

# Will you give when you have lost? How resource scarcity impacts prosocial behaviour

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## **Abstract**

Research on resource scarcity shows how compensatory behaviour could lead to either selfish or generous outcomes. In this paper, we study the role played by emotions arising from situational resource scarcity to propose when individuals seek compensation through engaging in causes for the “greater good.” Across three studies, we find evidence to support our hypotheses that the presence of resource scarcity and the type of resource scarcity influence both the preference for supporting the prosocial cause and mode of supporting (donating vs. volunteering). Our results offer actionable recommendations to policymakers and charitable organizations to assess the impact of situation-induced resource scarcity on individuals’ motivations to make contributions to prosocial causes.

**Keywords:** *prosocial behaviour; resource scarcity; emotion compensation*

**Track:** Public Sector and Non-Profit Marketing