to *The Complete Guide of Time Blocking* in todoist web site, “the principle of this method is to allocate specific time to activities so as to find a place for them in your calendar”. It is a time management strategy that asks you to divide your day into blocks of time. Each block is dedicated to accomplishing a specific task, or group of tasks, and only those specific tasks. Instead of keeping an open-ended to-do list of tasks you will get to as you are able, you will start each day with a concrete schedule that lays out what you will work on and when.

2.2.5-Time Boxing

According to todoist web site, the principle of this method is to allocate specific time to activities to limit the time spending on them. Time boxing and time blocking are often confused as being synonymous, but there is an important difference, time blocking asks you to set aside certain chunks of time to focus on a given task or activity. For example, “I will revise my lessons from 9 am to 11 am tomorrow”. In contrast, time boxing asks you to impose a limit on how much time you will dedicate to a specific task. For example, “I will finish my lessons’ revision tomorrow between 9 am and 11 am”. This self-imposed “time box” forces the student to work efficiently because he has a limited amount of time in which to complete the task, it is a way to challenge his self and increase his productivity. Forster (2015) in his book *Secrets of Productive People-The 50 Strategies You Need to Get Things*

Done advises to supercharge your time management with time boxing (p. 59). It is useful for tasks we cannot find the time and motivation to deal with.

2.2.6-Productivity Journal

According to todoist website, the principle of this method is to write about the activities which have been completed or need to complete. This method was inspired by Benjamin Franklin's daily schedule. At the top of his schedule, he printed: "morning question, what good shall I do this day ?", before he went to sleep at night, he would look over his list, examine his day and ask, " what good have I done today" ? This simple practice of evaluating his day every morning and evening helped him put everything into perspective.

2-3-Time Management Techniques

McCullough (2014) in *Accelerated Learning Techniques for Students: Learn More in Less Time !* presented an aggregate of techniques for the students to use them so as to be effective with regard to time management. These are the following:

- Apply the Pareto Principle (it states that 80 % of our results come from 20% of our efforts).
- Plan your day.
- Practice positive procrastination (proactive procrastination).
- Schedule your power hour (a specific time of day when we are most focused and productive).
- Prepare your state (getting into optimal mental, emotional, and physical state for learning).
- Take it one step at a time (do not multitask).
- Limit your use of electronics (to avoid distractions and reducing productivity).

- Use spare minutes wisely.
- Believe in yourself and in your abilities and have an internal locus of control.
- Consider the consequences of your decisions (decision management). Your future depends on your today decisions (pp.137-142).

3- The Importance of Time Management for Students

Time management has a great importance for students in different areas. It helps them control their study and avoid delving into trivialities instead of taking seriously their priorities by solely working on them. Without good time management students may probably sink in unimportant tasks. With efficient time management more work is accomplished in less time, which means that perfect ways to manage time are found. Here are some points in which the importance of time management is shown.

a-Maintain Control over Study

When students know how to manage their time well, they can learn more effectively, they become adept at studying quickly and more efficiently. This allows them to maintain control over their study, become effective learners, and increase their productivity.

b-Take into Account Priorities

It is very important to prioritize tasks when there are multiple things to complete. Deciding which task to complete is up to the student. However, it is recommended to complete the most time consuming tasks first. “All of time management boils down to

helping you determine the most important task that you can do at the moment, and then giving you the tools and techniques to begin immediately with that one task, so you can work on it until it is complete” (Tracy, 2013, p. 40).

c- Eliminate Stress

“Your time management can cause stress” (Lomas, 2000, p.15) . When the students don't have control of their time, it is easy to end up feeling rushed and overwhelmed . And when that happens, it can be hard to figure out how long it is going to take to complete a task. Once the students learn how to manage their time, they no longer subject their selves to that level of stress. Beside it being better for their health, they have a clearer picture of the demands on their time, they are better able to estimate how long a given task will take them to complete, and they know they can meet the deadline.

d-Not to Procrastinate

Procrastination has come to be seen as an illness of the time. Time management provides students with necessary path to never stray from the tasks they need to do in order to reach their goals. When students are not procrastinating, they end up with more available time to focus on the tasks that truly matter to them. Instead of worrying about messing deadlines or spending their nights on last-minutes tasks they have been postponing. “The best weapons against procrastination and poor concentration are a scheduled study time and a list of specific things to do once you sit down at the appointed time” (Paul 2012, p. 190).

e-Achieve Goals

Time management helps students to achieve their goals. If they are not using their time wisely; there is a small chance that they are going to reach their goals. “These goals should be

clear, specific, measurable , and time bounded. A goal without a deadline is not really a goal, it is merely a discussion ” (Tracy , 2013 , p.32).

f-Be Confident

Lack of time management is one of the biggest causes of stress and leads to difficulty focusing and loss of confidence. The trick to reduce that stress and improving student self-confidence is to employ good time management skills and strategies. “set goals for yourself and develop plans for achieving them”, “ to successfully travel that long road to your goals, you must believe in yourself” (Paul , 2012, p.136).

Conclusion

This section has displayed time management definition, strategies, skills, techniques, and the importance of time management for students. In the upcoming section, the definition and importance of cultural values for students are highlighted together with elements of culture and cultural determinism.

Section Two: Cultural Values

Introduction

In this section, the issue of culture and cultural values will be dealt with. In the outset of this section, we give a brief definition of culture before considering cultural values. But between culture and some types of cultural values that the students should have (regarding their importance in their academic life), elements together with manifestations and characteristics of culture are explained and, then, cultural determinism theory is highlighted.

1- Definition of Culture and Cultural Values

Culture is a complex notion. It has been defined by many researchers in different ways. Tylor (1871) defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (p. 13). Greenberg, Schmader, Arndt, & Landau (2015) defined culture as being “a set of beliefs, attitudes, values, norms, morals, customs, roles, statuses, symbols, and rituals shared by a self-identified group, a group whose members think of themselves as a group” (p. 52). Hofstede (2001) defined culture as being “the collective programming of the mind that

distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another'. He explained that "the mind stands for the head, heart, and hands_ that is, for thinking, feeling, and acting, with consequences for beliefs, attitudes, and skills" (p. 39).

Cultural values are about what the society holds as accepted beliefs and ideas. They become a solid foundation for the individuals' behaviors. All the values we have are learned and internalized from the society in which we live and the principles we believe in. According to Frey (1994) "Values...assist us in making judgements and in preparing us to act. In other words, the priorities we set and the choices we make are significantly based upon the values we hold (pp. 19-24). According to Wang (2006), values represent the ideas that people have about how things "ought to be".

From the aforementioned definitions of culture and cultural values, we can deduce that there is a strong link between behavior and values. In fact, they are the fulcrum of culture i.e., the latter is embodied by the former.

2- Elements of Culture

According to Barkan (2012), there are two important components of culture; the first component includes ideas and symbols i.e., non material culture encompassing the values, beliefs, symbols, and language that give a definition to a society, and the second component is represented by artifacts (p. 58).

A/ Nonmaterial Culture

According to Hofstede (2001), Symbols "are words, gestures, pictures, and objects that carry often complex meanings recognized as such only by those who share the culture" (p. 40). All cultures have their own symbols like gestures, movements of the body or flags and religious symbols. Heroes are persons, alive or dead, real or imaginary, who possess characteristics that are highly prized in a culture and, thus, serve as models for behavior "(p.40). Rituals are social and religious activities to keep the unity of the group and stir the

individual to be always in touch with the collectivity. Rituals serve as a transmitter of culture's norms from generation to generation. The three "symbols, heroes, and rituals are subsumed under the term practices

(p. 40) and that is why they are visible. They are shown as an onion layers surrounded by a core composed of values.

According to Barkan (2012), Language is the tool with which we communicate in society. It influences the thoughts of people and their perceptions of the world around them. "It is the most important set of symbols and is crucial to communication and, thus, to any society's culture" (p. 60). Norms "are socially acceptable ways of behaving" (p.65), and that is why they are more related to our behaviors. They are shaped by the values of a culture.

B/ Material Culture

It includes the physical objects made and used by all the collectivity members. The most striking objects of today's society are the ICTs tools, and this is due to the technological developments and the rise of a web culture accompanied by sophisticated devices.

As clearly observed values represent the core of culture or, in other words, the deepest manifestations of it.

3- Cultural Determinism

According to the Texas A&M university web site people.tamu.edu, "the position that the ideas, meanings, beliefs and values people learn as members of society determines human nature. People are what they learn". In other words, we are the product of the culture we live in. Consequently, the opposite view, then, is about the idea that we are the masters of our fate making two versions of cultural determinism; the optimistic and the pessimistic one. The former is about people (in our case students) who control their study and the latter is about others who have no control over their study and feel as if hindrances are set in front of them.

From what preceded, we can say that students who have an optimistic version are more prone to succeed in managing their time because their success in doing so is a state of mind by which they see their study by “the mental (filter) of optimism”, whereas those having a pessimistic version are more liable to fail in managing their time because they see their study by “the mental filter of pessimism” (Keller, 2001, p.13). Students’ optimism residing within them make them in control of their circumstances and students’ pessimism makes them think always that external factors control them. This is what Olsen & Kaye (2017), have called the locus of control which “concerns where you think the control of your circumstances resides : either within you, or in external factors” (p. 298). Tracy (2013), says that the psychology of time management is based on a simple principle called the law of control where psychologists refer to the difference between an internal locus and an external locus of control. With the former you feel that you are the master of your own destiny, and with the latter you feel that you are controlled by circumstances outside yourself (p. 5). To be a good time manager student, one should adopt an optimistic mind and a high internal locus of control.

5- Some Types of Cultural Values and their Importance in the Student’s Life

According to Anna Mar (2016), there are common types of values occurring under the umbrellas of ambition (motivation to excel in doing things), performance (implementation of values), experience (commitment to learning and knowledge), and people (relationship with peers and teachers). Students excel in doing things by having motivation “a magical energy” (Ramos, 2016, p. 38), innovation, diligence, greatness, competition, passion, courage, and growth for the sake of achieving their study goals. Students’ values of performance are principles related to daily activities and accomplishments in their study by committing themselves to manage their effort, energy, and focus, and their efficiency in saving time, managing, and using it to be productive and succeed in reaching the academic objectives. The

students should be aware of the necessity to have mastery over the acquired knowledge so as to move forward. According to Olsen & Kaye (2017), the student experiences his university life with a commitment to learning (p.192). As we see, these values (cultural by nature) are of great importance in the student's life because they are the basis for his actions, and govern his conduct toward his study.

Ramos (2016) spoke abundantly about the four Ds of productivity among the students and stressed on the value of productivity as the ultimate goal of students' time management. Productivity is also a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort (p. 25). The four cultural values (4 Ds) related to the value of being productive are diligence, discipline, direction, and durability. According to Ramos , diligence is about knowing what to do and doing it. Discipline is doing it no matter what and regardless of how you feel about it. Direction provides a clear vision of the end-goal while doing what you do. Durability value is about keeping producing work consistently (pp. 29-33).

Tracy (2013) presented, also, his four Ds necessary to succeed in managing time. He called them the four Ds of effectiveness. For him, an intense and a burning "Desire" is necessary to get your time under control and to achieve maximum effectiveness. "Decisiveness" is about making a clear decision that you are going to practice good time management strategies, skills and techniques until they become a part of your life and established as good habits. "Determination" is about the student's persistence in front of all temptations until becoming an efficient time manager. The student's desire will reinforce his determination. The last value is "Discipline" which is the most important key to success. It is needed to make time management a daily practice, and commit yourself to do what you should do regardless the feelings or the circumstances (p.2).

Conclusion

In this section, we have presented some culture and cultural values definitions. Additionally, elements of culture, cultural determinism, and some types of cultural values and their importance in the student's life have been presented. In the following section, a culture-specific time management has been presented by displaying time management from both native and foreign (English) culture perspectives.

Section Three : Culture-Specific Time Management

Introduction

In this section, time management from a native culture perspective encompassing both local and Islamic values is dealt with. Equally considered is time management from an English (foreign) culture perspective representing a universal (global) culture characterized by an English language playing perfectly the role of the Lingua Franca.

1 – Time Management From a Native Culture Perspective

a – Local Values

According to Dr. Bin Muammar (2020) traditional sayings and proverbs are so indicative in expressing the meanings of the cultural values they carry in their folds. They reflect a picture of the society with its shortcomings and virtues. These proverbs, full of cultural meanings, guide the behavior of individuals. In his article, he presented some proverbs to show how they influence people's perception of time and, consequently, their driven

behaviors on the ground. The popular proverb, for instance, كل عَطلة فيها خير means that even if we lose time on unimportant things, another occasion will present itself and important things will get done instead. We have also من بگر لحاجتو قضاها namely, who wakes up early will get his stuff done and which has the same meaning as life belongs to those who get up early. We have, also, the well-known proverb (الوقت كالسيف إن لم تقطعه قطعك) ; time is like a sword if you do not cut it off, it will cut you off. Ibn Abi Jamra, in his book *The Joy of Souls*, in explaining the meaning of this Arab proverb advised to cut time by work lest it cuts you by procrastination. Popular proverbs are not without guidance for behavior, actions, and embodiment of values. There is, then, no doubt that they encourage action and achievement like the proverb (لا تَوَجِّلْ عمل اليوم إلى الغد) namely, do not put off till tomorrow what you can do today.

On the other side, there exists a terrible culture of killing time in our popular folk (let's kill a bit of time) meaning (هيا نقتل شوية وقت) unfortunately transformed with time into “values” shaping popular conduct among people in society. People seem to forget that by doing so they kill themselves, exactly as depicted by Dion Boucicault in a proverb in which he says : “ men talk of killing time, while time quietly kills them”. Besides, somewhere in our popular culture, we are invited not to worry about things in this life, and to take it easy believing that hastiness is from Satan (العجلة من الشيطان), that every good work takes too long to finish (الشغل لمليح يطوّل), and as mentioned earlier (كل عَطلة فيها خير) which means, also, there is benefit in every delay. What we grasp, here, is that strict stickiness to dates, deadlines, and commitments does not always work despite of their necessity for anyone seeking efficiency, and that distractions are, in a way or another, welcomed pushing us to procrastinate even if we know we should not.

b– Islamic Values

Time for a Muslim is a blessing and a “rizk” like other blessings such as health, wellness, and knowledge. It is the most precious gift that a Muslim has ever been given, reason why everyone will be asked in the hereafter about his time and how he spent it. Allah swears by time in many verses in Quran to show its greatness and its importance.

According to “Quotes of Imam Ali Bin Abi Taleb” (2014), Ali Ibn Abi Taleb warns us that “he who busies himself with the trivial wastes the important” namely *من اشتغل بغير المهم ضيَع الأهم*. According to Madrassa An-Noor For the Blind (2019), the Prophet Muhammad in a Hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas said : “ Take benefit of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before you are occupied, and your life before your death”. It is a clear call for taking advantage of the “gift” of time together with other blessings as clearly stated here. In the same context, again, our Prophet Muhammad said : “there are two blessings which many people lose : (they are) health and free time for doing good”. Both our time and our health are precious resources that should be utilized in doing good deeds. Our Prophet, also, taught us, in a Hadith reported by Et-Tirmidhi, not to lose time to do good deeds before we are caught up by one of seven calamities awaiting us. Meaning that we should initiate doing good deeds before obstructions appear. A Muslim should always seek refuge in Allah from disability and laziness which are considered among the real time wasters that a Muslim should be aware of. Students seem to waste huge amounts of time in surfing the web, chatting, talking on cell phones, watching television, playing games, and sleeping more hours than necessary. The prophet said, according to At-Tabarani : “ O Allah, bless my nation’s early rising” namely *(اللهم بارك لأمتي في بكورها)*.

From an Islamic perspective there is no room for “values” encouraging people to kill time or waste it. There is no room, for overlooking free time, delaying, and being lazy to do good

deeds as soon as possible. There is no place for discarding all the stuff that make us waste time (time wasters); no place for not benefitting from the passage of time or the time per se, and not learning how to manage efficiently time to the fullest. There is no room for oversleeping and not getting up early. Only a person with values and goals to strive for would be able to commit himself to sleep everyday early and wake up early and let things become a reality in his study life. There is no room for arbitrary choices about the peak hours of high levels of productivity. The wise student is the one who works hard on priority tasks and activities in scheduled power hours of his choice based on the circumstances and environment appropriate to him. Planning to revise lessons and prepare for exams and not cramming are signs of an industrious and shrewd Muslim student. Responding favorably to assignments in due time means taking care of his learning process and, consequently, avoiding negative impact on academic achievements. According to Ramos (2016), “Non productive students are chronic procrastinators who put off every assignment or delay simple tasks” (p. 27).

2 – Time Management from an English (Foreign) Culture Perspective

The review of literature dealing with time management is very rich and is the result of many works of westerners. Self-help and personal development books abundantly tackle this issue and elucidate a great number of strategies, skills, techniques, and methods of how to manage efficiently time, and what are the principles and values inherent to it to be successful in this very important endeavor.

We have observed from the writings and ideas about cultural values and time management in the life of an individual (student in our case) what could be explained as follows : the bottom line in this issue is that time management is referred to as being very important in general and in the student’s life in particular. The same is true for culture and cultural values,

as they have their importance in the student's life because they are their guides, motivators, source of inspiration and behavior. But the most important thing is that time management, which is considered part of the student's self-development skills, is affected by what the students have at the level of thoughts, culture and vision (the way of seeing life) making them behave the way they do. Creating a value-based time management plan is what Walsh proposed (2008, p.251). Improving our time management to attain personal productivity has many things to do with our values. According to Tracy (2013), "it is not possible to manage time properly unless you know exactly what your values are (p.17).

We have noticed, as well, through the literature review the very dependency of the variable time management on the other independent cultural values variable. The success in managing time is tightly related to established values. This can be seen in many ideas and thoughts of prominent personal development writers. But, we have noted, too, little research dealing with the influence of cultural values on the students' time management or other issues related to students' personal development. Smith (1992) wrote : " the simple concept of making sure your daily activities reflect your deepest core values lies at the very heart of effective time and life management". Maxwell (2004) spoke about those principles that guide your life which are your values. A person's core values are nothing more than principles that he or she has internalized. And these values are critical to success. People without values are adrift on the ocean of life. To be successful, my values, not my feelings, need to control my actions. If you focus on your values, success is likely to follow anyway (p. 206). Kruse (2015) discovered that highly successful people do not think about time much at all. Instead, they think about values, priorities, and consistent habits (p.13). What is important for him is whether the things you spend time on each day align with your values and priorities ? All this explains the importance that should be given to cultural values as the basis first, and then time management will follow anyway.

Kogon, Merrill, & Rinne (2014) exposed challenges and proposed to overcome them by decision management, attention management, and energy management instead of time management (pp. 14-24). Loehr & Schwartz (2003) stressed on the importance of energy, not time, which is the fundamental currency of high performance. The number of hours in a day is fixed, but the quantity and quality of energy available to us is not. It is our most precious resource (pp. 3-4). Maurer (2004) asserted that any task that seems overwhelming can be made less intimidating by breaking it into component parts, phases, or sections and then working on these parts one at a time. It is about accomplishing the great tasks by a series of small acts, and take one small step at a time but regularly (seeking short-term comfort).

Now, here are the sayings representing English foreign culture perspective as presented in the questionnaire followed by brief explanations.

1/ *"It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is what we are busy about"* said Henry David Thoreau.

Being busy is not the ultimate goal and does not necessarily mean that you are productive, but maybe it means you are exhausted at the end of the day. Being busy doing your work based on a plan and staying focused on your idea is what is required. Also, being busy doing priorities and not wasting time doing trivialities. Brittany Burgunder, in the same sense, said : *" is surprising how much free time and productivity you gain when you lose the busyness in your mind"*.

2/ *"Desire, decisiveness, determination, and discipline are the four Ds necessary to succeed in your time management"* said Brian Tracy.

The saying includes four highly interesting and necessary cultural values that should be held to succeed in managing time efficiently. One should decide to have an intense, and burning *desire* to have your time controlled. Then, make a clear *decision* about your desire to practice an excellent time management. *Determine* to persist till you acquire the good habits in managing your time on a daily basis. *Discipline* yourself to do always what you should do in the right way and the right place and the right moment. Having these values is crucial for becoming a real time manager (Tracy, 2013, p. 2).

3/ “*Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today*” said Benjamin Franklin.

It is an adage advising us vehemently not to procrastinate, not to delay, not to waste time on trivialities, get your work done, and be away from all distractions. Getting your things done boosts your morale and makes you feel a sense of accomplishment. He also said : “ you may delay, but time will not”.

4/ “*... it takes both a plan and a schedule to get things done*” said Peter Turla.

Making schedules is a focal point in managing time. They are necessary. Weekly flexible ones seem to be the best because they help us to plan ahead for seven days and will put us on the path of organization and efficient time usage.

5/ “*Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort*” said Paul J. Meyer (the founder of the Success Motivation Institute).

Productivity does not happen arbitrarily for it is a process and a methodology. i.e., there are many things one needs to do to achieve it. It is the awareness of what to do which may bring the ultimate goals and results. Time management’s goal is to attain productivity, which

means that planning and organizing are tools to utilize to achieve this value. According to Ramos (2016), “Commitment to excellence means the vision of achieving great things is a catalyzer in the journey to become more productive. Abandoning mediocrity becomes your mission and you must stop working like everyone else. Intelligent planning is the main factor influencing the introduction of productivity into your workflow. Planning your projects not only increases productivity, but eliminates waste. It will save resources, encourage deadlines and mitigate risks. In the context of studying, however, its usefulness lies in setting clear short and long-term goals (and a means of achieving them). Focused effort having to do with “Productive” traits such as discipline and diligence, leads super students to sacrifice short term pleasure in favor of long term goals. Focusing your mental and physical resources on a goal is essential to keep productivity high. When studying, focus on studying and avoid distractions (p. 25).

Conclusion

In this section, time management from a native culture perspective (local values and Islamic values) and from a foreign (English) culture perspective has been presented. The following chapter is about methodology, data collection, data analysis, and results interpretation.

Chapter Two: Methodology, Data Analysis and Interpretation

Section One : Methodology

Introduction

For the sake of investigating the research hypothesis, we have used a close-ended questionnaire as a means to collect data. We were contented with the questionnaire only due to the current exceptional circumstances prevailing in the country. 25 Master 2 EFL students of Jijel University from the English department were randomly selected as our study participants. The questionnaire was designed via Google forms. The students' responses were sent back via this platform.

1-Research Methodology

A quantitative research methodology has been used to explore the issue of cultural values to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons of the students' behaviors related to how they manage their time.

2-Research Sample

The population targeted in our study is Master 2 students of Jijel University English Department. 25 Master 2 EFL students of English Department have been randomly selected as the study sample.

3- Research Tool and its Administration

A close-ended questionnaire composed of thirteen items to collect data has been selected, and the participants were asked to select the appropriate answers. The questionnaire was designed via google forms and sent to the participants via the Facebook Master 2 group composed of nearly all the Master 2 students, and via their emails at our disposal.

Conclusion

We have presented in this section a description of the research methodology, sample, and tool and its administration. In the following section, we present data analysis and results interpretation.

Section Two : Data Analysis and Results Interpretation

1-Data Analysis

Introduction

In this section, we present the collected data derived from the questionnaire as explained in the previous section. Analysis of the data collected is done and data representation through tables is displayed in a way to facilitate their interpretation in the following section.

Item 1 : Specify what is more valuable in managing your time.

Table 1. Students' Values Taken into Consideration in Time Management

Options	Number	Percentage
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Personal profit	15	60%
Social rules	6	24%
Faith	3	12%
No answer	1	4%
Total	25	100%

The majority of questioned participants, 15 students out of 25 representing 60% of the sample have chosen personal profit, and one participant with no answer.

Item 2 : Students' time management is necessary for success.

Table 2. Necessity of Students' Time Management for Success

Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Number	19	5	1
Percentage	76%	20%	4%

It is noticed that 96% of EFL students believe that time management is necessary for students' success.

Item 3 : Time Management skills consist of the ability to

- a- plan and organize your time,*
- b- manage your stress,*
- c- avoid distractions,*
- d- carry out one task at a time,*
- e- avoid procrastination,*
- f- identify priority tasks,*
- g- focus on tasks of high value.*

Table 3. Time Management Skills

Options	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	Mean
Strongly agree	21	11	12	13	12	15	20	14.86
Agree	4	11	12	11	12	8	5	9
Total agreement	25	22	24	24	24	23	25	23.86
Percentage	100 %	88%	96%	96%	96%	92%	100%	95.43%
Disagree	0	3	1	1	1	2	0	1.14
Percentage	0%	12%	4%	4%	4%	8%	0%	4.57%

The results show that 95% of the students recognize the time management skills mentioned and cited from “a” to “g” and the ability to master them.

Item 4: Time Management Strategies consist mostly of the following :

- a- 25 minutes work sessions and 5 minutes breaks,*
- b- Getting things done by managing your ideas and priorities,*
- c- Prioritizing tasks by difficulty, urgency and importance,*
- d- Allocating specific time to activities to limit the time you spend on them,*
- e- Writing about the activities you have completed or need to complete,*
- f- Allocating specific time to activities so as to find a place for them in your calendar.*

Table 4. Time Management Strategies

Options	a	b	c	d	e	f	Mean
Strongly agree	10	18	18	13	16	14	14.83
Agree	9	7	5	11	8	10	8.33
Total agreement	19	25	23	24	24	24	23.16
Percentage	76%	100%	92%	96%	96%	96%	92.66%
Disagree	6	0	2	1	1	1	1.83
Percentage	24%	0%	8%	4%	4%	4%	7.33

The results show that the majority of the students (more than 90%) agree with these time management strategies.

Item 5 : A high level of productivity is the primary goal of students' time management.

Table 5. Productivity in Time Management

Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Number	19	6	0
Percentage	76%	24%	0%

It is noticed that all the students agree that a high level of productivity is the primary goal of students' time management.

Item 6 : Time management helps

a- maintain control over study

b- take into account priorities

c- eliminate stress

d- not to procrastinate

e- achieve goals

f- be confident

Table 6. Benefits of Time Management

Options	a	b	c	d	e	f	Mean
Strongly agree	19	20	14	12	22	21	18
Agree	4	5	11	11	3	3	6.16
Total agreement	23	25	25	23	25	24	24.16
Percentage	92%	100%	100%	92%	100%	96%	96.66%
Disagree	2	0	0	2	0	1	0.83
Percentage	8%	0%	0%	8%	0%	4%	3.33%

The results show that the majority of the students questioned (97%) agree with these time management benefits.

Item 7: Choose what might apply to you.

a-You are always late

b-You tend to procrastinate

c-You are always in haste

d-You spend long time on social media

e-You only consider revising until before the exams

f-You make use of your free time in a constructive way

g-You set a daily or weekly to-do list

h-You set appropriate study goals

i-You respect your priorities

Table 7. Variations in Applying Time Management

Options	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
Number	3	4	0	12	13	8	9	11	17
Percentage	12%	16%	0%	48%	52%	32%	36%	44%	68%

The results show that the majority of the students (more than 55 %) have signs of good time management.

Item 8 :Time management differs from one culture to another.

Table 8. Time management across cultures

Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Number	10	7	8
Percentage	40%	28%	32%

The results show that (68 %) of students believe that time management differs from one culture to another.

Item 9 : Organize in relation to time management, by order of importance, from one to six, the following items :

- motivation
- attention
- determination
- clarity
- learning
- success

Table 9. Time Management Values by Order of Importance

Value Order	1	2	3	4	5	6	Percentage
Motivation	13	4	2	1	5	0	52%
Attention	4	5	6	3	4	3	24%
Determination	7	8	4	0	5	1	32%
Clarity	3	4	6	12	0	0	48%
Learning	2	4	4	1	12	2	48%
Success	8	1	3	1	0	12	48%

The results show that the students have changed the order of items as follows :

1-motivation, 2-determination, 3-attention, 4-clarity, 5-learning, 6-success

Item 10: When managing time, no item specified in number 9 above should be neglected.

Table 10. Values Prerequisite in Time Management According to Students

Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Number	10	13	2
Percentage	40%	52%	8%

The results show that 92% of students agree that the values specified in number 9 above should not be neglected when managing time

Item 11: A Muslim student should responsibly execute the following time management procedure(s) below.

- a- Taking advantage of time
- b- Using leisure time wisely
- c- Being swift in doing good
- d- Being conscious of time wasters
- e- Learning from the passage of time
- f- Waking up early
- g- Selecting appropriate moments to be productive
- h- Planning revision
- i- Responding favorably to assignments

Table 11. Time Management Procedures Executed by a Muslim Student

Options	a	b	c	d	e	f	c	h	i	Mean
Strongly	19	17	10	15	13	21	19	10	14	15.33
Agree	6	6	14	9	10	3	3	14	5	7.78
Total	25	23	24	24	23	24	22	24	19	23.11
Percentage	100%	92%	96%	96%	92%	96%	88%	96%	76%	92.44%
Disagree	0	1	1	1	2	1	3	0	6	1.67
Percentage	0%	4%	4%	4%	8%	4%	12%	0%	24%	6.67%
No answer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.22
Percentage	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0.89%

The results show that the majority of the students questioned (more than 90%) agree that a Muslim student should responsibly execute the procedures listed in item 11.

Item 12 : Choose what might be inspiring to you among the following :

- a- هَيَّا نَقْتَلْ شَوِيَةَ وَقْتٍ (Let's kill a bit of time)
- b- مَنْ بَكَرَ لِحَاجَتِهِ قَضَاهَا (Who wakes up early will have his stuff done)
- c- الْعَجَلَةُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ (Hastiness is from Satan)
- d- الْوَقْتُ كَالسَّيْفِ إِنْ لَمْ تَقْطَعْهُ قَطَعَكَ (Time is like a sword, if you don't cut it off, it will cut you off)
- e- كُلُّ عَطْلَةٍ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ (There is benefit in every delay)
- f- الشَّغْلُ الْمَلِيحُ يَطْوِلُ (Good work takes too long to finish)

Table 12. Local Values with Regard to Time Management

Options	a	b	c	d	e	f
Number	1	20	2	19	3	6
Percentage	4%	80%	8%	76%	12%	24%

The results show that more than 70 % of the students questioned are inspired by local values with regard to time management.

Item 13: Considering time management, respond to the sayings below.

- a- *It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is what we are busy about.*
- b- *Desire, decisiveness, determination and discipline are the four Ds necessary to succeed in your time management.*
- c- *Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.*
- d- *It takes both a plan and a schedule to get things done.*
- e- *Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning and focused effort.*

Table 13. Global Values in Relation with Time Management

Options	a	b	c	d	e	Mean
Strongly agree	17	16	21	17	20	18.2
Agree	7	9	3	8	5	6.4
Total agreement	24	25	24	25	25	24.6
Percentage	96%	100%	96%	100%	100%	98.40%
Disagree	1	0	1	0	0	0.4
Percentage	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%	1.60%

The results show that the targeted students overwhelmingly adopt the universal (global) culture sayings.

2- Results Interpretation

Item 01: Specify what is more valuable in managing your time.

The findings show that personal profit is more valuable for the students in managing their time. This choice, at a rate of 60%, is at the expense of Social Rules and Faith with respectively 24% and 12%. From the first glance, the master 2 students seem influenced by a globalized culture with high rate of interconnectedness and a language as lingua franca, as well as an esteem of the self. The latter constitutes, among others, the building blocks of culture.

The individualist orientation is clearly shown in these results. Personal Profit appears to be the central interest of the students. "The individual identifies primarily with self, with the needs of the individual being satisfied before those of the group. Independence and self reliance are greatly stressed and valued" (The Peace Corps, 2012, p. 31). In the same stream of ideas, it is denoted that "high levels of individualism in a culture are associated with valuing independence, uniqueness, and autonomy and fostering of an independent self-construal that defines and evaluates the self distinct from others. Independent self-construal views self as a unique active agent serving one's own goals" (Greenberg et al. 2015, p. 63).

Social Rules, on the other hand, depicts the collectivist concept where "the survival and success of the group ensures the well-being of the individual, so that by considering the needs and feelings of others, one protects oneself" (PC 2012, p. 31).

The most striking point in the findings is that Faith has been chosen, as the results reveal, by only 12% of the sample. The question is whether the principles and values making Faith have simply been replaced by those of Personal Profit, and to what extent these results are the corollary of a globalized culture which glorifies the self and its profit ?

Item 2 : Students' time management is necessary for success.

The findings show that all students (except one) with 96% of the sample consider time management as necessary for success. This implies that the students do not downplay the importance seen through effective time management. Time management is about striving to use time efficiently, developing necessary habits, mastering skills, adopting strategies, practicing self-discipline, promoting self-awareness, studying smartly, achieving goals and aiming at a high level of productivity and bearing in mind that the issue of time management is the key to success.

Item 03 : Time Management skills consist of the ability to

- a- plan and organize your time,*
- b- manage your stress,*
- c- avoid distractions,*
- d- carry out one task at a time,"*
- e- avoid procrastination,*
- f- identify priority tasks,*
- g- focus on tasks of high value.*

A review of the results shows that the quasi majority of the students (95%) recognize the time management skills cited from “a” to “g” and the ability to master them. These skills include the ability to plan and organize the students’ time, manage their stress, avoid distractions and procrastination, carry out one task at a moment, identify priority tasks, and focus on high value tasks. This implies the implementation of these skills and abilities by the students when managing their time.

Item 04 : Time management strategies consist mostly of the following :

- a- 25 minutes work sessions and 5 minutes breaks,*
- b- Getting things done by managing your ideas and priorities,*
- c- Prioritizing tasks by difficulty, urgency and importance,*
- d- Allocating specific time to activities to limit the time you spend on them,*
- e- Writing about the activities you have completed or need to complete,*
- f- Allocating specific time to activities so as to find a place for them in your calendar.*

The students, taken the results into account and whether they are conscious about it or not, follow the strategies cited from “a” to “f” in item number 4 of the questionnaire namely Pomodoro, GTD, Eat That Frog, Time Boxing, Productivity Journal, and Time Blocking.

It is to mention the percentage 24 % of the sample disagreeing with the use of Pomodoro; the interpretation of this can be explained in the students’ preference to use strategies other than Pomodoro. Another observation concerns the strategy of prioritizing tasks by difficulty, urgency, and importance which has received 8% of the students’ disagreement. This can be explained, to some extent, by the fact that these students prioritize tasks not by difficulty, urgency, and importance but rather by following the principle of simple and easy first.

On a general scale, the percentage of the students agreeing with these time management strategies is 92,66% against 7.33% disagreeing with. Generally, the disagreement percentage can be explained by the use of other strategies prevailing in time management field.

Item 5 : A high level of productivity is the primary goal of students’ time management.

100 % of the students agree with the idea that productivity is the primary goal of students’ time management. In *the Super Student’s Guide to Productivity*, Ramos (2016) stressed on

the value of productivity as the ultimate goal of students' time management. Ramos said "research shows that students who are efficient are not liable to burnout and that successful students are productive students" (p. 9).

The learners seem to be convinced with the value of productivity and the importance of being productive in their study life. This is also shown in the findings of item 13/e where they all agree on productivity as never being an accident, but it is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort. This means that the students are self aware of what mostly brings good results, and how to achieve them.

Productivity as it is the ultimate goal of the students leads us to speak about the values (cultural values) it brings with it to students' life. Ramos (2016) presented the four Ds of productivity which are cultural values that students should look for to optimize their self efficiency. Productivity for him is represented by diligence, discipline, direction, and durability. The path for students to be productive starts by giving importance to their values simply because embodying the values is at the core of the students duties to be at the top of effectiveness, order and organization (p.29).

Item 06: Time management helps

- a- maintain control over study*
- b- take into account priorities*
- c- eliminate stress*
- d- not to procrastinate*
- e- achieve goals*
- f- be confident*

The students agree with a majority of 96.66 % against 3.33% disagreement. They agree that there are benefits and advantages derived from time management. This high percentage shows the students' awareness of the advantages that time management brings to them and their impact on their productivity. The students agree totally with a rate of 100 % that time management helps take into account priorities, eliminate stress and achieve goals. 96 % of the sample agree that time management helps students to feel confident, and 92 % helps maintain control over study and not to procrastinate.

On the other side, obviously, we find 8% of the students disagree with the fact that time management helps maintain control over study and not to procrastinate. The rate of 3.33% of

total students' disagreement is not worth mentioning since only one out of 25 students disagrees with the fact that time management has these advantages.

Item 07 : Choose what might apply to you.

a-You are always late

b-You tend to procrastinate

c-You are always in haste

d-You spend long time on social media

e-You only consider revising until before the exams

f-You make use of your free time in a constructive way

g-You set a daily or weekly to-do list

h-You set appropriate study goals

i-You respect your priorities

The findings show how the students respond to variations in applying time management and the signs (good or poor) related to their choices about what might apply to them.

a-You are always late : 12% of the sample choose this sign which implies automatically that 88% of the students are not always late. The result means that the majority of them have a good sign of time management as far as lateness is concerned.

b-You tend to procrastinate : The results show that 16% of EFL students have chosen the poor sign of procrastination in the process of managing time. This means from the flip side that 84% of the participants tend not to procrastinate. The majority, then, shows a good sign of time management with regard to procrastination.

c-You are always in haste : No results here for no student has made this choice. Maybe, the item used here was not understood by the students.

d-You spend long time on social media : The findings show that 48% of EFL students spend long time on social media which means that 52% of the students do not spend long time on social media. Even if the gap between the two sides is not big, still the sign is positive from the students' side concerning social media and the amount of time spent on it.

e-You only consider revising until before the exams : The findings show that 52% of the students only consider revising until the examination dates are close against 48% of students who start revision early. The difference, even if slight, tells a lot about the many problems on the psychological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral scales that lead to more distractions

and to chronic procrastination. Not managing time efficiently results in a state of unreadiness to prepare work for exams in general. The results shown, here, represent a bad sign of time management.

f-You make use of your free time in a constructive way : The findings show that 32% of the students make use of their free time in a constructive way against 68% of them who do not make use of their free time in a constructive way. Using spare minutes, leisure or free time in a constructive way necessitates good planning also because every extra time they gain is an added value to be more productive. These results depict, then, a poor sign of time management.

g-You set a daily or weekly to-do list : The findings show us the rate of 36% of the students who set a daily or weekly to-do list against the percentage of 64% who, by contrast, do not set to-do list. Even if setting to-do list is within the framework of setting goals, the students in this case seem to neglect an important factor of effective time management reason why we qualify this behavior as a poor sign of time management.

h-You set appropriate study goals : The results display the percentage of 44% of the sample setting appropriate study goals against 56% not setting appropriate study goals. Regarding the results, the students seem to have problems in planning their study and, thus, setting appropriate study goals. Here too, the students stand in the path of poor signs of time management.

i-You respect your priorities : The findings display 68% of the students respecting their priorities against 32% who disrespect their priorities. This majority ranks them in the good sign time management side.

By applying the principle of the rates (percentages) by contrast, we calculate the percentages (assembling them) of good signs or variations of time management like not being late, for instance, and divide them on the number of real applied signs or variations which is 8 instead of 9. Remember “c” is not counted because no response has been assigned to it by the students. The same thing is repeated with the percentages of bad signs or variations of time management. The whole gives us the following outcomes :

Good signs/variations of time management: $452/8 = 56.50\%$.

Poor signs/variations of time management: $348/8 = 43.50\%$.

Item 08 : Time management differs from one culture to another.

68 % of the students have replied that time management differs from one culture to another against 32% considering time management as the same in all cultures .The findings mean that the students in their majority are conscious about the different perception of time within cultures. People in a linear time view are monochronics, profit-oriented, and strive to seize the present time to the fullest bearing in mind that the past is over. In multi-active time view, people tend to multitask (they are polychronics). Time also is event. In cyclical cultures, time goes and comes back later, and thus it is not considered as wasted.

On the other hand, what about the 32% of the students who tend to deal with time management as being the same in all culture ? They seem oriented on a global culture in which time is perceived and viewed depending on the profit it could bring to them.

Item 09 : Organize in relation to time management, by order of importance, from one to six, the following items :

- motivation
- attention
- determination
- clarity
- learning
- success

Motivation, attention, determination, clarity, learning, and success are among the values that the students should have to guarantee efficiency in their time management, and as a result, success in their academics.

Motivation has been selected by 52% of students in the first place as being the most important value to them in relation to time management. Determination has been selected by 32% of the sample in the second place as being important in their management of time. Attention has been chosen in the third rank by 24% of the sample. Clarity, Learning, and Success values have been chosen respectively in the fourth, fifth, and sixth places by 48 % of the students.

These findings show that only motivation has got the average of agreement to be ranked in the first place. The other values have got under the average which means, probably, that they are not sufficiently deep-rooted among the students with regard to time management.

The students' version of these (cultural) values organized in relation to time management by order of importance is as follows: motivation, determination, attention, clarity, learning, and success. The implementation of these values in the life of the students gives us the picture of students having motivation and determination, paying attention to the flow of their time, seeing clearly things in their minds, and can learn how to manage time efficiently and succeed smartly in this mission.

Item 10 : When managing time, no item specified in number 9 above should be neglected.

The results show through the students' responses their quasi-total agreement with a percentage of 92% that the previous mentioned (cultural) values should not be neglected when managing their time. In other words, when managing time, students should have motivation which has a strong effect on the levels of energy to use time wisely and efficiently, determination to succeed in this great mission, attention to time management role and importance in success, and have a clear vision of the goals to reach by focusing on what is important to them, and commit themselves to learn continuously how to use time in an effective way, and eventually reach a high level of mastery of time (management) permitting to succeed in their study.

The students representing 8 % of disagreement may have thought of other cultural values other than these ones.

Item 11: A Muslim student should responsibly execute the following time management procedure(s) below.

a- Taking advantage of time

b- Using leisure time wisely

c- Being swift in doing good

- d- Being conscious of time wasters*
- e- Learning from the passage of time*
- f- Waking up early*
- g- Selecting appropriate moments to be productive*
- h-Planning revision*
- i-Responding favorably to assignments*

The findings show 92.44% of the students agreed with the fact that a Muslim should responsibly execute the procedures listed in the questionnaire from “a” to “i” against 7.56% of the sample disagreeing with it. From these results we notice what follows:

a-Total agreement (100%) with “taking advantage of time”.

b-Quasi total agreement (96%) with the necessity to be “swift in doing good”, “conscious of time wasters”, “waking up early”, and “planning revision”.

c-The majority (92%) of agreement with “using leisure time wisely” and “learning from the passage of time”.

d-88% of the students with “select appropriate moments to be productive” against 12% disagreement which may explain that the students do not have specific moments for working to their potential.

e-76% of the students with “respond favorably to assignments” against 24% don’t favorably respond to assignments thing which represents a negative point in the process of learning and will have a negative impact on the academic achievements of the students.

Item 12 : Choose what might be inspiring to you among the following :

- a- هَيَا نَقْتُلْ شَوِيَةَ وَقْتِ (Let’s kill a bit of time)*
- b- مَنْ بَكَرَ لِحَاجَتِهِ قَضَاهَا (Who wakes up early will have his stuff done)*
- c- العَجَلَةُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ (Hastiness is from Satan)*
- d- الْوَقْتُ كَالسَّيْفِ إِنْ لَمْ تَقْطَعْهُ قَطَعَكَ (Time is like a sword, if you don’t cut it off, it will cut you off)*
- e- كُلُّ عَطْلَةٍ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ (There is benefit in every delay)*

f- الشغل المليح يطول (*Good work takes too long to finish*)

The findings show :

In (a) “let’s kill a bit of time” displaying a general tendency of the students (96%) not to be inspired by this popular local saying against only (04%) of the sample appear to be inspired by it. The tendency here is positive.

In (b) “ who wakes up early will have his stuff done”. The students inspired by this popular local saying represent 80% of the sample against 20% who seem to be not inspired by it a. This inspiration is the image of a good attitude and behavior of students.

In (c) “Hastiness is from Satan”. The findings prove that the students have misunderstood the saying and its meaning, or they could have confounded it with swiftness which is far in meaning of haste or hastiness, and the result is 92% disapprove the fact that hastiness is from Satan.

In (d) “Time is like a sword, if you don’t cut it off, it will cut you off ”. The sample representing 76% of the students agree with this saying against 24 % appear not to be inspired by it. Unlike (c) the tendency in (d) is positive.

In (e) “ there is a benefit in every delay”. The students inspired by this saying represent 12% of the sample against 88% appearing not to be inspired by it. The tendency is again positive.

In (f) “Good work takes too long to finish”. 24% of students agree whereas 76% seem not to be inspired by this saying.

Generally, 70.66 % of the students are inspired by the good side of these popular sayings representing local values with regard to time management against 29.33% of the sample aligning with the negative sides of these popular sayings.

NB. Since “c” seems to be misunderstood, and if ever we decide to cross it off when calculating the ratios, and not to include it, the outcome will be as follows : 83.20% of the students will be inspired by these engrained values in society against 16.80% of them will not.

Item 13 : Considering time management, respond to the sayings below.

- a- It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is what we are busy about.*
- b- Desire, decisiveness, determination and discipline are the four Ds necessary to succeed in your time management.*
- c- Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.*
- d- It takes both a plan and a schedule to get things done.*
- e- Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning and focused effort.*

The findings show a quasi-total agreement of the students with the sayings representing global cultural values by 98.4 % of the students. They have adopted overwhelmingly the content of the cited sayings from “a” to “e” which align with an English (foreign) global culture perspective against only 1.6 % of disagreement.

Summary

Through the analysis of the data and the interpretation of the results obtained from students’ responses, we have reached some insights related to our study. Here, we present a

summary or the gist of the findings of the students' responses to the items as ordered in the questionnaire.

1. Personal Profit got 60 % of EFL students' choice of what they value most in managing their time. Social Rules got 24 % and Faith got 12 % of students' consideration.
2. 96 % of the participants consider time management necessary for success.
3. 95 % of the respondents recognize the time management skills and the ability to master them.
4. 92.66 % of the students agree with the mentioned time management strategies.
5. 100 % of the students agree with the value of productivity as the primary goal of their time management.
6. 96.66 % of the participants agree with time management benefits and advantages.
7. The students have 56.50 % of good signs of time management against 43.50 % of them having poor signs.
8. 68 % of the respondents replied that time management differs from one culture to another against 32 % who consider time management being the same in all cultures.
9. The respondents have organized the cultural values related to time management by order of importance as follows : a. Motivation (52 %) b. Determination (32 %) c. Attention (24%) d. Clarity (48 %) e. Learning (48 %) f. Success (48 %).
10. 92 % of the participants agree that the previous mentioned cultural values should not be neglected when managing their time.
11. 92.44 % of the students agree with the fact that a Muslim student should responsibly execute the procedures listed from "a" to "i" in the questionnaire.
12. 70.66 % of the sample are inspired by the good side of the local values related to time management against 29.33 % of the sample align with the negative side of the popular sayings.
13. 98.40 % of the participants adopt overwhelmingly the content of the sayings aligning with English (foreign) global culture perspective.

Although there are good things revealed by the findings related to students' behaviors and actions regarding time management, yet there are shortcomings or bad sides in the students'

time management which are shown in different subfindings of the items presented in the questionnaire. They can be summarized as follows :

1. 56 % of the sample do not set appropriate goals.
2. 32 % do not respect their priorities.
3. 68 % do not use free or leisure time in a constructive way.
4. 32 % see time management as being the same in all cultures.
5. 43.50 % show poor signs of time management.
6. 24 % do not respond favorably to assignments.
7. 20 % are not inspired by the idea of waking up early.
8. 52 % start revision for exams immediately after their announcement.
9. 48 % spend long time on social media.

These numbers of good and bad sides of the issue could be explained by the universal phenomenon that humans appear to be incapable of translating the knowledge they acquire into actions for the simple reason that there is a gap between the value of “knowing” and that of “doing” among the students. This idea is made clear by Maxwell (2004) when he articulated about the gap between knowing and doing which is significantly greater than the gap between ignorance and knowledge (p. 212).

Section Three : Implications, Limitations, and Suggestions for Further Research

1-Implications

The very value of time management which is part and parcel of the personal development field could be adopted in the curricula. Self-help literature could be compulsory in the syllabi to help our students get acquainted with their potential, skills, and abilities and use them to reach high levels of productivity. From this perspective, cultural values rest in the heart of personal development issues to be focused on to improve the levels of students' mastery of time management.

As we know, the problem today is not the lack of knowledge, but rather how to make adequate use of it in the light of the increasing pressures and the triple overload our students are suffering from and caused by "data overload, communication overload and cognitive overload" (Buhlmann & Alcott, 2018). In fact, managing time efficiently can be learned as part of the syllabi because of its importance for students.

Moreover, in our society of today characterized by ICTs' knowledge where students are daily exposed to distractions, managing time in an efficient way makes it an urgency for the university to teach the appropriate skills to the students and develop applications to save time and effort.

In other clear, concise, and precise words, it is highly recommended for universities and state authorities to develop the psychology of success and momentum in managing time which are both important for students' productivity.

2-Limitations

Initially, a close-ended questionnaire and interviews have been decided to be used as research tools for the study, but with the new conditions and the circumstantial restrictions prevailing in the country, the choice was made to adopt only a close-ended questionnaire as the research tool for the study. The sample composed of 25 Master 2 students seem to be not representative. It represents 20.83 % of the whole population of 120 Master 2 EFL students.

3-Suggestions For Further Studies

Further studies could compensate for these limitations by investigating a bigger number of EFL students using various research tools.

General Conclusion

Do cultural values determine students' time management ? That is the focal question related to the hypothesis from which we have started our research journey. The second important question is related to which of the cultural values are more influential among the students; that is to say the values stemming from the native culture perspective or those originated from the foreign (English) culture perspective. That is the fulcrum of our study. Maxwell (2004) said that your values are the principles that guide your life, and to be successful your values need to control your actions. The cultural values are a source of behavior, inspiration, guides, and motivators. And any student who does not know the value of time management is going to live a degree of waste on the margins of his study life leading to his failure, and consequently feels a gap between his behavior and his cultural values with regard to time management (p. 212). This type of students needs to develop a philosophy of time management where priorities based on cultural values should be established. In other words, the student is in need to "a value-based time management plan" as proposed Walsh (2008, p. 251). How students manage time is important, but the most important are the cultural values they believe in that they determine their time management.

The study has attempted to investigate, firstly, the impact that cultural values could have on students' behaviors and, secondly, which among these values, be they native or foreign culture values, are more influential on the students when dealing with the issue of time management.

The relevance of our research topic lies in the fact that cultural values are so important for students to such an extent that "it is not possible to manage time properly unless you know exactly what your values are" (Tracy, 2013, p. 17). The relevance of cultural values for students can be compared to the same way Hofstede (2001) has depicted the importance of both culture and personality for both a human collectivity and an individual respectively when saying : "culture is to a human collectivity what personality is to an individual" (p.40). A way, then, to understand the significance of cultural values to an individual. Also, the insights derived from our investigation could serve as a source of inspiration to make of the issue of personal development (where time management is part and parcel of it) an important academic subject to fit the needs of the students and to prepare them for more success in their study and professional life after graduation.

The methodology adopted in our research was quantitative. Through the use of a close-ended questionnaire, we tried to explore the issue of cultural values to understand the underlying reasons of the students' behaviors related to how students manage their time.

The analysis of the results obtained through the students' responses generally showed the interest in time management strategies, skills, and abilities and in native culture values and foreign culture values related to productivity, performance, and toil. This is clearly shown in the results related to English universal (global) culture perspective where 79.20 % of the students seem to be influenced by the corresponding values, and to native culture perspective where 66.36 of EFL students seem, from their part, to be influenced by native culture values. The gist of the findings is that the hypothesis is true and cultural values determine students' time management with a preference to universal (global) culture perspective at the expense of native culture perspective with a slight difference of 12.84 % but which is not unimportant.

More research would be very interesting with the use of other research tools to see what cultural values should be stressed on when developing syllabi to help our students develop themselves and, above all, when managing their time.

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Appendice

Students' Questionnaire

Faculty of Foreign Languages

Department of English

Questionnaire

The present questionnaire is intended to collect data concerning our Master research topic entitled *Cultural Values Determining Students' Time Management*.

We would be very grateful if you could respond to the following items.

1- Specify what is more valuable in managing your time.

Social rules Faith Personal profit

2- Students' time management is necessary for success.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

3- Time management skills consist of the ability to

a- plan and organize your time,

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

b- manage your stress,

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

c- avoid distractions,

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

d- carry out one task at a time,

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

e- avoid procrastination,

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

f- identify priority tasks,

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

g- focus on tasks of high value.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

4- Time management strategies consist mostly of the following :

a- 25 minutes work sessions and 5 minutes breaks.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

b- Getting things done by managing your ideas and priorities.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

c- Prioritizing tasks by difficulty, urgency and importance.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

d- Allocating specific time to activities to limit the time you spend on them.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

e- Writing about the activities you have completed or need to complete.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

f- Allocating specific time to activities so as to find a place for them in your calendar.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

5- A high level of productivity is the primary goal of students' time management.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

6-Time management helps

a- maintain control over study

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

b- take into account priorities

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

c- eliminate stress

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

d- not to procrastinate

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

e- achieve goals

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

f- be confident

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

7- Choose what might apply to you in relation to time management.

- a-You are always late*
- b-You tend to procrastinate*
- c-You are always in haste*
- d-You spend long time on social media*
- e-You only consider revising until before the exams*
- f-You make use of your free time in a constructive way*
- g-You set a daily or weekly to-do list*
- h-You set appropriate study goals*
- i-You respect your priorities*

8- Time management differs from one culture to another.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

9- Organize in relation to time management, by order of importance, from one to six, the following items :

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| motivation | <input type="checkbox"/> | clarity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| attention | <input type="checkbox"/> | learning | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| determination | <input type="checkbox"/> | success | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10- When managing time, no item specified in number 9 above should be neglected.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

11- A Muslim student should responsibly execute the following time management procedure(s) below.

a- Taking advantage of time

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

b- Using leisure time wisely

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

c- Being swift in doing good

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

d- Being conscious of time wasters

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

e- Learning from the passage of time

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

f- Waking up early

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

g- Selecting appropriate moments to be productive

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

h- Planning revision

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

i- Responding favorably to assignments

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

12- Choose what might be inspiring to you among the following while managing time.

- a- هَيَا نَقْتَلْ شَوِيَةَ وَقْتِ (Let's kill a bit of time)
- b- مَنْ بَكَرَ لِحَاجَتِهِ قَضَاهَا (Who wakes up early will have his stuff done)
- c- الْعَجَلَةُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ (Hastiness is from Satan)
- d- الْوَقْتُ كَالسَّيْفِ إِنْ لَمْ تَقْطَعْهُ قَطَعَكَ (Time is like a sword, if you don't cut it off, it will cut you off)
- e- كُلُّ عَطْلَةٍ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ (There is benefit in every delay)
- f- الشَّغْلُ الْمَلِيحُ يَطْوِلُ (Good work takes too long to finish)

13- Considering time management, respond to the sayings below.

a- *It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is what we are busy about.*

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

b- *Desire, decisiveness, determination and discipline are the four Ds necessary to succeed in your time management.*

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

c- *Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.*

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

d- *... It takes both a plan and a schedule to get things done.*

I strong agree I agree I disagree

e- *Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning and focused effort.*

I strongly agree I agree I disagree