How far the perceptions of 14-16 year olds attending a Pupil Referral Unit fit with a model of future oriented motivation and proximal self-regulation conceptualised by Miller and Brickman (2004)

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study, using semi-structured interviews, investigates the perceptions of eight year 10 and 11 students attending a Pupil Referral Unit. The study explores how far the young people's perceptions of their educational engagement and motivation can be understood and explained within the framework of a motivational model proposed by Miller and Brickman (2004), which brings together research on future oriented motivation and proximal self-regulation. Several of the young people's responses point to a particular disruption in their self-regulatory learning processes, resulting from a disconnect between their personally valued future goals and their perceptions of the instrumentality of their education. The underlying reasons for this disconnect are considered and it is proposed that interventions seeking to enhance the students' capacity to be goal directed in their learning and in how they think about the future could help overcome the issues identified. The study concludes that the Miller and Brickman (2004) model provides a framework that facilitates the mapping of factors underpinning individuals' motivational patterns. Furthermore, its strong theoretical basis provides the opportunity to explore in depth possible reasons for these patterns.

KEY WORDS:	**PRU STUDENTS**	**FUTURE ORIENTED MOTIVATION**	**PROXIMAL SELF REGULATION**	**PERSONALLY VALUED FUTURE GOALS**	**PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUMENTALITY**

Introduction

Having had an unusual route through education I have always been interested in what motivates young people to learn, and in particular, how education systems either support or thwart people's desire to learn and be successful throughout their education. Much of my education was in a specialist music school, where huge emphasis was placed on achieving musical brilliance, and competition between students' achievement across all our education was high. Disillusioned, I left school at the beginning of upper sixth, but driven largely by the need to still achieve and prove myself, I went onto complete A-levels by entering myself for the exams and then later on attending night school. Whilst I attribute the reasons for my desire and motivation to keep achieving to the nature of my education and family background, I am aware that my own route through education is not a typical one. I sympathise with those disillusioned by their education, having felt the strain of pressure to achieve throughout my own schooling. Today, the British education system places great emphasis on gaining academic qualifications, and teachers are encouraged to teach from a highly prescribed curriculum in order to meet targets. I am interested in exploring the effects this has on individual students' academic engagement and motivation. What happens if the pressures don't resonate with individuals own desires to learn, or if students don't feel able to achieve what is being asked of them? What are the different factors that influence a student's ability to be motivated and how can individual differences in educational engagement be fully accounted for?

Embarking on my dissertation I hope to gain a snapshot of academic motivation in our education system through the eyes of students whose struggle has resulted in exclusion from mainstream. I decided to use the model that is the focus of the present study in order to explore how far it's proponents' claim - that it helps to map the complex processes involved in student motivation and engagement- seems to be true in relation to the perceptions voiced by the young people I interview.

Literature Review

The present study is concerned with investigating the scope for application of Miller and Brickman's (2004) model of future oriented motivation (FOM) and proximal self-regulation (PSR), to account for the potential motivational disruptions of a small sample of 14-16 year old students who have been excluded from mainstream education and attend a pupil referral unit (PRU). To meet this end, I will firstly outline why students who attend a PRU are an appropriate sample for the present study. Next, I will review the research underpinning Miller and Brickman's model, in order to expound its theoretical foundations. Discussion of Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-regulation will lead into consideration of the underpinnings of self-determination theory (SDT). Attention will then turn to the research field of future time perspective (FTP). This will lead into specific consideration of what these theories suggest about the role of students' perceptions of instrumentality on their educational engagement and motivation.

Pupil Referral Units

Pupil referral units exist to provide an education for students who have been excluded from mainstream schools. The Department for Education (DfE) emphasise the seriousness of the decision to permanently exclude a pupil from school, as illustrated by guidance informing educationalists that to exclude a pupil is 'a last resort', and should only occur after all other possible means of improving behaviour have been exhausted (DfE, 2011). Furthermore, upon making the decision to educate a student in a PRU the aim is for this to be for a temporary measure (DfE, 2011). Statistics revealing poor academic achievement reveals why the decision to education a student in a PRU is viewed as a last resort: in 2010 3.1% of students attending either a PRU or a hospital school achieved 5 A*-C grades (DfE, 2010).

Recently published legislative guidance explicitly outlines the particular circumstances where the decision to permanently exclude a student can be made:

'…a) In response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy, and
b) if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupils or others in the school.' (DCSF, 2008, p12)

Upon reflection, these reasons provide insights about the students who attend PRUs. It is clear that the decision to educate a student in a PRU will only be taken in situations where the behavioural issues are severe and have not improved over time. These guidelines strongly indicate that the student has struggled to regulate their behaviour within the mainstream environment, which strongly suggests the existence of some form of disengagement and a lack of educational motivation.

The publication of the White Paper for Schools by the new government at the end of 2010 documents a move to pilot a new approach to permanent exclusions. In a drive to 'ensure the decision to exclude is never abused, schools will be held accountable for the students they exclude' (DfE, 2010, p39). This will include schools having to fund the educational provision of students they have excluded, as well as being obliged to include these students in their performance tables (DfE, 2010). It seems highly likely that these new responsibilities will lead to schools wanting to avoid exclusions as far as possible, and where they have had to exclude, wanting to re-integrate students so as to reduce the financial burden of supporting them in a PRU. Thus it is possible that under this new legislation, the desire for PRU's to be a temporary measure may well become more of a reality.

However, alongside this legislative drive to ensure permanent exclusion only happens when essential, and then as a temporary measure, there will remain an increasing number of students on the fringe of exclusion, struggling to be engaging in education. This calls for research that is deepening understanding of the factors that lead to academic disengagement. Does Miller and Brickman's model provide a framework that can deepen knowledge of these factors? I hope to gain insights from the reflections of a group of students attending a PRU and nearing the end of compulsory education. My aim is to discover whether these insights point to disruption in the students' FOM and/or PSR, and if so where and in what ways these disruptions exist.

Miller and Brickman's model

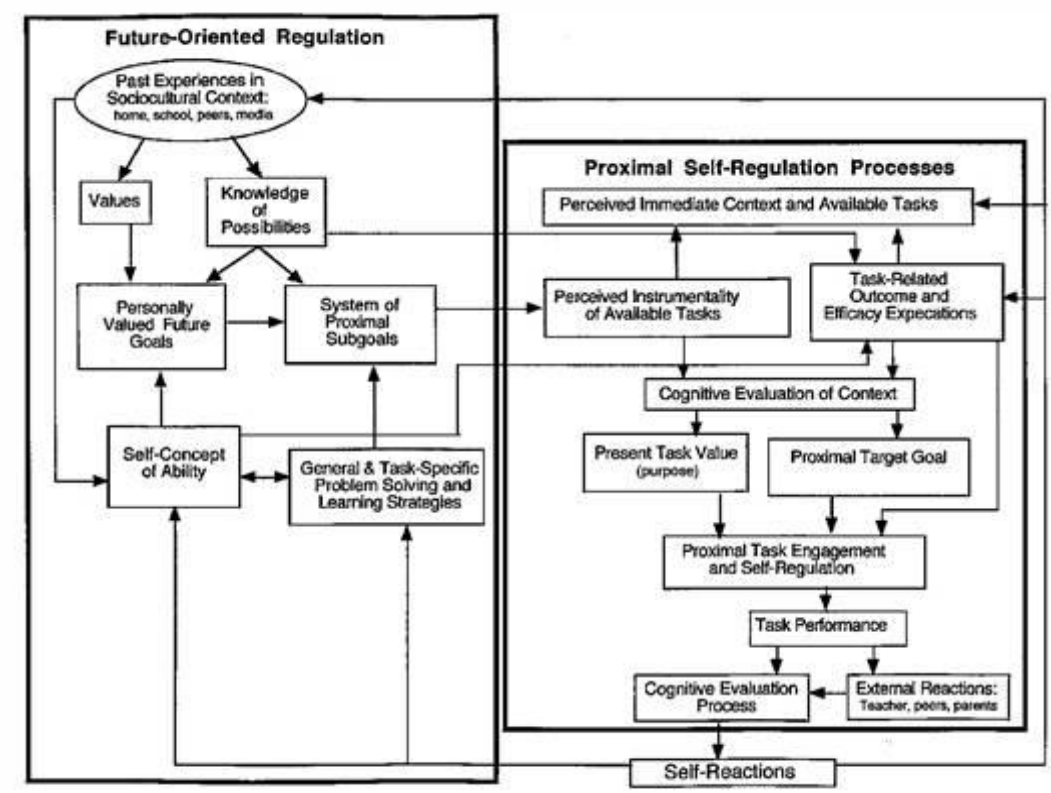

Figure 1: A model of future oriented motivation and self- regulation (Miller & Brickman, 2005)

The majority of contemporary models of motivation focus on 'short term (proximal) motivational and self- regulatory issues', yet theorists have begun to challenge this view as being short sighted, in failing to account for the contribution that future goals can have on a person's PSR processes (Miller & Brickman, 2004, p10; Husman & Lens, 1999). This is exemplified by Miller and Brickman's (2004) motivational model, which synthesizes research on proximal motivation and self- regulation with research on future oriented motivation and self- regulation. In the conceptualisation of the model, consideration is given to research exploring how students' thinking about school, both in the present and in the future, affects their approaches to learning (Miller & Brickman, 2004). The model is based upon a social cognitive understanding of motivation, where self-regulation is understood as goal directed learning (Miller & Brickman, 2004).

Miller and Brickman (2004) propose that personally valued future goals play a pivotal role in educational motivation as they provide the learner with the crucial incentive to engage in self-regulated learning. It follows, that the nature of the future valued goals held by students, and whether or not those goals relate to schooling, is of core relevance. The theorists predict that disruption can occur in one of four ways (see Figure 1). Firstly, where an absence of goals relating to schooling exists, the outcome will be that the individual struggles to engage in present tasks, as their motivation to self-regulate their learning is impaired through the knock on effects of not having future goals that key into schooling. Secondly, it is possible for an

individual to possess future oriented goals relating to schooling, but to fail to establish a set of proximal sub-goals that enable the progression to meeting their future goals. Thirdly, failure is possible when the individual possesses both future oriented goals and a system of proximal sub-goals, but they fail to see the instrumentality of school tasks in relation to their goals and sub-goals. Fourthly, failure within the model's framework can occur due to task disengagement, as a consequence of the individual possessing negative expectations and self-efficacy beliefs in relation to learning tasks.

Self-efficacy

Bandura's social cognitive theory is underpinned by the belief that human behaviour is goal directed: individuals' actions are tied to their 'outcome expectations', which are cognitive beliefs regarding the outcome of a certain behaviour (Bandura, 1977, p193). An 'efficacy expectation' is the individual's belief that they will be able to successfully complete the task at hand (Bandura, 1977, p193). Bandura (1993) claims that a person's efficacy expectations act to determine behavioural initiation, the amount of effort applied, and persistence, especially in the face of adversity, in the task. The two combine to form an individual's self-efficacy beliefs. Thus self-efficacy is two-fold: it is the individual's knowledge of what is needed in order to achieve a goal, and it is also the individual's belief that they possess the skills required to successfully achieve the goal (Solomon & Rogers, 2001).

Bandura (1993) argues that self-efficacy is the primary cognitive determinant possessed by the student in the self-regulation of learning. Bandura's self-efficacy is reciprocally determined, as it is influenced by the interaction between environmental factors and the individual's own behaviours (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). This 'dynamic interplay' brings into focus the nature of academic engagement and motivation as having the potential to be shaped and changed by several factors (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). Thus, for a person to be self-regulating their learning in such a way that their beliefs about future outcomes influence their current behaviours, other cognitive processes must exist alongside the individual's appraisal of self-efficacy (Miller & Brickman, 2004).

As mentioned, Bandura (1977) emphasises the role of the environment as a key part in the make-up of a person's efficacy beliefs, whereby factors assimilated from a person's socio-cultural surroundings, including variables such as 'home, school, peers and the media', are believed to contribute to the shaping of an individual's system of self-regulation (Miller & Brickman, 2004, p14). Miller and Brickman (2004) hypothesise that in particular, both the values an individual holds, and the knowledge of possibilities that they possess both about the present and the future, which are strongly influenced by an individual's socio-cultural background, play a big part in shaping both an individual's personally valued future goals and their system of proximal sub-goals. Bandura (1977) believes that socio-cultural influences can be so strong that they hold the potential to override a person's self-evaluation of their capacity to enact a certain behaviour, even if they have successfully accomplished that behaviour. In such a case, even though the individual possesses the necessary skills to reach the goal, expectations of failure that have been assimilated into their self-regulatory system from factors in their socio-cultural environment, lead to the

individual failing to change their view of how efficacious they are in that task (Bandura, 1977).

Following this theoretical standpoint, goals become critical in a person's PSR processes. This draws attention to the relevance of the future in present learning situations, and so supports the move by Miller & Brickman to bring together the two research fields.

Self-determination theory

Overlap exists between Bandura's social cognitive perspective of self-regulated learning and Ryan and Deci's (2000) conceptualisation of motivation as being self-determined. Ryan and Deci (2000) argue that the 'self-determination of goals is a necessary prerequisite for experiencing intrinsic motivation.' (Miller & Brickman, 2004, p20). Within both the theories, it becomes clear that for the student to be self-determined or effectively self-regulating their learning, it is crucial for their perceptions of learning tasks to be related to their future goals. Thus, discussion of the theoretical basis of self-determination theory (SDT) provides the opportunity to explore in more depth the factors at work influencing an individual's educational motivation and engagement.

SDT is underpinned by the belief that individuals possess the innate capacity towards intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This drive to act on our environment grows out of the existence of three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci 2000). The existence of these needs, which are crucial for 'social development and personal well-being', lead humans to be both intrinsically motivated and to assimilate the values of culture and society through internalization and integration (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p68).

SDT lends itself to educational application: Niemiec & Ryan (2009) argue that the greatest resource teachers have is to 'tap into' students' 'natural tendencies' to learn (p134). SDT is concerned with how peoples' innate tendencies to learn and 'actively assimilate knowledge and cultural practices' are either supported or thwarted by their environment (Ryan & Deci, 2009, p174). Flowing from the belief that humans possess intrinsic motivation to learn both from the outer environment, and also to develop their inner knowledge, SDT posits that social contexts best support an individual's motivation when they provide conditions believed to support intrinsic motivation.

Bruner (1966) claims that the classroom often fails to provide an environment that nurtures each individual's intrinsic motivation. He argues that there exists a disconnection between the structure of education and the promotion of intrinsic motivation (Bruner, 1966). Proponents of SDT have continued in this line of argument, accusing education systems of failing to latch onto and nurture the inherent tendencies individuals possess to act with interest and curiosity upon their environment (Ryan & Deci, 2009; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Ryan and La Guardia (1999) draw attention to pressures that are transmitted from a society that chases after increasingly higher achievers, and the knock on effects that this has had on education reforms. Rather than providing autonomy supportive conditions, schools fail to promote self-determined engagement by creating systems that operate around

external pressures, resulting in teaching strategies that are dependent upon high levels of control in the classroom (Ryan & La Guardia, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2009; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

Similarly to Bandura's social cognitive theory, SDT places emphasis on the importance of competence (or self-efficacy) as underpinning the self-regulation of learning. Within SDT the supporting of intrinsic motivation hinges on the satisfaction, or facilitation, of the needs for competence and self-determination (that is: autonomy), by socio-cultural influences (Deci & Moller, 2005). Similarly to lower task engagement and motivation resulting from low self-efficacy beliefs, Deci & Moller (2005) claim that an individual's competence develops through engaging with tasks of an optimal challenge, where they perceive that they possess the ability to succeed.

If behaviour is autonomous then it is self-endorsed. Immediately one can draw links between autonomy and competence and can hypothesize a knock on effect pattern, whereby the failure for an individual to perceive themselves as being competent in a particular task will lead also to the thwarting of autonomy, as they are likely to feel helpless rather than in control of their actions. It is crucial to bear in mind that within SDT the sustaining of intrinsic motivation is dependent on the fulfilment of both autonomy and competence needs (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). This link between the two needs is further highlighted in a motivational model of high school dropout, where Vallerand et al (1997) propose that the autonomy support given (or not given) by important others impacts students' perceptions of both their academic autonomy and their competence.

Thus the psychological need for relatedness is also inseparably connected to autonomy, and so also to competence. This is illustrated by research that found where students perceive their teachers to be autonomy supportive, they report higher levels of autonomous self-regulation, which is associated with higher persistence rates in education (Vallerand et al, 1997). Furthermore, Vallerand et al (1997) claim that the school administration can impact a student's experiences of autonomy and competence, by virtue of the authoritative position it holds within the school system. When bearing in mind the current climate in education as being increasingly driven to meet targets, it is plausible to suggest that in many cases, the school administration will be highly controlling and narrow in its' focus, creating the potential to thwart students' needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness.

To conclude, when seeking to account for the many factors influencing a person's self-regulation, SDT implicates that students need to experience support of competence, relatedness and autonomy in order to achieve optimum academic engagement and motivation.

Future oriented motivation

Future time perspective (FTP) can be understood as the extent to which, and the ways in which, a person assimilates ideas about the future into their present cognitive structures, through setting motivational goals (Husman & Lens, 1999). Research indicates that the psychological length of a person's FTP can influence a person's motivation (Husman & Lens, 1999). Possessing a longer FTP (having a

series of goals that lead to an outcome further into the future than someone who holds a shorter FTP), results in that person being more easily able to identify the instrumentality of present tasks, thus assisting current academic engagement (Husman & Lens, 1999).

Husman and Lens (1999) argue that bringing together research on FTP and PSR in the study of student motivation will provide a theoretical basis that can more holistically account for the interconnecting processes at work. Furthermore, they argue that education is in its essence future oriented, as it's aims are concerned with preparing children for their future (Husman & Lens, 1999). Therefore, exploring the nature of students' orientation to the future, and whether these influence current learning processes, should provide insights than can lead to better informed pedagogical practices and educational interventions (Husman & Lens, 1999; Miller & Brickman, 2004).

Perceptions of Instrumentality

Within Miller and Brickman's model, a person's FTP can be explained in terms of the level of connectedness between their future goals and their PSR processes, as shown through how they plan and orientate themselves in the present. Of particular relevance to the present study, is the level of connectedness that exists between the young peoples' personally valued future goals, their system of proximal sub-goals and their PSR processes, as mapped through their perceptions of instrumentality of school, both in general and as related to specific tasks. Indeed, a specific aim of theorists assimilating current and future motivation research is to uncover the extent to which students' motivation is influenced by recognising learning tasks and academic achievement as instrumental in achieving proximal and distal goals (Husman & Lens, 1999; Miller & Brickman, 2004).

Research findings indicate that attributing instrumentality to current tasks has many potential benefits for current academic engagement. Indeed, a study undertaken by DeVolder and Lens (1982) grouped 17-18 year old students as having high, medium or low academic motivation, and then on the basis of questionnaires, gained measures on their beliefs of the instrumental value of their education for success in later life. Their findings revealed that the three groups differed significantly with regard to the instrumental value they attributed humanities subjects as having for later life: the more highly motivated students placed significantly more instrumental value on them than the low motivated students (DeVolder & Lens, 1982).

Despite findings reporting the positive effects that attributing instrumentality to current tasks has on current engagement, further studies highlight complexities in the relationship between instrumentality and motivation. A study of young people who had failed to succeed in academic education and who now undertook a vocational education composed of a practical course, a theoretical course, and French as a second language course, explored the impact that perceptions of instrumentality had on motivation (Creten, Lens & Simons, 1998 cited in Husman & Lens, 1999). The study found that the students who attributed their practical course as highly instrumental for their future were more motivated in it. However, findings also revealed that despite attributing higher instrumentality to learning French for their future careers than the other theoretical course, which was attributed with lower

instrumentality, the young people were less motivated in French than in the theoretical course. This suggests that whilst FTP does influence current self-regulatory processes, particularly the recognition of instrumentality of current tasks in line with future goals, in and of itself, recognising such instrumentality is not sufficient for ensuring current academic motivation. Furthermore, a separate study on 17-19 year old students found that strong perceptions of education as instrumental for future success in life only works to support or enhance motivation when students also view their future positively (Van Calster, Lens & Nuttin, 1987).

These findings support Miller and Brickman's argument that the factors at work in student motivation are multiple and complicated in their interactions. Husman and Lens (1999) pose that the individual's perception of how instrumental a task is depends upon three variables: the nature of the individual's personally valued future goals, the individual's overarching FTP, and the requirements of the specific task. The latter of these variables has to do with self-efficacy, suggesting that a person's efficacy beliefs in relation to a specific task play a part in determining how far the individual will perceive the task as instrumental.

Indeed, the central components of FTP are compatible with Bandura's beliefs about the intentionality of people's actions being linked to target goals within their self-regulatory systems. Bandura (1977) emphasises the importance of people working towards proximal goals whilst retaining an overarching recognition of how they lead to achieving the distal goal. This process will lead to the individual evaluating the instrumentality of the learning tasks they are faced with. In line with these theoretical foundations, Miller and Brickman (2004) argue that higher incentive value will be attributed to current learning processes when the individual has made the cognitive connection between the instrumentality of the current task in terms of meeting both their proximal sub-goals and their personally valued distal goal. In directing current actions towards future goals, self-efficacy beliefs are central to both goal selection, and to decisions regarding behavioural commitment, effort and persistence (Bandura, 1977). It seems plausible to suggest that self-efficacy beliefs, alongside evaluations of instrumentality, form two of the most pervasive factors when exploring how far a person's PSR system is connected to and influenced by their future goals.

Discussion of some of the factors that influence and interact with the current motivational processes of students, highlights that the scope for disruption and disconnect is great. Consideration of research exploring perceptions of instrumentality has highlighted a particular area within Miller and Brickman's model where it appears several interacting factors work together to influence each individual's PSR and FOM. The current study will focus in on this area, with the aim of shedding light on the factors that influence the young people's perceptions of the instrumentality of their education. Ultimately this focus will be taken in order to appraise the effectiveness of Miller & Brickman's (2004) model, in providing a framework that can map and account for factors influencing educational motivation and engagement.

Research Questions

The following questions arise out of the literature review and will be explored interchangeably as there is much overlap between them. However, stating the

questions separately is helpful in retaining focus throughout the proceeding discussion.

1) How far do the student's perceptions point to disruption in their future-oriented regulation and proximal self-regulation processes as theorised by Miller and Brickman's (2004) model?

2) What do the young people's responses reveal about their beliefs regarding the instrumentality of specific school tasks and their education in general?

3) Does the Miller and Brickman model provide a framework that seems to account for the factors that influence the young people's perceptions of the instrumentality of their education for their future?

Method

Data collection in this qualitative study took the form of recorded semi-structured interviews. I devised an interview schedule using the Miller and Brickman model as a framework, thus the current study is theory driven.

Sample

A pilot study was undertaken in a PRU in NW England, with four male students, two in year 10 and two in year 11. The decision to undertake a pilot was made as it provided the opportunity to both familiarise myself with the PRU context, and also to evaluate the interview schedule's effectiveness.

I believe the pilot study provided valuable insights about my approach of relating with the young people, in order to help them feel at ease. I learned the importance of not jumping in too quickly, and the power of silences to allow the young people time to think through and express their perceptions in full. It also provided me with an opportunity to reflect on the wording of my contributions, highlighting the importance of clarity and avoiding bias and emotiveness.

Little structural change was made to the interview schedule after the pilot, as I evaluated it as largely effective in stimulating and guiding the discussion in line with the theoretical framework. Minor changes regarding wording were undertaken to improve understanding.

The actual study took place in a separate PRU, also in NW England. I initially intended to use an all male sample, but due to the small numbers of year 10 and 11 students in attendance at the PRU, this was not possible. The sample was made up of 8 students: five male students, four of whom are in year 11, and one who is in year 10; and three female students, all three of whom are in the year 10 class, despite one of them in terms of age being a year 11 student.

In both the pilot and the main study, it was made clear to the young people that participation was voluntary and that they could stop the interview at any point. Passive consent was gained, with letters being sent to parents urging them to contact school if they did not want their children to participate. No withdrawals were

requested on this basis. Confidentiality was assured, I explained that I would not discuss any of the interviews with staff and students at the PRU. I made clear that the participants' contributions would remain anonymous throughout the whole process of writing up the study, and to this end pseudonyms are used.

Driven from my belief that gaining the perspectives of the young people is crucial and highly valuable to the foundations of my study, I believed it was important to inform them of this prior to the interview. To this end in the introductory paragraph I gave the young people information about my dissertation, and also drew out how their experience at a PRU is a unique one by saying, 'Your experience at this school is one that not many people have, and it's not often that you get to hear about what it's like.'

Interviews

The interviews took place within the PRU, in a room used for one-to-ones and time-outs. It is possible that the use of this room helped the students feel at ease, due to it being both a familiar room used for one-to-ones and a place they could go to that provided space for them if struggling to engage in whole class situations. With the exception of Interview 5, where the student requested to do the interview in the company of other members of staff, the only people present during each interview were the student and I. Each interview lasted between 20 minutes and 1 hour and 5 minutes, with the average length of interviews being about 45 minutes.

From Miller and Brickman's model I drew out areas of particular interest, which I used to split the interview schedule into six sections: personally valued future goals; system of proximal sub-goals; perceived instrumentality of available tasks and task related outcome, with regard to school in general; efficacy expectations and beliefs with regard to school in general; perceived instrumentality of available tasks and task related outcome, with regard to specific tasks; and efficacy expectations and beliefs with regard to specific tasks. I translated the theoretical ideas from the model into meaningful and answerable questions, which mapped onto the different elements of the Miller and Brickman model. Each section includes a root question, and around ten further questions, to be used selectively, in order to help explore and develop the responses of the young people.

I memorised the questions so that I could concentrate on developing a rapport with the young people, with the hope that this would help them to be more open, honest and engaged. For the interviews, I developed a summary of the interview schedule that I referred to as and when I needed prompts to direct the conversation.

Although all of the interviews (with the exception of Interview 8 where the young person asked to stop the interview before the end) followed the framework of the interview schedule, many different questions were asked in line with the particular responses and points of interest that arose with each young person.

I used this semi-structured approach because I wanted the young people to direct the conversation, within the boundaries that needed to exist in order to gain on- topic perceptions. As the study is theory driven, I concluded that using a highly structured interview could easily lead into researcher bias, where my questions could become

very leading. This more open approach, I hoped, would also allow the young people to raise points I hadn't developed questions for.

Timelines

In the second section of the interview I asked the young people to explain the steps they will need to take in order to reach their personally valued future goals. To make this process more concrete for the young people, I wrote down a timeline, getting them to state the steps they will have to take and asking them the time frame of these steps.

Continuums of Success and Failure and Personal Construct Theory

In the fourth section of the interview I adapted one of the techniques central to Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory. Kelly's approach to the psychology of personality includes a self-characterisation, which is explored through the generation of bipolar constructs (Winter, 1992). Typically, these bipolar constructs will be drawn from a particular 'aspect of experience' that arose in a person's self-characterisation (Winter, 1992, p21). In the present study I provided the initial bipolar constructs: the successful student or the failing student, firstly in the PRU and then in mainstream. In line with Kelly's theory, I got the young people to describe what characterises the successful student and the failing student. After the young person had developed these constructs, I drew a line between the two constructs (success and failure) and asked them where on the line they and others close to them believed they were in the past, present and future, and explored this through further questions.

Kelly's theory is driven by the belief that we can best learn about a person by seeking to map how they make sense of themselves and those around them (Winter, 1992). Thus, by asking the young people to explore what makes 'a person' either successful or failure, and then getting them to work out how they fit in with their own constructions, my hope was to encourage the young people to think reflectively, to gain insights into the nature of their efficacy beliefs.

Researcher bias

Inevitably, there will be a level of researcher bias in the data collection. This will result from the nature of the interviews, whereby my contributions, in both the questions I chose to ask and also in the way I related to the young people, will have unavoidably had some impact on the young people. However, great effort to be consistent and objective was made in the design and the delivery of the interview schedule.

With regard to the analysis, there will also be a level of researcher bias. In seeking to map how far it seems the young peoples' perceptions fit with Miller and Brickman's model, I must make decisions about the meanings of contributions and level of fit with the theory. In seeking to avoid bias here, I ensured my analysis was thorough.

Generalization

Because the current study is interested in gaining deep knowledge of the perceptions of a small sample of people, the scope for generalization is limited, even to the wider population of PRUs. The Miller and Brickman framework is a process model, which poses a range of factors for consideration and theorises how these factors might interact to impact on the academic engagement and motivation of students. I am concerned with exploring the model's capacity to be applied at an individual level on a small sample of students from a specific population, in order to establish whether it is effective at mapping individual differences.

Analytical Approach

I listened to the interviews several times and transcribed them fully. When devising my analytical approach I began with my data already structured around the core components of the Miller and Brickman model. However, to treat the interviews holistically and to avoid simply mapping isolated findings onto the model, I identified themes from the interviews, and from this composed a number of categories. These categories were: values past, values present, extreme views (all or nothing), self-evaluations of self-regulation processes, goals relating to school, goals not relating to school, and planning. My aim in this part of the analysis was to step back from the boundaries of the model and understand the perceptions of the young people across the whole interview, with the hope that themes, patterns and disruptions would emerge.

Reflecting on the themes that emerged from this process, and to present both a detailed and balanced picture of the perspectives gained, the analysis focuses in on disruption at one point in the Miller and Brickman model: the young people's perceptions of the instrumentality of their education. My decision to take this focus flowed out of the early part of the analysis process, as a strong theme emerged, of disruption between the future goals that they hold and their perceived instrumentality of school in the present. The analysis will consider many of the components of Miller and Brickman's model, as they become important in examining how far the young people's perceptions seem to point to disruption in their ability to perceive school as instrumental within the wider framework of the model. My hope is to gain insight and provide possible explanations for the young people's struggle to engage in school, within these boundaries. I am going to structure the analysis under three headings, described by Husman and Lens (1999) as the factors that perceptions of instrumentality are dependent upon.

Analysis

The Nature of the Young People's Personally Valued Future Goals

The influence of the socio-cultural background

Within their model, Miller and Brickman hypothesise that the goals an individual holds for their future will be influenced by their values, which largely stem from their socio-cultural background. In line with this, all of the young people interviewed made value laden statements at some point within their interviews, strongly indicating that their socio-cultural environment in some way influences their own values, especially the values held by their parents.

Three of the eight young people, when asked about the origins of their personally valued future goal, explicitly refer to the job as being something that runs in the family:

Where do you get that idea from?
Everyone in my family is a mechanic (Joe)

Why is that something that you think you'd like to do?
…its summit that family have done in the past and its summit that they do and I've done it with them, so I wouldn't mind doing it really (Peter)

So I just want to start by asking what goals you have for your life?
…well my dad's got businesses and stuff…So when I finish here, I'm gonna work in the shops with him and then like, he's gonna be leaving it all to me soon. (Cameron)

These examples illustrate how the nature of the young people's environment has contributed to the shaping of their values, which then contribute to the goals they hold for their future. The theoretical grounding of Miller and Brickman's model stresses the importance of having goals that link to schooling, in order to perceive education as being instrumental in achieving one's goals. Failure to have goals relating to school is predicted to negatively impact self-regulatory processes. Thus the nature of the values underlying these goals, and whether or not they are related to education, is of high importance when considering the nature of the academic motivation of these young people.

<u>Cameron</u>

The values underlying Cameron's future goals have very little to do with schooling. This can be understood when considering that his goal is to work for, and later on own, his father's business, who himself left school without GCSEs.

How will school help you reach your goal?
I don't know. I don't really like school to be honest. Like sometimes I feel like, cause when I look at my Dad, he didn't go to school and he has got all of this and a big part of me I think relies on my dad. (p2)

…

Do you think your view of school is affected because you said both your Dad and your brother didn't get their GCSEs?
Er… kind of because when I know they haven't got their GCSEs and stuff and they're still doing good it makes me feel like, well why can't I just do the same? (p4)

This theme largely underpins the values and perceptions expressed by Cameron throughout the whole interview. As distinct from almost all the other young people, Cameron did not see failing GCSEs as necessarily leading to bad consequences for future life and conversely, he thought that people who did well at school wouldn't necessarily do well in life. This leads onto discussion of how and for what outcomes the young people value school.

GCSEs: all or nothing

In order to explore their understanding, I asked the young people to show on a timeline what they will have to do between now and achieving their personally valued future goal. All of the young people, with the exception of Cameron, stated that they would need to get their GCSEs. Getting GCSEs was also a common answer to questions in the next section when I asked what the point of school is for people in general, and also why their parents want them to come to school.

In order to shed light on why the young people place so much importance on getting GCSEs, it will be helpful to reflect on the responses given by the young people when I asked them what the consequences would be if someone succeeds or fails their GCSEs.

For most of the young people, succeeding or failing in GCSEs leads to either extremely good or extremely bad consequences in later life. Success in GCSEs not only means getting a job, but for many of the young people it also means happiness and wealth,

What will their life look like?

Happy basically. You've got everything you ever wanted.' (Helen)

It means you'd get to do what you want to do, what you get to choose to do and how everything goes in the future. (Brian)

Pretty good… they got a job…got loads of money (Joe)

This differs markedly to the consequences in life for those who fail to get their GCSEs,

Can we think a bit about what the consequences would be for someone who doesn't manage to get their grades?

…they wouldn't be able to work, they'd need to go on the job seekers allowers (*sic)* thing to get money through… and they wouldn't have GCE (*sic)* grades and CV's or anything so they wouldn't be able to get a job really. (Brian)

…a horrible life like some tramps when they don't get their GCSE's, then they don't get a job and then they're out on the streets and they just drink beer… Gone wrong. Yeah and you won't ever, well you might be able to get a job but not a very good job. (Sarah)

Five of the eight young people, when asked what the consequences would be for someone's life if they failed to get GCSEs, said that they would end up on job seekers allowance. Conversely, and as illustrated by the above excerpts, success in GCSEs was seen by many of the young people as a prerequisite to gaining a job in later life. The frequency of negative references to 'going on the dole' indicates that

this is a fear for many of the young people, that has been assimilated into their value systems from their socio-cultural backgrounds.

Mark

Indeed, this idea is supported in an excerpt from Mark's interview, when he compares the different 'point of school' for people from different backgrounds. Mark made a distinction between those from 'lower backgrounds' and 'posh people who go to private school and stuff like that'. His perceptions indicate that those from the former have lower academic aspirations than those from the latter, 'they see a different approach to school don't they…probably go to school and get like the best grades you can get.' This compares to his view of the 'point of school' of those he labelled as coming from a 'lower background', where he described that for young people 'whose mum and dad's on the dole and stuff', they 'skive school all the time and their mum and dad's not bothered…it depends how you grow up, like how you see school different.'

Disconnect

Considering the high level of importance the young people place on getting GCSEs in order to succeed in later life, one would expect it would follow that their explanations of their PSR processes would point to them being motivated in working towards their GCSEs. On the contrary, for most of the young people a disparity emerges in their responses regarding the point of school for people in general, and the reasons they gave for why they go to school. Many of the young people failed to identify working towards GCSEs as a reason for why they go to school.

Brian

Let us consider how the conversation went with Brian,

Can you describe what the point of school is?
To study and to work and to have a laugh with your mates at some point.

Ok. Anything else?
Have a laugh with your mates, that's about all generally,

If I say, why do you come to school, would that be the reason you'd give me?
Well for attendance and stuff to get your parents out of trouble and stuff.

Only minutes before this excerpt, Brian had explained to me that he will need to get certain GCSEs if he is to get on the college course that he wants to. At this point, however, his reasons are bound to the present, and to escaping negative outcomes that would happen in the very near future if he didn't go to school, 'to get your parents out of trouble' or on a daily basis, 'to study and to work and to have a laugh'.

Peter

When I asked Peter, a year 10 student who wants to become a plumber, why he comes to school, conflicting responses emerged,

What would you say the point of going to school is?
I only come to school cause my mum makes me. Otherwise I wouldn't go.

Otherwise you wouldn't go?
Well…now I would cause the course to get to college… but otherwise I wouldn't… if I didn't get to go to college in year 11, I would get the GCSEs then I wouldn't go.

But you initially said, you only come to school because your mum makes you?
Yeah well…really if I could actually stay off then I'd stay off.

Helen

This pattern was echoed in Helen's interview, when I asked what the point of school is she gave a long list of reasons, which included getting GCSE's. However, when I then asked her why she comes to school she responded,

…Cause I feel lazy staying in bed all day.

This disconnect indicates that when asked to think about the future in and of itself, the young people have no problem recognising the value of education, particularly in gaining GCSEs. However, the repeated failure to voice any of these reasons when asked concrete questions about their PSR processes indicates that other factors are at work, which have led to a disconnect between the values the young people express and their PSR processes, impinging their capacity to recognise the instrumentality of school in helping them reach their future goal. One possible explanation is that the young people repeatedly bring up the idea of succeeding in GCSEs not because it is a meaningful part of their self-regulatory learning processes, but because it is a reason that has been repeatedly fed to them throughout their education, as a result of being part of an education system driven by external targets and pressures to gain qualifications. However, thus far little evidence from the interviews supports this explanation, calling for further exploration of the young people's responses, in order to gain understanding of the factors that have lead to this disruption.

The Young People's Overarching FTPs

Mainstream and PRU

Several of the young people expressed having a deeper knowledge of the steps they will need to take now they are in the PRU, compared to when they were in mainstream. Whilst on one level this is no surprise, as one would expect that as the young people get older and move up the years in education they will begin to explore in more depth possibilities for the future, their responses indicate a greater willingness and ability to engage with those possibilities within the PRU context:

Cameron

And did school at all… did you think at all 'this will be helpful for me in terms of my future', when you were in Roseworth High?

Erm… I wasn't really thinking about it at that time I was just, I used to mess about, I took advantage of that thing I didn't really think about what I was doing most of the time and that's what got me in to trouble.

So here, have things changed at all, do you think a bit more about why school is helpful?
Erm…well it makes me think about school a lot more…when I was at Roseworth High I never thought about it, I just messed about and wasted my time. But coming here, makes me think of wanting to be at Roseworth High. So cause I wasted that I think I might as well make the most of this.

Sarah

Did you think about it much?
No not really. I didn't really cause I was mostly bad. I'd go back to Crambly High and redo my years and be good cause I regret being bad.

These responses, also echoed in the interviews with Mark and Brian, who said that they didn't think about their future and goals in mainstream, point to the young people having a short FTP when they were in mainstream. Explained within Miller and Brickman's model, this will have led to these young people failing to recognise the instrumentality of school, as they were not making any links between their education and their future, which will in turn have had knock on effects on their self-regulatory processes, for example recognising little value in school tasks, resulting in impinged task performance.

Year 10 and Year 11 students

A further pattern emerged in the section exploring the sub-goals held by the young people, whereby the year 10 students had a less elaborated knowledge than the year 11 students of the steps they will need to take to reach their future goal. Let us consider the responses of Peter and Sarah, both in year 10:

Peter

Any specific GCSEs?
Well I'll need Maths and English won't I…and I.T, maybe

Any others? Just those?
Don't know…Science

So you've got to get you're GCSEs, and then?
Yeah…and maybe go to college…I can go to college in yr 11 here…so I'll get on my plumbing course then

And have you found out a little bit about that?
Not yet

Sarah

And are there any particular GCSEs that you need to get on that course, or any particular grades that you need?
Erm... I think you need your.... I don't know... I think you might need Art so that when you take horses to the show they're nice and clean or stuff like that.

You might need Art?
I don't know.

Similarly to the motivational problems discussed in reference to failing to consider goals when in mainstream, here, the absence of having a clear understanding of the steps needed to reach their future goals are highly likely to impinge upon Peter and Sarah's PSR processes. This provides some explanation for their struggle to successfully engage in their schooling: they are failing to recognise in tangible steps how their education could be instrumental for their future.

Helen

Helen's problematic education included her missing a significant amount of schooling in year 10 and also the first term of year 11. At the PRU, whilst she is hoping to sit her GCSE's at the end of this academic year, she attends year 10 classes. Her responses to questions about her plans for reaching her goal of being a hairdresser and ultimately owning her own business, indicated a failure to express any understanding of time-scales. This is illustrated by her response to three questions asked at different points in the interview. The first question was about when she would start at college full-time, which I asked as she had been explaining to me the course she wanted to go on and do after school:

So when would the full time place start?
I haven't got a clue.

I asked the next question in the midst of discussion about Helen's back up plan to get a job in catering:

But how would you long term get from there (being in college) to having a job in catering?
I haven't got a clue.

And similarly, when exploring her personally valued goal of becoming a hairdresser I asked:

Can you think when you would be able to get a job in a hairdresser's salon?
I haven't got a clue.

Considered together, the problems that have arisen regarding both the struggle to think about the future in terms of specific steps and timescales, are highly likely to be contributing to the young people's failure to have a system of proximal sub-goals that link the current demands of education to their future goals. When exploring potential explanations for these difficulties, Luria's theory of cognition, which documents that 'planning…regulates behaviour', can help us to understand the potential impact that the young people's difficulties to think about their future in terms of timings and

details, will have on their PSR processes (Das, Naglieri & Kirby, 1994, p76). The issues highlighted with regard to knowledge of possibilities and systems of sub-goals, point to the young people finding planning difficult.

Whilst we have come some way in mapping explanations regarding the contributing factors that have resulted in a failure for the young people to perceive instrumentality, detailed consideration of the role of self-efficacy beliefs and also the elements of SDT should provide further insights.

The Requirements of the Specific Task

Perceptions of instrumentality bound to self-efficacy beliefs

Joe

Joe's responses in the section exploring sub-goals indicate that he has a very limited FTP, and has not developed a system of sub-goals. Joe said that he doesn't look far into the future, and hasn't explored the college course that he wants to do after finishing school at the end of this academic year:

Do they talk to you about college and what you have to do to get to college?
No just like make it complicated so don't understand them so you just blank out and try to ignore them.

The above response indicates that the underlying reasons for Joe's failure to explore future options have to do with low self-efficacy beliefs. Low self-efficacy beliefs, seem to have had a knock on effect, leading to him failing to engage and relate to the possibilities others have sought to make known to him about the future: not assimilating these into his proximal self-regulatory system.

Indeed, when exploring how successful a student Joe evaluates himself as being in mainstream school, his responses also point to low self-efficacy beliefs and indicate that he often failed to engage with learning tasks of an optimal difficulty:

So did you find them helpful in terms of explaining what you had to do with work?
They just confused me even more.

Furthermore, this extract points to a lack of mutual understanding between Joe and his teacher, certainly this above evaluation by Joe indicates he found the teachers in mainstream unhelpful with regard to his learning.

In contrast, when exploring a school task that Joe considered useful, his responses stood out starkly from the rest of the interview; for most of the interview Joe had lacked interest and enthusiasm in his responses. When getting him to think through a school task that he has enjoyed, Joe began to explain a power-point presentation task he recently did in a science lesson:

What do you like about it?
I don't know its just easy work and I'm good at it. (p13)

…

So how did you react when you were given that task to do?
…I told them to do one… but then I started doing it and I started to like it

So what were your reactions when you started to like it?
I were buzzing… I dunno, I were pretty chuffed… I just said it was easy

And how was your behaviour?
Good

The above dialogue reveals that when given a task of optimal challenge, Joe's self-regulation processes transform as his competence beliefs change upon realising he can understand and complete the task. Furthermore, his positive self-reactions indicate that Joe places personal value on success in school, thus suggesting that his lack of academic engagement is due to the thwarting of support for intrinsic motivation. This leads into discussion of potential disruption in the meeting of the psychological needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy.

Disruption: competence, relatedness and autonomy

The links between low self-efficacy beliefs and struggles to self regulate discussed above in relation to Joe can be further examined through the lens of SDT, and the inter-relationship between the thwarting of the needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy. Whilst it is not possible to comment on causation, it seems plausible to suggest that the failure to possess a thought through system of proximal sub-goals, and a lack of commitment to his future goal, could be due to a combination of: a failure to have developed personal competencies, thwarting of the need for relatedness, and low levels of personal autonomy.

There were several further indicators across the interviews that the young people's psychological needs for relatedness, competence and autonomy have to some extent been thwarted during their education. Specifically many of the young people, when justifying their reasons for failing to succeed in mainstream, expressed a failure to experience relationships of mutual understanding with teachers.

At several points in Sarah's interview, she describes finding teachers unhelpful. For example:

'…but say I was in a lesson I like to get on with my work and the teacher's just stood there and don't shut up at the front and then I do, like… I get frustrated even more and that's when I just…go mad.'

This description is echoed by Helen, who also links being frustrated to misunderstandings between herself and the teachers, 'It's just when… the teachers started mouthing at me for no reason or something'. Furthermore, much of Helen's justification for her struggle to remain a successful student in mainstream are tied to issues that she sees with teachers. She says 'they *never* listen' (emphasised to mirror Helen's emphasis when spoken). With regard to how they taught lessons she

says, ‘I didn’t like that at all… They said, right do that, and then they didn’t even explain it’.

Cameron also expresses frustration at feeling misunderstood by teachers, ‘…what frustrates me is that when I’m trying people sometimes don’t realise I’m actually trying’.

Here, the frustration expressed with teachers, is tied to struggles to demonstrate competence within the constraints set by the teachers, which also points to the thwarting of the need for autonomy. Similarly to Joe, several of the young people describe their ability to self-regulate when given a task or subject that they feel competent at, and conversely, struggling to behave and demonstrate control over their behaviour when given a task where they possess low competence beliefs.

Joanna

A relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulatory processes also emerged in my discussion with Joanna. Joanna was the only young person who did not complete the interview. Prior to the interview, the deputy-head had informed me that Joanna was having a bad day due to problems at home and Joanna brought this up herself during the interview.

Joanna placed herself at the middle of the continuum of success in the PRU, and when I asked her the reasons why she placed herself where she did she replied:

‘Because I have problems at home, I have problems at home and then like I’ll probably… I can’t help bringing them into school… so things be like bad at school because I’d probably sit there, do nothing, not do my work, not co-operate… just like a big fail.’

Joanna’s self-evaluation of herself as ‘a big fail’ illustrates that she has a very low self-concept of ability. These low competence beliefs seem to be tied to the thwarting of her need for relatedness, in this case, with relationships at home. Here, factors outside of school, from Joanna’s experiences in her socio-cultural context, are impinging upon her proximal self-regulatory processes. With Joanna, whose system of proximal sub-goals also lacked elaboration and indicated a short FTP, it seems that problems at home have an overarching impact on her motivational processes. Indeed this idea is supported by Joanna’s answer when I ask her why she goes to school, ‘I go to school to get away from problems’. For Joanna, failing to recognise the instrumentality of school for her future seems to be more than simply a consequence of low self-efficacy beliefs, but due to wider issues in her socio-cultural background.

In exploring the nature of the young people’s efficacy beliefs, and also the psychological needs for relatedness, competence and autonomy many further factors have emerged that are influencing both the young people’s future orientation and proximal self-regulation processes.

What is evident across the analysis is the vastness of factors that interconnect to either aid or hamper the young people’s academic motivation and engagement.

Clear patterns have emerged, particularly with regard to the thwarting of relatedness with teachers, and the relationship between this and the young people's experiences of competence and autonomy; the knock on effects of failing to have elaborated systems of proximal sub-goals; and a striking disconnect between the values the young people vocalise regarding the purpose of school in general, and their own reasons for coming to school. These patterns come together to provide various explanations for the failure for many of the young people to have incorporated into their PSR processes tangible perceptions of their education as instrumental for their future.

Conclusion

Miller and Brickman's model provides a framework that has enabled this analysis to uncover several factors influencing the young people's perceptions of instrumentality. At a first glance it appeared that the disconnect that emerged, where the young people place heavy value on getting GCSEs yet fail to mention working towards them, could be explained by the idea that the young people are only paying lip service to valuing GCSEs, because their education system places weight on academic achievement. This explanation has previously been explored by theorists attempting to account for the academic disaffection of students attending PRUs, who have argued that these students do not value the 'overtly academic' nature of education (Solomon & Rogers, 2001, p332). However, when considered in their entirety, the findings of the current study suggest that the reasons for the existence of this disconnect seem to be more attributable to other factors.

Firstly, many of the young people indicated that their parents and families also placed great value on getting GCSEs, and their perceptions that their future goals are strongly linked to family values would suggest that parental valuing of GCSEs in many cases would act to strengthen the students' values. Moreover, many of the responses from the young people indicate that in mainstream they had an extremely short FTP, which provides a strong explanation for their failure to recognise instrumentality in school, and so also for their lack of academic engagement. The responses of year 10 students, which indicate a struggle to think clearly about their future in terms of timings and specific steps, uncovered a further disruption: the failure for some of the young people to have a clear system of proximal sub-goals. Thus in placing central importance on individuals' FOM, the Miller and Brickman model provides the scope to gain a fuller picture of factors influencing academic engagement than models that focus simply on PSR processes. These particular findings about their sub-goals, enabled broader explanations for the disruption between them recognising value in GCSEs but not perceiving current learning as instrumental, as it pointed to a struggle for many of the young people to plan.

Further delving into the reasons behind the disconnect between the young people's personally valued future goals and their perceived instrumentality of available tasks, yielded responses that further explain the nature of the young people's perceptions of instrumentality. These explanations emerged from questions that explored 'efficacy expectations', 'task related outcomes' and their beliefs about 'external reactions', particularly those of teachers. Here, the theoretical underpinnings of self-efficacy and SDT help to build a greater understanding of the reasons for the disconnect, where problems including perceptions of poor relatedness with teachers,

alongside low self-efficacy beliefs, act as a barrier to perceiving education as instrumental.

Considered collectively, it appears that a combination of disruptions in the young people's PSR processes, have come together to create motivational disruptions, that can be explained and understood in terms of a disconnect between the young people's FOM and PSR processes. These disruptions are highly likely to have strongly contributed to the disengagement that these young people have experienced through their schooling, and so help us understand in some depth the different factors contributing to this.

Contemplating possible interventions that could have helped avoid the disruption in the FOM and PSR processes of the students in the present study, it seems educators need to give more attention to ensuring that students are encouraged and supported in developing systems of proximal sub-goals. Whilst the young people were all able to voice personally valued future goals, in the form of the job they hope to do when they are older, many of the young people's systems of sub-goals are weak. This is especially the case for the year 10 students, and suggests that interventions, whose aim is to give explicit knowledge of paths people who have had similar goals have taken, should be introduced at an earlier point in education (Miller & Brickman, 2004). Such an intervention could have helped many of the young people assimilate their valuing of GCSEs into their current self-regulation processes, and so enable them to recognise current school tasks as instrumental for their future.

Alongside interventions designed to heighten students' knowledge of how their education relates to their future goals, the findings concerning the impact of self-efficacy beliefs and the need for relatedness on the young people's self-regulatory processes, indicate that attention also needs to be given to pedagogical practices. Here, rather than interventions focussed on seeking to enhance students' general motivation levels in order to help build an overall valuing of education, the findings of the current study indicate that the difficulty often lies in the students' capacity to translate existing values into meaningful schemas that then become part of their self-regulation processes. Considering the importance that both Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory and Ryan and Deci's SDT place on having tangible and manageable goals to work towards in order to experience optimum self-regulation over present tasks, Solomon and Roger's (2001) suggestion that teacher's should forward plan their curriculum delivery based around reachable proximal goals for students, could be one promising approach to tackling this disconnect.

However, when considering the capacity for specific interventions such as these to provide appropriate solutions to all the struggles expressed by all of the young people in the study, there are limitations. Despite the emergence of clear thematic patterns across the interviews, each of the young people's perceptions point to particular aspects predominating in different ways. This remind us of the impossibility of reaching a universal explanation, and therefore universally applicable solutions, for the motivational disruptions experienced by these young people.

Rather than being a model that limits the possible explanations of the factors that can influence academic engagement and motivation, Miller and Brickman's model provides a framework that can help map individual differences, through the wide

range of elements it includes, and the many possible links between these elements that it poses. The constraints of the present study mean that it has not been possible to explore all the different factors that were raised in the interviews, which influence the motivation and engagement of the young people. This suggests that further analysis would result in a greater understanding of the self-regulatory processes and motivational patterns of the young people. Nevertheless, this study has illustrated that in bringing together several well-established theories so as to provide a framework, Miller and Brickman's model provides research- based guidance to those seeking to identify and understand individual differences in academic engagement and motivation.

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