POSITIVE ORIENTATION AND GENERALIZED SELF-EFFICACY

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Abstract: The beliefs that people hold about themselves, their life and future are important and mutually related constituents of psychological functioning and well-being. In this paper, we investigated the relationship between positive orientation and generalized self-efficacy. The sample consisted of 672 participants aged 15-72 years (274 males). The results confirmed the first hypothesis that positive orientation and generalized self-efficacy constitute two distinct but correlated constructs. The results were confirmed across the three age groups and, contrary to the second hypothesis, age was not confirmed as a moderator of the relationship between positive orientation and self-efficacy.

Key words: positive orientation, self-esteem, life satisfaction, optimism, generalized self-efficacy

Interest in the positive beliefs and positive features of individual functioning has been attracting an increasing amount of attention over the last decade. The promotion of health rests upon a broad appreciation of the potentials and strengths that enable people to recognize their talents, to act fruitfully, to cope effectively, and to pursue ambitious goals (Lyubomirsky, King, Diener, 2005; Sheldon, 2009).

Positive orientation is the name given to what life satisfaction, self-esteem, and optimism have in common. It is a pervasive mode of facing reality, reflecting upon experience, framing events, and processing experiences (Caprara et al., 2009). This study addresses the question of whether generalized self-efficacy beliefs (Schwarzer, 1992) can be included in the aforementioned triad, as an indicator of positive orientation. The aim of this article is twofold. The first is to check whether self-efficacy beliefs belong to the broader construct of positive orientation; the second is to check whether the relationships between positive orientation and self-efficacy are moderated by age.

Positive Orientation as a Personality Dimension

Recently, a significant body of research has focused on human strengths and optimal functioning (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009; Sheldon, 2009; Sollárová, Sollár, 2010). Self-esteem (Kernis, 2003), life satisfaction (Diener, 1984) and dispositional optimism (Carver, Scheier, 2002) are treated as associated with well-being and success and con-