

## **Abstract**

Using a scenario measure of social risk aversion (SRA), the individual's inclination to avoid the risk of being exploited in social relations, we demonstrated that SRA strongly affects individuals' cooperative choices in one-shot prisoner's dilemma games. The effect of SRA was found to be significant even after the participants' SVOs and their expectation of their partners' levels of cooperation were controlled. These findings confirm the assertion made earlier by Pruitt and Kimmel (1977) that fear of exploitation prevents even pro-socials who prefer mutual cooperation over unilateral defection from taking a cooperative action. The construct validity of the SRA measure was demonstrated through the high SRAs' strong disliking of the CD cell of the prisoner's dilemma game in which they cooperate and are exploited by the defecting partner.