

THE STABILITY OF POSITIVE SCHEMAS

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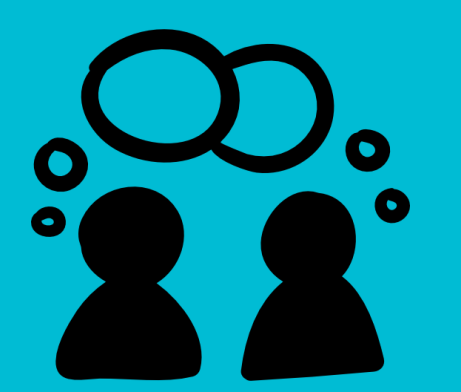
BACKGROUND



Most psychological research examines negative schemas. Positive schemas may be important for youths' well-being.

Cognitive theory suggests schemas exhibit stability over time. Little is known about positive schema stability in youth. Schemas may not be stable as adolescents experiment with identity formation.

SCHEMAS



...are core negative ("I am worthless") and positive ("I have value") self beliefs. They shape how experiences are interpreted, and are often targeted in prevention and health promotion.

METHOD



Participants

N = 139 adolescent girls (n = 64) & boys (n = 71) aged 8 to 13 (M = 11.20, SD = 1.21).

Worthiness
I value myself

Optimism
I believe things will turn out well

Measure
Positive Schema Questionnaire
(Keyfitz et al., 2013)
T1 $\alpha = .94$
T2 $\alpha = .95$

Trust
I trust other people

Self Efficacy
I can deal with tough things

Success
If I try I will succeed

Procedure

Positive schemas were measured at two time points:

- Time 1 Fall 2012
- Time 2 Spring 2013 (~ 6 months later)

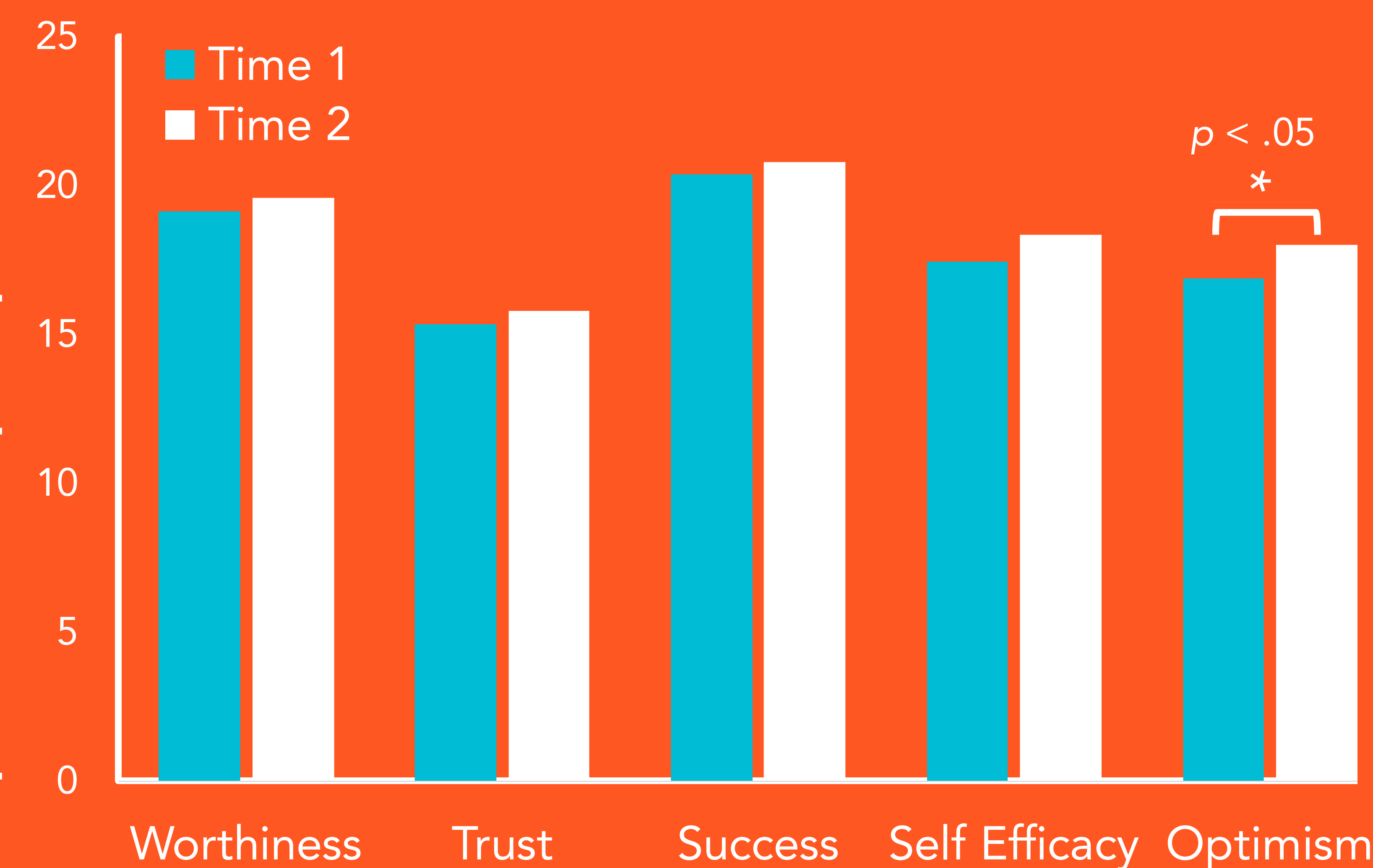
RESULTS



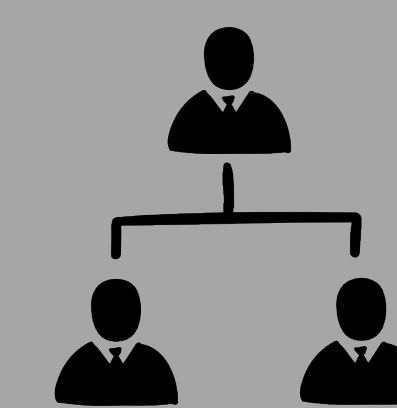
- Positive schemas were strongly correlated over time
- No significant differences between positive schemas over time, except higher optimism at Time 2

	Time 1 M (SD)	Time 2 M (SD)	r
Positive schema total	89.02 (19.11)	92.61 (16.66)	.44***
Worthiness	19.16 (4.80)	19.65 (3.90)	.52***
Trust	15.08 (4.65)	15.70 (5.18)	.50***
Success	20.32 (4.64)	20.84 (3.55)	.42***
Self Efficacy	17.51 (4.51)	18.38 (3.83)	.41***
Optimism	16.94 (4.33)	18.04 (3.93)	.39***

Note. ***p < .001



CONCLUSIONS



Positive schemas seem stable by adolescence. Future studies should examine schema structure and measure at multiple time points.

Future research should determine if positive schemas are as amenable to modification as negative schemas.

Identifying ideal timing for preventive and supportive schema development is needed.

Note. References available upon request.

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