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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST BETWEEN VALUES AND OPTIMAL PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING

Grankina-Sazonova N. V.
ORCID 0000-0002-0818-572X
natalia.grankina85@gmail.com

Abstract The paper is devoted to the problem of mechanism of relatedness of optimal personality functioning (OPF) and values as complex motivational cognitive constructs. The different approaches to understanding of interrelations between wellbeing and values are regarded. Most of works examine the direct way of influence of values on subjective and psychological well-being. Few studies regard the social peculiarities and individual characteristics of the personality as possible moderators and mediators.

The study examines the correlation connections between values, trust and OPF indexes, which are Psychological Well-Being (PWB) and Hardiness. Trust indexes are highly connected with OPF indexes. The values of Openness to change and Conservative values both correlate with OPF indexes. At the same time the Regression analysis and Structural Equation Modelling show that Openness to change values predict PWB. The structural model of PWB includes Self-trust as a mediator between values of Openness to change and PWB.

Key words: optimal personality functioning, trust, values, well-being, mediation model.

Анотація В статті розглядається проблема механізму зв'язку між оптимальним функціонуванням особистості (ОФО) та цінностями як складними когнітивно-мотиваційним утвореннями. Представлено різні підходи до вивчення взаємовідносин між цінностями та психологічним благополуччям. Здебільшого, досліджуються механізми прямого впливу цінностей на суб'єктивне та психологічне благополуччя. Деякі роботи розглядають соціальні особливості та індивідуальні характеристики особистості в якості складових, які модерують та опосередковують такий вплив.

В даній роботі представлено дослідження кореляційних зв'язків між цінностями, довірою та показниками ОФО, а саме психологічним благополуччям (ПБ) та життєстійкістю. Показники довіри тісно пов'язані з показниками ОФО. Цінності відкритості до змін та Консервативні цінності також пов'язані з ОФО. В той же час, регресійний аналіз та структурне моделювання вказують на те, що предиктором ПБ є цінності Відкритості до змін. Структурна модель ПБ долучає довіру до себе як медіатор між цінностями відкритості до змін та ПБ.

Ключові слова: оптимальне функціонування особистості, психологічне благополуччя, цінності, довіра, модель медіації, психологічне благополуччя.

The issue of optimal personality functioning (OPF) is one of the highest importance nowadays, when the society in developed countries has reached the economic stability, high level of medical service and education, social tolerance etc., but still many people do not feel happy and subjectively well. In 1958 M. Jahoda proposed a theory of ideal mental health which was viewed not as the absence of illnesses but as a set of certain structures of the personality. The author considered that time structure, social contact, collective effort or purpose, social identity or status, and regular activity should be developed in a personality for feeling well-being [3].

In 1960s the humanistic psychology referred to the problems of fully functioning personality (C.Rogers), self-actualization (A.Maslow) and other terms of personal growth (G. Allport, R. May and others). The humanistic psychology put the individuality and self-realization in the center of the personality's wellness.

Later R. Bradburn regarding the issue of person's functioning used the term "psychological well-being" (PWB) to describe the subjective feeling of one's being happy and satisfied with life. This term is widely known nowadays but is still understood in different ways. Two main directions for defining well-being in psychological literature are eudemonistic and hedonistic approaches. In hedonistic approach, well-being is regarded in terms of positive and negative affects balance and satisfaction with life (R. Bradburn, E. Diener). Eudemonistic approach (E. Deci, R.Ryan, C.Ryff) views PWB in the framework of humanistic views on the nature of personality and humanistic values, i.e. through the terms of personal growth, self-actualization etc.

C. Ryff's model of PWB is widely known and used in psychological studies. It is grounded on the humanistic approach to a personality and on the analysis of main characteristics of its optimal functioning by different authors. It also considers the M. Jahoda's Ideal Mental Health theory. The C. Ryff's PWB Scale is proved to be valid and reliable, so it is widely used in various scientific studies [9].

The C. Ryff's model of PWB includes six dimensions of person's existence. These dimensions can be measured, but they are not fixed once and forever. They reflect the person's image of his/her own relations, aspirations, settings, achievements and goals, values for this moment of life. The dimensions, which are measured, are Personal Growth, Autonomy, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, Self-Acceptance, Environmental Management.

Though C. Ryff's dimensions take into account most important humanistic grounds of optimal functioning, to our mind it lacks a unit which would reflect the ability to overcome obstacles. We think that it is important from two points of view. First, the eudemonic way of life itself requires some strengths from a

person because it's not just "easy and pleasant" life, it's rather full of intensions and efforts life. Second, the modern way of life is full of stresses and difficulties, and a person needs to manage them every day. That's why we consider, that OPF should also include Hardiness in one row with PWB. Hardiness is a complex of settings, which provide the person the possibility to overcome stresses and difficulties with resulting personal growth [7].

Besides the definition of what OPF is, another important question in this issue is "What are the factors which provide well-being?" Affects, optimism/neuroticism, emotional intelligence, social support and many other factors are regarded as possible predictors for it. Values as important motivational constructs of the personality are also widely investigated in their connection with OPF.

Schwartz and Sortheix mention that the influence of values on person's wellbeing has become a target of scientific studies recently, though the people's values are very close to their identities [11]. Depending on values people regard different events and situations as more or less desirable and as may feel satisfied or dissatisfied with them and with life in general. Values seem to have especially important role in eudemonistic well-being. The studies show, that the non-materialistic values are related to well-being and life-satisfaction while materialistic values seem not to relay to them significantly [1; 11; 14].

Schwartz argues that all values have following characteristics: 1) values are the beliefs, which are linked to emotions; 2) values are connected to goals; 3) values transcend specific actions and situations; 4) on the base of values people select and evaluate events, objects, other people etc.; 5) values have hierarchical structure, some of them are more important, than others; 6) the importance of values have the motivating impact on attitudes and behavior [11].

In the issue of values and wellbeing connectedness, Schwartz and Sortheix regard three guidelines to see their relatedness [11]. The first one suggests that values and wellbeing are related in a direct way. The motivational function of values provides higher level of wellbeing in case of fulfilling the valued activity and receiving valued results. In this way authors depict some healthy values, providing wellbeing, and unhealthy values, which decrease the level of wellbeing. Self-determination theory and positive psychology postulate these ideas in terms of intrinsic needs and strenthes [8; 12].

The second approach is based on the correspondence of the personal values and the values, prevailing in the environment, at the workplace, neighborhood, etc. Schwartz and Sortheix discuss three mechanisms of influence of values on SWB in this approach. One is connected with the resources of the environment, which it proposes to a person in accordance to its goals. Many opportunities to reach one's goal promotes higher well-being. The second mechanism is based on the conformism: when the person's behavior fits the social normalized values, the person is met positively, in other way the person receives negative feedback from the society. Therefore, the wellbeing depends on how the society responds to the person. The third mechanism is the internal values conflict of the person, which decreases the level of SWB [11].

In this line stands the Veage et al. study, which investigated the dependence of well-being on the accordance of personal values to the values of the workplace environment [14].

The third approach regards the relations between values and well-being as a process of achieving the valued goals. The more goals are achieved, the higher SWB level the person will have. This approach doesn't assume that it depends on the characteristics of the values themselves as it is in the first approach, but just considers the achievements.

Schwartz and Sortheix mention that there are few researches devoted to investigation of mediating role of individual characteristics between values and well-being. The social identities were regarded as possible mediators by Sagiv, Roccas and Oppenheim-Weller [10]. Also emotions are suggested to have a mediating role between values and SWB [11].

We didn't find any studies, which regarded trust as a mediator between values and OPF. Trust is a basic presupposition, which E. Erickson believed to determine all person's relations with the world, with other people and with the self. Kryazh and Grankina-Sazonova showed, that trust is closely related to psychological well-being and to OPF, and also provided the structural model of OPF with trust's mediating role between emotional intelligence and OPF [6].

We suppose that the connection between values (or some of them) and OPF also may be mediated by trust. Trust is understood as a complex construct, reflecting the person's attitude to the world, to other people and to oneself as to a safe and reliable or dangerous.

The goal of the article is to examine this hypothesis on the empirical data.

According to the goal we have following tasks;

1. To study connections between values and OPF indexes and between trust and OPF indexes;
2. To examine which values are more related to OPF;
3. To investigate if the relation between values and OPF may be mediated by trust.

Methods and Sample

To study values we used Values Questionnaire (Stern P.C, Dietz T., Guagnano G.A.) in I. Kryazh's adaptation [2; 5; 13]. This questionnaire is a version of Schwartz's values questionnaire version and includes four basic clusters which refer to basic types of individual values: Self-transcendent (Altruistic and Biosphere), Self-enhancement values, values of Openness to change and Conservative values.

Trust was measured by A. B. Kupreichenko's "Methodic of measuring trust/distrust to the world, to other people and to oneself" and T. P. Skripkina's "Reflexive questionnaire of self-trust level" [4].

The optimal functioning was measured by C. Ryff's "Psychological Well-being Scale" and S. Maddi's

“Hardiness Survey”.

All the methodics are reliable and valid.

The data analysis was carried out by the statistical methods: correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis and structural equation modelling (SEM). The statistical analysis was provided by the software Statistic 7.

The sample of the study consists of 236 respondents in the age from 17 to 40 years. Among them were the students of Kharkiv National University and Kharkiv National Pharmaceutical University: 32 students of Physics and Energetics Department, 33 students of History Department, 99 students of Psychology Department and 52 students of Laboratory Diagnostics Department (referred here as ‘medics’). Besides, there were 20 practical psychologists. The characteristics of the sample are provided in the table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of the sample (age)

Group	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
All respondents	21	20	17	40
Psychologists (all)	22,7	21	17	40
Psychologists (practicing specialists)	36	34	29	40
Psychologists (students)	20,4	20	17	25
Physics	19,25	19	17	21
Historians	19,4	19	19	20
Medics	21,04	21	19	23

Results

The data of descriptive statistics and results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed, that all indexes of trust, hardiness, values and some indexes of PWB (Personal Growth, Purpose in life and Self-acceptance) have the deviation from the normal distribution of data. That is why we use nonparametric statistic methods in further analysis.

The correlation analysis was carried out by Spearman method. The results are provided in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2

The correlation connections between trust and OFP indexes

Index	Trust	Trust to the world	Trust to other people	Self-trust	ST (self-trust)
PWB	0,52	0,38	0,28	0,47	0,56
Positive relations with others	0,4	0,28	0,35	0,23	0,42
Autonomy	0,24	0,16*	-	0,37	0,3
Environmental management	0,47	0,33	0,26	0,44	0,54
Personal growth	0,38**	0,32	0,19**	0,34	0,32
Purpose in life	0,44	0,36	0,26	0,34	0,49
Self-acceptance	0,48	0,34	0,23	0,47	0,52
Hardiness	0,53	0,35	0,36	0,41	0,6
Commitment	0,48	0,33	0,33	0,37	0,59
Control	0,46	0,29	0,28	0,42	0,49
Challenge	0,5	0,34	0,37	0,33	0,51

Connections are significant at the level $p < 0.05$, except * $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.001$;

As we can see from the table 2, trust is highly related both to PWB and to hardiness. The most significant connections with OFP indexes are observed for general trust and self-trust (both for scale of self-trust in Kupreichenko’s test and Reflexive self-trust scale). We found that all indexes of trust are related to all scales of PWB and Hardiness with the only exception of absence of any relatedness between trust to other people and autonomy. As far as autonomy means being able to stand other people’s pressure and fulfilling one’s own ideas and opinions, the trust to other people seems not to be helpful in providing this dimension of PWB. In general, we can state the high level of connection between trust and OFP.

Table 3

The correlation links between OFP indexes and values

Index	Biosphere values	Altruistic values	Conservative values	Self-enhancement values	Openness to change values
PWB					0,19**
Positive relations with others			0,13		
Autonomy					
Environmental management		0,15			
Personal growth					0,34***
Purpose in life					0,15
Self-acceptance				0,15	0,17*
Hardiness			0,13		
Commitment			0,14		
Control				0,14	
Challenge					

Connections are significant at the level $p < 0.05$, except * $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.005$; *** $p < 0.001$;

As we can see from the table 3, values are also closely connected with PWB and Hardiness. The values of Openness to change in general are more related to PWB and its scales while Conservative values are more related to Hardiness and its dimensions. The most significant connections we observe between Openness to changes values and PWB indexes: general PWB (0.19), Personal growth (0.34), Purpose in life (0.15) and Self-acceptance (0.17).

As far as any growth or development are impossible without changes, personal growth requires openness to changes. That's why they are highly connected with each other. When the personality has changes as a value, the personal growth is supported. The same way of connection we can observe for Purpose in life and Self-acceptance.

At the same time the Conservative values, which are the opposite side of this scale are more connected with another domain of OPF – the Hardiness (0.13) and its scale Commitment (0.14). We may regard it as the need to preserve the achieved values in stressful and difficult situations. In the situations when the changes around the person are out of its control it becomes important to save, what it already has first of all, and traditional values as family, relations etc. become a very important support. That's why we can observe such connections between Conservative values and Hardiness.

In that way, the OPF is connected with two controversial groups of values at the same time, they are the Openness to changes values and Conservative values. From the one hand, a person needs changes for its growth and development. From the other hand, it needs a certain stability to become a support for changes. We think that it is a dynamical process of finding and loosing balance for further growth with the base of the achieved goods.

Therefore, we can suppose that the Openness to changes values have the most significant meaning for the OPF, but in critical situations the Conservative values become a good support for the personality.

The correlation analysis of connections between trust and values showed, that self-trust (RST) is highly connected with all the values: Conservative (0.3, $p < 0.001$), Altruistic (0.18, $p < 0.005$), Self-enhancement (0.17, $p < 0.005$), Biosphere (0.15, $p < 0.05$) and Openness to changes (0.13, $p < 0.05$).

As we have found, the strongest relations with Self-trust have the Conservative values. We think, it's because both trust and Conservative values are related to safety issues. The person can trust to objects and subjects, which it regards as safe. And the Conservative values are connected with the need to save the goods and relations, which help to feel safe in a changing world.

At the same time, ST is also connected to Openness to changes values. We think, that self-trust is necessary for changes and personal growth, it gives the basis for feeling oneself to be able to survive in unknown changed future which will definitely differ from the well-known present. Changes always rise the level of anxiety, and it is high level of trust and self-trust, which supports the person in its growth, its inner changes.

The correlation analysis showed the presence of connections between the values, trust and OPF indexes. However, it doesn't give us the answer to a question if values or trust predict the OPF. The causal effect we can check with the help of the Multiple regression modelling method. We used the Forward Stepwise method of regression analysis, when the best predictors are chosen one by one.

Table 4

Predictors-variables involved into analysis	Dependent			
	PWB		Hardiness	
	Predictors, which are confirmed to stay in the model with β -coefficients	R ² and R ² adj	Predictors, which are confirmed to stay in the model with β -coefficients	R ² and R ² adj
Scales «Trust to the world», «Trust to other people» and «Self-trust», ST	ST 0,41; Trust to the world 0,19; Self-trust 0,23	R ² 0,47; R ² adj 0,465	ST 0,47; Trust to other people 0,19; Trust to the world 0,14*; Self-trust 0,13*	R ² 0,47; R ² adj 0,46
Trust and ST	ST 0,44; Trust 0,35	R ² 0,46; R ² adj 0,45	Trust 0,46; ST 0,34	R ² 0,47; R ² adj 0,47
Values	Openness to changes values 0,22	R ² 0,047; R ² adj 0,043	-	-
Trust ST Values	ST 0,44 Trust 0,34 Openness to changes values 0,1**	R ² 0,47; R ² adj 0,46	ST 0,45 Trust 0,35	R ² 0,47; R ² adj 0,47

The indexes are significant at level $p < 0,001$, except * $p < 0,1$ and ** $p < 0,05$

As we can see from the table, both PWB and Hardiness are significantly predicted by trust in its various forms, and the most weighting of trust kinds for OPF indexes is ST. As for the values, we only observe the meaning of Openness to changes values for PWB, both separately and together with trust and ST.

In that way, though we have found correlation connections between different values and indexes of OPF, only one group of values is confirmed to be its predictor, and only for 4.7%. Nevertheless, it gains 47% of predicting together with trust. Therefore, we can suppose that the influence of values on OPF may be mediated by trust.

To examine this supposition we built and checked structural model of OPF with trust as a mediator between values and OPF. We used the SEPATH method. As far as regression analysis showed that the predicting role have Openness to changes values, we used them in the model. Also, the values showed to be a predictor only for PWB as a domain of OPF, but they don't predict Hardiness. At the same time, we could notice that the most significant meaning for PWB had self-trust. The according model is shown at the Fig.1.

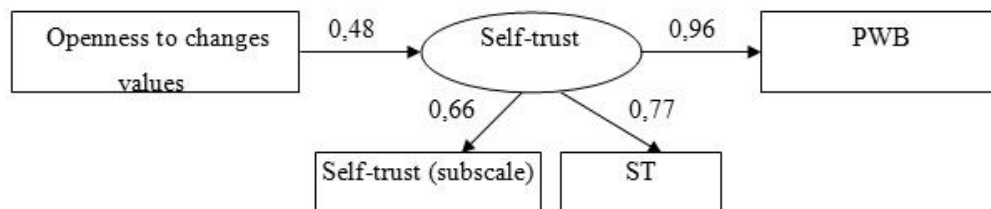


Figure 1. The structural model describing the connections between Openness to changes values, self-trust and PWB (connections are significant at $p < 0,001$). Accordance indexes: $\chi^2/df = 0,8/2$; $p = 0,67$; RMSEA 0; GFI 0,998; AGFI 0,99.

The model has weighting accordance indexes and confirms that values have influence on OPF, but that influence is mediated by trust.

Conclusions. Our study shows that among different values only the Openness to changes group of values is highly connected to PWB and stands out to be its predictor. Though this group of values is one of predictors of PWB, it's not the most important one. Trust has more significant influence on OPF indexes, which are PWB and Hardiness, and it is found to be a mediator between Openness to changes values and PWB. It should be underlined that in our model Self-trust has the most important role. Self-trust as a separate kind of trust occurs to be a mediator between Openness to changes values and PWB.

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