

Transgenerational trauma of the **Famine-Genocide 1932-1933** in Ukraine and its psychological impact on modern generation

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The study was supported by the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium (HREC) and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.



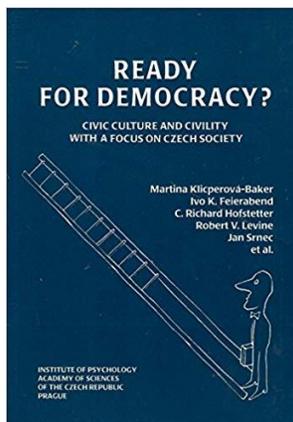
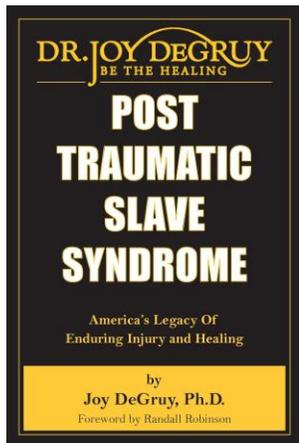
The **Holodomor** (derived from ukrainian words "to kill by starvation")-was a man-made famine in Soviet Ukraine in 1932 and 1933 that killed millions of Ukrainians. Since 2006, the Holodomor has been recognized by Ukraine and 15 other countries as a genocide of the Ukrainian people carried out by the Soviet government.



Masluk (2010) writes about **five depressive factors of Holodomor, which provoked changes that could have been inherited**. There was information deprivation (people did not know anything about the accuracy of the situation and real aims of the Soviet government), confinement (people were basically trapped in their regions and did not have any possibilities for escape), famine (absence of sufficient food for survival), ban on spiritual practices (people were pressed to maintain only communistic ideology), and destruction of traditions (first of all, tradition of mutual help and support).

Gornostay (2012) selected four groups of factors, from which to describe the gravity of a collective trauma burden: the scale of traumatization, the level of injustice, the inability to resist and the limitations of emotional response.

Psychological consequences of transgenerational trauma can be conditionally divided into two common groups: cognitive and behavioural consequences. The first includes all outcomes associated with the content of life interpretation and the second refers to the coping strategies, the reactions toward the world that are determined by the worldview.



The rare researches of the psychological consequences of the Holodomor for second and others generation focused on the **number of changes in behavioural, moral attitudes, values and worldview.**

First, it is a behavioral shift to the direction of irrational stockpiling/hoarding of excessive food supplies, an inability to discard unwanted and unneeded items; an extreme reverence for food; overeating and emphasis on food; and, a permanent state of survival (Bezo, 2011). In the sense of values, researchers write about a particular form of national inferiority complex (like underestimating own abilities comparatively with Russians) and permanent fear of defeat with a low level of aspirations (Reva, 2013). Holodomor survivors have a much more level of conformism, anxiety, phobias, behaviour avoidance, and inner conflicts etc (Obushnuyi and Voropaeva (2009)).

The similar points are presented in the studies of other transgenerational traumas. DeGruy (2005) describes a particular kind of intergenerational trauma “**The post-traumatic slave syndrome**”. This syndrome as a set of behaviors and beliefs (e.g. general self-destructive outlook, learned helplessness, or distorted self-concept) have African Americans, whose ancestors were suffering from a long history of slavery and racism. **Post-communist syndrome** as learned helplessness, specific manifestations of immorality/incivility, lack of civic culture and civic virtues are mentioned in concern of tragedies, which connect with Soviet Union actions (Klicperova, Feierabend & Hofstetter, 1997; Klicperova-Baker, 1999).

The research model of study of the psychological consequences of Holodomor transgenerational trauma

DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA OF PTSD according to DSM-5				
Exposure	Internal / external avoidance (thoughts, feelings / objects places...)	Negative alterations in mood / cognitions (amnesia, negative beliefs / emotion state, distorted blame, loss of interest, social detachment, low positive emotions)	Reexperiencing (intrusions, nightmares, flashbacks, emotion and physical reactivity)	Hyperarousal (aggression / irritability / anger, recklessness / self-destructiveness, hypervigilance, exaggerated startle response, difficulty concentrating / sleeping)
Transmissions mechanisms	-	discursive heredity	discursive heredity	epigenetic heredity and direct impact on mental health as vicarious traumatization
Type of Consequences	-	psychological consequences	psychological consequences	neurobiological consequences
Area of changes	-	attitudes towards events/storytelling behaviour	family worldview attitudes and behaviour strategies	health, including mental health
Diagnostic block in the author's structured interview	"Holodomor -related family history"	"Personal attitude to Holodomor" / "Holodomor-related storytelling behaviour within the family"	"Family Holodomor-related worldview attitudes and behaviour strategies"	beyond study topic

The structured interview was developed in Google Forms for online use, particularly for sharing in FB and personal mail



Психологічні наслідки Голодомору

Цей опитувальник ставить на меті дослідити психологічні наслідки Голодомору (усіх хвиль), які були цілеспрямовано організовані на території радянської України. Просимо вас дати відповіді на запитання, які допоможуть встановити переконання та стратегії, які можуть бути прямо або опосередковано пов'язані з досвідом пережиття подій Голодомору. Дякуємо за участь!

Дані збираються в межах соціально-психологічного проекту "Голодомор-розбити тишу" за підтримки Holodomor Research and Education Consortium - HREC, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies та Інституту психічного здоров'я Українського Католицького Університету. Автори опитування - співробітники Інституту психічного здоров'я Українського католицького університету, доктори психологічних наук, Віталій Климчук (klymchuk@ucu.edu.ua) та Вікторія Горбунова (gorbunova@ucu.edu.ua).

Історія родини, пов'язана з Голодомором

Моя родина мешкала на території, де був Голодомор

Так

Ні

The Psychological consequences of the Holodomor in Ukraine

Instructions. This questionnaire aims to investigate the psychological consequences of the Holodomor famine that was purposefully organized by the territory of Soviet Ukraine by the Soviet authority. We ask you to answer questions that will help establish beliefs and strategies that may be related to the Holodomor events. Thank you for participation!

The data are collected within the framework of the research project, supported by the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium (HREC) and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. The authors of the study are Vitali Klymchuk (vitaly.klymchuk@gmail.com) and Viktoriya Gorbunova (viktoriyka.gorbunova@gmail.com).

Holodomor-related family history

Please choose a variant of the answer, which corresponds to your family history

	Yes	No	I don't know	Another answers
My family lived in the Holodomor area				
One or more of my family members died during the Holodomor				
All my family members survived during Holodomor but starved and suffered a lot				
Our neighbours / distant relatives suffered or died during the Holodomor				
My family starved during the Holodomor, but not so much that it threatened their life				
My family experienced no suffering from the Holodomor				

Holodomor-related storytelling behaviour within the family

Please choose one answer, which corresponds to your personal experience

Holodomor-related family stories were retold often and in detail	
Holodomor-related family stories were retold but not often	
Holodomor-related family stories exist but not retelling; I learned about them from friends or other relatives	
I know nothing about Holodomor-related family stories; I found out about the Holodomor events from the media, books, articles, etc.	

Data summary for Holodomor-related storytelling behaviour within family among participants from stricken areas

<i>My family lived in the Holodomor area</i>	I know for sure that there are no Holodomor-related family stories		I know nothing about Holodomor-related family stories		Holodomor-related family stories exist but not retelling		Holodomor-related family stories were retold but not often		Holodomor-related family stories were retold often and in detail	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	3	1	42	8	65	12	339	63	93	16
No	38	28	55	40	8	6	26	19	9	7
I don't know	4	9	21	49	4	9	14	33	0	0
<i>Total</i>	45	38	118	97	77	27	379	115	102	24

Data summary for correlation between the kind of suffering and level of Holodomor-related storytelling behaviour among participants from stricken areas

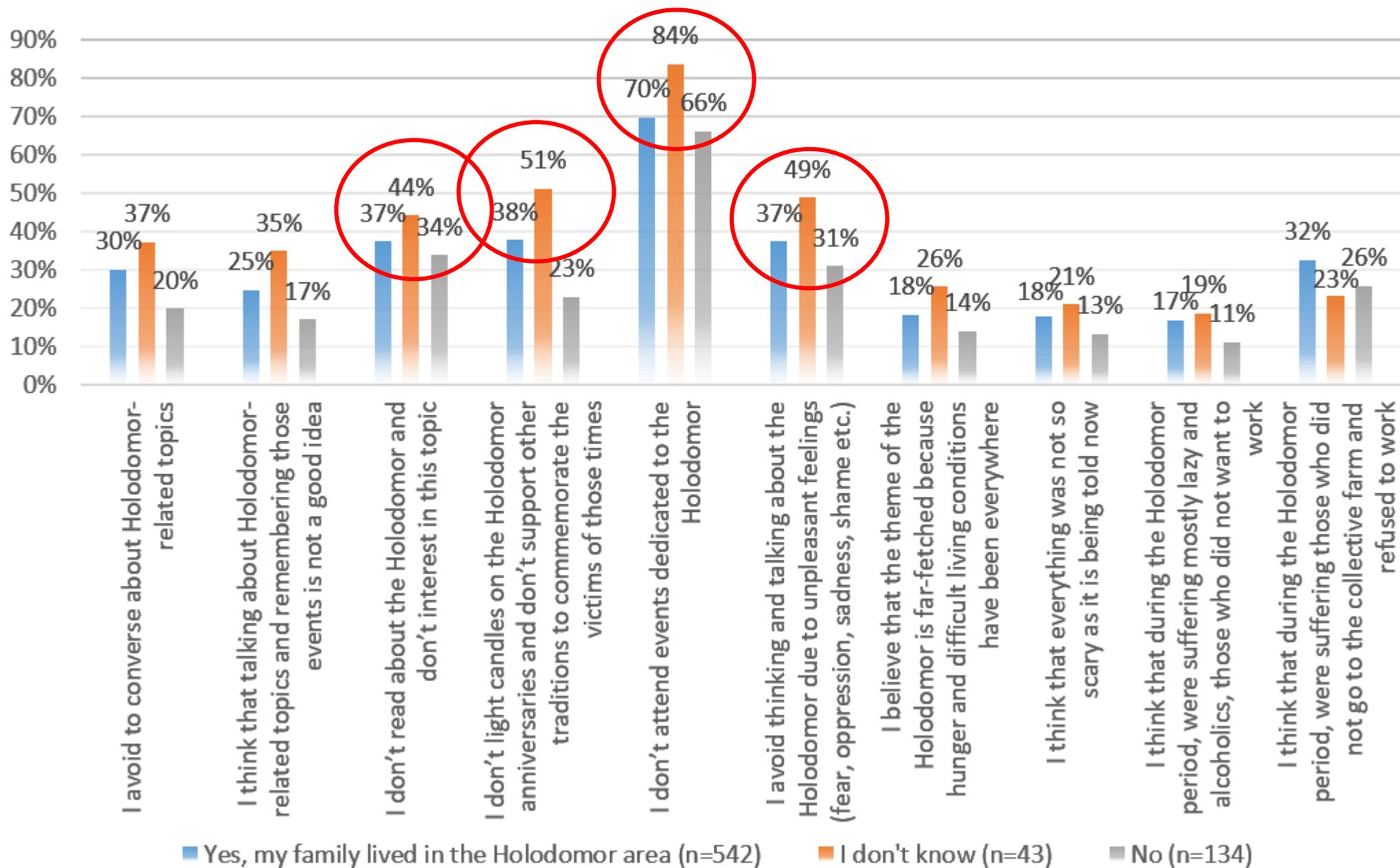
	One or more of my family members died during the Holodomor		<u>All of my family members survived during the Holodomor but starved and suffered a lot</u>		Our neighbours / distant relatives suffered or died during the Holodomor		My family starved during the Holodomor, but not so much that it threatened their life		My family experienced no suffering from the Holodomor	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Level of storytelling	0,08	0,054	-0,02	0,591	0,22	0,000	-0,16	0,000	-0,13	0,002

Data's summary for the correlation between personal attitudes and level of Holodomor-related storytelling behaviour

⊕

		<i>My family lived in the Holodomor area</i>										
		I avoid conversing about Holodomor-related topics	I think that talking about Holodomor-related topics and remembering those events is not a good idea	I don't read about the Holodomor and don't have interest in this topic	I don't light candles on the Holodomor anniversaries and don't support other traditions to commemorate the victims of those times	I don't attend events dedicated to the Holodomor	I avoid thinking and talking about the Holodomor due to unpleasant feelings (fear, oppression, sadness, shame etc.)	I believe that the theme of the Holodomor is far-fetched because hunger and difficult living conditions have been everywhere	I think that everything was not so scary as it is being told now	I think that during the Holodomor period, were suffering mostly lazy and alcoholics, those who did not want to work	I think that during the Holodomor period, were suffering those who did not go to the collective farm and refused to work	
Level of storytelling	Yes	<i>r</i>	-0,112	-0,083	-0,137	-0,101	-0,085	-0,038	-0,113	-0,093	-0,110	-0,152
		<i>p</i>	0,009	0,053	0,001	0,018	0,048	0,373	0,009	0,030	0,010	0,000
	No	<i>r</i>	0,1	-0,000	-0,025	-0,030	-0,023	0,162	-0,014	0,026	0,124	0,078
		<i>p</i>	0,248	0,999	0,772	0,723	0,790	0,060	0,869	0,762	0,152	0,369
	I don't know	<i>r</i>	-0,206	-0,321	-0,289	-0,388	-0,200	-0,354	-0,305	-0,366	-0,346	-0,193
		<i>p</i>	0,185	0,036	0,060	0,010	0,200	0,020	0,047	0,016	0,023	0,216

Data summary for personal attitudes to Holodomor



Data summary for Family Holodomor-related worldview attitudes and behaviour strategies

You have to flee from here because there will not be anything good

You can't trust anyone, especially authorities

You have to search for a better life elsewhere

Theft is bad, but if it is at work or in the state, then it does not cause me such a strong condemnation

Reporting to a boss about a colleague who stole something insignificant at work is not a good deed

It is better for you to organize and conduct business with relatives

Children should always be well-fed

If the child is thin, then, perhaps, she feels bad or sick - she needs to be better fed

It is better for you not to interfere in matters that do not touch you personally, even when it comes to crime or dishonesty

If you feel tired, weak or dizzy, these are disturbing symptoms that require an obligatory medical examination

It is wrong and dangerous to lose weight and be on a diet

You should not to throw out bread and other food residues

You have to make food preserves and always have a supply of food in the house

You need to have subsistence farming, growing vegetables, and fruit trees

You have to advise daughters to marry well-to-do men

You should not to go against the authorities, those who are above you in the hierarchy

You should not to express your opinion if it cannot be approved by a majority

You should not give birth to more children than you can feed

You have to, first of all, take care of the welfare of your family

You should not demonstrate your happiness, it is better to share with other problems than joy

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