

Peer Review

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

Francesca Pancotto¹

1. Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Modena, Italy

The manuscript addresses an important and timely question: how socioeconomic resources, personality traits, and gender relate to prosocial behaviour. The attempt to integrate a resource-based perspective with dispositional psychology is theoretically meaningful and well positioned within the literature. The sample size (N = 972) is adequate, and the use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is appropriate for testing complex mediation structures.

Overall, the paper is thoughtfully written and methodologically competent. However, several conceptual and analytical issues require clarification and strengthening before the contribution can be fully persuasive.

A central conceptual issue concerns the operationalization of "prosocial behaviour." The manuscript frames its contribution as focusing on altruistic aspects of prosocial behaviour. However, the empirical indicators used (e.g., other-oriented empathy, helpfulness) are self-reported dispositional measures rather than observed or behavioural outcomes.

This raises an important distinction:

Are we studying *actual prosocial behaviour*?

Or are we examining *self-perceived prosocial tendencies*?

The current design appears closer to measuring prosocial orientation or prosocial personality rather than behaviour in a strict sense. This does not invalidate the study, but the terminology should be aligned with what is empirically measured. Some claims in the discussion risk overgeneralization by implying behavioural effects that are not directly observed.

2) The initial measurement model of the full Big Five shows poor fit, leading to the retention of only Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Openness. While statistically understandable, this raises two concerns:

The exclusion of Agreeableness is theoretically surprising, as it is typically one of the strongest predictors of prosociality.

Model trimming based primarily on fit indices may risk capitalizing on sample-specific characteristics.

It would strengthen the manuscript to provide deeper theoretical justification for excluding Agreeableness and Neuroticism. Alternatively, presenting robustness analyses or supplementary models would enhance transparency.

3) The manuscript proposes mediation pathways (e.g., resources → personality → prosocial behaviour). However, all data are cross-sectional and self-reported.

While SEM allows testing of statistical mediation, causal ordering cannot be established. For instance:

Education may shape personality.

But personality may also influence educational attainment.

Or both may be jointly shaped by unobserved background factors.

The paper would benefit from a clearer acknowledgment that the mediation tested is statistical rather than temporal or causal.

Recommendation:

Revise and Resubmit (Constructive Revision Encouraged)

The manuscript has clear potential and would benefit from conceptual tightening and modest methodological clarification.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.