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## Consequences of prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport: A systematic review and meta-analysis

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## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Support** - This research was supported by Beijing Philosophy and Social Science Foundation (Grant numbers:24DTR068).

**Review Stage at time of this submission** - The review has not yet started.

**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.

**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY202610006

**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 2 January 2026 and was last updated on 2 January 2026.

## INTRODUCTION

**Review question / Objective** Review question - What consequences have been examined in relation to prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport?

**Objective** - The present review brings together quantitative evidence on the consequences associated with prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport and synthesises this evidence using meta-analytic methods.

**Rationale** Prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport have been examined in relation to a range of psychological and behavioural consequences. These associations have been reported across studies conducted in different sport contexts and populations. The present review brings this work together and synthesises the available quantitative evidence.

**Condition being studied** Prosocial and antisocial behaviours are intentional behaviours that may have positive or negative consequences for others' rights and well-being. Research has examined these behaviours in relation to a range of cognitive, affective, and behavioural consequences.

## METHODS

**Search strategy** A systematic search will be conducted to identify quantitative studies examining prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport and their associated consequences. Searches will use terms related to prosocial and antisocial behaviour, sport, and athletes, and will be adapted for each electronic database. In addition, reference lists of included studies will be screened to identify further relevant studies.

**Participant or population** Athletes participating in organised sport settings.

**Intervention** Not applicable.

**Comparator** Not applicable.

**Study designs to be included** Observational quantitative study designs, including cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.

### Eligibility criteria

#### Inclusion criteria

1. Empirical quantitative studies examining prosocial and/or antisocial behaviours in sport in relation to their associated psychological, cognitive, affective, behavioural, or interpersonal consequences.
2. Studies involving athletes participating in organised sport settings.
3. Studies conducted in sport contexts.
4. Observational quantitative study designs, including cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.
5. Studies employing validated or commonly used measures of prosocial and/or antisocial behaviours in sport.
6. Studies reporting sufficient statistical information to allow extraction or calculation of effect sizes.
7. Peer-reviewed journal articles published in English or Chinese.

#### Exclusion criteria

1. Qualitative studies.
  2. Experimental or intervention studies designed to manipulate prosocial or antisocial behaviours.
  3. Reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, editorials, commentaries, or theoretical papers.
- Case studies.
4. Conference abstracts, dissertations, theses, and other non-peer-reviewed literature.
  5. Studies not involving athletes or not conducted in sport settings.
  6. Studies that do not report sufficient data for quantitative synthesis.

**Information sources** Electronic databases will be searched to identify relevant studies, including Web of Science, Scopus, PsycINFO, SPORTDiscus, China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), and Wanfang Data. In addition, reference lists of included studies will be screened to identify further relevant articles.

**Main outcome(s)** The main focus of this review is on psychological, cognitive, affective, and behavioural consequences that have been examined in relation to prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport. Quantitative associations between these behaviours and their reported consequences will be synthesised.

**Data management** All retrieved records will be managed using reference management software, and duplicates will be removed prior to screening. Extracted data will be stored in electronic files and checked for accuracy and completeness throughout the review process.

**Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis** The methodological quality and risk of bias of included studies will be assessed using a standardised quality assessment tool appropriate for observational studies. Quality assessment will be conducted independently by two reviewers, with any disagreements resolved through discussion or consultation with a third reviewer when necessary. The assessment will be used to inform interpretation of the findings.

**Strategy of data synthesis** Where sufficient data are available, quantitative synthesis will be conducted to summarise associations between prosocial and antisocial behaviours in sport and their reported consequences. Effect sizes will be transformed to a common metric where necessary, and random-effects models will be applied to account for heterogeneity across studies. Statistical heterogeneity will be examined using standard indices. When quantitative synthesis is not feasible, findings will be summarised narratively.

**Subgroup analysis** Where sufficient data are available, subgroup analyses will be conducted to explore potential sources of heterogeneity. Planned subgroup analyses may consider factors such as age group, competitive level, type of sport (team vs. individual), and type of consequence examined. Subgroup analyses will only be undertaken when an adequate number of studies are available within each subgroup.

**Sensitivity analysis** Sensitivity analyses will be conducted where appropriate to examine the robustness of the findings. These analyses may involve repeating the synthesis after excluding studies with higher risk of bias or studies with extreme effect sizes. The results of sensitivity analyses will be used to inform interpretation of the findings.

**Language restriction** Studies published in English and Chinese will be included.

**Country(ies) involved** China.

**Keywords** Prosocial behaviour; Antisocial behaviour; Moral behaviour; Sport; Athletes; Consequences; Meta-analysis.

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**Dissemination plans** The findings of this systematic review and meta-analysis will be disseminated through publication in peer-reviewed academic journals and presentation at relevant academic conferences.

**Contributions of each author**

Author 1 - Dong Wang - Author 1 conceived the study, designed the protocol, and drafted the manuscript. Other authors will contribute to study selection, data extraction, and critical revision of the manuscript.

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