

Prosocial Orientation Questionnaire (POQ): An Introduction

Hing Keung Ma, Hong Kong Baptist University
Daniel T. L. Shek, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Ping Chung Cheung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ma, Shek and Cheung (1994) constructed the Prosocial Orientation Questionnaire (POQ) based on Ma and Leung's (1991) Child Altruism Inventory (CAI). Some items of the CAI were used in the POQ.

The POQ measures various aspects of prosocial orientation and behavior of adolescents. Subjects responded to the POQ by indicating their degree of agreement to 40 statements on a 4-point scale: Strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. There are four subscales in the POQ: 1) Helping Behavior - tendency to help others in various situations (e.g., "I would spend time and money to help those in need."); 2) Cooperation and Sharing - tendency to cooperate with others and to share things with others (e.g., "When I am playing games or ball games, I welcome other classmates to play with me."); 3) Affective Relationship - tendency to maintain an affective, friendly, and sympathetic relationship with others (e.g., "When a family member is sick, I feel very unhappy."); and 4) Normative Behavior - tendency to behave in compliance with the social norm (e.g., "I listen attentively during lessons."). The average of all the items in the POQ is a measure of the general tendency to perform prosocial acts. Therefore, it is called General Prosocial Orientation.

The internal consistency reliability of the four subscales of the POQ ranges from .55 to .69, and that of the General Prosocial Orientation score is .87 (Cheung, Ma & Shek, 1998, p.36). The reliability of the POQ is regarded as acceptable. Ten sample items are given in Appendix 1.

Ma, Cheung and Shek (2007) found that prosocial orientation was associated negatively with peer negative influence and peer delinquent behavior, and positively with peer positive influence. Prosocial orientation was associated with positive family social environment.

In addition, prosocial orientation was associated negatively with psychoticism and neuroticism, but positively with social desirability. The findings suggested that positive peer interactions, good family social environment and positive personality tended to increase the prosocial orientation of adolescents.

(May 9, 2016)

Correspondence should be addressed to Hing Keung Ma, Centre for Child Development, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong.

E-mail address: hkma@hkbu.edu.hk.

Relevant References

- (1) Ma, H. K., & Leung, M. C. (1991). Altruistic orientation in children: Construction and validation of the Child Altruism Inventory. *International Journal of Psychology*, 26, 745-759.
- (2) Ma, H. K., Shek, D. T. L., & Cheung, P. C. (1994). *Prosocial Orientation Questionnaire (with scoring key)*. Unpublished Test Instrument, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- (3) Cheung, P. C., Ma, H. K., & Shek, D. T. L. (1998). Conceptions of success: Their correlates with prosocial orientation and behavior in Chinese adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 21, 31-42.
- (4) Ma, H. K., Cheung, P. C., & Shek, D. T. L. (2007). The relation of prosocial orientation to peer interactions, family social environment and personality of Chinese adolescents. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 31, 12-18.

Appendix 1

Prosocial Orientation Questionnaire: Sample Items

I. English Version

Please tick [] the appropriate box after reading the question.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My relationship with my family is good.				
2. When I am playing games or ball games, I welcome other classmates to play with me.				
3. I will use time and money to help those in need.				
4. I love my father.				
5. I will persuade my classmates not to fight or quarrel.				
6. If necessary, I would donate to social welfare organizations.				
7. When my family is in trouble, I will help them.				
8. When I see someone leave something behind, I usually wouldn't be bothered to help.				
9. Sharing something that belongs to me with someone else is a pleasure.				
10. I am very respectful and obedient to my parents.				

II. Chinese Version

在回答下列問題時，請在適當的方格用 來表示。

	十分不同意	不同意	同意	十分同意
1. 我與家人的關係良好。				
2. 在玩遊戲或打球時，我歡迎其他同學加入。				
3. 我會用時間和金錢去幫助有需要的人。				
4. 我愛爸爸。				
5. 我會勸同學不要打架和爭吵。				
6. 如有需要我會捐助社會福利機構。				
7. 家人有困難時，我會幫助他。				
8. 我看到別人遺下東西，多數不加理會。				
9. 與他人分享一些我所擁有的東西是一件快樂的事情。				
10. 我十分孝順父母。				