

Introduction

- Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a prevalent, disabling mental health condition, causing distress for 5-20% of individuals worldwide.
- Exposure to traumatic experiences may increase internal conflicts that lead to PTSD symptoms and impair perceptions of self or others (Hegarty et al., 2022; Toyoda et al., 2022).
- Recent research suggests investigating an unexplored moral dimension of PTSD-related social cognitions.
- In this study, we will assess the relationship between PTSD symptoms, distress, and perceptions of moral transgressions.

Present Study

Aim

To better understand the links between dimensional PTSD symptoms, perceived moral transgressions, and emotional distress.

Design

Using both correlational and experimental data, we will test whether perceived moral transgressions mediate the relationship between PTSD symptoms and distress.

Design: Within-person, repeated measures

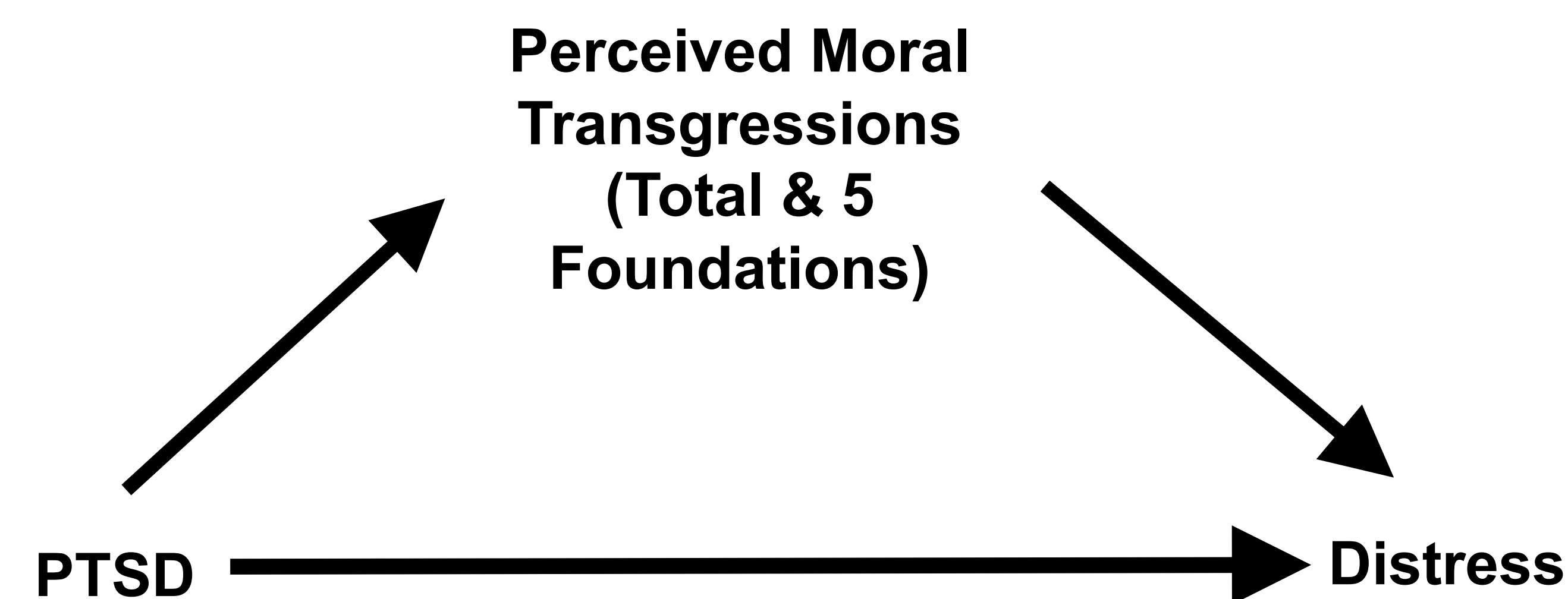
Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Individuals with higher PTSD symptoms will endorse greater distress during the past few weeks and when exposed to experimental vignettes about moral transgressions.

Hypothesis 2

The link between PTSD and distress will be mediated by perceptions of moral transgressions.



Transgressions based on Haidt's Moral Foundations

Care vs. Harm

Fairness vs. Cheating

Loyalty vs. Betrayal

Authority vs. Subversion

Sanctity vs. Degradation

Methods

Experimental

- Receiving 2 transgressions and 1 control vignette.
- Reporting distress states: Anger, Disgust, Anxiety, Sadness

Correlational

- Measure of perceived moral transgression
- Haidt's 5 moral domains

PTSD

- Short PTSD Checklist (PCL)

Distress

- Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS)

Proposed Analyses

1. Multiple Regression
2. Multilevel modeling
3. Bootstrapping, to detect indirect effects

Potential Implications

- Develop treatment strategies targeting moral conflicts - addressing feelings of guilt, shame, self-blame
- Inform understanding of decision-making and behaviors of individuals experiencing PTSD symptoms

References

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