**README FILE**

Publication package: The effect of exposure to social-media coverage of the Russo-Ukrainian war on stress symptoms in Dutch adolescents

Jana Runze1,2§, Finja Marten3 & Lysanne te Brinke4

1Clinical Child and Family Studies, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands;

2Leiden Consortium on Individual Development, Leiden University, The Netherlands;

3Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, KU Leuven, Belgium;

4Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands;

§Correspondence to: Jana Runze, [j.runze@vu.nl](mailto:j.runze@vu.nl)

**Abstract**

On February 24th 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine which formed a major escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Via various social media platforms, adolescents can be constantly exposed to extensive war-related media content, even if they are not directly affected. This might pose an indirect threat to their wellbeing. In the current study, we made use of an ongoing longitudinal survey study with 426 adolescents (13-25 years old) from the Netherlands. The participants reported on their media exposure about the Russian-Ukrainian war as well as their stress symptoms in consequence of it. A linear regression model showed that war-related media exposure predicted stress symptoms in the adolescents. This relation was not moderated by trust in the news, social media or the government. Our study adds important insight into the indirect effects of war-related media on adolescents in Western Europe.

**Variables in Dataset**

1. Demographic variables

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable name** | **Variable description** | **Values** |
| ses05\_age | Age of the participant in years |  |
| ses05\_gender\_01 | Gender of the participant – multiple choice | 1 = boy/man, 2 = girl/woman, 3 = I identify as… , 4 = I prefer not to say, 5 = non-binary  Note: we combined categories 3, 4 and 5 into one category |
| ses05\_gender\_02 | Gender of the participant – open text | answer option if choice was 3 before |
| ses05\_education\_01 | Current education | 1 = elementary school, 2 = high school, 3 = college education, 4 = currently not enrolled, 5 = academic education  Note: we combined category 3 and 5 into academic education |
| ses05\_psychdiagnosis\_01 | Current psychiatric/psychological diagnosis | 1 = yes, namely, 2 = no, 3 = I don’t know, 4 = I prefer not to say  Note: we combined category 3 and 4 |
| ses\_ethnicity\_composite | Ethnicity/Nationality | 1 = Dutch, 2 = Dutch and another nationality, 3 = other nationality  Note: this variable is a combined variable, ethnicity was asked in several waves and data of all waves was used to increase sample size |

2. Study variables

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable name** | **English translation** | **Values** |
| ses03\_institutional\_04 | Indicate on a scale of 0-10 how much you trust these institutions – social media | 0 = no trust at all, 10 = complete trust |
| ses03\_institutional\_06 | Indicate on a scale of 0-10 how much you trust these institutions – the news | 0 = no trust at all, 10 = complete trust |
| ses05\_ukraine\_01 | IES-6 item 1: I thought about it when I didn’t mean to | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |
| ses05\_ukraine\_02 | IES-6 item 2: I felt watchful or on-guard | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |
| ses05\_ukraine\_03 | IES-6 item 3: Other things kept making me think about it | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |
| ses05\_ukraine\_04 | IES-6 item 4: I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn’t deal with them | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |
| ses05\_ukraine\_05 | IES-6 item 5: I tried not to think about it | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |
| ses05\_ukraine\_06 | IES-6 item 6: I had trouble concentrating | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |
| ses05\_ukraine\_07 | In the past two weeks, how many hours per day have you spent engaging with content related to the war in Ukraine on all media channels that you use | 1 = 0 hours  2 = 1 hour  3 = 2 hours  4 = 3 hours  5 = 4 hours  6 = 5 hours  7 = 6 hours or more |
| ses05\_ukraine\_mean | Mean score of the 6 items of the IES-6 | 0 = not at all to 4 = extremely |

**Analysis Code**

The analysis code was written in R Studio Version 2022.07.1 Build 554 which makes use of the program R, version 4.2.1. R and R Studio can be downloaded for free via <https://cran.r-project.org/bin/windows/base/> and <https://www.rstudio.com/products/rstudio/download/>.