

**Free International University of Moldova
Universitatea Liberă Internațională din Moldova**



**Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Facultatea Științe Sociale și ale Educației**

**Doctoral School of the Free International University of Moldova
Școala Doctorală a Universității Libere Internaționale din Moldova**

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**Materialele Conferinței Științifice cu Participare Internațională
Ediția a XVI-a
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SELF-AWARENESS OF UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN THE INTERPERSONAL SPACE OF MARTIAL LAW

AUTO-CONȘTIINȚA STUDENȚILOR DIN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL SUPERIOR DIN UCRAINA ÎN SPAȚIUL INTERPERSONAL ȘI ÎN CONTEXTUL LEGII MARȚIALE

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Abstract. *This study investigated the subjective characteristics of stress experiences among Ukrainian students living under martial law and their relationship to the system of self-images. The research was conducted between 2022 and 2024. The sample comprised 301 students from Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University and Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic National University. The empirical methodology included the Stress Level Test (linguistically adapted by O. Kharko) for assessing general stress levels and the Interpersonal Behavior Inventory (T. Leary, IBI) for examining interpersonal self-awareness. The findings indicate that the intellectual manifestations of stress were the most pronounced among higher education students. Eight types of interpersonal self-awareness were identified. The results also revealed the predominance of a generalized interpersonal self-image characterized as a “joyless individual with feelings of distrust and altruistic guilt,” which was closely associated with the cognitive symptoms of stress experienced by students. These findings provide important directions for psychological support and intervention within the interpersonal context of student life under conditions of martial law.*

Keywords: *chronic stress, martial law, interpersonal self-awareness, higher education students.*

Rezumat. *Studiul investighează particularitățile experiențelor subiective de stres la studenții ucraineni aflați în condiții de lege marțială și relația acestora cu sistemul de auto-reprezentări interpersonale. Cercetarea a fost realizată în perioada 2022–2024 pe un eșantion de 301 studenți de la Universitatea Națională Pedagogică „Volodymyr Hnatiuk” din Ternopil și Universitatea Națională „Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic”.*

Metodologia empirică a inclus Testul de evaluare a nivelului de stres (adaptat lingvistic de O. Kharko) și Inventarul comportamentului interpersonal (T. Leary). Rezultatele evidențiază predominanța manifestărilor intelectuale ale stresului în rândul studenților din învățământul superior. Au fost identificate opt tipuri de auto-conștiință interpersonală.

De asemenea, a fost evidențiată prevalența unei imagini generalizate de sine interpersonale, caracterizată printr-un profil de tip „individ lipsit de bucurie, cu sentimente de neîncredere și vinovăție altruistă”, asociat semnificativ cu simptomele cognitive ale

stresului. Rezultatele oferă direcții importante pentru intervenția psihologică și sprijinul studenților în condiții de stres cronic generat de contextul legii marțiale.

Cuvinte-cheie: *stres cronic, lege marțială, auto-conștiință interpersonală, studenți din învățământul superior.*

INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this study is determined by the prolonged impact of military events as a chronic stress factor that negatively affects the experiences and well-being of student youth. Stress is arguably one of the most widely used scientific concepts, particularly in the context of increasing awareness of the persistent turbulence of contemporary life, often described as a condition of uncertainty (Selye, 1956; Bernard, 1974; Cannon, 1963; Thoits, 2010).

A concise overview of the most commonly cited definitions of stress is provided by the American Institute of Stress. These definitions describe stress as “physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension,” “a state or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize,” or simply “that which causes suffering” (What Is Stress, 2024).

From the perspective of contemporary science, however, stress is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that extends far beyond simplified interpretations and is not exclusively negative. On the one hand, the World Health Organization (WHO) has described stress as the “health epidemic of the 21st century.” WHO experts define stress as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. On the other hand, stress is also recognized as a natural human response that can motivate individuals to cope with challenges and threats (Stress, 2023).

Within psychology, the concept of stress is closely linked to research in biology and medicine through such notions as adaptation and maladaptation, homeostasis and heterostasis, among others (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Cohen et al., 2016; Crosswell & Lockwood, 2020; Fink, 2017).

The APA Dictionary of Psychology defines emotional stress as “a feeling of psychological tension and anxiety triggered by situations of danger or threat to personal safety, as well as by internal conflicts, frustration, loss of self-esteem, and grief” (Emotional Stress, 2022). While the classical concept of stress remains particularly relevant within biological and medical sciences, contemporary approaches increasingly focus on its psychological dimensions, especially in situations characterized by uncertainty and instability.

Such uncertainty is associated with numerous challenges and threats in the modern world, including natural disasters, epidemics, economic crises, military conflicts, and other large-scale social disruptions. One of the most significant stress-inducing events of the 21st century was the COVID-19 pandemic, which profoundly affected both the global social order and individual well-being. In Ukraine, the pandemic followed a period of intense socio-political transformations associated first with the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) and later the Joint Forces Operation (JFO), which marked the initial stages of the military conflict that gradually came to be understood by the population as a full-scale war initiated by Russia against Ukraine.

According to a national survey conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) prior to the full-scale invasion, 69% of respondents in a

representative sample reported having experienced a stressful situation in 2021, the highest level recorded during the previous decade. Among the most frequently reported psychological manifestations of stress were loss of trust in people and experiences of betrayal (10%), feelings of helplessness (7%), and loss of confidence in one's own abilities (3%) (Novikova, 2021).

The outbreak of the full-scale war on February 24, 2022, further intensified these challenges. Ukrainian citizens were immediately confronted with severe restrictions and hardships associated with martial law. Stress levels increased substantially due to forced displacement, both within Ukraine and abroad. Young people, in particular, faced difficult decisions regarding whether and how to continue their education while simultaneously adapting to dramatically changed economic and social conditions.

The aim of this study is to provide a theoretical and empirical analysis of the subjective characteristics of stress experiences among Ukrainian higher education students living under martial law and to examine their relationship with the system of self-images.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted between 2022 and 2024. The sample comprised 301 students from Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University and Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic National University. The mean age of the participants was 19.6 years.

The empirical assessment employed two psychodiagnostic instruments. General stress levels were measured using the *Stress Level Test* (linguistically adapted by O. Kharko). Interpersonal self-awareness and interpersonal self-images were assessed using Leary's *Interpersonal Behavior Inventory* (IBI).

The collected data were processed using descriptive statistical methods and comparative analysis. The obtained results were interpreted in relation to the theoretical framework of stress research and interpersonal self-awareness under conditions of martial law.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

When focusing specifically on higher education students, research in Ukraine has primarily examined the characteristics of academic stress and examination stress as one of its manifestations. For example, I. Mazoha notes that substantial evidence indicates that chronic stress is a "constant companion of student life." In her view, academic and examination stress occupy a leading position among the causes of chronic psychological tension. It is emphasized that student stress generally develops as a result of significant information overload and insufficient systematic work during the semester and, as a rule, becomes most pronounced during examination periods (Mazoha, 2015).

In contrast, the events of the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) and the Joint Forces Operation (JFO), and especially the onset of the full-scale war in Ukraine, created the need to investigate not only academic stress but also war-related stress among students. Various aspects of stress experienced by students under martial law have been examined by researchers, including O. Dzhedzhera and O. Yurchuk, as well as R. Kulakov and L. Kulakova (Dzhedzhera & Yurchuk, 2023; Kulakov & Kulakova,

2024). However, personal characteristics that may serve as significant predictors and correlates of stress experiences, including features of self-awareness associated with the complex system of self-images and self-evaluations, remain relatively underexplored.

The present study found that intellectual manifestations of stress were the most pronounced among higher education students. This result appears entirely logical. Physiological symptoms, by contrast, were the least pronounced. We believe that the predominance of intellectual manifestations can be explained by the nature of students' primary activities, which involve intensive cognitive engagement and contribute to heightened academic (essentially informational) stress even outside the context of martial law. Conversely, the relatively low expression of physiological symptoms may be associated with the age-related characteristics of the studied group, whose members are generally at the peak of their physical health and adaptive capacities (Savelyuk et al., 2023).

In 2024, during the third stage of the study, the *Stress Level Test* developed by V. Shcherbatykh (linguistically adapted by O. Kharko) was supplemented by T. Leary's well-known *Interpersonal Behavior Inventory*. This instrument is based on the concept of interpersonal behavior, traits, and motives, which underlies the *Interpersonal Circumplex Model*. The circumplex includes eight basic types of interpersonal behavior represented through 128 characteristics associated with two orthogonal dimensions: a vertical axis (status, dominance, power, and control) and a horizontal axis (solidarity, friendliness, warmth, and love). Subsequently, these two dimensions came to be interpreted as agency and communion, respectively (Horowitz, 1996).

The Ukrainian version of the inventory has been published, among others, in a collection of psychodiagnostic methods edited under the scientific and methodological supervision of O. Kokun. In that publication, the instrument is presented as *Character Properties: T. Leary's Self-Assessment Questionnaire* (Kokun et al., 2011, p. 162). The decision to incorporate this inventory into the study was based on the assumption that stress experiences, particularly in their psychological dimension, are closely connected with socially and interpersonally conditioned self-images. Furthermore, the four principal orientations of the Interpersonal Circumplex Model—dominance versus submission and friendliness versus hostility—can be linked, at least partially, to major stress-response patterns such as “fight,” “flight,” and “freeze.”

At the third stage of the study, the response format of both Shcherbatykh's and Leary's instruments was modified from a bipolar (“agree”/“disagree”) format to a five-point scale analogous to the Likert scale. One of the main purposes of this modification was to facilitate a more comprehensive correlation analysis of the quantitative data obtained. For Leary's inventory, participants received the following instruction:

“Carefully read the descriptions of personal traits and behavioral tendencies. Evaluate each characteristic according to your perception of yourself using the following scale: 1 = not characteristic at all; 2 = almost not characteristic; 3 = characteristic to some extent; 4 = substantially characteristic; 5 = completely characteristic.”

The inventory made it possible to identify respondents' self-perceptions regarding each of the 128 personal characteristics and to construct a structured description of eight types of interpersonal behavior. In the present study, these

categories are referred to as "types of interpersonal self-awareness." For the sake of clarity in presenting the results, ratings of 4 and 5 were combined into a single category, "characteristic to a substantial extent." Nevertheless, when ranking the degree of expression of the respective traits, primary emphasis was placed on the mean quantitative indicators.

The first type of interpersonal self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 3.14$) consists of the following 16 traits (self-images) with the corresponding indicators (traits are listed in descending order of \bar{x} values): 1. "I strive for success" ($\bar{x} = 4.03$; to a substantial extent – 69.2% of respondents), 2. "I can stand my ground" ($\bar{x} = 3.67$; to a substantial extent – 55.7% of respondents), 3. "I like giving advice" ($\bar{x} = 3.37$; to a substantial extent – 41.1% of respondents), 4. "I strive to help everyone" ($\bar{x} = 3.34$; to a substantial extent – 46.1% of respondents), 5. "I like responsibility" ($\bar{x} = 3.33$; to a substantial extent – 46.4% of respondents), 6. "I know how to be liked" ($\bar{x} = 3.27$; to a substantial extent – 45.3% of respondents), 7. "I am able to evoke admiration" ($\bar{x} = 3.19$; to a substantial extent – 35.3% of respondents), 8. "I make an impression on others" ($\bar{x} = 3.16$; to a substantial extent – 38.8% of respondents), 9. "I know how to manage and give orders" ($\bar{x} = 3.12$; to a substantial extent – 40.8% of respondents), 10. "I am respected by others" ($\bar{x} = 3.07$; to a substantial extent – 40.3% of respondents), 11. "I create an impression of importance" ($\bar{x} = 3.03$; to a substantial extent – 28.8% of respondents), 12. "I have leadership talent" ($\bar{x} = 3.00$; to a substantial extent – 32.4% of respondents), 13. "I expect admiration from everyone" ($\bar{x} = 2.98$; to a substantial extent – 34.0% of respondents), 14. "Bossy and influential" ($\bar{x} = 2.78$; to a substantial extent – 22.0% of respondents), 15. "Authoritative" ($\bar{x} = 2.71$; to a substantial extent – 20.8% of respondents), and 16. "Managing other people" ($\bar{x} = 2.27$; to a substantial extent – 10.0% of respondents).

Given the traits attributed to themselves by a relatively large number of respondents, this type was labelled "With Leadership Qualities, Influential" (the original designation was "Authoritarian"). It was found that higher education students primarily strive for success and value their ability to stand their ground, whereas they are less likely to perceive themselves as authoritative or capable of managing others. In other words, the empirical findings reveal a theoretical dichotomy between leadership and management: students perceive leadership qualities as more characteristic of themselves, whereas, given their relatively young age, they do not yet possess actual managerial or authoritative power.

The second type of interpersonal self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 2.71$) is represented by the following 16 traits, ranked according to their mean values: 1) "Able to take care of myself" ($\bar{x} = 3.87$; to a substantial extent – 66.5% of respondents), 2) "I have a sense of dignity" ($\bar{x} = 3.84$; to a substantial extent – 65.8% of respondents), 3) "Independent" ($\bar{x} = 3.58$; to a substantial extent – 55.0% of respondents), 4) "Confident" ($\bar{x} = 3.48$; to a substantial extent – 45.3% of respondents), 5) "Businesslike, practical" ($\bar{x} = 3.29$; to a substantial extent – 41.7% of respondents), 6) "I can show indifference" ($\bar{x} = 3.05$; to a substantial extent – 36.7% of respondents), 7) "Self-confident and persistent" ($\bar{x} = 3.04$; to a substantial extent – 34.2% of respondents), 8) "Inclined to competition" ($\bar{x} = 2.92$; to a substantial extent – 32.4% of respondents), 9) "I love fame" ($\bar{x} = 2.42$; to a substantial extent – 20.7% of respondents), 10) "Sly and calculating" ($\bar{x} = 2.21$; to a substantial extent – 17.2% of respondents), 11) "I think only of myself" ($\bar{x} = 2.10$; to a

substantial extent – 11.4% of respondents), 12) "Egoistic" ($\bar{x} = 2.07$; to a substantial extent – 14.8% of respondents), 13) "Boastful" ($\bar{x} = 2.05$; to a substantial extent – 12.6% of respondents), 14) "Superior and self-satisfied" ($\bar{x} = 1.99$; to a substantial extent – 9.5% of respondents), 15) "Despotic" ($\bar{x} = 1.91$; to a substantial extent – 8.9% of respondents), and 16) "I judge people by rank and income" ($\bar{x} = 1.56$; to a substantial extent – 7.2% of respondents).

Based on the research findings, this type was labelled "Independent, Pragmatic" (originally "Egoistic"). Indeed, Ukrainian higher education students perceive themselves as capable of taking care of themselves independently and as possessing a strong sense of dignity. Conversely, only a small proportion of respondents described themselves as superior, despotic, or inclined to judge others according to their social or economic status. We assume that the tendency to perceive oneself as independent and self-reliant is related to the realities of Ukraine's ongoing struggle for sovereignty and statehood, which is reflected in the consciousness and self-awareness of its citizens.

The third type of interpersonal self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 2.75$) consists of the following 16 traits arranged in descending order according to their mean values: 1) "I can be sincere" ($\bar{x} = 4.28$; to a substantial extent – 78.8% of respondents), 2) "Open and straightforward" ($\bar{x} = 3.58$; to a substantial extent – 50.0% of respondents), 3) "Frank" ($\bar{x} = 3.44$; to a substantial extent – 50.6% of respondents), 4) "Able to be strict" ($\bar{x} = 3.43$; to a substantial extent – 49.7% of respondents), 5) "Strict but fair" ($\bar{x} = 3.38$; to a substantial extent – 45.5% of respondents), 6) "Firm and tough when needed" ($\bar{x} = 3.27$; to a substantial extent – 37.1% of respondents), 7) "Critical of others" ($\bar{x} = 2.85$; to a substantial extent – 28.4% of respondents), 8) "Irritable" ($\bar{x} = 2.83$; to a substantial extent – 31.8% of respondents), 9) "Inexorable but impartial" ($\bar{x} = 2.82$; to a substantial extent – 23.8% of respondents), 10) "Impatient with other people's mistakes" ($\bar{x} = 2.43$; to a substantial extent – 23.2% of respondents), 11) "Self-interested" ($\bar{x} = 2.25$; to a substantial extent – 16.2% of respondents), 12) "Often angry" ($\bar{x} = 2.22$; to a substantial extent – 15.3% of respondents), 13) "Often unfriendly" ($\bar{x} = 1.98$; to a substantial extent – 10.7% of respondents), 14) "Cold, callous" ($\bar{x} = 1.84$; to a substantial extent – 12.9% of respondents), 15) "Caustic, mocking" ($\bar{x} = 1.78$; to a substantial extent – 10.6% of respondents), and 16) "Evil, cruel" ($\bar{x} = 1.73$; to a substantial extent – 8.8% of respondents).

According to the research findings, this type was labelled "Sincere, Uncompromising" (originally designated as "Aggressive"). This substantial modification of the label is explained by the fact that higher education students rated themselves highest on traits such as sincerity, openness, and frankness, while assigning the lowest ratings to characteristics such as causticity, cruelty, and malice. The discrepancy between the self-recognition of socially desirable traits related to sincerity and socially undesirable traits related to cruelty is considerable, reaching approximately 70% of respondents.

The fourth type of interpersonal self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 2.72$) includes the following 16 traits: 1) "I cannot stand being commanded" ($\bar{x} = 3.46$; to a substantial extent – 44.7% of respondents), 2) "Stubborn" ($\bar{x} = 3.24$; to a substantial extent – 42.6% of respondents), 3) "Able to show distrust" ($\bar{x} = 3.19$; to a substantial extent – 39.0% of respondents), 4) "It is difficult to influence me" ($\bar{x} = 3.12$; to a substantial

extent – 30.9% of respondents), 5) "Often disappointed" (\bar{x} = 3.05; to a substantial extent – 34.5% of respondents), 6) "Hold grudges for a long time" (\bar{x} = 2.97; to a substantial extent – 37.2% of respondents), 7) "Skeptical" (\bar{x} = 2.95; to a substantial extent – 26.7% of respondents), 8) "Inclined to envy" (\bar{x} = 2.80; to a substantial extent – 30.4% of respondents), 9) "Touchy, meticulous" (\bar{x} = 2.70; to a substantial extent – 23.1% of respondents), 10) "Often sad" (\bar{x} = 2.66; to a substantial extent – 24.3% of respondents), 11) "I have a spirit of contradiction" (\bar{x} = 2.65; to a substantial extent – 23.8% of respondents), 12) "Vindictive" (\bar{x} = 2.53; to a substantial extent – 24.2% of respondents), 13) "I like to complain" (\bar{x} = 2.47; to a substantial extent – 25.8% of respondents), 14) "Inclined to whine" (\bar{x} = 2.02; to a substantial extent – 13.1% of respondents), 15) "Insensitive, indifferent" (\bar{x} = 1.86; to a substantial extent – 11.8% of respondents), and 16) "Embittered" (\bar{x} = 1.81; to a substantial extent – 5.4% of respondents).

Based on the dominant self-characteristics reported by the respondents, this type was labelled "Nonconformist, Distrustful" (originally designated as "Suspicious"). The use of the term *nonconformist* is primarily associated with the self-image "I cannot stand being commanded," which emerged as the most salient characteristic within this category. It should be noted that, unlike the previous three types, none of the traits included in this category was endorsed by at least half of the respondents. In other words, higher education students generally do not perceive themselves as markedly nonconformist, unyielding, or distrustful. This finding is logically connected with the overall pattern observed in the next type of interpersonal self-awareness.

The fifth type of interpersonal self-awareness (\bar{x} = 2.80) includes the following 16 traits: 1) "Gentle" (\bar{x} = 3.73; to a substantial extent – 52.9% of respondents), 2) "Able to admit one's own mistakes" (\bar{x} = 3.42; to a substantial extent – 52.7% of respondents), 3) "Able to be self-critical" (\bar{x} = 3.36; to a substantial extent – 50.6% of respondents), 4) "Modest" (\bar{x} = 3.17; to a substantial extent – 39.3% of respondents), 5) "Easily embarrassed" (\bar{x} = 2.90; to a substantial extent – 34.9% of respondents), 6) "Compliant" (\bar{x} = 2.86; to a substantial extent – 24.8% of respondents), 7) "Unpretentious" (\bar{x} = 2.84; to a substantial extent – 30.9% of respondents), 8) "Inclined to self-blame" (\bar{x} = 2.81; to a substantial extent – 30.3% of respondents), 9) "Shy" (\bar{x} = 2.77; to a substantial extent – 29.0% of respondents), 10) "Not confident in oneself" (\bar{x} = 2.69; to a substantial extent – 24.6% of respondents), 11) "Willingly subordinate" (\bar{x} = 2.68; to a substantial extent – 15.4% of respondents), 12) "Unconfident" (\bar{x} = 2.54; to a substantial extent – 24.4% of respondents), 13) "Timid" (\bar{x} = 2.38; to a substantial extent – 18.9% of respondents), 14) "Distrustful and suspicious" (\bar{x} = 2.34; to a substantial extent – 20.7% of respondents), 15) "Uninitiated" (\bar{x} = 2.26; to a substantial extent – 15.6% of respondents), and 16) "Excessively submissive" (\bar{x} = 2.12; to a substantial extent – 11.2% of respondents).

According to the research findings, this type was labelled "Compliant, Self-Critical" (originally designated as "Submissive"). The results indicate that more than half of the respondents perceive themselves as gentle, capable of admitting their own mistakes, and self-critical. At the same time, the smallest proportion of students identified themselves as excessively submissive. We associate this finding with the patterns observed in the previous types, particularly with the high importance

attributed to personal dignity in the self-awareness of higher education students in Ukraine.

The sixth type of interpersonal self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 2.99$) includes the following 16 traits: 1) "Grateful" ($\bar{x} = 4.16$; to a substantial extent – 74.0% of respondents), 2) "Respectful" ($\bar{x} = 3.89$; to a substantial extent – 65.1% of respondents), 3) "Compassionate" ($\bar{x} = 3.48$; to a substantial extent – 46.7% of respondents), 4) "Trusting and eager to please others" ($\bar{x} = 3.44$; to a substantial extent – 43.2% of respondents), 5) "Willingly accept advice" ($\bar{x} = 3.32$; to a substantial extent – 39.3% of respondents), 6) "Highly respect authorities" ($\bar{x} = 3.24$; to a substantial extent – 41.1% of respondents), 7) "Inclined to admiration and imitation" ($\bar{x} = 3.15$; to a substantial extent – 33.9% of respondents), 8) "Seek approval" ($\bar{x} = 3.12$; to a substantial extent – 36.6% of respondents), 9) "Allow others to make decisions" ($\bar{x} = 3.09$; to a substantial extent – 36.3% of respondents), 10) "Often turn to others for help" ($\bar{x} = 2.89$; to a substantial extent – 27.3% of respondents), 11) "Like to be cared for" ($\bar{x} = 2.82$; to a substantial extent – 30.8% of respondents), 12) "Easily get into awkward situations" ($\bar{x} = 2.61$; to a substantial extent – 21.5% of respondents), 13) "Hardly ever object to anyone" ($\bar{x} = 2.37$; to a substantial extent – 11.3% of respondents), 14) "Dependent, not self-sufficient" ($\bar{x} = 2.23$; to a substantial extent – 14.3% of respondents), 15) "Like to obey" ($\bar{x} = 2.01$; to a substantial extent – 9.0% of respondents), and 16) "Intrusive" ($\bar{x} = 1.97$; to a substantial extent – 7.7% of respondents).

According to the research findings, this type may be described as "Grateful, Respectful, and Approval-Oriented" (originally designated as "Dependent"). The highest-rated characteristics within this category were gratitude and respectfulness, both endorsed by a substantial majority of respondents. Compassion, trustfulness, and willingness to accept advice were also relatively prominent. In contrast, traits traditionally associated with dependency, such as obedience, lack of self-sufficiency, and intrusiveness, received the lowest ratings. These findings suggest that students' self-perceptions within this category are characterised more by appreciation of others, respect, and social responsiveness than by dependency in the classical sense.

Based on the dominant self-characteristics of higher education students, this type was labelled "Grateful, Dependent on Others" (originally designated as "Dependent"). In particular, gratitude and respect for others are closely intertwined within students' self-awareness. In contrast, respondents least frequently recognized in themselves a tendency toward obedience and intrusiveness, which is also consistent with the results obtained for the previous types. Overall, social dependence on other people among the students studied appears to be ambiguous and ambivalent. On the one hand, almost one-third of respondents are willing to accept help from others and enjoy being cared for; on the other hand, only about one in ten acknowledges a certain degree of personal lack of independence.

The seventh type of interpersonal self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 3.21$) includes the following 16 traits: 1) "Friendly" ($\bar{x} = 4.06$; to a substantial extent – 72.9% of respondents), 2) "Attentive and kind" ($\bar{x} = 3.96$; to a substantial extent – 68.1% of respondents), 3) "Able to cooperate and provide mutual help" ($\bar{x} = 3.95$; to a substantial extent – 67.5% of respondents), 4) "Good-natured" ($\bar{x} = 3.84$; to a substantial extent – 65.6% of respondents), 5) "Sociable and easy to get along with" ($\bar{x} = 3.69$; to a substantial extent – 56.2% of respondents), 6) "Always polite in

communication" (\bar{x} = 3.65; to a substantial extent – 53.2% of respondents), 7) "Strive to get along with other people" (\bar{x} = 3.59; to a substantial extent – 50.9% of respondents), 8) "Value the opinions of others" (\bar{x} = 3.40; to a substantial extent – 42.3% of respondents), 9) "Always friendly with everyone" (\bar{x} = 3.27; to a substantial extent – 39.6% of respondents), 10) "Benevolent towards everyone without exception" (\bar{x} = 2.97; to a substantial extent – 32.0% of respondents), 11) "Sympathize with everyone" (\bar{x} = 2.79; to a substantial extent – 24.3% of respondents), 12) "Overly trusting" (\bar{x} = 2.64; to a substantial extent – 22.8% of respondents), 13) "Strive for everyone's approval" (\bar{x} = 2.54; to a substantial extent – 26.1% of respondents), 14) "Easily influenced by others" (\bar{x} = 2.44; to a substantial extent – 16.2% of respondents), 15) "Agree with everyone" (\bar{x} = 2.32; to a substantial extent – 10.0% of respondents), and 16) "Willing to trust anyone" (\bar{x} = 2.28; to a substantial extent – 15.4% of respondents).

According to the study findings, this type was labelled "Friendly, Trusting" (originally designated as "Friendly"). Accordingly, friendliness emerged as the dominant self-characteristic within this category. Moreover, more than half of the respondents also recognized in themselves such traits as kindness, cooperativeness, good nature, sociability, politeness in communication, and a desire to maintain harmonious relationships with others. Notably, a larger number of traits in this category (seven) were identified as salient personal characteristics than in any of the previous types.

The eighth type of interpersonal self-awareness (\bar{x} = 3.19) includes the following 16 traits: 1) "Responsive to calls for help" (\bar{x} = 3.88; to a substantial extent – 63.3% of respondents), 2) "Generous" (\bar{x} = 3.77; to a substantial extent – 63.1% of respondents), 3) "Kind, inspiring confidence" (\bar{x} = 3.66; to a substantial extent – 54.8% of respondents), 4) "Tender and soft-hearted" (\bar{x} = 3.65; to a substantial extent – 51.2% of respondents), 5) "I love taking care of other people" (\bar{x} = 3.57; to a substantial extent – 50.3% of respondents), 6) "Tactful" (\bar{x} = 3.56; to a substantial extent – 53.5% of respondents), 7) "Approving" (\bar{x} = 3.53; to a substantial extent – 51.1% of respondents), 8) "Strive to help everyone" (\bar{x} = 3.34; to a substantial extent – 46.1% of respondents), 9) "Selfless" (\bar{x} = 3.24; to a substantial extent – 43.5% of respondents), 10) "Inclined to forgive and patient with shortcomings" (\bar{x} = 3.13; to a substantial extent – 38.5% of respondents), 11) "Try to comfort everyone" (\bar{x} = 2.91; to a substantial extent – 28.4% of respondents), 12) "Overflowing with excessive compassion" (\bar{x} = 2.78; to a substantial extent – 26.1% of respondents), 13) "Care about others to my own detriment" (\bar{x} = 2.71; to a substantial extent – 26.6% of respondents), 14) "Forgive everything" (\bar{x} = 2.60; to a substantial extent – 24.9% of respondents), 15) "Overly indulgent toward those around me" (\bar{x} = 2.50; to a substantial extent – 17.5% of respondents), and 16) "Spoil people with excessive kindness" (\bar{x} = 2.25; to a substantial extent – 15.3% of respondents).

According to the research findings, this type was labelled "Altruistic, Sometimes to the Extreme" (originally designated as "Altruistic"). As in the previous type, as many as seven interpersonal traits were identified as substantial components of self-awareness among higher education students: responsiveness (readiness to help others), generosity, kindness, tenderness, caring for others, tactfulness, and readiness to approve of others. Although the trait "spoiling people with excessive kindness"

received the lowest level of endorsement, the presence of several self-characteristics containing notions such as "excessive," "overly," or "too much," some of which were endorsed by approximately one-quarter of respondents, justified the addition of the phrase "*sometimes to the extreme*" to the title of this type.

The obtained results are summarized in consolidated form in Table 1.

Table 1. Degree of Expression of Types of Interpersonal Self-Awareness and Their Dominant Self-Images among Higher Education Students

No.	Interpersonal Personality Type (\bar{x} of all self-image components)	Dominant Self-Image	\bar{x}	Respondents with Substantial Expression (%)
1	Friendly, Trusting (3.21)	"Friendly"	4.06	72.9
2	Altruistic, Sometimes to the Extreme (3.19)	"Responsive to requests for help"	3.88	63.3
3	With Leadership Qualities, Influential (3.14)	"I strive for success"	4.03	69.2
4	Grateful, Dependent on Others (2.99)	"Grateful"	4.16	74.0
5	Compliant, Self-Critical (2.80)	"Gentle"	3.73	52.9
6	Sincere, Uncompromising (2.75)	"I can be sincere"	4.28	78.8
7	Nonconformist, Distrustful (2.72)	"I cannot stand being commanded"	3.46	44.7
8	Independent, Pragmatic (2.71)	"Able to take care of myself"	3.87	66.5

Overall, the qualities that were most strongly represented in students' self-awareness were: "*I can be sincere*" ($\bar{x} = 4.28$), "*grateful*" ($\bar{x} = 4.16$), "*friendly*" ($\bar{x} = 4.06$), and "*I strive for success*" ($\bar{x} = 4.03$). Conversely, the least characteristic qualities were: "*embittered*" ($\bar{x} = 1.81$), "*caustic, mocking*" ($\bar{x} = 1.78$), "*evil, cruel*" ($\bar{x} = 1.73$), and "*I judge people by rank and income*" ($\bar{x} = 1.56$).

Thus, under conditions of martial law and the chronic stress associated with it, higher education students retain a generally positive self-concept. This may be regarded as an important personal resource that helps prevent progression into the "red zone" of the exhaustion stage of stress.

DISCUSSION

The study found that intellectual manifestations of stress were the most pronounced among higher education students, whereas physiological symptoms appeared to be relatively the least pronounced. As a result of the study, eight types of interpersonal self-awareness were identified and provisionally labelled as follows: "With Leadership Qualities, Influential," "Independent, Pragmatic," "Sincere, Uncompromising," "Nonconformist, Distrustful," "Compliant, Self-Critical," "Grateful, Dependent on Others," "Friendly, Trusting," and "Altruistic, Sometimes to the Extreme." The findings also revealed the predominance of a generalized interpersonal self-image of a "*joyless individual with feelings of distrust and altruistic guilt*," which was

found to be closely associated with the cognitive manifestations of stress experienced by higher education students. These patterns provide important directions for the development of psychological support and intervention within the interpersonal sphere of student life.

The obtained results are consistent with contemporary research highlighting a range of positive adaptive personality changes that may emerge as an individual's response to traumatic experiences (Dzhedzhera & Yurchuk, 2023; Kulakov & Kulakova, 2024). Of particular interest in this regard is the phenomenon of post-traumatic growth, which is viewed as a constructive and positive outcome of coping with stress, including combat-related stress. According to S. Hanaba and E. Balashov, one of the key factors underlying post-traumatic growth is a transformation in self-perception. Specifically, this involves changes in self-acceptance and in one's understanding of one's place in the world, accompanied by a stronger orientation toward the development of personally meaningful qualities (Hanaba & Balashov, 2023).

A more detailed psychological interpretation of the broader sociological context can be found in the work of O. Zlobina and S. Dembitsky (Zlobina & Dembitsky, 2024). The authors note that "*war is a perpetual emergency that affects the entire network of social relationships*" and gives rise to a form of "*collective trauma.*" In other words, war exerts complex and multifaceted pressure on the psychological well-being of the population by generating numerous existential threats. In this context, the authors emphasize the importance of maintaining dispositional optimism—that is, stable positive expectations regarding the future—which is associated with more active behavioural and communicative coping strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, psychological assistance provided to higher education students experiencing chronic stress and its related symptoms should include, among other components, the psychocorrection of such self-images as the "Sad Self," "Disappointed Self," "Distrustful Self," "Guilty Self," "Insecure Self," "Irritable Self," and "Excessively Altruistic Self." In a broader sense, this may be interpreted as psychological work aimed at transforming the non-constructive life model of a "*joyless altruist with feelings of distrust and guilt*" into a more adaptive and psychologically resilient self-image, such as the generalized image of the "Friendly, Trusting Self." This type of interpersonal self-awareness is particularly important because most symptoms of subjective stress experience were found to have weak or predominantly non-significant associations with its constituent traits.

As a perspective for further scientific research, we consider comparative investigations of age-, gender-, and other socio-demographic differences in the experience of stress among Ukrainians living under wartime conditions, as well as their relationships with various components of self-awareness. Particular attention should also be devoted to psycho-semantic studies exploring the manifestations and transformation of trust under conditions of prolonged military conflict and social uncertainty.

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