

Give and you will receive. The association between prosocial behaviour and wellbeing

Abstract

A question of give and take? Pro-social behaviour and social wellbeing.

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In our everyday experiences, helping somebody often results in positive emotions in the actor. Some social psychological theories argue that while helping behaviour can be carried out in order for the actor to feel good, true altruism does not exist since there is always an intrinsic or extrinsic reward associated with helping ((Batson, 2008; Batson, 1998). This issue will be discussed in a broader context of investigating whether there is a relationship between pro-social behaviour and social well-being. Recent studies have found that helping behaviour such as an act of kindness, community service and voluntary work increases psychological well-being, self-esteem, life satisfaction and happiness irrespective of other economic considerations. In this study a questionnaire will be administered to a volunteer sample of 500 people. Part one of the questionnaire assesses prosocial behaviour using the Helping Attitude Scale developed by Nickell, 1998 while part two measures social well-being using Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills and Argyle, 2002). Relationships between pro-social behaviour and well-being will be analysed. Age and gender will also be examined with regard to this relationship. Implications of the study for policy making will be discussed.