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THE INTERACTION EFFECTS OF STRESS EXPOSURE, VALUE DIMENSIONS ENDORSEMENT AND WELL- BEING IN UKRAINE AFTER THE FULL-SCALE INVASION

Values have been extensively studied across different disciplines, including the range of issues connecting them to personality facets, aversive traits, coping styles and mental health (Hanel et al., 2020; Iosifyan, Arina, & Flahault, 2016; Lake, Bardi, Sneddon, & Lee, 2024; Petrov, Lim, Fillon, & Feldman, preprint; Sortheix & Lönnquist, 2015; Sortheix & Schwartz, 2017; Zacharopoulos et al., 2021). Already some important findings have been reported with regard to the interaction between values, stress and emotional life, emphasizing the role of values congruence as a factor associated with lower expression of negative mental health symptoms (e.g. depression and anxiety) (Stavrova, Fetchenhauer, & Schlösser, 2013; Chentsova-Dutton & Tsai, 2010; Caldwell-Harris & Ayçiçeği, 2006), as well as the role of materialistic values in mediating the effects on perceived stress (Masoom, 2022). While many of the studies focus on direct relationships between variables, it is likely that much of what is going on in the

social data is hidden behind indirect relationships (e.g. mediation or interaction effects). Such mediated relationships add to the complexity of research questions one could ask of one's data, enriching the understanding of the interactions between various phenomena. Yet those indirect relationships have only recently attracted attention from social scientists. For example, the role of moral distress as a mediator of depression in clinical workers congruent with their professional values profile has been discussed, stressing the importance of frequency and intensity of moral distress in the outcome (Lamiani, Dordoni, & Argentero, 2018). In its turn, the mediating effects of perceived stress on positive outlook on life, and positive and negative affect have also been explored (Horiuchi, Tsuda, Yoneda, & Aoki, 2018), leading to a conclusion that perceived stress acts as a mediator in the relationship between positivity and negative affect. Perceived stress was also found to mediate the relationship between positivity and positive affect. As negative affect is an important predictor of an entire cascade of adverse health outcomes, it is important to explore this link further. However, rather little is known about the factors that mediate these relationships.

Stress is known to be multidimensional, in that it includes exposure to stressful events, perception of stress, stress response, coping strategies, cumulative life stress etc., which, on the one hand, makes operationalization and measurement of stress a rather challenging task, and on the other hand, calls for theoretical refinements that would allow for consideration of the combined effects of chronic stress, acute stress and cumulative stress that reflects the 'wear and tear' with the years of life (Dorsey, Scherer, Eckhoff, & Furberg, 2022; Epel et al., 2018).

Stress can affect health both directly (through dysregulation of several physiological systems) and indirectly (via unhealthy coping behaviors), and as such it has been reliably linked to a number of physical and mental morbidities, as well as mortality (Dorsey, Scherer, Eckhoff, & Furberg, 2022; Segerstrom &

O'Connor, 2012; Thoits, 2010). Stress interferes with multiple physiological processes. One of the effects of stress on health is associated with the increased likelihood of developing adverse psychological symptoms such as depression, which, in turn, is linked to a whole cascade of various mental disorders and physiological comorbidities (Berk et al., 2023; Frank et al., 2023; Steffen, Nübel, Jacobi, Bätzing, & Holstiege, 2020). With mental health problems being a major contributor to disease burden in high-income countries, depression is currently ranking among the top 10 causes of years lost to disability (GBD 2017 Child and Adolescent Health Collaborators, Reiner, R. C., Jr., Olsen, H. E., Ikeda et al., 2019; Groen et al., 2020) and displaying comorbid associations with a whole range of serious chronic conditions (Frank et al., 2023).

The mere fact of stress exposure however, is not necessarily fateful and does not necessarily lead to disease. Moreover, not all stressors are the same with respect to their ability to leave their mark on health. Chronic stress is considered more damaging for health than acute stress. Enduring chronic stress can lead to long-lasting consequences and eventually compromise health. The impact of chronic stressors on health has received much research attention but its mechanisms are still not fully understood (Goldstein & McEwen, 2002).

As value priorities can influence interpretation of situations, they are also likely to affect our subjective experiences, including perception of stress severity and, through it, quality of life. Here we explore the contributing role of different types of values in individual experiences of various war-induced stressors. Following the results of a quantitative study on stress exposure, values and identity fusion conducted in Ukraine in Spring 2023 (N = 245) (Maltseva, Halimov, & Kuchynskyi, 2023), we continue with a more in-depth quantitative investigation of the interactions of each value type with war-related stressor exposure and identity fusion in times of armed conflict (Maltseva & Sereda, under review).

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