

Adolescent Sense of Control: A Downward Extension of the Shapiro Control Inventory to Pre- and Early Adolescents

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ABSTRACT. The most commonly used measures of perceived control for young adolescents are dated, psychometrically flawed, or focused on particular domains. To address the need for a general purpose measure of control for this age range, the overall sense of control (OSOC) and the domains of control (DOC) subscales of the Shapiro Control Inventory (D. H. Shapiro, 1994), designed for use with adults, were modified. Exploratory factor analyses suggested that the adapted OSOC and DOC scales consisted of internally consistent 1-factor structures, accounting for 32% and 29% of the variance, respectively. In Study 1, results from 310 preadolescents (9–13 years old) indicated that a higher sense of control was related to lower stress, OSOC, $r(308) = -.52, p < .001$; DOC, $r(308) = -.23, p < .001$; and depression, OSOC, $r(308) = -.63, p < .001$; DOC, $r(308) = -.33, p < .001$. In study 2, results from 195 adolescents (11–15 years old) showed that a higher sense of control was associated with lower stress, $r(193) = -.55, p < .001$, and depression, $r(193) = -.60, p < .001$, concurrently. The results suggest that these 2 revised measures of adolescent perceived control exhibited good content and predictive validities.

Keywords: adolescence, depression, longitudinal, reliability, sense of control, validity

Feeling a sense of control over life has long been associated with a range of psychological and health benefits. Conversely, lacking a sense of control over life has been associated with various negative psychological outcomes, such as eating disorders (Shapiro, Blinder, Hagman, & Pituck, 1993; Surgenor, Horn, & Hudson, 2003), childhood anxiety (Weems, Silverman, Rapee, & Pina, 2003;

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