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# Study of the Relationship Between Psycho-Emotional Wellbeing and Personal Qualities in Ukrainian Youth: Ways of Overcoming



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## Abstract

**Objectives.** There is enough information about personal state and characteristics of the students from different countries, but about Ukrainian Senior school pupils and university students is completely missing. For the first time, the issue of stressful psychosomatic consequences for Ukrainian youth health is raised in world research. **Methods.** To assess wellbeing, anxiety, value orientations and behavior types in 216 youth (school/university participants) four standardized Instruments were used. Additionally, with other young/adult participants (n = 307), the method of conversation was used to establish their reaction to the ongoing Russian military aggression in Ukraine, and to find out the ways for prevention-rehabilitation the psycho-emotional state of all participants. **Results and Conclusion.** The greater the anxiety, the more competitive behavior. Wellbeing is negatively associated with competitive behavior; anxiety is positively linked with adaptation. The youngest participants showed the worst state of health, higher anxiety, and cooperative behavior. During the war unleashed by Russia, Ukrainians, on the one hand, were strongly motivated, aimed at the speedy cessation of hostilities which strengthened, encouraged them psycho-emotionally, on the other hand, needed special psychological support and help. High value orientations are combined with high conflict resolution. Special preventive-recovery activities were carried out with different categories of the population: refugees, people left in the war zone and their families, militaries, rescuers, medical personnel. **Limitations.** Findings on the anxiety and wellbeing interconnected with value orientations require clarification. Correctional-rehabilitation work efficiency provided to the participants suffered because of the hostilities need experimental-statistical confirmation.

**Keywords:** Wellbeing; Anxiety and Psychological overload; Value orientations; Behavior types in conflicts; Additional coping means

**Abbreviations:** SSWB: Subjective Well-being; AV: Average-Arithmetic value; STAI: State-Trait Anxiety Inventory

## Introduction

Childhood and adolescence are critical transitional stages during adolescents and young people; therefore, the education

environment (primarily, the student-teacher relationship) plays extremely important role for ensuring psychosomatic wellbeing

and creative development of the young people. This directly invests in improving general population health. With all that, it is sad to state that Senior school pupils, college and university students aged 17-23 years (regardless of their nationality) are forced to overcome various kinds of distresses (anxiety, sleep disorder, insomnia, fatigue, depression, somatic complaints, irritability, forgetfulness, etc.). And if 20 years ago there was not so much research devoted to this issue, today there is much more, which indicates the relevance of the topic. However, information about Ukrainian Senior pupils and university students is completely missing in world scientific periodicals. In this regard, it seems appropriate to fill this gap, and precisely in the current critical period, when the hostilities, that have continued in the east of Ukraine since 2014, escalated into a monstrous full-scale war unleashed on February 24, 2022, by Russia in Ukraine.

Worth noting, even before the Russian military aggression, the indicators of the psycho-emotional wellbeing of Ukrainian youth (high school students and university students) were far from the norm, namely, poor self-esteem, bad academic performance, hard overwork, and worsened health. At that, both Ukrainian and other post-Soviet researchers are practically silent about psycho-emotional state of the youth, or if mention the problems, note that just schoolchildren/students themselves are guilty, neither the learning methodology, educational frame nor teachers [1]. Only a few scholars point to teachers as one of the main causes of students' psychosomatic disorders and academic failure: positive relationships with teachers might be all-important, crucial [2], preferably based on empathy [3,4] for reducing students' stress and improving wellbeing, since stressful issues associated with interpersonal relationship - primarily, poor interacting with professors, unrealized expectations of parents - easily lead to mental health problems, anxiety, depression, even suicide. Additionally, recent research suggest that the students of different countries evidenced poor psycho-emotional and social state of varied nature, namely: inferior problem-solving confidence using avoidance as behavioral style [5]; low level of life satisfaction and happiness, poor resilience to resist everyday/academic stressful events [6,7]; insufficient personal/family income for maintaining educational-financial status [8]; necessity to cope with many newfound academic/interpersonal stressors [9]; poor sleep quality predicting depressive symptoms, alcohol consumption, high psycho-physiological fatigue, behavioral irritability and academic decline [10,11]; father's poor education background [12]; alcohol/tobacco use, insomnia, headache, insufficient self-assessment and dissatisfaction with own education, at that females more affected than males [13,14]. Furthermore, intimidating COVID-19 consequences had dramatic impact around the world: led to depression, anxiety, stress, insomnia, unhealthy increased "food addiction", violence, divorce, financial restriction, even suicide [15-18]. Alike, in educational system not only schoolchildren/students, but also their parents and teachers faced varied organizational, technical, psychological,

interpersonal problems [19-21]. Findings of Nguyen et al. [22] testified that acculturative stress might provoke serious problems in international students, namely: inadequate or scarce social connectedness quite possibly could increase depression, while escalating acculturative stress, vice versa, enhance depressive symptoms. Casey et al. [23] concluded that graduate-entry medical students experienced higher anxiety/stress than younger students, since were unsure of their expectations, experienced overloads, and uncertainties during study, faced financial problems, had little time for relaxation, family or friends that increased with age. While Alharbi et al. [24] revealed that depressive symptoms gradually decreased with advancing toward the fifth year, at that students who lived alone were more likely to report depressive symptoms in comparison to students living with their families/relatives.

To improve subjective wellbeing students, especially females, tried to use khat, but instead they had higher rate of mental distress, mood disturbances, depression, and anxiety in comparison with those who did not use khat [24]. While the ancient psychological-philosophical high-spiritual traditions - worshipping (as a means to relieve stress and become optimistic about any negative life circumstances), non-attachment (as non-clinginess to own desires and non-insistence in controlling personal actions and life events), and mindfulness (a way to improve attentional control, increase awareness of internal/external experiences, reduce automatic reactivity in emotional, physiological and behavioral domains, and develop own qualities of acceptance, openness, curiosity, compassion and non-judging), as already proven, efficiently help to relieve stress, look with optimism at any negative life circumstances reducing by that psychosomatic disorders [25-28], since it is necessary to cultivate positive emotions, universal wisdom, compassion and love to overcome destruction, chaos, fear, death [29].

Despite enough studies on the assessment of the students' wellbeing, there are still quite important scientific questions regarding their health. Since so far, no scientific study has been aimed at comprehensive research of the health problems of Ukrainian youth, this study is intended to fill this gap and assess the psycho-emotional state of young people, identify the causes of psychosomatic disorders and stress prevention means. It is hypothesized that the psycho-emotional wellbeing and personal self-development of Ukrainian youth is negatively correlated with individual anxiety. Additionally, we also assume that hypothetically young people are maximally focused on the future and achieving their goals, while not aimed at awakening and developing own creative aspirations and abilities, due to the incapability to reveal the existing internal reserves in studying. Importantly, today's youth, although well versed in modern technologies, is forced to adhere to unrealistic expectations of the family and educational institutions, which leads them to emotional burnout, much stress/anxiety and deterioration of learning activities. The main aim of this study was a more detailed study of the psycho-emotional state

of Ukrainian schoolchildren/students, namely, to assess personal characteristics and qualities (mental wellbeing, value orientations and types of behavior in conflict resolution).

## Materials and Methods

This research was approved at the Research Ethics Committee of Kharkiv Institute "Interregional Academy of Personnel Management", protocol number B-11/03-13 on 13.12.2022. The study was conducted in accordance with the directives of the Experts on Ethics of Kharkiv Institute "Interregional Academy of Personnel Management", approval letter number AK-17/15 on 01.12.2022. The study procedures with the participation of human participants were fulfilled in accordance with the ethical standards of the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki (its later amendments or comparable ethical standards) and with norms of the National Scientific Centre for Medical and Biotechnical Research of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

## Participants

Selection of the main participant group (n=216, age 16-23) was guaranteed by willingness of their institution administration. Additionally, with other young/adult participants (n=307, age 16-65), there was used the method of conversation to establish their reaction to the ongoing Russian military aggression in Ukraine and to find out the ways for prevention-rehabilitation their psycho-emotional state of all participants. All participants were informed about the research aims and objectives, gave written voluntary consent to participate, and by May 2023 in online format have completed the psychological self-assessment in four questionnaires and self-report on the questions posed in the conversation-interview. The participants' socio-demographic characteristics of the main participant group (educational specialty, gender, age, and quantity) are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of the main participant group.

Participants	Gender	Age	Quantity
Senior school pupils of 11 <sup>th</sup> class (n=62)	M	16-17	30
	F	16-17	32
Students of humanitarian specialties (n=154)	M	17-19	14
		20-22	24
	F	17-19	64
		20-23	52
Female students of humanitarian specialties, divided into groups according to their specialty (n=138):			
Psychologists	F	17-19	20
		20-23	30
Sociologists	F	17-19	25
		20-21	22
Lawyers	F	18-19	19

Combined student group, called «Students of humanitarian specialties», included both males and females. All of them were separated by specialty into 3 groups: psychologists, sociologists, lawyers. In the following sections of the article, for the sake of brevity, the participants of all student groups will be named according to their future specialization, i.e., psychology students as "psychologists", and so on. In each specialty, there were less than 10 male participants because in Ukrainian universities such professions are considered a priority for women, and few male students choose them as a future employment. That is why the groups were not equal by gender. Inasmuch as female participants were significantly dominant compared with males, the division in groups by specialty was fulfilled exclusively for females. Statistical analysis of data, obtained by means of the methods that show gender differences, also was carried out only

for females. Otherwise, a comparative analysis of the results of statistical data processing on men and women might be incorrect. Inclusion criteria: 1) studying at a school, college, university, 2) 16-23 years old, (3) written consent to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria: 1) presence of a chronic physical illness or mental disorder, 2) alcoholism or drug addiction, 3) the effects of medical-behavioral intervention during the last year. These criteria characterize participants in terms of specific indicators that should be considered in the study to form homogeneous groups and increase the chances of obtaining the most reliable results.

## Instruments

The chosen standardized questionnaires are trustworthy, valid, long-time tested, repeatedly used in psychology in Ukrainian, Russian, English languages, namely:

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI), designed by C.D. Spielberger in 1966, in 1967 Y.L. Hanin fulfilled its Russian-language standardized adaptation [30,31]. It is aimed to assess anxiety level through 40 items. We considered it enough to use only STAI Form Y-1, since its statements (20 items) relate both to a present and events stored in memory. Using a 4-point Likert scale, participants rated how each judgment corresponded to their own state, thus evaluated the intensity of personal sensations/feelings. The obtained data were presented in the total indicator (in average-arithmetic value - AV) of "raw scores" received after completing the questionnaire.

Scale of Subjective Wellbeing (SSWB), developed by Anne Perrudet-Badoux in 1988, in 1992 M.V. Sokolova fulfilled Russian-language standardized adaptation Perrudet-Badoux et al., 1988, [31,32]. Using a 7-point Likert scale, this psycho-diagnostic instrument measures quality of emotional comfort/experience/mood (i.e., subjective wellbeing). For each of 17 statements, participants had to indicate how much they agree/disagree with it, that determined their sensations, feelings, life perception. The obtained data were also presented in the total indicator (in average-arithmetic value - AV) of "raw scores" received after

completing the questionnaire.

Value Survey questionnaire, designed by M. Rokeach in 1973, in 1992 D.A. Leontiev adapted its standardized Russian version [33,34]. Only terminal values were taken they allow to fully determine the main orientation of a person, indicate what is especially important/significant for him, what guides him in life, what areas of life prevail for him (professional, educational, family, hobby-recreational or social life). Participants had to rank 18 terminal values, arrange them in descending order: the most important/significant one, which acted as a guide in his life, received rank 1, etc.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Conflict Instrument), introduced by K. Thomas and R. Kilmann in 1976, in 1992 O.P. Eliseev adapted its standardized Russian version (Eliseev, 2010; Thomas & Kilmann, 1976). It evaluates typical behavior reaction in conflict situations, allows for exploring which of 5 styles of conflict resolution a person adheres to. Participants received a list of 30 pairs of statements, in which each pair chose the statement that best characterized their own position. The number of scores determined personal tendency to manifest one of behavioral styles.

## Results

**Table 2:** Summary table of participants' results received by means of three self-esteem questionnaires («SSWB», «STAI» and «Conflict Mode Instrument»)

Participants (n=216)					Instruments					
				SSWB*						
		STAI*	Conflict Mode Instrument							
			(Indicates an expression degree for each of five types to resolve conflict situations, in medians)							
			1	2	3	4	5			
			Competition	Adaption	Compromise	Avoidance	Cooperation			
Group	Gender	Age	Quantity							
Senior school pupils of 11 <sup>th</sup> class	M	16-17	30	70	50	6	7	5	6	7
	F	16-17	32	69	47	7	6	7	5	6
Students of humanitarian specialties	M	17-19	14	67	53	7	6	6	7	5
		20-23	24	58	47	6	5	7	7	6
	F	17-19	64	64	44	6	5	6	7	6
		20-23	52	64	48	6	5	6	6	6
Among Students of humanitarian specialties (n=116):										
Psychologists	F	17-19	20	64	43	8	5	5	5	6
		20-23	30	63	50	8	5	6	6	5
Sociologists	F	17-19	25	64	45	6	5	5	7	6
		20-21	22	65	45	5	5	6	6	7
Lawyers	F	18-19	19	63	44	6	6	6	7	5

**Note:** \* and \*\* - in average-arithmetic values of the summed "raw score".

**Table 3:** Results of all participants received by means of self-reported questionnaire («Value Survey»).

Participants (n=216)				Value orientations (n=18)																	
Group	Gender	Age	Quantity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1*	M	16-17	30	8	8	5	9	16	11	6	5	12	13	14	9	7	8	12	15	14	11
	F	16-17	32	10	12	6	12	12	9	4	7	13	12	15	11	8	9	9	14	14	10
2**	M	17-19	14	11	8	8	12	13	8	7	8	11	10	9	10	10	11	9	15	11	8
		20-22	24	8	11	7	9	14	7	7	7	13	8	10	10	12	10	9	14	12	9
	F	17-19	64	9	10	6	9	13	7	7	9	11	12	10	9	9	8	10	15	12	7
		20-23	52	8	13	6	7	13	6	8	9	14	11	9	7	10	9	9	5	10	8

Note. Groups of participants: 1\* - Senior school pupils of 11th class; 2\*\* - Students of humanitarian specialties (combined students' group).

**Table 4:** Results of "Students of humanitarian specialties" received by means of self-reported questionnaire («Value Survey»).

Participants (n=216)				Value orientations (n=18)																	
Group	Gender	Age	Quantity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
3*	F	17-19	20	10	12	7	8	15	8	7	10	9	14	10	6	8	7	7	13	13	7
		20-23	30	7	13	5	7	14	6	7	9	14	11	10	7	11	9	8	15	10	9
4**	F	17-19	25	9	8	6	9	11	6	7	8	13	11	9	9	9	9	11	15	11	7
		20-21	22	8	13	7	7	12	6	8	8	14	11	8	8	10	8	9	15	11	8
5***	F	18-19	19	6	8	5	10	15	6	7	8	11	12	11	11	11	8	8	15	13	7

Note: Groups of participants: 3\* - Psychologists; 4\*\* - Sociologists; 5\*\*\* - Lawyers.

It is worth noting that in the framework of this research, it was not necessary to use the ANOVA or ANCOVA methods for statistical analysis of the data obtained, because of the small sample of the main participant group (in wartime, only such a number turned out possible to recruit). Besides, since this work is preliminary search studying, it does not pretend to give global theoretical constructions and detailed statistical generalizations. Table 2 presents the results characterizing the level of subjective well-being (SSWB) and anxiety (STAI). According to the content and instructions of the SSWB tool, the lower the sum of the "raw scores", the better the participants' subjective wellbeing. In contrast to the SSWB questionnaire, the relationship between STAI scores and psycho-emotional state has an inverse relationship: the larger the amount of "raw scores" in STAI, the higher the level of anxiety. Concerning the terminal values-goals, in Table 3 and Table 4 we gave the medians since average-arithmetic indicators do not fully describe the results obtained. According to the meaning of this value in own life and his/her beliefs, every participant had to assign to each value-goal a corresponding numeric, indicated in both Tables: the most important value was No. 1, the least significant - No. 18. Values were presented to the participants in the following order:

- 1 - active productive life
- 2 - life wisdom
- 3 - health

- 4 - interesting work
- 5 - beauty of nature and art
- 6 - love
- 7 - financially guaranteed life
- 8 - presence of good and faithful friends
- 9 - public recognition
- 10 - cognition
- 11 - productive life
- 12 - development
- 13 - pleasures
- 14 - freedom
- 15 - happy family life
- 16 - happiness of others
- 17 - creativity
- 18 - self-confidence

Below we provide the analysis of all results according to the following structure:

- (A) Generalized description of all results.
- (B) Comparison of the participants for each indicator,



identifying various indicators and determining the specifics of each group (namely, comparing males and females, Senior school pupils and students, younger age students with older ones, students-psychologists with sociologists and lawyers, etc)

- (C) Analysis of interrelations between various indicators within each participant group (namely, identification of interconnected blocks of personal qualities; comparison of groups of participants on the features of the relationship of these indicators).

(A) Within each group of participants, a wide scatter was found for almost every indicator from its minimum to maximum values, which indicates a high degree of individualization of all aspects of young people's personal development. In this situation, there can be no question of clear identifying and precise describing the specific narrow "psychological portraits" of each group. On the contrary, in each group there is both any combination of value orientations and any ways of conflict resolution, which is typical for all groups of participants. A similar situation exists in the relationship of individual indicators with each other, i.e., all indicators can be combined between themselves: e.g., high or low levels of value orientations with high or low levels of conflict resolution, etc. It should be clarified that, choosing among the values, a participant had to create own hierarchy, determine for himself a real significance of each value in his/her life, namely: to the most significant value he gave numeral 1, to the slightly less important - numeral 2, etc., to the most insignificant - numeral 18. According to such significance assessment, we present below a concrete example of a group of 19 female Lawyers who estimated value 1 (active productive life) and value 2 (life wisdom) with the following rating:

Value 1: 2 4 4 4 5 5 6 6 6 6 7 8 8 10 11 11 12 15 18

Value 2: 2 3 4 4 5 5 6 6 7 8 8 10 12 13 13 14 14 14 17

Analyzing more concretely the Lawyers' results, their choices (i.e., numerals) regarding value 1 are within almost the entire possible range (min = 1, max = 18), but concentrations of the numerals are still in a rather limited range (from 4 to 11). As to value 2, there is no such concentration (more precisely, they are in a much wider range (from 4 to 14), with a relative "emptiness" in the middle (from 7 to 12). In this situation, the most appropriate indicator of the distribution center is the median (as a mid, median number of an ordered series), but not a traditionally used arithmetic mean value (here it will be greatly distorted by several "popping up" edge that will "drag" it onto themselves: in value 1 these are the numerals 15 and 18). Thus, for value 1 the median is 6, and for value 2 the median is 8 (for comparison the arithmetic mean value, respectively - 7.8 and 8.7, which are much worse describing general relative left-side shift of value 1 numerals, compared with value 2).

There are some other value orientations, characterized by analogic (as for value 1) shifts to the left or right: thus, values 3

(health) and 7 (financially guaranteed life) are shifted to the left in all groups, whereas values 5 (beauty of nature and art), 16 (happiness of others) and 17 (creativity) - to the right, also in all or in most groups. Such a relatively unanimous asymmetry of these five values (with a large spread and the presence of bias in only a few separate groups relative to all other values) is the general picture inherent in contemporary Ukrainian Senior school pupils and university students. As for indicators of psychological wellbeing, anxiety, and types of behavior in a conflict situation, they are characterized by wide variability (like mentioned value 2, given in the example above).

(B) Wide individual differences significantly overlap intergroup differences both in specialty and in age or sex. But still there are some weak differences (trends) between groups, which sometimes reach statistical significance (comparison of groups was carried out according to the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney method, two-sided criterion; along with the traditionally used border  $p \leq 0.05$ , sometimes a level of difference was indicated  $p \leq 0.20-0.25$ ). There was established the following.

Comparison of Senior school pupils and students. In value orientations, several rather sharp obvious differences were revealed, which are manifested both in relation to males and females. To be precise, students are more focused on love (value 6), productive life (11), creativity (17) and self-confidence (18), but less appreciate health (3), financially guaranteed life (7), presence of good and faithful friends (8) and pleasures (13). At the same time, male students (but not females) more than male Senior school pupils consider the value beauty of nature and art (5), cognition (10) and happy family life (15), whilst less estimate freedom (14). Importantly more than interestingly among all participants, exactly females (but not males) appreciate high enough interesting work (4) and development (12). The analysis conducted on value orientations indicates that students have a concrete system of values, which is quite adequate and oriented to education: they strive for productive life, self-confidence, cognition, interesting work, and development. Nonetheless, the desire for health, presence of good and faithful friends and financially guaranteed life is not revealed clearly. Comparison on emotional characteristics shows that students experience greater psychological wellbeing, whilst Senior school pupils somewhat less. About anxiety, Senior school pupils and students demonstrate approximately the same levels. In this sense, students having high anxiety levels risk getting into a state of stress quite easily and find it difficult to get out of it. While simultaneously they demonstrate an average level of psychological wellbeing, high orientation to interesting work as a way for self-realization, but low projection to health and presence of good and faithful friends. As for five ways of behavior in conflict situations, in general the reaction of the participants of all ages is different: students, unlike Senior school pupils, prefer to use the adaptation (type 2) evidently less often. Male students more often use compromise (3) and avoidance (4) but less - cooperation (5). The latter behavioral type is the most

effective way to resolve any conflicts. Regarding the females, Senior school pupils solve conflicts applying competition (1), while students less often use a compromise (3), but more often resort to avoidance (4).

Analysis of changes in personality qualities among students with age. Regarding value orientations, both among males and females, more similarities than differences are found. Namely, the role of such values as active productive life (value 1), interesting work (4) and cognition (10) is evidently growing among young males, but significance of life wisdom (2), public recognition (9) and pleasures (13) decreases. In females, the role of interesting work (4), development (12) and creativity (17) clearly increase, but of life wisdom (2) and public recognition (9) also becomes less; at that, active productive life (1), love (6) and cognition (10) increase less significantly than in males, whilst financially guaranteed life (7) and pleasures (13) somehow decrease although not very noticeable. With all the variety and inconsistency of these changes, it is still obvious that the values, directly related to future professional activity and self-realization (1, 4, 10, 12, 17), are clearly strengthened. This fact highlights that with age students (males and females) mature and develop while mastering the chosen profession. Comparative gender analysis of all participant groups revealed the most pronounced differences in value orientations. The females visibly appreciate such values: health (3), love (7), possibility of own development (12) and interesting work (4); the males are more projected onto cognition (10) and presence of good and faithful friends (8). Regarding the emotional state (wellbeing and anxiety) as well as ways of behavior in conflict, there are no statistically significant differences. This fact is somewhat surprising. Although, a barely noticeable differentiation by gender is still present, according to the values of the medians indicated in Table 4: psychological wellbeing is slightly better for older males (indicator - 58), while younger female students showed the least anxiety (indicator - 44). Regarding the dynamics of changes in the students' emotional characteristics with age, it differs depending on gender: the level of psychological wellbeing and anxiety in males has slightly decreased; in females, psychological wellbeing has remained at the same level although anxiety has insignificantly increased. Regarding ways of resolving conflict, there are very few changes with age: young males used a little less avoidance (type 4), while females utilized more often a compromise (3) and cooperation (5).

Comparison of the students' results according to specialty (psychologists, sociologists, lawyers). All psychologists and sociologists show great similarity in value orientations, at that lawyers are significantly different from them. Namely, female lawyers more estimate active productive life (1) and life wisdom (2) but less appreciate interesting work (4) and development (12). Female sociologists (compared to lawyers and psychologists) more appreciate beauty (5) and less - happy family life (15), whilst female psychologists (unlike male lawyers and sociologists)

significantly less take into consideration presence of good and faithful friends (8). With all this, the female psychologists and sociologists have some, generally small differences in changing the personal qualities with age. Among psychologists, the importance of active productive life (value 1), health (3), love (6), cognition (10) and creativity (17) somewhat increase, but the values of public recognition (9), pleasures (13), freedom (14), happiness of others (16) and self-confidence (18) decrease. For sociologists, the interesting work (4), development (12) and happy family life (15) were slightly increasing, but the life wisdom (2) was decreasing. Although these changes are different for psychologists and sociologists, in both cases, overall, they are quite constructive. As to psychological wellbeing and personal anxiety among females of all specialties, there are practically no differences (except for older female psychologists, who are somewhat more anxious in comparison with sociologists and lawyers). Differences in types of behavior in conflict are also very small: psychologists (unlike sociologists and lawyers) are more likely to competition (1), but sociologists (unlike psychologists and lawyers) use cooperation more often (5).

(C) Results of the correlation analysis between the levels of psychological wellbeing and anxiety are presented in Table 5 (according to Kendall, correlation coefficient and corresponding approximate level of significance). The indicator of psychological wellbeing (as an indicator of the emotions of positive pole) and anxiety (as an indicator of the emotions of negative one) characterize the person's emotional traits. We analyzed the presence or absence of correlations between levels of psychological wellbeing and anxiety, as well as their correlation with the use of each of five behavioral types in conflict resolution. Theoretically, three options for their ratio are possible:

- reciprocal (i.e., mutually opposite) relationship: the more pronounced the spectrum of a person's positive emotions, the less the spectrum of his negative emotions is manifested.
- positive relationship (if basing on the general level of activity, which can be in emotional sphere either low or high): at general high level of activity, a person experiences both strong positive and severe negative emotions, while with a low level of activity, positive and negative emotions are manifested weakly, and a person is much less susceptible to them.
- zero relationship: an interrelationship is absent because the positive and negative spectra of emotions function relatively independently since they belong to different brain centers responsible for their occurrence.

Additionally, based on our previous research results [28], a comparative analysis of data before COVID-19 and the Russian military attack on Ukraine with results revealed a significant SSWB deterioration during 2019-2023, namely. In Senior school pupils (males/females) - from 52.5/48.0 to 70/69; in psychologists - from 43.8/43.4 to 64/63; in sociologists - from 47.1/46.0 to 64/65; in lawyers - from 46.8/43.1 to 63/63. Though

STAI indicators improved in all four groups (moreover, by almost the same number of “raw score” by which the data on the SSWB deteriorated, i.e., by about 15-20 points): from 74.5/71.3 to 50/47; from 59.1/64.8 to 43/50; from 63.5/63.7 to 45/45; from 55.8/63.9 to 44/44.

**Table 5:** Results of data correlation analysis: comparison of psychological wellbeing and personal anxiety.

Groups of participants	Gender	Age	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Senior school pupils of 11 <sup>th</sup> class	M F	16-17 16-17	+0,048 +0,107	Insignificant Insignificant
Students of humanitarian specialties	M F	17-19 20-22 17-19 20-23	+0,299 +0,247 +0,277 +0,314	≈ 0,26 ≈ 0,099 < 0,001 < 0,001
Among Students of humanitarian specialties, divided into 3 groups according to their specialty, namely:				
Psychologists	F	17-19 20-23	+0,196 +0,261	≈ 0,25 ≈ 0,044

Sociologists	F	17-19 20-21	of self-regeneration and self-rehabilitation. However, the general psycho-emotional and somatic state remained at a rather low level: they had high blood pressure, headache, heart palpitations, insomnia, sharp emotional response to loud sounds; and so on.
Lawyers	F	18-19	level: they had high blood pressure, headache, heart palpitations, insomnia, sharp emotional response to loud sounds; and so on.

## Discussion

The following explanation can be given for the above comparison of the SSWB and STAI indicators of this study with the data from 2019-2020. Deterioration of wellbeing, along with decreased anxiety, is an adaptive-protective reaction to stress compensation: a person cannot stay under stress for a long time, so starts generating optimistic attitude/mood, positive assumptions, gradually supplants the pandemic/war situation from consciousness, ignoring it. Subjective wellbeing is an integral indicator that includes both the conscious and unconscious spheres, while anxiety embraces only consciousness. The decrease in anxiety is the fact of switching thoughts to positive life factors, whereas deterioration in wellbeing occurs because the negative situation is still in the subcortex. Naturally, this personal reaction is not characteristic for everyone, but for most of our sample results. In present research, the SSWB and STAI data of the main sample of participants were confirmed by the results obtained by the conversation-interview method on the additional sample, viz. If in the first two months of the Russian military aggression in Ukraine, these participants were in a state of complete shocking prostration, misunderstanding, severe stress, overwhelming emotional tension and showed clear signs of a nervous breakdown, even panic [35], then by May 2023 they came to a conscious understanding of upcoming events: a sense of faith-patience appeared like signs of believe in quick finishing this monstrous situation as much as the desire to cope with it. Thus, self-regulation was spontaneously turned on, to which, apropos, a person often comes on his own: an internal natural mechanism of self-defense is triggered, suggesting adequate ways

An analysis of the results of the main (youth) sample convincingly indicates the presence of a weak positive correlation between the levels of wellbeing and anxiety in all groups (except for the youngest, Senior school pupils, who have practically no positive or negative relationship between these indicators). Correlations between the levels of psychological wellbeing and personal anxiety, on the one hand, and the frequency of use of each type in conflict resolution, on the other hand, are practically absent. Thus, these two groups of indicators turn out to be, in total, mutually independent. For the united group of Humanitarian students, the following trends of interrelation by gender and age have been identified, which, however, did not reach the level of statistical significance:

- In older males, anxiety and competition behavior are positively correlated (+0.248, ≈0.099): the greater anxiety, the more often competitive position in conflicts.
- In older females, level of wellbeing is associated with competition behavior negatively (-0.162, ≈0.092), and level of anxiety is positively associated with adaptation position (+0.143, ≈0.120); in younger ones, neither these nor other relationships were revealed.

Gender differences in students are mostly pronounced in value orientations. The females clearly appreciate such values: health (3), love (7), self-development (12) and interesting work (4); whilst young males are more projected onto cognition (10) and presence of good and faithful friends (8). Regarding emotional states (wellbeing, anxiety) and behaviors in conflict, there are no



statistically significant differences by gender, which is somewhat surprising. In general, the students' personal qualities have very few statistically significant correlations, i.e., degree of expressing any single quality can be combined with whatever expression degree of any other quality: for example, high and low anxiety equally often can correlate with the disposition to use competition or avoidance, or whatever other behavioral type in conflict.

### Explanatory-Evaluating Characteristic of the Results

Are modern Ukrainian students generally harmoniously developed, professionally oriented and stress-resistant? Are there any reasons for concern? Is their psychological state normal? Or do they have serious deficiencies in the formation of personal qualities, professional self-development, social behavior? Therefore, do they need urgent psychological help? To answer these questions and provide an explanatory description of the situation, qualitatively different ways may be applied: a) from the everyday life point of view; b) basing on acme logical approach, focused on high standards of development and high level of ACME (acme - lat. "the highest point of something"), both of a person and a country including the education system.

- From the everyday life point of view, we did not find any obvious super-positive qualities in students and did not reveal any super-flaws. At any case, Ukrainian students are not focused on either asocial behavior or super-obvious positive behavior: they are a standardized regular type of youth with the average statistical test indicators.

- Nevertheless, from the position of the acme logical approach, students' average statistical indicators are evidently low. This situation contradicts the natural (pledged from birth) desire of young people for self-development and realization of own strengths, desires, innovations that we call the disclosure of «creative life-orientation»: it is based on the students' emotions that play a paramount role in shaping their motivation to learn [36,37]. Instead, Ukrainian youth (school graduates and freshmen) experiences severe stress associated with a variety of life problems and educational overload, they neglect the use of socially acceptable, health-restoring means of stress protection, which leads to a deterioration in life perception and health [38]. Just students, no one else, are the future elite of society, and their entrepreneurial competencies should be surely strengthened [39,40], since the development of entrepreneurial potential, initiative enthusiasm of citizens and the introduction of the principle of environmental thinking is one of the key goals for any country. The more it is invested in the education of people, regarding the principles of love for the environment, care for the living and instilled cultural values, the faster the foundations of the person's ecological thinking and his/her responsibility for healthcare are formed. This concept of eco-competence is reinforced by an entrepreneurial and innovation-oriented mindset: it leads to action, is expressed by the individual's ability

to turn ideas into action and develop competencies related to empowerment, resilience, locus of control and coping. Such a prospective is very important for a country in a crisis state, since only individuals with high (and not average statistical) personality indicators can bring their own country to a greater development level. Based on this, Ukrainian students clearly require psycho-correction aimed at activating their own internal positive reserves (which, in our opinion, are a priori given to them from birth). They need instilling progressive social attitudes and trends (which exist in their culture and society, but not genetically predetermined). Exactly the age of Senior school pupils (who next year begin university education, so nearly university students) and freshmen can be considered as the most appropriate, beneficial, opportune for the disclosure of own «creative life-orientation» (by virtue of natural youth flexibility, determined abandonment of stereotypes, aspiration for self-improvement, and development of life-affirming qualities, acmeological inclinations, personal-social ACME-tendencies).

The impossibility for acmeological growth occurs because the existing paradigm of university education in Ukraine predetermines a practically impersonal teaching method based on a huge, exaggerated number of both written tests and extracurricular independent work of students. An educational approach like that completely negates, firstly, direct interrelationship between professor-student, secondly, possibility for teacher's real contribution namely by personal example to the student's self-development. It leads to vanishing the student's probability to imitate Teacher, which happens just in such an important period for freshmen, when they turn already enough mature, energetically charged for own self-becoming, though critically evaluating all around [36]. Meanwhile, François VI de La Rochefoucauld, famous French moral philosopher of the 17th century, aptly and concisely noted in this regard, saying that «we are entering various ages of our lives, like newborns, without any experience ...» [41]. The power of personal example at any age creates miracles. This statement fully applies to Senior school pupils, i.e., future freshmen: they enter student life, starting it as if from a "clean slate", but having simultaneously a clear inner readiness to accept all new and interesting. That is why it is so important to emotionally inspire, surprise, and heuristically intrigue the freshmen. This promising but difficult mission falls entirely on the shoulders of school/university teachers. Although they often flaunt their pride, arrogance, and haughtiness, which affect students only adversely; while real pride, in close union with a true genuine mind, will never go beyond. Trust to the Teacher launches the mechanism of favoring, emancipation, liberty, creating the prerequisites for stable interpersonal dialogue, attraction, empathy. Just such interrelations form a positive emotional background in the relationship prepare the student for meeting new, unexplored, tempting things. Then a young person is likely to be prepared for any life happenings, because, as an ancient Chinese adage asserts, that those who are

ready for changing are ready for everything. A figure of Teacher (by virtue of his status) should produce an acmeological effect, give impetus to imitation, disclose the disciple's internal potential and natural aspiration for knowledge. However, such a fruitful, regenerating, and reviving approach to the teacher's interrelation with students is not generally widespread, met less and less due to the commercialization in education and decreased spirituality in society. As a result, carefree happy moments of childhood and adolescence might be lost for some young people. While happiness (even in excessive amounts) does not violate the integrity of the internal balance, providing an exclusively positive effect, which is also confirmed by the Indonesian wisdom of Balinese healers, namely: the loss of intrinsic balance that occurs at times in a person who is in a state of happiness is only part of a stable integral life balance.

What way out of this unfavorable situation are the students themselves trying to find? Additionally, by interview method, we revealed that 9 study participants practiced either recreational ancient Eastern methods of body self-healing or physical activity (tennis, karate, equestrian sport, volleyball, Capoeira sport gymnastics, dancing): all these participants showed better results compared to others. Totally, Reiki, Yoga, meditation help replenish the internal energy of the body, thereby normalizing the work of physiological processes, immune, cardiovascular, and other systems [28,42]; sports activities allow to activate the recovery processes in the body, redirect attention, and at the same time get rid of interfering social-personal factors and reveal internal sanogenic resources. As consequence, the only salubrious catchall unity "mind-spirit-body" is achieved that is allistic by nature, directly normalizes psychosomatics, being quintessence/basis of all Ancient Eastern body self-healing techniques.

Therefore, all the time when defensive-liberation war of Ukraine with Russia-aggressor is ongoing, predominantly in online-regime, Ukrainian psychologists (authors of the present study, including) have been successfully conducting a complex correctional-restabilative work with both all participants of present study, and other population categories - refugees, the people remaining in the war zone and their families, military/medical personnel, rescuers: 1) carried out telephone consultations provided by telephone numbers indicated on various websites, ads in stores, pharmacies; 2) provided training the sport-recreational activities; 3) explained the methods of self-rehabilitation of the body (Reiki, Yoga, meditation, prayers), ways of self-stabilization of the psyche and methods of complex reinforcing of memory-thinking-imagination which strengthened the ability to make the right decisions in various problem situations [28,42-45].

By conversation-interview method, convincing evidence has been obtained that Ukrainians, on the one hand, are highly motivated, aimed at an early end to the war, which reinforces and encourages them psycho-emotionally, on the other hand, a certain population segment needs special psychological support/

assistance. The results of this practical scientific work will be presented in our future publications. Besides, further research will be aimed at conducting a cross-cultural comparative analysis of students' psychosomatic state from different countries to develop ways to prevent stress among young people in critical situations.

## Conclusions

The main findings of the study:

1. During research period, psycho-emotional, somatic health and wellbeing of Ukrainian youth has significantly deteriorated.
2. Senior school pupils (the youngest) revealed the worst psychosomatic results: lowest level of personal wellbeing and highest degree of anxiety, but they more often resorted to cooperation in conflict situations. Consequently, students differ from Senior pupils by a higher level of personal development.
3. The indicators of students' personal development varied extremely wide, both as a whole and within each group of students. It indicates a very strongly expressed degree of individualization of their personal qualities. Namely, in each group there were participants both with high, medium, and low level of anxiety, and with high, medium, and low tendency to resolve conflicts by means of all five types of interaction (competition, adaptation, compromise, avoidance, cooperation). Besides, there were various combinations of these and other qualities.
4. The vast majority of students have indicators of personal development within the normal range. Only a small number of students have one-two indicators significantly different from the average. In other words, with the overall harmony of the personal development of students, some of them, in general, have pronounced problems, so they may need the help of a psychologist.
5. With extremely wide variability of indicators in general, it is still possible to identify some averaged changes and trends, indicating dim but still statistically significant differences between different groups of students. These differences/trends affect all the studied parameters: the ranks of value orientations, indicators of psychological wellbeing, rates of personal anxiety, and difficulties in resolving conflicts in various ways. These differences depend on all the independent variables, namely: age, gender, and specialty (psychologists, sociologists, lawyers).
6. In general, the relationships between the indicators of different personal characteristics are statistically insignificant: each personal quality is relatively independent of others. A weak positive correlation between levels of psychological wellbeing and personal anxiety occurs most frequently. It testifies that such qualities as general emotionality and teaching activity are important in determining the personal development of students. Indicators of propensity to resolve conflicts in various ways are practically not related either to psychological wellbeing or to personal anxiety.

7. From the point of view of the acme logical approach in analyzing the students' characteristics, the present-day young Ukrainians had the average statistical indicators of personal qualities, but needed, nevertheless, intensive psychological support for their personal, social, and professional development.

8. Implementation of telephone psychological consultations, training in sport-recreational activities and familiarization with the ancient-Oriental techniques for self-healing of the body and stabilization of internal energy proved to be an effective means of self-stabilization of the psyche and methods of complex reinforcement of memory-thinking-imagination.

## Limitations

Data on the relationship between anxiety and well-being with value orientations require clarification. A study with a larger sample is needed. The effectiveness of the correctional and rehabilitation work provided to participants who suffered because of hostilities claims experimental and statistical confirmation.

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