

Hope And Emotional Intelligence as Predictors of Pro-Social Behaviour Among Secondary School Teachers

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Abstract

*The study investigated hope and emotional intelligence as predictors of pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers, ninety-eight (98) public school teachers comprising 73 females and 27 males with a mean age of 37.61 and S.D of 7.618 were drawn as participants from public secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Governmental using purposive sampling techniques. Pro-socialness Scale, The Adult Hope Scale and Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) were used for data collection, correlational design was adopted, and the statistical test that was used for data analysis was hierarchical multiple regression using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 software. Findings revealed that hope (agency $St\beta = .301^{**}$ $t = 3.280^{**}$ at $p < .01$, pathway $St\beta = .349^{***}$ $t = 4.695^{***}$ at $p < .001$ and $St\beta = .187^{*}$ at $p < .05$) positively relate to pro-social behaviour, Hope $r = .642$ relate to pro-social behaviour, it contributed 41.2 % variance to pro-social behaviour at $r^2 = .412$, it predicted prosocial behaviour at $p < .001$. Emotional intelligence $St\beta = .413^{***}$ $t = 3.876^{***}$ at $p < .001$ positively predicted pro-social behaviour. The predictor variables $r = .703$ relate to the dependent variable, they contributed 49.4% variance to pro-social behaviour at $r^2 = .492$, hope and emotional intelligence jointly predict pro-social behaviour at $p < .001$. Hence school management should come up with a package that can make the teachers to be hopeful, they should also make effort to encourage their staff this will increase their level of emotional intelligence, and will help to increase hope for pro-social behaviour to be present.*

Introduction

Prosocial behaviours encompass a broad array of voluntary actions designed to benefit others and are deemed valuable within society (Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2014). Such behaviours may be enacted by individuals, groups, or organizations within a workplace context and can target a variety of beneficiaries, ranging from a single individual to entire groups, organizations, communities, or more expansive societal objectives (Hart, 2024). The concept of prosocial organizational behaviour encompasses numerous elements, including citizenship behaviour, civility, respect, care, support, assistance, altruism, kindness, collaboration, sharing, cooperation, benevolence, giving, donating, generosity, volunteering, social activism, and

heroism. Additionally, it includes individual dispositions such as empathy, sympathy, perspective-taking, humanity, and compassion, as well as personality traits like agreeableness and the attributes associated with a prosocial personality (Hart, 2024).

Pro-social behaviour refers to a wide array of actions that include assisting others, sharing resources, and collaborating with peers. These behaviours are instrumental in cultivating social connections and nurturing a sense of belonging, which is essential for the establishment of a cohesive and harmonious society. Research has established a correlation between pro-social behaviours and numerous positive outcomes, such as enhanced mental and physical health, increased well-being, and elevated levels of life satisfaction. Furthermore, pro-social behaviour serves to alleviate the adverse effects of stress and trauma, as it promotes a sense of social support and equips individuals with the means to navigate challenging circumstances. Individuals who participate in pro-social behaviour demonstrate a significant level of compassion and altruism. This conduct can be expressed through various activities, including providing assistance to those in need, participating in volunteer initiatives, contributing to charitable organizations, or championing the rights of others (Chin & Zakaria, 2015). The significance of pro-social behaviour lies in its ability to cultivate a sense of community and interconnectedness among individuals.

Pro-social behaviour can manifest in numerous ways, ranging from minor acts of kindness to more structured charitable activities. Research conducted by Lay and Hauptmann (2015) elucidates the diverse scenarios and contexts in which individuals may display pro-social behaviour, whether through simple acts of assistance or formal engagement with charitable organizations. Recognizing the positive impact of pro-social behaviour on individuals and communities is crucial. Acts of charity and kindness have the potential to cultivate a sense of social responsibility among individuals and enhance the well-being of those within their immediate environment. Such behaviour may also elicit positive feedback and foster additional pro-social activities among individuals and society at large. It is essential to acknowledge that the terms pro-social behaviour, helping, and kindness are frequently used interchangeably, as noted by Nelson and colleagues (2015). Furthermore, pro-social behaviours have been linked to various positive life outcomes. However, it is noteworthy that a decline in these behaviours has been reported during early adulthood (Padilla-Walker, Carlo, & Memmott-Elison, 2018). Pro-social behaviour facilitates positive social adaptation in individuals, serving as a critical indicator of socialization development. Such behaviour enables individuals to maintain strong relationships with one another, fostering justice, harmony, and the overall progress of society (Penner et al., 2005; Wittek & Bekkers, 2015; Ding & Lu, 2016; Ding et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021). Additionally, pro-social behaviour benefits not only society but also plays a significant role in enhancing the mental health of both those who engage in it and those who receive it, thereby contributing to the advancement of human society (Kou et al., 2007; Yang et al., 2016; El-Khodary & Samara, 2019; Aycok et al., 2020).

According to Eisenberg's Pro-social Behaviour theory, the process by which individuals exhibit pro-social behaviour comprises three stages: recognizing the needs of others, forming an intention to assist, and connecting that intention with action (Yang et al., 2017). Given that teachers serve as role models for their students, it is vital to comprehend how they conceptualize

pro-social behaviour within their professional context and how they incorporate it into their duties. The degree to which teachers demonstrate pro-social behaviour in educational settings significantly influences the quality of teacher-student relationships (Thevi & Portia, 2017). This underscores the necessity to explore factors contributing to pro-social behaviour, particularly among secondary school teachers, and to examine the roles of hope and emotional intelligence in this dynamic.

Pro-social behaviours can be classified into various types, each typically motivated by different factors. For instance, proactive pro-social actions are often driven by goals associated with status and a desire for popularity within a group (Cherry, 2022). Additionally, some researchers propose that pro-social behaviours can be further subdivided into categories such as helping, sharing, or comforting (Dunfield, 2014). This type of behaviour is essential in the workplace (Biagioli et al., 2016), as fostering a sense of humanity among employees enhances their commitment and dedication. Moreover, hope emerges as a potential catalyst for the promotion of pro-social behaviour within organizational settings.

Hope is defined as the aspiration for a potential yet uncertain goal (Pleeging et al., 2022). It represents a cognitive process that encompasses agency and pathways to achieving goals (Snyder, 2000a; Pleeging et al., 2022). Additionally, hope can be characterized as an emotion that arises when an individual focuses on a significant positive future outcome (Bruiniks & Malle, 2005; Pleeging et al., 2022). It is also regarded as a form of positive psychological capital (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Pleeging et al., 2022) and described as an inner strength oriented toward a new awareness and personal enrichment (Herth, 1992; Pleeging et al., 2022). Individuals who possess hope demonstrate resilience and exhibit the determination to confront challenges, pursue positive outcomes, and navigate health-related adversities. Conversely, individuals lacking hope tend to encounter more obstacles and experience diminished success in achieving their goals. In severe cases, hopelessness can result in a decline in energy, enthusiasm, and self-concept, potentially leading to clinical depression (Thakre & Ruchita, 2016).

The concept of hope is defined as a cognitive framework that encompasses positive expectations concerning the attainment of goals, which is rooted in a sense of effective agency and viable pathways. This perspective was initially proposed by Snyder, Irving, and Anderson (1991) and subsequently validated by Thakre and Ruchita (2016). Research indicates that individuals with a hopeful disposition report greater life satisfaction, as demonstrated in a study conducted among youth (Thakre, 2013).

It is clear that hope plays a crucial role in fostering an optimistic outlook and instilling a sense of purpose and direction in the pursuit of personal goals. Additionally, organizational hope is essential for the study and advancement of organizations. It highlights the most constructive and promising aspects of social and organizational life, offering a moral vision of the future to inform and inspire collective action (Ludema et al., 1997; Thakre & Ruchita, 2016). Hope is frequently perceived as a personal experience, anchored in an individual's beliefs and responsibilities pertaining to the attainment of their objectives (Drahos, 2004; Snyder, 2000a; Pleeging et al., 2022). However, the literature on hope underscores the significant influence of an individual's social environment. This environment encompasses familial and friend

relationships, as well as institutional, political, cultural, and economic contexts. Such social frameworks play a crucial role in various facets of the hope process (Pleeging et al., 2021). Additionally, these contexts can serve as sources of hope by educating individuals on the cultivation of hope, facilitating the achievement of their goals, and providing a sense of meaning, trust, and self-worth (Benzein & Saveman, 1998; Elliot, 2007; Du & King, 2013). The sense of hope among workers can significantly impact others, frequently offering hope or comfort to those around them (Ludema et al., 1997; Boukala & Dimitrakopoulou, 2017). Furthermore, employees may collectively experience shared hopes when objectives are aligned and individuals collaborate in the pursuit of these aspirations (Weingarten, 2010; Torres & Tayne, 2017). When individuals are queried about their hopes, a considerable proportion indicate that their hopes are often directed towards others or are closely related to their interactions with others (Bland & Darlington, 2002; Pleeging et al., 2021).

Another important variable of interest is emotional intelligence. Research conducted by Wang et al. (2021) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and prosocial behaviour, concluding that emotional intelligence positively predicts prosocial behaviour. During the need-awareness phase of prosocial behaviour, an individual is attentive to whether others require assistance, which involves the perception and assessment of emotional awareness and expression abilities of emotional intelligence concerning the emotions of others. Once it is established that another individual needs help, the person must then decide whether to assist. At this stage, the understanding and management components of emotional intelligence are activated, allowing the individual to organize and analyze the available information and evaluate whether their intentions to engage in PSB are appropriate for the current situation (Xu and Li, 2020). Additionally, the emotional management dimension of emotional intelligence plays a critical role in bridging intentions and actual behaviour (Glazer, 2021). Thus, emotional intelligence is pivotal in the manifestation of prosocial behaviour; individuals possessing higher levels of emotional intelligence are likely to have enhanced emotional perceptions of others, thereby increasing their propensity to engage in prosocial actions.

Emotional intelligence is defined as the capacity to perceive, regulate, and assess emotions (Cherry, 2024). Scholars are divided on the nature of emotional intelligence, with some positing that it can be acquired and enhanced over time, while others argue that it is an inherent trait. Notably, the ability to express and regulate one's own emotions is crucial; equally important is the capability to comprehend, interpret, and respond to the emotions of others. Research indicates that emotional intelligence encompasses four distinct dimensions: emotional perception, the ability to reason using emotions, the capacity to understand emotions, and the ability to manage emotions effectively (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Cherry, 2024). Perceiving emotions is the initial step in understanding emotional experiences and involves accurately recognizing emotions in oneself and others. This often includes interpreting nonverbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions. The subsequent step, reasoning with emotions, entails leveraging emotions to enhance cognitive processes. Emotions play a significant role in determining our focus and how we respond to various stimuli; we tend to react emotionally to issues that command our attention.

Understanding emotions involves recognizing that the emotions perceived by an individual can convey a multitude of meanings. For instance, if an individual observes someone exhibiting signs of anger, it is essential to interpret the underlying cause of that anger and its potential implications. An example of this could be that if a manager appears angry, it may signify dissatisfaction with an employee's performance, or it could stem from unrelated external factors, such as receiving a traffic citation earlier that day or experiencing personal conflicts. Managing emotions represents the highest level of emotional intelligence and is critical for effective interaction. This dimension encompasses the regulation of one's own emotions, responding appropriately to emotional stimuli, and considering the emotional states of others. The model proposed by Salovey and Mayer arranges the four branches of emotional intelligence by increasing complexity, with foundational processes such as perceiving and expressing emotions at the lower levels, while more advanced processes, such as the regulation of emotions, are situated at higher levels (Cherry, 2024).

Social Learning Theory, as articulated by Rotter (1954), serves as the theoretical framework for this discussion, predicated on the premise that the development of an individual's personality is significantly influenced by interactions within a meaningful environment (Rotter, 1966). The environmental context is thus of paramount importance. Simultaneously, it is essential to recognize that behaviour is not merely a direct response to an objective set of stimuli present in the environment. Rotter (1954) argues that behaviour is best understood and studied by considering both the individual—encompassing their learning paradigms and prior experiences—and the environmental conditions influencing behaviour, specifically the various stimuli that elicit responses from the individual. This perspective suggests that experiences within the environment will shape an employee's emotional intelligence and the extent of their hope, which, in turn, will significantly affect their level of prosocial behaviour. Hence these hypotheses were tested:

Hope will significantly play a role in pro-social behaviour

Emotional intelligence will significantly play a role in predicting pro-social behaviour Hope and emotional intelligence will jointly play a role in pro-social behaviour

Method Participants

Ninety-eight (98) public school teachers comprising 73 females and 27 males with a mean age of 37.61 and SD of 7.618 were drawn as participants from public secondary schools in Nkanu West Local Governmental using purposive sampling techniques. Teachers that were drawn are as follows: Government College (35), Modern Secondary School (31), Obe Girls' High School (33), Ozalla High School (34) and Umueze High School (35). **Inclusive criteria:** the students must be from the selected schools. **Exclusive criteria:** none student from the selected schools.

Instrument

These instruments were used for data collection:

1. Caprara et al., (2005) Pro-socialness Scale
2. Snyder et al., (1991) The Adult Hope Scale

3. Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)

Caprara et al., (2005) Prosocialness Scale

Prosocial behaviours were measured using the Prosocialness Scale for Adults, a scale that consists of 16 items developed by Caprara et al., (2005). The scale uses a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (never/almost never true) to 5 (almost always/always true). This instrument is reliable to be used with Cronbach's alpha value .91 (Caprara, Steca, Zelli and Capanna, 2005).

Snyder et al., (1991). The Adult Hope Scale

The Adult Hope Scale was used to assess hope (Snyder et al., 1991), which is a 12-item measure for determining a respondent's level of hope. This scale has been divided into two subscales comprising Snyder's cognitive model of hope: (1) Agency (i.e., goal-directed energy) and (2) Pathways (i.e., planning to accomplish goals). Among the 12 items, 4 are part of the Agency subscale and 4 are part of the Pathways subscale. The remaining four items are fillers. Each item is answered using an 8-point Likert-type scale ranging from definitely false to definitely true (20). Higher scores indicate a higher life expectancy in the respondent and vice versa. Khodarahimi reported the reliability by Cronbach's alpha as much as 0.82 (21). The researcher carried out a pilot study with thirty which yielded a Cronbach Alpha .845.

Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)

The Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) were adopted to measure the emotional intelligence of adolescents in this study. The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale was developed and validated by Wong & Law (2002) and is based on Davies (1998) four-dimensional definition of emotional intelligence. There are 16 items on the scales which assess emotional intelligence competences in four areas; Self-Emotional Appraisal, Others-Emotions Appraisal, Use of Emotion and Regulation of Emotion. It contains less number of items and has been validated and used among Nigerian students. It has a high reliability coefficient of 85 (Olatoye, Akintunde & Yakasai 2010).16 among the Nigerian students. The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale was measured on a 5-point Likert format type scale from "1" (Not so true of me) to "5"(fully represents me). Sample questions on this scale are "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time", "I always know whether or not I am happy" and "I have good control of my own emotions". On average, it takes 6 minutes to fill the questionnaire. A higher score on this questionnaire shows good emotional intelligence while lower scores indicate poor emotional intelligence.

Procedure

The researchers adopted a purposive sampling technique to draw and both the participants and the schools used for this study from Nkanu West local area of Enugu State. The researchers employed the help of research assistants who are Nation Youth Service Corps Members (NYSC) serving in the selected schools to administer and retrieve the instrument, the participants who are school teachers were drawn with the aid of purposive sampling techniques; because being teacher-qualified them to participate in the research, then the ones drawn were asked to respond to the items by shading one of the boxes in front of the statements which best

reflects to what degree they agree or disagree with the statement. One hundred and eleven copies of the instruments were distributed, and one hundred and one copies were returned of which three were wrongly responded to, leaving only ninety-eight copies properly responded to which was used to carry out analysis; the wrongly responded ones were discarded.

Design and statistics

Correlational design was adopted because a relationship between the predictor variables and dependent variable was been investigated, including the level of interaction. The statistical test that was used for data analysis is hierarchical multiple regression using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 software.

Results

Table I: descriptive and correctional statistics on emotional intelligence and hope as predictors of pro-social well-being.

S/N	Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Gender	1.68	.470	1	-.227*	-.027	.111	.120	.091	.153	.102
2	Age	37.61	7.618		1	.201*	.132	.076	.182	.053	.114
3	Agency	25.55	5.077			1	.506**	.173	.723**	.564**	.510**
4	Pathway	25.79	5.298				1	.303**	.793**	.670**	.563**
5	Fillers	23.12	6.148					1	.704**	.266**	.349**
6	Hope	74.33	12.19						1	.658**	.626**
7	Emotional intelligence	61.43	9.755							1	.651**
8	Prosocial	57.95	10.27								1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table I above shows that gender $r = -.227^*$ at $p < .05$ negatively relate to age, this implies that increase in age will cause a decrease in the presence of gender among secondary school teachers. Age $r = .201^*$ positively relate to agency dimension of hope. Emotional intelligence positively relate to hope $r = .658^{**}$ at $p < .01$ (agency $r = .564^{**}$, pathway $r = .670^{**}$ and fillers $r = .266^{**}$ at $p < .01$) and pro-social behaviour $r = .651^{**}$ at $p < .01$, this implies that an increase in emotional intelligence will cause an increase in hope it dimensions and pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers. Pro-social behaviour positively relate to emotional intelligence $r = .651^{**}$, hope $r = .626^{**}$ (agency $r = .510^{**}$, pathway $r = .563^{**}$ and fillers $r = .349$) at $p < .01$, this implies that an increase in emotional intelligence, hope and its dimensions will cause an increase in pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers.

Table II: regression statistics on emotional intelligence and hope as predictors of prosocial behaviour among secondary school teachers

Model	R	R ²	St β	t
Agency	.642***	.412***	.301**	3.280**
Pathway			.349***	3.695***
Fillers			.187*	2.255*
2	.703***	.494***		
Emotional intelligence			.413***	3.876***
Gender			.012	.148
Age			.032	.407

Dependent variable: pro-social behaviour, at $p < .05^*$, $p < .01$, $p < .001^{*}$.**

Table II above shows that hope (agency $St\beta = .301^{**}$ $t = 3.280^{**}$ at $p < .01$, pathway $St\beta = .349^{***}$ $t = 4.695^{***}$ at $p < .001$ and fillers $St\beta = .187^*$ at $p < .05$) positively relate to pro-social behaviour, this implies an increase in the different dimensions of hope will cause an increase in pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers. Hope $r = .642$ relate to pro-social behaviour, it contributed 41.2 % variance to pro-social behaviour at $r^2 = .412$, it predicted prosocial behaviour at $p < .001$. Emotional intelligence $St\beta = .413^{***}$ $t = 3.876^{***}$ at $p < .001$ positively predicted pro-social behaviour, this implies that an increase in emotional intelligence will cause an increase in pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers. The predictor variables $r = .703$ relate to the dependent variable, they contributed 49.4% variance to pro-social behaviour at $r^2 = .492$, hope and emotional intelligence jointly predict pro-social behaviour at $p < .001$. The demographic variables of gender $St\beta = .012$ $t = .148$ and age $St\beta = .032$ $t = .407$ at $p < .05$ did not predict pro-social among secondary school teachers.

Discussion

The first hypothesis tested which stated that hope (agency, pathway and filler) will independently and jointly predict pro-social behaviour was confirmed, hence the hypothesis was accepted. The obtained result shows that agency, pathway and filler dimensions of hope positively predicted pro-social behaviour among teachers, this implies that an increase in the dimensions of hope will cause an increase in pro-social behaviour. The motivation to pursue goals, the belief in one's capacity to achieve desired goals, and the development of routes to goal achievement are primary factors that can necessitate pro-social behaviour according to the outcome. The findings from the study strongly suggest that hope is significantly linked to the demonstration of pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers. This implies that when teachers possess the key elements of hope, their propensity to exhibit pro-social behaviour is heightened. The presence of hope is seen as a facilitator, enabling teachers to excel in their roles and contribute positively to their school communities.

Furthermore, the text underscores the impact of hope on teachers' resilience in the face of unfair treatment by their employers. It highlights that a high level of hope is crucial for fostering prosocial behaviour among teachers, as it empowers them to perform at their best despite challenging circumstances within their work environment. The text emphasizes the need for increasing hope as a trait among teachers, as doing so can greatly enhance their ability to navigate and thrive amidst various situations and events within the school setting.

The result obtained is in congruity with the study of Jafari and Jafari (2023) which postulated that hope and pro-social behaviour are strongly associated and that an increase in hope will cause an increase in pro-social behaviour. The convergence of the two findings indicated that the definition of hope is a general term that cuts across different cultures.

The second hypothesis tested which stated that emotional intelligence will significantly predict pro-social behaviour was confirmed, hence it was accepted. The findings suggest a strong association between emotional intelligence and pro-social behaviour, indicating that emotional intelligence can significantly impact the willingness of secondary teachers to engage in prosocial conduct. Emotional intelligence, defined as the capacity to comprehend and manage one's own emotions and those of others, can cultivate a genuine desire to offer assistance without expecting reciprocation. This has the potential to enhance their level of engagement and catalyse their optimal performance.

The findings is in congruity with the study of the study of Jin et al., (2021) that found in their investigation that emotional intelligence and pro-social behaviour are strongly related. Although, the two study didn't use the same sample. The cited authors sampled hotel workers, while this one sampled secondary school teachers. The convergence obtained indicated that emotional intelligence has the same definition everywhere.

Implication of the findings

The findings were in congruity with social learning theory by Rotter (1954) which was adopted as theoretical framework based on the fact that the foundation on which social learning theory builds is that the development of an individual's personality is highly dependent on interaction with a meaningful environment (Rotter 1966). The environment is thus of fundamental importance. At the same time, behaviour is assumed not to be directly dependent upon responses to an objective set of stimuli in the environment. Instead, Rotter (1954) postulates that behaviour is most effectively studied and understood by taking both the individual (which includes learning paradigms and previous experiences) and the environmental conditions that determine behaviour (the various stimuli in the environment to which the individual is responding) into consideration. This indicate that experience from the environment will determine the level of emotional intelligence of the employee and the volume of hope they will have, this will also contribute to their level of prosocial behaviour. The result from this study added to empirical work and literature that can be cited by future researchers.

The finding indicated that hope and emotional intelligence positively predicted, this means that both variable can help to determine pro-social behaviour. Hence school management should come up with a package that can make the teachers to be hopeful, they should also make effort to encourage their staff this will increase their level of emotional intelligence, and will help to increase hope for pro-social behaviour to be present. The government and law makers should come up with a law that can increase the social welfare of the teachers, this will help to increase their hope and emotional intelligence to produce pro-social behaviour. **Limitations of the study**

Many factors worked against this study, one of such is the population sampled. Sampling private school teachers alone reduces the numbers of teachers that participated in this study, due to low numbers of teachers in the private school sectors. More participants would have been involved assuming teachers from both public and private were sampled.

This research was carried out during exam period, this factor also reduce the numbers of participants. Most teachers were involved in examination process, which discourage some of them citing busyness. The numbers would have increase assuming it was not during exam period.

The sampling techniques adopted also worked against this study, more school would have been sampled assuming none probability sampling techniques was adopted.

Suggestion for further study

Future researcher should consider sampling participants from both private and public schools so as to increase the numbers of participants.

Secondly, future researcher should consider visiting outside exam period or sample schools that are not involve in serious academic activities, so as to give room for more participants. Finally, a favourable sampling techniques should be adopted by future researcher so to give room for the selection of more participants.

Summary and conclusion

The study investigated hope and emotional intelligence as predictors of pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers, and findings revealed that both hope and emotional intelligence are strong predictors of pro-social behaviour. Hence, secondary school management should work out a way to help keep the hope of the teachers high for emotional intelligence to be presence so as to cause the increase in pro-social behaviour.

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