

Peer Review

Review of: "How Personality Traits, Social Resources, and Gender May Relate to Engagement in Prosocial Behaviour"

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The manuscript attempts to integrate sociological (Social Resource Theory) and psychological (Big Five Personality Traits) perspectives to explain the underlying mechanisms of prosocial behavior. While the research question is inherently interesting and the integration of these two domains is a worthy scholarly endeavor, the current version of the manuscript suffers from fundamental theoretical gaps, significant methodological flaws, and statistical inconsistencies that undermine the validity of its conclusions.

The study is grounded in established theories, specifically Social Resource Theory and the Five-Factor Model of personality. The authors correctly identify that prosocial behavior is a multifaceted construct. However, the theoretical contribution remains limited. The integration of "resources" and "traits" is presented somewhat linearly, failing to offer a novel conceptual framework that advances the existing literature beyond confirming that personality is a stronger predictor than external resources.

A major theoretical weakness is the failure to account for interactions among social and demographic variables. Prosocial behavior is highly context-dependent. The study treats variables such as age, gender, and resources as independent predictors or mediators, without considering how they might interact to produce specific behavioral outcomes. For instance, the impact of social capital on prosociality may differ significantly across different life stages or socio-economic contexts. By ignoring these intersections, the study presents an oversimplified model of human behavior that lacks ecological validity.

The most concerning aspect of the manuscript is the handling of latent variables. The authors excluded "Agreeableness" and "Neuroticism" from the final analysis due to poor model fit. In the context of prosocial behavior, Agreeableness is theoretically the most significant personality predictor. Removing it because of a statistical "misfit" transforms the study from a theory-driven investigation into a data-driven exercise.

The "Social Responsibility" scale was removed due to extremely low internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha < .50$). This suggests significant issues with the measurement instrument or its application to this specific sample, further weakening the structural integrity of the proposed model.

The sample is heavily skewed, with females representing 79% of the participants. While the authors acknowledge this, such a profound gender imbalance makes it nearly impossible to draw meaningful or generalizable conclusions about the male population. This bias is particularly problematic given that "gender" is a central variable of interest in the study's title and hypotheses.

Instead of simple path comparisons or dummy coding, the authors should have employed Multi-Group Structural Equation Modeling (MG-SEM) to rigorously compare men and women.

Prior to comparing paths between genders, it is a methodological necessity to establish Measurement Invariance (configural, metric, scalar, and strict). Without demonstrating that the constructs (e.g., "Extroversion" or "Human Capital") are measured and understood identically across both gender groups, any observed differences in paths may be artifacts of measurement bias rather than true psychological differences.

In summary, while the topic is relevant, the manuscript's reliance on a data-driven modification of established scales (excluding primary theoretical predictors such as Agreeableness), the lack of an interactionist perspective, the biased sample, and the absence of rigorous invariance testing diminish the study's significance. The study requires a more balanced sample and a theoretically faithful re-analysis (including all personality dimensions) using more advanced multi-group modeling techniques to be suitable for publication.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.