

Abstract of Thesis entitled:

Lay Beliefs of Human Finitude:

Exploration of Four Dimensions of General Beliefs about Human Limitations

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The existence of limitations that humans face led this research to conceptualize a new construct known as *belief in human finitude* — a belief about how people think of being limited in a particular aspect of ability as human. Individuals hold different beliefs about human limitations to a different extent, and these beliefs may in turn color their ways of acting and interacting in everyday life. The proposed construct of belief in human finitude, which rooted in the literatures of philosophy and psychology, was explored in the present study. Three studies were conducted to develop and validate a scale entitled the Beliefs in Human Finitude scale (BHF). Study 1 identified the different dimensions of human limitations that people think are true to human being. Through content analysis, four dimensions of beliefs in human finitude were extracted, and items were categorized according to the four dimensions. Study 2

evaluated the reliability and validity of the items as a scale assessing lay beliefs about human limitations in general. As informed by both qualitative and quantitative results, items in the BHF attained adequate reliability and validity. Factor analyses confirmed the items to fit into a four-factor structure, named as lay belief of human finitude in the domain of: (1) Cognition and Epistemology; (2) Interpersonal Interaction; (3) Societal Influence; and (4) Fate Determinism. Study 3 related beliefs in human finitude with other related individual-difference constructs and outcome variables in a nomological network. Implications of beholding different lay beliefs of human finitude will be discussed.