

# The Impact of Subjective Socioeconomic Status on College Students' Prosocial Behavior: The Chain Mediating Role of Social Support and Just-World Belief

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**ABSTRACT:** Using 450 college students as participants, this study explored the relationship and possible mechanisms between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior using the Subjective Socioeconomic Status Scale, Social Support Scale, Just World Belief Scale, and Prosocial Tendency Scale. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between subjective socioeconomic status, social support, belief in a just world, and prosocial behavior; Social support and belief in a just world play an intermediate role between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, which includes three pathways: the mediating role of social support, the mediating role of belief in a just world, and the chain mediating role of social support belief in a just world.

**Keywords:** just-world belief, prosocial behavior, social support, Subjective socioeconomic status

## I. INTRODUCTION

Prosocial behavior includes all behaviors that meet social expectations and are beneficial to others, groups, or society, including cooperation, sharing, helping, donation, humility, comfort, sympathy, etc. (Wang Meifang, Pang Weiguo, 1997). In recent years, the rapid development of the Chinese economy has brought significant growth in social wealth, but at the same time, it has also exacerbated social stratification. This phenomenon has sparked scholars' attention to socioeconomic status, whether as an objective environmental factor or an individual's subjective perception of their own environment. They attempted to explore the correlation between socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior in order to gain a deeper understanding of the manifestations and differences of prosocial behavior among different social classes (Jiang Wei, Wang Cuiyan, 2017). Previous studies have found that there is no consensus on the relationship between socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, resulting in two different perspectives. One viewpoint, from the perspective of social cognition of social class, suggests that compared to high socioeconomic status individuals, low socioeconomic status individuals are more inclined to acquire more resources through prosocial behavior (Zheng&Wang, 2021). The second viewpoint is based on the cost consumption theory, which suggests that individuals with high socioeconomic status are more likely to exhibit prosocial behavior due to having more resources and facing

relatively lower opportunity costs when implementing prosocial behavior (Kraus&Callaghan, 2016). The effects produced by the mechanisms assumed by these two viewpoints are opposite. Further exploration is needed to determine whether these two mechanisms work simultaneously or if one mechanism dominates in specific groups. For college students, exhibiting prosocial behavior is not only an important manifestation of their social adaptability, but also has positive significance for their future integration into society and the promotion of social harmony and development. Therefore, studying the relationship between the socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior of college students can provide empirical testing for the above two theories. In addition, there are multiple factors that affect the relationship between socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, among which areas closely related to socioeconomic status include perception of social fairness (such as belief in a just world) and physical and mental health levels (Guo Yongyu et al., 2015). Social support, as an important manifestation of mental health (Huang Guixian et al., 2024), should also be given attention. Therefore, this study aims to explore the relationship between socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, as well as the role of social support and belief in a just world in this relationship, in order to provide theoretical basis for promoting psychological education practices of prosocial behavior among college students.

The concepts of socioeconomic status and social class are often used interchangeably, and they refer to the same content (Wang Shuyan et al., 2023). This study uses the commonly used term 'socio-economic status' in the field of psychology. Socioeconomic status contains both objective and subjective components. Among them, objective socio-economic status refers to an individual's position relative to others in terms of resource ownership or reputation level (Zheng&Wang, 2021), mainly measured by objective indicators such as income, education level, and occupational reputation; Subjective socio-economic status refers to an individual's subjective perception of their social class (Singh Manoux et al., 2003). Research has found that subjective measures of socioeconomic status have more advantages than objective indicators (Jie Xiaona et al., 2018). In terms of empirical validity, subjective socioeconomic status is more capable of predicting individual behavior than objective socioeconomic status, and can be intervened and manipulated (Wang Shuyan et al., 2023). In terms of measuring reliability, the measurement of objective socio-economic status may not be accurate due to potential biases in the reported income of participants and issues such as occupational instability. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior. Festinger's social comparison theory laid the theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior. Social comparison refers to the process by which individuals compare themselves with others to understand and evaluate their own state and abilities (Festinger, 1954). Therefore, the formation of subjective socio-economic status should include the process of social comparison. When individuals receive positive feedback in social comparison (such as downward comparison, comparing themselves to people in a less favorable situation), they will enhance their sense of self affirmation and ability perception. In order to maintain this positive self-awareness, they tend to exhibit helpful behavior (Klein, 2003). Research has shown that when people are in a situation of downward comparison, their empathy is enhanced, and compared to situations of upward comparison or no comparison, they exhibit more frequent prosocial behaviors (Zheng Xiaoying et al., 2015). From this perspective, it can be inferred that those who subjectively perceive themselves to be in a higher socio-economic position often feel that they are in a favorable position in social class (i.e., through downward comparison), and are therefore more likely to exhibit prosocial behavior. However, as most college students have not yet achieved economic independence, they find it difficult to determine their socio-economic status based on objective economic indicators. Therefore, studying the subjective perception of social and economic status among college students is more meaningful. In addition, college students currently rely mainly on resources provided by their families, and it is difficult for them to

increase resources through their own efforts, which makes them more inclined to consider the cost of behavior when taking action. Overall, this study speculates that the emergence of prosocial behavior among college students is mainly influenced by the mechanisms assumed by the cost consumption theory.

Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis H1: subjective socioeconomic status is significantly positively correlated with prosocial behavior.

Social support refers to the help and support that individuals receive from their social relationships (Guang Ruiqing et al., 2020), while other scholars (Cobb&Sidney, 1976) believe that social support can be understood as the care, concern, and respect that people experience in their social relationships. This is mainly the subjective support that individuals feel from others. Related studies have found that social support plays a moderating role between family socioeconomic status and individual physical and mental health (Ng CW et al., 2014). For individuals with lower socioeconomic status in their families, the importance of social support is more prominent. When individuals feel a higher level of social support, the negative impact of family socioeconomic disadvantage on their physical and mental health is significantly reduced (Emily DH et al., 2020). Studies have shown that social support plays a mediating role between family socioeconomic status and individual physical and mental health (Cheng Lina, 2016). This viewpoint holds that the distribution of social support within social classes is unequal (Mickelson&Kubzansky, 2003), with adolescents in higher social classes receiving higher levels of social support; The social network size of low social class adolescents is relatively small, and their participation in social activities is limited (Weyers S et al., 2010), with less social support from their families and communities. Cheng Lina and Yang Yang (2024) believe that those who subjectively perceive themselves to have a higher socioeconomic status often feel a higher level of social support. Based on the above research results, we can clearly see that social support is an important assistance for individual physical and mental development. Research also shows that people who feel more social support are often more inclined to exhibit prosocial behavior (Yan, 2023).

Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis H2: Social support mediates the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior.

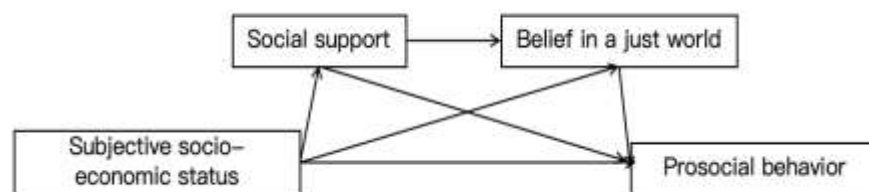
Socioeconomic status is closely related to people's direct perception of social fairness and justice. The belief in a just world is a deep understanding of whether the world is just, which refers to people believing that the world they live in is fair, that is, in this world, people usually receive the results they deserve (Lerner&Miller, 1978). According to the theory of social domination, individuals in low socioeconomic status have limited control over social resources compared to those in high socioeconomic status, making them more likely to believe that their disadvantages are caused by social inequality (Pratto F et al., 2006; Yang Shenlong, 2013). Subjective socio-economic status, as a comprehensive reflection of socio-economic status, can better predict an individual's psychological and behavioral characteristics (Wang Shuyan et al., 2023). Previous studies have found that the higher the subjective socio-economic status, the stronger the individual's belief in a just world (Guo Cheng et al., 2019). In addition, Yuan Lixin and Li Xiaomin (2019) believe that individuals with a high level of belief in a just world tend to follow the principle of reciprocity in interpersonal communication and tend to engage in prosocial behavior.

Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis H3: The belief in a just world mediates the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior.

The perception of the surrounding environment by individuals is influenced by social support, and the higher the level of social support, the more likely individuals are to believe that society is fair. Coninck's (2010) study found a significant positive correlation between organizational support and organizational belief in a just world. The higher the level of social support perceived by individuals, the stronger their perception of

organizational fairness, and the more inclined they are to believe that the organization is fair. Liu Li et al. (2015) found that social support has a significant impact on college students' belief in a just world, and can positively predict the strength of their belief in a just world. In addition, relevant studies have shown that the level of parental support also has a significant impact on the belief in a just world among adolescent inmates: the more parental support they feel, the stronger their belief in a just world (Zhang et al., 2015). This study found that social support not only applies to adolescent inmates, but also has a positive predictive effect on their belief in a just world among inmates of all ages (Guo Ying, Zhang Mengrou, 2016). In addition, the study by Tian Yuan et al. (2017) found that online social support has a significant positive predictive effect on the belief in a just world among vocational school students, and the same conclusion was found among high school students (Tian Yuan et al., 2019). In summary, there is a positive correlation between social support and the belief in a just world, and it can positively predict the belief in a just world.

Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis H4: Social support and belief in a just world play a chain mediated role in the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, and constructs a model as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1 Hypothesis Framework of the Social Support and Just World Belief Chain Mediation Model**

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

### 2.1 Participants

Convenient sampling was used to select 450 high school students from online sources to participate in this study. Conduct a questionnaire survey on these high school students, eliminate 37 invalid questionnaires, and obtain 413 valid questionnaires. Among them, there were 194 males (47.0%) and 219 females (53.06%); 110 freshmen (26.6%); 95 sophomore students (23.0%); 98 third year students (23.7%); 110 senior students (26.6%); The age range is between 18 and 22 years old ( $M=19.99$  years old,  $SD=1.19$  years old).

### 2.2 Research Tools

#### 2.2.1 Subjective Social and Economic Status Scale for College Students

The subjective social status scale for college students developed by Cheng Gang et al. (2015) was used, which includes seven indicators including academic performance, family conditions, social status, social practice ability, talent level, emotional status, and image and temperament, with a total of seven questions. Each indicator is measured using a Mac Arthur scale graphical ten step ladder. The higher the total score, the higher the subjective socio-economic status of college students. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale in this study is 0.77.

#### 2.2.2 Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Compiled by Zimet et al. (1998) and revised by Jiang Qianjin (2001), it is divided into three dimensions: family support, friend support, and other support, with a total of 12 items. The scale uses Likert 7-level scoring (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree), with higher scores indicating higher social support. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale in this study is 0.97.

### 2.2.3 Just World Belief Scale

The Fair World Belief Scale revised by Su Zhiqiang et al. (2012) was used, which includes two dimensions: general fair world beliefs and individual fair world beliefs, with a total of 13 questions. This scale adopts Likert 6-level scoring, and the higher the total score, the stronger the belief in a just world among college students. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale in this study is 0.93.

### 2.2.4 Prosocial Tendency Scale

The prosocial inclination scale revised by Kou Yu et al. (2007) was used, which includes six dimensions: public, anonymous, altruistic, compliant, emotional, and urgent, with a total of 26 questions. This scale uses Likert 5-point scoring, with higher total scores indicating more prosocial behavior among college students. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale in this study is 0.9.

### 2.3 Data Processing

SPSS 27.0 was used for correlation analysis, and PROCESS plugin (Hayes, 2013) was used for Bootstrap path effects analysis.

## III. RESULTS

### 3.1 Common Method Bias Test

The Harman single factor test method was used to calculate and test all items. The results showed that there were a total of 4 factors in the eigenvalue big sub 1, and the first principal component obtained before rotation accounted for 37.805% of the total factor load, which did not exceed the critical value of 40%. This indicates that there is no serious common method bias problem in the questionnaire survey results of this study.

### 3.2 Descriptive statistical analysis and correlation analysis

The results of descriptive statistical analysis and correlation analysis are shown in Table 1. There is a significant positive correlation between subjective socioeconomic status, social support, and belief in a just world, as well as a significant positive correlation with prosocial behavior, supporting hypothesis H1.

**Table 1 Descriptive statistical analysis and correlation analysis between variables**

| Variable                         | M    | SD    | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4 |
|----------------------------------|------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| Subjective socio-economic status | 7.39 | 1.401 | -      |        |        |   |
| Social support                   | 5.23 | 1.483 | .334** | -      |        |   |
| belief in a just world           | 4.34 | 1.094 | .267** | .461** | -      |   |
| prosocial behavior               | 4.74 | .937  | .286** | .479** | .448** | - |

Note: \*\* $p < 0.01$

### 3.3 Mediating Effect Test and Path Comparison

This study used the SPSS macro program PROCESS developed by Hayes (2013) to test the chain mediation effect of social support and belief in a just world using Model 6 at a 95% confidence interval. The results are shown in Table 2. Subjective socioeconomic status has a positive predictive effect on prosocial behavior and social support ( $\beta = 0.354$ ,  $\beta = 0.072$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Subjective socioeconomic status and social

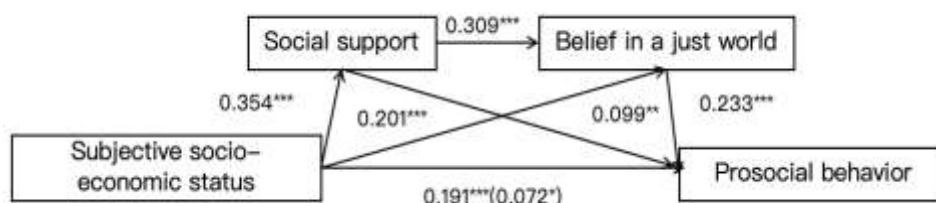
support can positively predict the belief in a just world ( $\beta=0.099$ ,  $\beta=0.309$ ,  $p<0.01$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). When subjective socioeconomic status, social support, and just world beliefs enter the equation simultaneously, both social support and just world beliefs can positively predict prosocial behavior ( $\beta=0.201$ ,  $\beta=0.233$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and subjective socioeconomic status can also positively predict prosocial behavior ( $\beta=0.191$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

**Table 2 Regression analysis of the relationships between various variables**

| Predictive variables             | Model 1 (Social Support) |                          | Model 2 (Belief in a Just World) |                      | Model 3 (Prosocial Behavior) |                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
|                                  | $\beta$                  | $t$                      | $\beta$                          | $t$                  | $\beta$                      | $t$                  |
| Subjective socio-economic status | 0.354                    | 7.184 <sup>*</sup><br>** | 0.099                            | 2.756 <sup>**</sup>  | 0.072                        | 2.428 <sup>*</sup>   |
| Social support                   |                          |                          | 0.309                            | 9.091 <sup>***</sup> | 0.201                        | 6.623 <sup>***</sup> |
| belief in a just world           |                          |                          |                                  |                      | 0.233                        | 5.813 <sup>***</sup> |
| $R^2$                            | 0.112                    |                          | 0.227                            |                      | 0.305                        |                      |
| $F$                              | 51.610                   |                          | 60.198                           |                      | 59.771                       |                      |

Note: \*  $P < .05$ , \*\*  $P < .01$ , \*\*\*  $P < .001$

Further Mediating Effect Test for Social Support and Just-World Belief. The mediating effect analysis for social support and just-world belief is presented in Table 3. The results indicate that the mediating effect is significant, with a total mediating effect value of 0.191. The mediating effect consists of three specific pathways: The indirect effect from subjective socioeconomic status to prosocial behavior via social support (effect value = 0.071). The indirect effect from subjective socioeconomic status to prosocial behavior via just-world belief (effect value = 0.023). The indirect effect from subjective socioeconomic status to prosocial behavior via social support and then just-world belief (effect value = 0.025). The proportions of these three indirect effects relative to the total effect are 37.17%, 12.04%, and 13.09%, respectively. According to the criteria for judging mediating effects, the Bootstrap 95% confidence intervals for these paths do not include zero, indicating that these paths have significant mediating effects. The specific paths are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2 Chain mediated pathway diagram of social support and belief in a just world**



Pairwise comparisons of the indirect effects revealed the following: Indirect effect 1 was significantly different from indirect effect 2. Indirect effect 1 was also significantly different from indirect effect 3. However, there was no significant difference between indirect effect 2 and indirect effect 3. The specific results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3 Analysis of the mediating effect of social support and belief in a just world**

| Effect type            | Effect value | BootSE | Boot95%CI   |             |
|------------------------|--------------|--------|-------------|-------------|
|                        |              |        | Lower limit | Upper limit |
| Total effect           | 0.191        | 0.032  | 0.129       | 0.253       |
| Direct effect          | 0.072        | 0.030  | 0.014       | 0.130       |
| Total indirect effects | 0.120        | 0.023  | 0.079       | 0.169       |
| 1-2-4                  | 0.071        | 0.017  | 0.041       | 0.108       |
| 1-3-4                  | 0.023        | 0.010  | 0.007       | 0.045       |
| 1-2-3-4                | 0.025        | 0.008  | 0.012       | 0.044       |
| Compare 1              | 0.048        | 0.020  | 0.012       | 0.090       |
| Compare 2              | 0.046        | 0.019  | 0.011       | 0.085       |
| Compare 3              | -0.002       | 0.011  | -0.026      | 0.019       |

**Note: Comparison 1: Indirect Effect 1 and Indirect Effect 2; Comparison 2: Indirect Effect 1 and Indirect Effect 3; Comparison 3: Indirect Effect 2 and Indirect Effect 3.**

## IV. DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Subjective Socioeconomic Status and Prosocial Behavior

The results of this study indicate that subjective socioeconomic status significantly positively measures prosocial behavior among college students, which is consistent with previous research on supporting cost consumption theory (Fu Tingting et al., 2024; Jie Xiaona and Li Xiaoping, 2018). Although the R<sup>2</sup> of subjective socioeconomic status predicting prosocial behavior is relatively small at 0.072, in empirical modeling of social sciences, as long as some or most of the explanatory variables have statistical significance, an R<sup>2</sup> as small as 0.072 is acceptable (Ozili, 2023). Previous studies have also found that the R<sup>2</sup> of the relationship between the two is lower than 0.1 (Jiang Wei et al., 2017; Zheng, 2021). This indicates that college students' perception of their own socio-economic status does indeed have an impact on the formation and development of prosocial behavior. This study introduces social comparison theory, providing a new perspective for exploring the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior: the higher the subjective socioeconomic status, the more prosocial behavior college students may exhibit. For college students, their resources mainly come from family support, and it is difficult for them to quickly increase the amount of resources through their own efforts. Therefore, before implementing prosocial behavior, they often pay more attention to the cost of the behavior. The subjective socio-economic status not only reflects the socio-economic level of the family, but also the result of comparing college students with others. Combining social comparison theory, college students activate their perception of the resources they possess when evaluating their subjective socio-economic status, and determine their social status by comparing themselves with others. When individuals perceive an advantage in socioeconomic status compared to others (downward comparison), it enhances confidence and satisfaction (Wills, 1981), thus providing more psychological resources to help others. Therefore,

from the characteristics of the college student population and the formation mechanism of subjective socio-economic status, the cost consumption theory can better explain the relationship between subjective socio-economic status and college students' prosocial behavior, that is, subjective socio-economic status can positively predict college students' prosocial behavior. In addition, the predictive power  $R^2$  value of subjective socioeconomic status on college students' prosocial behavior is relatively small, indicating that there may be other important factors affecting the relationship between the two.

#### 4.2 The Mediating Role of Social Support

The results of this study found that social support plays a mediating role between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, which is consistent with previous research findings (Liu et al., 2024). College students with lower subjective socioeconomic status often face various life and psychological pressures. Emotional support in social support, such as care, encouragement, and understanding from family and friends, is like warm sunshine that can effectively alleviate their inner anxiety and unease, making them feel loved and loved. This positive emotional experience will encourage them to pass on this goodwill to others, thereby increasing prosocial behavior. For example, a student from a financially disadvantaged family, after receiving care and comfort from their classmates when they are sick, will be more willing to lend a helping hand when others need it, to accompany and encourage their classmates who are facing difficulties. Social support also reflects to some extent the expectations and norms that society places on individuals. When college students feel support from society, they will realize that society advocates values such as mutual assistance and care. In order to comply with these social norms, they will consciously adjust their behavior, increase the frequency of pro social behavior, and gain social recognition and acceptance. For example, the community provides a platform and opportunity for college students to volunteer, allowing them to understand the importance that society places on volunteer service. Under the guidance of these social norms, they will be more actively engaged in pro social activities such as volunteer service.

#### 4.3 The Mediating Role of Just-World Belief

In addition, the results of this study also found that the belief in a just world mediates the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior, which is consistent with previous research findings (Zheng Xianliang et al., 2021). According to the theory of social domination, individuals in lower social classes may feel a stronger sense of loss of control due to more external constraints on their activities, and thus tend to deny the fairness of the social system (Yang Shenlong et al., 2013). For college students, the higher their subjective socio-economic status, the more they can feel the ability to control the environment and believe that they can receive the rewards they deserve. In other words, college students with higher subjective socioeconomic status are more inclined to believe that the world is fair. In addition, there is a close connection between the belief in a just world and pro social behavior, and social exchange theory provides a theoretical basis for this connection. When college students firmly believe in the concept of "good will be rewarded", they are more likely to demonstrate a higher sense of trust and social responsibility in their interactions with others (Yi Mei et al., 2019). Due to the principle of reciprocity and the mutual assistance experience in college collective life, college students are more willing to practice pro social behavior. From this, it can be seen that subjective socio-economic status influences college students' pro social behavior through the intermediary of a just world belief.

This study further found that social support and belief in a just world play a chain mediated role in the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and pro social behavior among college students. In this



study, the mediating effect of the chain between social support and belief in a just world was 0.025, accounting for only 13.09%. However, according to Wen Zhonglin et al. (2022), the mediating effect was too small to be of practical significance for research. The relative mediating effects of social support and belief in a just world are 37.17% and 12.04%, respectively. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that social support and belief in a just world play separate mediating roles in the model, and the chain mediation effect is also significant.

### Research Insights and Shortcomings

On the basis of revealing the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior of college students, this study further verifies the chain mediated role of social support and belief in a just world, providing a more rich and refined explanatory framework for theoretical research in related fields, and expanding the understanding of the mechanism by which subjective socioeconomic status affects prosocial behavior. On the one hand, for university educators, understanding the mediating role of this chain can help develop more targeted educational strategies and intervention measures. For example, by creating a favorable campus support atmosphere and conducting diverse social practice activities, we can enhance the sense of social support among college students, thereby improving their belief in a just world, ultimately promoting the development of pro social behavior, and cultivating a more socially responsible and dedicated group of college students; On the other hand, social organizations and community workers can design and implement relevant projects and activities based on the research results, focusing on the social support status and level of belief in a just world among college students. Establishing mutual aid platforms for college students, conducting mental health education courses, etc., to enhance their pro social behavior tendencies and promote their active integration into society.

Of course, there are also shortcomings in this study. Firstly, this study adopts a cross-sectional research design, which cannot determine the causal relationships and temporal changes between variables. In cross-sectional studies, data for all variables were collected at the same time point, making it difficult to accurately determine the causal sequence and dynamic development process between subjective socioeconomic status, social support, belief in a just world, and prosocial behavior. For example, it is uncertain whether changes in subjective socioeconomic status lead to changes in social support, or if changes in social support affect the perception of subjective socioeconomic status, or if there is a mutually influential relationship between the two. Secondly, the research sample may have certain limitations, as factors such as the level of economic development, cultural background, and type of university in different regions may have an impact on the subjective socio-economic status, social support, belief in a just world, and pro social behavior of college students. Therefore, the limitations of the sample may affect the universality and applicability of the research results, making it difficult to represent the overall situation of all college student populations. Furthermore, although this study proposes a chain mediated model of social support and belief in a just world, in practice, the mediating mechanisms that affect the relationship between subjective socioeconomic status and prosocial behavior may be more complex and may involve other mediating variables that were not included in the study. For example, individual psychological resilience, personality traits, values, and socio-cultural factors may all play important roles in it, but this study failed to fully examine these potential mediating variables, thus simplifying the entire mediating mechanism. Finally, there may be certain subjectivity and limitations in the measurement and operation of beliefs in a just world, mainly relying on self-report tools such as scales, which may affect the accuracy and objectivity of measurement results. The self-reported scale data is easily influenced by subjective cognition, social expectations, and other factors of the subjects, leading to deviations between the reported results and the actual situation. In addition, the belief in a just world is a complex psychological

construct, and existing measurement tools may not be able to fully and accurately capture its connotations and various dimensions, thereby affecting the accurate assessment of its position and role in the chain mediation.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

- (1) Subjective socioeconomic status significantly positively predicts prosocial behavior among college students.
- (2) Subjective socioeconomic status can also influence prosocial behavior through the separate mediating effects of social support and just-world belief, as well as through their chain mediating effect.

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