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# The Mediating Role of Values in the Relationship Between Needs and Professional Well-Being of University Academic Staff

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### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords:

*Professional well-being,  
Mediation effect, Value priorities  
of an individual, Satisfaction of  
needs, Competence, Multiple  
linear regression*

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Professional well-being is considered an integrated state that is formed in connection with the extent to which individual needs are realized in professional activity, taking into account individual values and meanings. The purpose of this study is to determine the nature of the relationship between an individual's needs, values, and professional well-being, and, in particular, to empirically test the mediating role of personal values in the relationship between an individual's needs and his professional well-being. A cross-sectional method was applied using Need Satisfaction Questionnaire (NSQ), Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS), and Human Values Scale (NSS). The participants of the survey were 132 teachers at higher schools in Ukraine. Statistical analysis included multiple linear regression, correlation analysis, and variance analysis. Realization of needs and values in professional activity are important components of the professional well-being of an individual, which provide the mechanism of its formation. It was found that the level of satisfaction of actual needs in the professional context is significantly correlated with professional well-being. Values explain part of the variance in the relationship between need satisfaction and occupational well-being. When the level of professional well-being decreases, the value-semantic system of the individual is a mediating link that strengthens the motivation to change and a buffer system that contributes to the preservation of well-being in the case of a slight inconsistency between the real and the desired in the professional sphere.

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The scientific literature presents many different descriptions of the well-being of an individual in the organizational space, which indicates the lack of a sufficient theoretical base and a

generally accepted idea about professional well-being, as well as the need to clarify the content of this concept and the mechanism of its formation. Professional well-being is often associated with self-development, realization of personal potential, and professional self-realization (Glavinska et al., 2020; Volynets, 2018). At the same time, it is known that not all employees have a desire for personal growth (Maslow, 1970), so this approach theoretically makes it impossible for these employees to achieve professional well-being. No less often, well-being is described in terms of satisfaction with specific aspects and circumstances of life and affective experience (Diener et al., 2018; Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019), which, in our opinion, also does not explain the mechanism of formation of professional well-being as a result of the so-called "hedonistic running in a circle" (the level of desires increases with increasing opportunities) (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Therefore, it is necessary to search for other approaches to understanding the essence of professional well-being as a psychological phenomenon, as well as its psychological mechanism. The content analysis of ideas about the professional well-being of academic staff of different cultural affiliations showed that these ideas are related to the possibility of realizing actual needs in professional activities, taking into account the values of employees (Voitenko et al., 2023). Depending on cultural norms and values, different aspects of professional life have different significance for respondents and have different effects on the resulting experience of professional well-being. The revealed facts indicate the expediency of clarifying the nature of professional well-being in the context of the value-motivational sphere of the individual. The purpose of this study is to determine the nature of the relationship between an individual's needs, values, and professional well-being, and, in particular, empirical verification of the mediating role of value priorities in the relationship between individual needs and professional well-being.

## **Literature Review**

### ***The Need-motivational Component of Professional Well-being***

The idea of considering professional well-being as an integrated state that is formed in connection with the extent to which personal needs are realized in professional activity, taking into account individual values and meanings, finds sufficient confirmation in the scientific literature. Theoretical analysis suggests that well-being in the professional context has different aspects. One of the dimensions of occupational well-being is the physical working conditions, which affect the work efficiency, motivation, and even stress levels of employees (Hermansyah et al., 2023; Voitenko et al., 2022). It has been shown that reducing the stress of employees has a positive effect on their general state of psychological well-being at work (Abdi et al., 2020). Perceived job insecurity is considered one of the factors of work imbalance and an important source of stress and other negative consequences for health (Klug et al., 2019), which is primarily related to the frustration of the individual's basic need for security. Job insecurity has been shown to be associated with lower job satisfaction, higher incidence of physical health disorders, higher levels of psychological stress, lower productivity, and lower employee engagement. Therefore, acceptable working conditions contribute to the satisfaction of basic needs and, accordingly, to an increase in the level of well-being.

An important aspect of professional well-being is positive relationships in the team and the attitude of colleagues towards the employee as a professional. It is known that all people need attachment and belonging to a certain community to overcome feelings of loneliness and

alienation (Maslow, 1970). The need for belonging is conceptualized as a deeply rooted human motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This is the need to be accepted, and valued (Allen et al., 2022). Individuals with higher levels of social integration report higher levels of emotional well-being (Arslan, 2021). Empirical studies show that the satisfaction of the need for belonging is negatively correlated with depression (Parr et al., 2020). Well-established interaction between employees and cohesion provides them with social support that mitigates the impact of stressful factors on health and professional well-being.

A component of the structure of most existing models of professional well-being is professionalism, which implies competence, the presence of professional goals and practical experience, as well as the desire for career and professional growth, increasing the level of knowledge. A sense of competence is a sense of effectiveness in one's affairs, a perception of one's actions as leading to the desired results (Collie, 2022). Professional competence is aimed at satisfying prestige needs (Maslow, 1970), is acquired in the process of professional activity, and at the same time increases the success of the specialist's activities, his authority, and, accordingly, professional well-being (Kovalenko & Rick, 2020).

Achieving professional well-being can also be correlated with a person's realization of the desire for autonomy, that is, the desire to feel like the initiator of one's own actions, and to independently control one's behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Ryan and Deci (2017) also emphasize that the essence of autonomy is that a person's actions are consistent with his interests and values. It is shown that autonomy has a positive effect on job satisfaction and involvement in work processes (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). Satisfying the basic needs for autonomy, positive relatedness, and competence intrinsically drives work engagement, thus improving occupational well-being and productivity.

Most employees use career opportunities for versatile realization of their abilities and implementation of life plans. Emphasis on self-realization and personal self-expression as an element of psychological well-being has been made in previous studies (Glavinska, 2020). The possibility of self-realization provides staff with job satisfaction and loyalty to the organization. According to A. Maslow's (1970) theory, the individual's need for continuous realization of potential opportunities and abilities is considered the highest-level need. Therefore, the desire for self-actualization can be the meaning of professional activity, which, according to the position of Seligman (2012), is the main source of the subjective side of well-being. It is easy to see that the identified components of the structure of professional well-being correspond to Maslow's universal hierarchical model of needs (Maslow, 1970). The state of being at work serves to achieve the employee's personal goals, such as career, growth, autonomy, competence, and positive relationships, which can offset work demands and the associated physical and psychological costs. This suggests, in our opinion, that estimates of work-related well-being are estimates of the contribution of work to the satisfaction of actualized needs. However, the relationship between the degree of satisfaction of an employee's needs and his professional well-being remains outside the attention of researchers and requires empirical confirmation. So, it can be assumed that people are satisfied with their professional life to the extent that their actualized needs are satisfied, therefore the need-motivational component of professional well-being is an integral part of its structure.

**H1:** *The level of satisfaction of an individual's actual needs is correlated with his professional well-being.*

### **Value-meaning Component of Professional Well-being**

The theoretical analysis shows that the satisfaction of needs is not enough to achieve professional well-being. Some authors prove that a person evaluates the degree of his well-being based on internal criteria, values that may differ depending on the subject's culture and social experience (Bergis, 2018; Hofstede, 2003; Oishi et al., 1999). Researchers consider values along with the concepts of need and motive, emphasizing their motivational power. Values are considered the starting point for all actions embedded in everyday experience and behavior (Romaniuk, 2018). Professional life requires coordinated actions, planned behavior, and internal coordination, which includes values as the life principles of an individual that can guide his activities. The value theory of Schwartz and Bilsky (1990) describes values as desirable trans-situational goals of varying importance that serve as guidelines. Maslow (1993) pointed out that the hierarchy of individual needs is formed depending on his values and ideals, which ensures his self-actualization. The implementation of deficit values aimed at satisfying basic needs provides the subject with a state of equilibrium and becomes a prerequisite for the actualization of development values (Maslow, 1993). Everyone has a certain attitude to the surrounding environment, based on which he interprets its content and gives meaning to it. In this sense, professional well-being also corresponds to the value-meaning orientation of the individual and, accordingly, should be considered in the context of distinguishing the value-meaning component in its structure. According to Seligman (2012), the greatest contribution to a person's experience of well-being is the meaningfulness of his activity. When considering well-being in the professional sphere, its main source is the meaning of the professional activity performed by the specialist. The question is what kind of meaning becomes such a source? As the theoretical analysis shows, each person considers the organization as an object capable not only of satisfying his personal needs but also of contributing to the realization of his individual values and meanings.

Thus, every employee experiences professional well-being in the context of personal needs, values, and meanings that determine professional goals, orientations of the subject, ways of self-actualization, vectors of development, and opportunities for their implementation in professional activities. However, the implementation of needs and values in professional activity as a mechanism for the formation of professional well-being remains outside the attention of scientists. As we can see, most studies focus on studying linear relationships between job characteristics and parameters of professional well-being, which limits the understanding of its psychological mechanism, given that professional well-being is a complex psychological formation caused by the interaction of many factors. In our opinion, the study of mediating effects in the relationship between the studied variables will fill this gap and contribute to the disclosure of the essence of professional well-being and the logic of its formation. The idea of value-meaning regulation of the subject's life activity (Romaniuk, 2018; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990; Seligman, 2012) allowed us to assume that the nature of the relationship between the needs of the employee and his professional well-being can change due to the regulatory influence of values as a mediator variable (Figure 1).

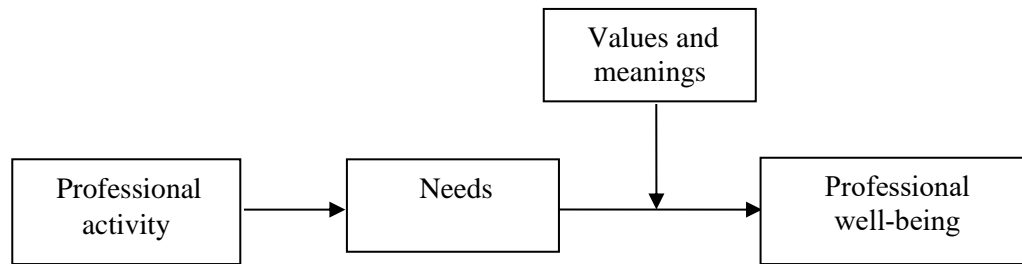
**Figure 1***Mediating Role of Values and Meanings in Professional Well-Being*

Figure 1 reflects the theoretical basis of the study, according to which professional well-being is considered an integral generalized assessment of the correspondence of an individual's professional life to his main value and meaning priorities and the consistency of personal needs and goals with the possibility of their implementation in professional activities, which allows building a research program based on the following hypothesis:

**H2:** *The relationship between needs and professional well-being functions through the mediation of the value-meaning system of the individual.*

## Method

The proposed model requires the study of the specified mediating effect with the application of appropriate mediating analysis procedures with a preliminary diagnosis of the identified structural components. In accordance with the purpose of this study, a cross-sectional method was applied using Need Satisfaction Questionnaire (NSQ) of Porter (1961), the Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) of Spector (2022), and Human Values Scale (NSS) of Schwartz (2007). The translation of the original scales from English to Ukrainian was carried out by two bilingual psychologists using the reverse translation method.

Porter's (1961) Need Satisfaction Questionnaire (NSQ) modified by Payne (1970) was used to assess the level of satisfaction of employees' needs. The questionnaire consists of 8 items. For each item, respondents are asked to make three ratings: (a) How much of the characteristic is there now? (b) How much of the characteristic do you think there should be? (c) How important is the characteristic to you? The answer scale is a seven-point scale from 1 (minimum) to 7 points (maximum). Perceived lack of satisfaction of needs (the index of discrepancy between the organization's resources and personal needs) is calculated by determining the absolute difference between the indicators of the existing state (organizational resources) and the desired one (employee needs). In addition to using a discrepancy score and an importance score, a total discrepancy score and a total importance score are calculated for each of the eight items. The total need satisfaction index (NSI) is obtained by dividing the total discrepancy score by the total importance score. The nomological validity of this measure has been repeatedly proven by several researchers (Cohen et al., 1997; Golembiewski & Sun, 1990).

Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) was used to assess professional well-being (Spector, 2022). The questionnaire is designed to determine the employee's attitude to his work according to nine parameters: salary, recognition (monetary and non-material incentives for work achievements), colleagues (satisfaction with the team), working conditions (internal rules,

bureaucratic obstacles), management (direct supervisor), additional benefits, promotion (opportunity for career growth), nature of work (content of performed tasks) and communication (informing on work and general issues), as well as to obtain an assessment of overall satisfaction with one's position in the organization. Each aspect is assessed on four items, and a total score is calculated for all items. A total rating scale format is used with six response options for each item ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Although the Job Satisfaction Survey was developed by the author for the service industry, it is suitable for a wide range of types of organizations. The author presents high indicators of psychometric properties of the scale (Spector, 2022).

Human Values Scale (HVS) of the European Social Survey (ESS) was developed by Schwartz (2007) to classify respondents according to ten basic value orientations: achievement, benevolence, conformity, hedonism, power, security, independence, stimulation, traditions, and universalism was used to assess value priorities. The scale contains short verbal portraits of twenty-one people, corresponding to the respondent's gender. By describing certain people in terms of goals and desires that are important to them, verbal portraits reflect their values. For each portrait, respondents must answer the question: "How similar is this person to you?" and rate the degree of similarity from 1 ("Very much like me" to 6 points ("Not like me at all"). Thus, similarity judgments are transformed into a six-point numerical scale, and the importance rating of each value represents the average response to the items that measure it. Each of the ten values is implemented in two portraits, except for universalism, which is presented in three portraits because its content is particularly broad. The author cited high indicators of consistency of the scales and retest reliability (Schwartz, 2007).

Several separate questions were related to the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample (age, gender, status). The participants of this study were 132 academic employees of the university, selected by random sampling. The most important socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Sample*

Age	%	Gender	N	%	Position	%
25-35	14	Male	16	12	Head of Department	3
36-45	38				Lecturer	11
46-55	30				Senior Lecturer	26
> 56	18				Associate Professor	48
		Female	116	88	Professor	12
Total	100		132	100		100

According to the data presented in Table 1, all age categories of academic workers, as well as academic positions, are sufficiently represented in the researched sample, which indicates the representativeness of the studied sample.

Statistical data processing included multiple linear regression (MLR) by stepwise analysis, variance analysis (ANOVA), and correlation analysis. The density and directionality of the relationship between the variables was estimated by the parametric linear correlation coefficient of Pearson. To characterize the observations, descriptive statistics (mean value, standard deviation, asymmetry, kurtosis) were calculated. The initial data of all variables were checked

for compliance with the law of normal distribution. Calculations were performed in SPSS Statistics 23.0.

## Results

The presence of statistically significant correlations between the independent (needs) and dependent (professional well-being) variables was established, in particular, the negative relationship of the general indicator of the discrepancy (Discrepancy Score, DS) between the real and desired state of needs satisfaction and the level of general satisfaction with various aspects of the individual's professional activity (Professional well-being, PWB) ( $r = -.44, p < .01$ ); a positive relationship between the general indicator of the importance of needs (Importance Score, IS) and the level of general satisfaction with various aspects of an individual's professional activity (Professional well-being, PWB) ( $r = .19, p < .05$ ); negative relationship of the need satisfaction index (Need Satisfaction Index, NSI) (reverse score) with the level of overall satisfaction with various aspects of the individual's professional activity (Professional well-being, PWB) ( $r = -.48, p < .01$ ) (Table 2).

**Table 2**

*The Summary of Descriptive Statistics & Correlations (N = 132)*

Variables	1	2	3	4	M	SD	S	K
1. Professional well-being (PWB)	1.00				133.61	20.84	-.219	-0.47
2. Discrepancy Score (DS)	-0.44**	1.00			9.36	8.62	1.02	1.10
3. Importance Score (IS)	0.19*	0.26**	1.00		47.63	9.56	-2.15	5.43
4. Need Satisfaction Index (NSI)	-0.48**	0.98**	.130	1.00	0.19	0.17	0.88	0.45

*Note. M - average value; SD - standard deviation; S - asymmetry; K - kurtosis; \*\* - correlation statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-sided); \* - correlation statistically significant at the 0.05 level (2-sided)*

No linear relationship was established between the respondents' values and professional well-being, except for the values of Self-management ( $r = .25, p < .01$ ) and Hedonism ( $r = -.200, p < .05$ ).

To confirm the hypothesis of the existence of a mediating role of values between needs and professional well-being, three regression equations were analyzed (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Judd & Kenny, 1981): first, the regression of the mediator (values) on the independent variable (needs), secondly, regression of the dependent variable (professional well-being) on the independent variable (needs), thirdly, regression of the dependent variable (professional well-being) on both the independent variable (needs) and the mediator (values). Stepwise regression was achieved by testing one predictor at a time and including it in the regression model, subject to statistical significance. Significance tests were performed using F-tests, t-tests, and adjusted  $R^2$ .

### **Regressing the Mediator (Values) on the Independent Variable (Needs)**

At the first stage of the analysis, the regressing of the mediator on the independent variable was estimated (Table 3). Stepwise regression confirmed at the first step a statistically significant effect of the general indicator of the importance of needs (IS) on all ten values according to Sh. Schwartz's "Scale of Human Values" (HVS): Self-Direction ( $R^2 = .86$ ), Power ( $R^2 = .90$ ), Universalism ( $R^2 = .87$ ), Achievement ( $R^2 = .85$ ), Security ( $R^2 = .84$ ), Stimulation ( $R^2 = .86$ ), Conformity ( $R^2 = .87$ ), Tradition ( $R^2 = .87$ ), Hedonism ( $R^2 = .86$ ), Benevolence ( $R^2 = .83$ ).

**Table 3***Regressing the Mediator (Values) on the Independent Variable (Needs)*

Model			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
			B	Std. Error	Coefficients $\beta$		
1	Self-Direction Power Universalism Achievement Security Stimulation Conformity Tradition Hedonism Benevolence	IS	0.04	0.00	0.93	29.26	.000
		IS	0.06	0.00	0.95	35.47	.000
		IS	0.04	0.00	0.93	30.23	.000
		IS	0.05	0.00	0.92	27.96	.000
		IS	0.04	0.00	0.92	26.83	.000
		IS	0.06	0.00	0.92	28.52	.000
		IS	0.05	0.00	0.93	30.15	.000
		IS	0.05	0.00	0.93	30.25	.000
		IS	0.06	0.00	0.93	29.05	.000
		IS	0.04	0.00	0.91	26.09	.000
2	Self-Direction  Power  Tradition	IS	0.05	0.00	1.02	21.32	.000
		DS	-0.02	0.00	-0.11	-2.44	.016
		IS	0.07	0.00	1.04	26.11	.000
		DS	-0.03	0.01	-0.11	-2.98	.003
		IS	0.05	0.00	0.85	18.65	.000
		NSI	1.17	0.52	0.10	2.25	.026
3	Self-Direction  Power  Tradition	IS	0.05	0.00	1.02	22.10	.000
		DS	-0.15	0.04	-0.80	-3.72	.000
		NSI	6.65	2.04	0.69	3.25	.001
		IS	0.07	0.00	1.04	28.67	.000
		DS	-0.27	0.04	-0.98	-5.84	.000
		NSI	12.00	2.28	0.87	5.25	.000
		IS	0.05	0.00	0.89	21.25	.000
		DS	12.94	2.19	1.14	5.89	.000
		NSI	-0.24	0.04	-1.07	-5.48	.000

Note. IS – importance score, DS - discrepancy score, NSI – need satisfaction index.

In the second step, the influence of two indicators of the independent variable on the mediator was statistically confirmed, namely, the influence of the general indicator of the discrepancy between the desired and actual state of needs satisfaction (DS) and the general indicator of the importance of needs (IS) on such values as Self-Direction ( $R^2 = .87$ ), Power ( $R^2 = .91$ ). The influence of the general indicator of importance of needs (IS) and the index of satisfaction of needs (NSI) on the value of Tradition ( $R^2 = .88$ ).

In the third step, statistical confirmation of the influence of the general indicator of importance (IS), the general indicator of the discrepancy between the desired and the actual state of need satisfaction (DS), and the need satisfaction index (NSI) was obtained on such values as: Self-Direction ( $R^2 = .88$ ), Power ( $R^2 = .92$ ), Tradition ( $R^2 = .90$ ).

### **Regressing the Dependent Variable (Professional Well-Being) on the Independent Variable (Needs)**

At the second stage of the study, the regressing of the dependent variable on the independent variable was estimated (Table 4). At the first step of the analysis, a statistically significant effect of the general indicator of the importance of needs (IS) on overall satisfaction with various aspects of professional activity (PWB) was confirmed ( $R^2 = .95$ ). In the second step, the predictors of the model were the total score of need importance (IS) and the total score of discrepancy (DS) between the actual and desired state of need satisfaction. A statistically significant result was obtained ( $R^2 = .95$ ). In the third step, the predictors of the model were the total score of need importance (IS), the total score of discrepancy between the actual and desired



state of need satisfaction (DS), and the need satisfaction index (NSI). A statistically significant influence of predictors on the dependent variable was confirmed ( $R^2 = .96$ ).

**Table 4**

*Regressing the Dependent Variable (Professional Well-Being) on the Independent Variable (Needs)*

Model			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
			B	Std. Error	$\beta$		
1	Professional well-being	IS	2.71	0.05	0.97	49.97	.000
2	Professional well-being	IS	2.98	0.07	1.07	38.70	.000
		DS	-1.38	0.29	-0.13	-4.69	.000
3	Professional well-being	IS	2.98	0.06	1.07	43.54	.000
		DS	-8.49	1.22	-0.79	-6.95	.000
		NSI	354.91	59.58	0.67	5.95	.000

Note. IS – importance score, DS - discrepancy score, NSI – need satisfaction index

### **Regressing the Dependent Variable (Professional Well-Being) on Both the Independent Variable (Needs) and the Mediator (Values)**

In the third stage, to confirm the influence of the mediator on the dependent variable while controlling the independent variable, in addition to values, indicators of satisfaction of needs for the prediction of professional well-being are included in the regression analysis (Table 5). In the first step, the joint influence of the general indicator of the importance of needs (IS) and the value of Self-Direction was statistically confirmed ( $R^2 = .96$ ). The next step confirmed the statistically significant influence of the total indicator of the importance of needs (IS), the value of Self-Direction and the overall indicator of the discrepancy between the desired and the actual state of need satisfaction (DS) ( $R^2 = .97$ ). The third step statistically confirmed the joint influence of the general indicator of the importance of needs (IS), the value of Self-Direction, the general indicator of the discrepancy between the desired and the actual state of needs satisfaction (DS) and the value of Tradition ( $R^2 = .97$ ). The next step confirmed a statistically significant relationship between the total need importance index (IS), the value of Self-Direction, the total Tradition index of the discrepancy between the desired and the actual state of need satisfaction (DS), the value of Tradition and the need satisfaction index (NSI) ( $R^2 = .97$ ).

**Table 5**

*Regressing the Dependent Variable (Professional Well-Being) on Both the Independent Variable (Needs) and the Mediator (Values)*

Model			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
			B	Std. Error	$\beta$		
1	PWB	IS	1.80	0.12	.64	14.70	.000
		Self-Direction	19.12	2.41	.35	7.92	.000
2	PWB	IS	2.09	0.13	.75	15.17	.000
		Self-Direction	17.20	2.34	.31	7.34	.000
		DS	-0.99	0.25	-.09	-3.90	.000
3	PWB	IS	1.70	0.15	.61	11.33	.000
		Self-Direction	15.23	2.20	.27	6.91	.000
		DS	-1.15	0.23	-.10	-4.84	.000
		Tradition	9.10	1.88	.19	4.81	.000
4	PWB	IS	1.93	0.16	.69	11.87	.000
		Self-Direction	13.75	2.18	.25	6.29	.000
		DS	-4.77	1.19	-.44	-4.01	.000
		Tradition	6.37	2.02	.13	3.14	.002
		NSI	180.93	58.29	.34	3.10	.002

Note. IS – importance score, DS - discrepancy score, NSI – need satisfaction index, PWB – professional well-being

The value of the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  increases with the growth of the number of variables in the regression, which does not mean an improvement in the quality of prediction. Therefore, to assess the quality of the fit of the regression model to the observed values, an adjusted (Adjusted  $R^2$ ) coefficient of determination is introduced. Regressions with a different set of variables were compared by this coefficient, and the regression option for which it is maximal was accepted. A comparison of regression coefficients in regression models with the maximum coefficient of determination at the second and third stages of the analysis is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Comparison of Coefficients in Regression Models*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		B	Std. Error	$\beta$		
2*	IS	2.98	0.06	1.07	43.54	.000
	DS	-8.49	1.22	-0.79	-6.95	.000
	NSI	354.91	59.58	0.67	5.95	.000
3**	IS	1.93	0.16	0.69	11.87	.000
	Self-Direction	13.75	2.18	0.25	6.29	.000
	DS	-4.77	1.19	-0.44	-4.01	.000
	Tradition	6.37	2.02	0.13	3.14	.002
	NSI	180.93	58.29	0.34	3.10	.002

*Note.* \* Regressing the dependent variable (professional well-being) on the independent variable (needs); \*\* Regressing the dependent variable (professional well-being) on both the independent variable (needs) and the mediator (values)

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirmed the reliability of the constructed regression models ( $F_2 = 1243.16$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p < .001$ ;  $F_3 = 1048.56$ ;  $df = 5$ ;  $p < .001$ ), therefore, these models can be meaningfully interpreted.

## Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine the nature of the relationship between the needs, values, and professional well-being of an individual, and, in particular, to empirically verify the mediating role of personal values in the relationship between the needs of an individual and his professional well-being. Correlation analysis established the presence of statistically significant correlations between the independent (needs) and dependent (professional well-being) variables, which confirms our hypothesis about the connection between the level of satisfaction with an individual's current needs and his professional well-being. The obtained results correspond to the data of previous studies. It has already been repeatedly shown that the satisfaction of basic needs leads to job satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2017), and determines the quality of the professional life of employees (Sirgy et al., 2001). Our results also fit well with goal self-concordance theory, according to which goal achievement leads to changes in well-being (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999).

To test the mediation hypothesis, several regression equations were estimated (Baron, & Kenny, 1986; Judd & Kenny, 1981): 1) regressing the mediator (values) on the independent variable (needs), 2) regressing the dependent variable (professional well-being) on the independent variable (needs), 3) regressing the dependent variable (professional well-being) both on the independent variable (needs) and on mediator (of value). These three equations provided a test of the mediation model relationships. Although the criteria we used for establishing mediation (Baron, & Kenny, 1986; Judd & Kenny, 1981) are somewhat outdated,

the use of this logic can be found in many contemporary studies (Olefir & Bosniuk, 2021; Staring et al., 2016). Hayes and Rockwood (2017) note that the mathematics of mediation analysis described by Baron and Kenny (1986) remains useful and relevant to contemporary approaches.

To confirm the influence of the mediator on the critical variable during the control of the predictor, values for the prediction of professional well-being were included in the regression analysis, in addition to indicators of satisfaction of needs. According to the coefficient of multiple determination in this model ( $R^2 = .97$ ), 98% of the variation in professional well-being is explained by the variation in indicators of satisfaction of needs and values, and only 2% is explained by other factors. The relationship between needs satisfaction and occupational well-being remained statistically significant when the value variable (Self-Direction and Tradition) was entered into the study as a mediator (Table 3). This result indicates that values mediate the relationship between needs and occupational well-being only partially. However, a comparison of regression coefficients shows that the influence of need satisfaction indicators on professional well-being is almost half as much in the third equation as in the second (Table 3). From a theoretical point of view, a significant reduction in the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable demonstrates that the mediator is indeed powerful (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Therefore, value priorities are an important variable for predicting the professional well-being of employees, along with indicators of satisfaction of needs in professional activities. In particular, the values of Self-Direction and Tradition according to Sh. Schwartz's Human Value Scale (HVS) (Schwartz, 2007). Schwartz (2007) claims that the main substantive aspect that separates values from one another is the type of motivation in which they are reflected. Therefore, he grouped individual values into ten complexes (types of motivation), which, according to the author, determine the direction of specific actions of an individual and his life activity. Each type corresponds to its own leading motivational goal. Self-Direction has as a motivational goal freedom of thought and action (in choice, creativity, and knowledge), due to the individual's need for autonomy and independence. Tradition has as a motivational goal acceptance, respect and maintenance of customs, and recognition of ideas existing in a certain culture. Traditional behavior becomes a symbol of group solidarity, an expression of the uniqueness of its picture of the world. The mediating role of the values of Self-direction and Tradition is obviously determined by the specifics of the respondents' professional activity: a teacher at a higher school is a creatively thinking, socially active person whose purpose of activity is the formation of social capital, ensuring social progress, establishing universal human values, beliefs, and respect to the cultural and historical past in the minds of the young generation. Values explain a significant portion of the variance in the relationship between need satisfaction and occupational well-being. This fact corresponds to the idea of value-meaning regulation of the subject's life activity (Romaniuk, 2018; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990; Seligman, 2012). Researchers consider values along with the concepts of need and motive, emphasizing their motivational power. A decrease in satisfaction with certain aspects of professional activity, which arises in response to the inconsistency of a person's capabilities with his life values, leads to their rethinking. As a result, these aspects acquire additional value and increase human motivation for activities aimed at their implementation. They also provide, in part, a buffering effect that supports their occupational well-being when people are faced with the inability to meet needs.

Despite certain scientific contributions, there are some limitations in our study. First, the cross-sectional design does not allow us to track changes and trends over time. Secondly, Sh. Schwartz's Scale of Human Values (HVS) contains ten basic human values out of many possible ones. In our opinion, this fact could have affected the results of the study and be the reason why we did not obtain confirmation of perfect mediation.

## Conclusion

Realization of needs and values in professional activity is an important component of the professional well-being of an individual, which provides the mechanism of its formation. The results of the correlation analysis confirmed the hypothesis that the level of satisfaction of an individual's actual needs is correlated with his professional well-being. Thus, people are satisfied with their professional life to the extent that their actual needs are satisfied, therefore the need-motivational component of professional well-being is an integral part of its structure.

Mediation analysis supported the hypothesis that values function as a mediator in the relationship between needs and occupational well-being. The correspondence of the results obtained by us to the main mediation criteria was established: (a) variations in the levels of the predictor (needs) largely explain the variations of the probable mediator (values), (b) the predictor affects the criterion variable in the second equation, (c) the mediator (values) significantly reduces the influence of the predictor (needs) on the criterion variable (professional well-being). Values explain a significant part of the variance in the relationship between need satisfaction and occupational well-being. Therefore, every employee experiences professional well-being in the context of personal values and needs, and the possibility of their realization in professional activities. Values, as a person's perceived significance of certain objects in relation to their conformity or non-conformity with the needs of the individual, determine the specifics of the individual's work motivation. When professional well-being is disturbed, the value-semantic system of the individual is a mediating link that strengthens the motivation to change and a buffer system that contributes to the preservation of well-being in the case of a slight inconsistency between the real and the desired in the professional sphere. Taking into account the fact that professional well-being is an important condition for an individual's ability to work and his professional longevity, our contribution to the study of the mechanism of its formation acquires important practical significance. The results we obtained open new directions for the search for technologies for the prevention of violations of the professional well-being of scientific and pedagogical workers of educational organizations. The prospect of further research is the determination of organizational and psychological determinants of professional well-being, which significantly affect the employee's ability to realize needs and values.

## Declarations

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