

## Hope as a Predictor of Pro-Social Behaviour among Secondary School Teachers

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated hope as a predictor 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 was used for data collection, correlational design was adopted, and the statistical test used for data analysis was linear 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 filler  $St\beta = .187^*$   $t = 2.255^*$  at  $p < .05$ ) positively predict pro-social behaviour among school teachers, Hope  $r = .642$  relate to pro-social behaviour, it contributed 41.2 % variance to pro-social behaviour at  $r^2 = .412$ , hope predicted 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 an 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.*

**Keywords:** *Hope, Pro-social behaviour, Teachers, Secondary School*

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## **Introduction**

Prosocial behaviour plays a crucial role in fostering positive social adaptation and is a significant indicator of individual socialisation development. It facilitates the maintenance of constructive relationships among individuals, thereby contributing to the promotion of justice, harmony, and societal progress (Wang et al., 2021). Moreover, engaging in prosocial behaviour not only benefits others and the broader society but also positively influences the mental well-being of both the givers and recipients, along with contributing to the advancement of human society (Aycock et al., 2020). According to the Prosocial Behaviour theory, the production of Prosocial Behaviour in individuals involves three stages: attending to the needs of others, forming an intention to assist others, and connecting intention with behaviour (Yang et al., 2017). Given that teachers serve as role models for students, it is crucial to comprehend how teachers perceive Prosocial Behaviour within their professional environment and how they put it into practice as part of their professional responsibilities. The demonstration of prosocial behaviour by teachers in schools significantly impacts the quality of teacher-student relationships (Thevi & Portia, 2017). This underscores the necessity to explore the factors that contribute to it, thereby highlighting the importance of examining pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers and the role of hope.

Pro-social behaviours encompass actions driven by the intention to aid others, demonstrating consideration for their rights, emotions, and well-being. These behaviours are underpinned by empathy and an innate inclination to offer assistance without an immediate quid pro quo (Cherry, 2022). Pro-social actions play a pivotal role in cultivating robust interpersonal connections and advancing the common welfare. A predisposition to extend help without anticipating recompense or acknowledgment has the potential to nurture a more supportive community, thereby fostering an environment characterized by empathy and trust. The significance of pro-social behaviour in the context of society cannot be overstated. Because it offers a framework for establishing and sustaining a community that is supportive, empathetic, and responsible, as noted by Padilla-Walker et al. (2015). Pro-social behaviour is a broad term that encompasses a range of actions, such as helping others, sharing resources, and cooperating with others (Cherry, 2022). It facilitates the development of social bonds and fosters a sense of belonging, which is critical for building a cohesive and harmonious society (Cherry, 2022). Pro-social behaviours have been linked to a variety of positive outcomes, including improved mental and physical health, heightened well-being, and higher levels of life satisfaction. Moreover, pro-social behaviour can help to mitigate the negative effects of stress and trauma, as it fosters a sense of social support and helps individuals cope with difficult circumstances. Individuals who engage in pro-social conduct exhibit a profound sense of compassion and altruism. This behaviour may be manifested in various forms, such as rendering aid to those in need, engaging in volunteer work, contributing to charity, or advocating for the rights of others (Chin & Zakaria, 2015). The value of pro-social behaviour lies in its capacity to engender a sense of community and interconnectedness among individuals. Pro-social behaviours can be categorized into different types and are usually motivated by different factors. For instance,

proactive pro-social actions are often driven by status-linked goals and the desire to be popular within a group (Cherry, 2022). On the other hand, some researchers suggest that pro-social behaviours can be further classified into helping, sharing, or comforting subtypes (Dunfield, 2014). This pro-social behaviour is needed in the workplace (Biagioli et al., 2016) because the workplace needs the feeling of humanity, this will help the employee to be dedicated. Hope is a variable that might bring about the presence of pro-social behaviour.

Hope is defined as the aspiration for an achievable yet uncertain objective (Pleeging, et al., 2022). It encompasses a cognitive process that entails both agency and pathways to goals (Snyder, 2000a; Pleeging, et al., 2022) and is characterized as 'an emotion that emerges when an individual is oriented toward an important positive future outcome' (Bruiniks & Malle, 2005; Pleeging, et al., 2022). Additionally, it is viewed as a positive psychological asset (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Pleeging, et al., 2022), or as 'an intrinsic force aimed at cultivating heightened awareness and personal enrichment' (Herth, 1992; Pleeging, et al., 2022).

Individuals with hope demonstrate resilience, and determination to overcome challenges, achieve favourable outcomes, and endure illnesses. Conversely, individuals devoid of hope are noted to encounter greater hindrances and reduced success in goal attainment, and in severe instances, may manifest a diminished vitality, lack of enthusiasm, compromised self-concept, and potentially clinical depression (Farran et al., 1995; Snyder et al., 1996; Thakre & Ruchita, 2016).

Hope, when combined with adaptive coping strategies, can result in enhanced functionality. This may lead individuals to experience greater positivity, express more adaptive thoughts and behaviours, and foster improved relationships with others and the world, resulting in an increased sense of vitality (Fromm, 1968; Thakre & Ruchita, 2016). A distinctive characteristic of hope lies in its capacity to maintain a flexible outlook, where even in instances of unmet expectations or desired outcomes, hope can endure (Farran et al., 1995; Thakre & Ruchita, 2016). The concept of hope pertains to a cognitive framework that encompasses optimistic expectations related to achieving goals, rooted in a perception of efficacious agency and accessible pathways. The theoretical framework was initially proposed by Snyder, Irving, and Anderson in 1991 and subsequently corroborated by Thakre and Ruchita in 2016. Empirical studies indicate that individuals exhibiting a hopeful disposition tend to experience higher levels of life satisfaction, as evidenced by research involving youth (Thakre, 2013). Hope plays a pivotal role in nurturing an optimistic outlook and cultivating a sense of purpose and direction towards the attainment of personal objectives. Moreover, the concept of organizational hope assumes significance in the examination and fortification of organizational structures. It underscores the most auspicious facets of social and organizational existence and furnishes a morally inspiring vision of the future to steer collective endeavours (Ludema et al., 1997; Thakre & Ruchita, 2016).

The adoption of Rotter's (1954) social learning theory as a theoretical framework is grounded in the understanding that an individual's personality development is significantly influenced by interactions within their meaningful environment (Rotter, 1966). The pivotal role of the environment in shaping behaviour is a fundamental tenet. Behaviour is not viewed as directly contingent upon responses to an objective set of environmental stimuli. Instead, Rotter (1954) posits that a comprehensive understanding of behaviour necessitates taking into account both the individual (incorporating learning paradigms and prior experiences) and the environmental conditions that influence behaviour (the diverse stimuli in the environment to which the

individual responds). This suggests that environmental experiences determine a teacher's level of hope, which in turn contributes to their pro-social behaviour. The following questions will provide answers:

Will hope significantly predict pro-social behaviour among school teachers?

Hence this following hypothesis

Hope (agency, pathway and filler) will independently and jointly will significantly predict pro-social behaviour

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Ninety-eight (98) public school teachers' comprising 73 females and 26 males with a mean age 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. 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**

A questionnaire form comprising two scales and demographic variables were used.

The scales include:

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

#### **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 et al., 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.

### **Procedure**

The researcher adopted 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 researcher employed the help of research assistants who are Nation Youth Service Corps Member (NYSC) serving in the selected schools to administered 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 questionnaire were distributed, one hundred and one copies were returned back of which three were wrongly responded, leaving only ninety-eight copies properly responded to which was used to carry out analysis; the wrongly responded once 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
1	Gender	1.68	.470	1	-.227*	-.027	.111	.120	.091	.102
2	Age	37.61	7.618		1	.201*	.132	.076	.182	.114
3	Agency	25.55	5.077			1	.506**	.173	.723**	.510**
4	Path way	25.79	5.298				1	.303**	.793**	.563**
5	Fillers	23.12	6.148					1	.704**	.349**
6	Hope	74.33	12.19						1	.626**
7	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 an increase in age will cause a decrease in the presence of gender among secondary school teachers. Hope  $r = .626^{**}$  (agency  $r = .510^{**}$ , pathway  $r = .563^{**}$  and fillers  $r = .349$ ) at  $p < .01$ , positively relate to pro-social behaviour, this implies that an increase in 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 <sup>2</sup>	St $\beta$	t
Agency	.642***	.412***	.301**	3.280**
Path way			.349***	3.695***
Fillers			.187*	2.255*

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  $St\beta = .187^*$   $t = 2.255^*$  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  $r = .642$  relates to pro-social behaviour, it contributed 41.2 % variance to pro-social behaviour at  $r^2 = .412$ , it predicted 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 findings indicate a positive association between the agency, pathway, and filler dimensions of hope and pro-social behaviour among teachers. This suggests that an augmentation in hope dimensions leads to a corresponding increase in pro-social behaviour. The impetus to pursue objectives, belief in one's capacity to achieve desired goals, and the development of strategies for goal attainment are pivotal determinants facilitating pro-social conduct, as endorsed by the study outcomes. The evidence strongly indicates a significant correlation between hope and the demonstration of pro-social behaviour among secondary school educators. The passage points out that when teachers possess hope, they are more inclined to display pro-social behaviour, such as kindness, empathy, and cooperation. Hope is regarded as a catalyst that empowers teachers to thrive in their roles and make positive contributions to their school communities. Furthermore, the passage underscores the profound impact of hope on teachers' resilience, particularly in the face of unjust treatment by their employers. It emphasizes the vital role of nurturing hope as a characteristic among teachers, as it can significantly bolster their capacity to navigate and flourish in diverse school environments and challenging circumstances.

### Implication of the findings

The findings aligned with Rotter's social learning theory (1954), which served as the theoretical framework. According to this theory, an individual's personality development is heavily influenced by interactions with their environment (Rotter, 1966). The theory emphasizes the fundamental role of the environment in shaping behavior, positing that behavior is not solely a reaction to external stimuli. Instead, Rotter (1954) suggests that behavior should be studied by considering both the individual (including learning patterns and past experiences) and the environmental factors that influence behavior. This indicates that an, level of hope, and prosocial behavior are influenced by their experiences in the environment.

The result from this study added to empirical work and literature that can be cited by future researchers.

The findings suggest a positive relationship between hope their ability to predict pro-social behaviour. Consequently, it is recommended that school management devise a program to cultivate hope among teachers and staff, thereby fostering pro-social behaviour. Additionally, policymakers are advised to consider legislation geared at enhancing the social welfare of

teachers, as this can serve to augment hope, consequently leading to an increase in pro-social behaviour.

### **Limitations of the study**

There were several factors that worked against this study, one of which was the limited population sampled. Focusing solely on public school teachers reduced the overall number of participants, as there are fewer teachers in the private school sector. A more robust sample could have been achieved if teachers from both public and private schools were included.

Additionally, conducting the research during the exam period also hampered participation. Many teachers were heavily involved in the examination process, which deterred some from taking part in the study due to their busy schedules. Conducting the study during a different time of year would likely have increased the number of participants.

The sampling techniques adopted also presented limitations. Using non-probability sampling techniques restricted the number of schools sampled. Employing different sampling methods could have allowed for a more extensive representation of schools to be included in the study.

### **Suggestion for further study**

Future researchers should consider sampling participants from both private and public schools to increase the number of participants in their studies.

Additionally, they should avoid conducting research during the exam period or select schools that are not heavily involved in serious academic activities to allow for more participation. Finally, future researchers should consider adopting a more favourable sampling technique to enable the selection of a greater number of participants.

### **Summary and conclusion**

The study investigated hope as a predictor of pro-social behaviour among secondary school teachers, and findings revealed that hope is a strong predictor of pro-social behaviour. Hence, secondary school management should work out a way to help keep the hopes of the teachers high to cause the increase in pro-social behaviour.

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