

Affective Trust in Chinese Leaders: Linking Paternalistic Leadership to Employee Performance

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Adopting the theoretical framework of social exchange, the authors used the two dominant Confucian values—hierarchy and relationalism—to theorize the mediating role of affective trust in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee in-role and extra-role performance in the Chinese organizational context. Data from 601 supervisor–subordinate dyads of 27 companies in a Taiwanese conglomerate revealed that while the benevolence and morality dimensions of paternalistic leadership are positively associated with both in-role and extra-role performance, the authoritarian paternalistic leadership dimension is negatively related to subordinate performance. Furthermore, affective trust mediated the relationship between benevolent and moral paternalistic leadership and employee performance but

Acknowledgments: We thank Bruce Avolio for his constructive comments on an earlier draft of this article. We also thank Action Editor Mark Griffin and the three anonymous reviewers for their insightful feedback on this article.

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did not mediate the relationship between authoritarianism and employee performance. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed in the Chinese context and beyond.

Keywords: *paternalistic leadership; affective trust; employee performance*

Paternalistic leadership has received growing interest from organizational researchers around the world in the past two decades (e.g., Aycan, 2006; Aycan et al., 2000; Farh & Cheng, 2000; Pearce, 2005; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006; Redding, Norman, & Schlander, 1994). A review of this research indicates a diverse set of definitions and perspectives and a lack of empirical studies (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Whereas the Western literature tends to view paternalistic leadership in a negative light, as it connotes authoritarianism (e.g., Uhl-Bien & Maslyn, 2005), research from non-Western cultures such as India, Turkey, China, Japan, and Mexico suggests, rather, that it reflects a relationship in which subordinates willingly reciprocate the care and protection of paternal authority by showing conformity (Aycan et al., 2000; Martinez, 2003; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006). In particular, studies conducted in the Chinese context have demonstrated the validity of paternalistic leadership in predicting employee job attitudes and performance (Cheng, Chou, Wu, Huang, & Farh, 2004; Cheng, Huang, & Chou, 2002; Farh, Cheng, Chou, & Chu, 2006; Wu, Hsu, & Cheng, 2002). Following this stream of research, we chose to conduct our research in the Chinese context.

The extant literature, however, is marked by some concerning limitations. First, the majority of research has focused on linking paternalistic leadership to employee attitudes such as satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty (Cheng et al., 2004; Erben & Güneser, 2008; Farh et al., 2006; Pellegrini, Scandura, & Jayaraman, 2010). The few studies that identified the links between paternalistic leadership and employee performance either relied on self-reported performance, introducing concerns regarding same-source biases (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), or focused only on organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), a set of discretionary behaviors outside of one's job description (Organ, 1988). One goal of our study is to address this limitation by testing a comprehensive model linking paternalistic leadership to both in-role and extra-role performance using multiple data sources.

Second, even fewer studies have explored the psychological mechanisms underlying the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee performance. In the present research, we propose that trust, especially affective trust, plays a significant role in linking Chinese paternalistic leadership to employee in-role and extra-role performance. In developing our hypotheses, we consider *hierarchy* and *relationalism*, the two pillar values in Confucianism, as a basis for theorizing (Hwang, 2000). The development of our arguments is therefore grounded in an emic approach (e.g., Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999), where we draw from culture-specific considerations to develop and test the model.

We chose to focus on trust due to its pivotal role in explaining leadership effectiveness (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004; Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Yang, Mossholder, & Peng, 2009). Trust is often conceptualized as a critical mediating mechanism in the social exchange process between leaders and followers (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) and serves to stabilize interpersonal social relationships. We expect paternalistic leaders to achieve a positive impact in the

Chinese context partially because of their ability to solicit affective trust from their subordinates. Affective trust signifies a strong personal bond and felt positive emotions toward the trustee (McAllister, 1995). Moving beyond a purely instrumental nature, this “trust from the heart” (Chua, Ingram, & Morris, 2008: 436) is relationship based and considers the relationship partner’s genuine care and concern for one’s well-being. Due to the paramount importance of managing relationships in Chinese society (Hwang, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), affective trust should play a critical role in explaining how paternalistic leaders can motivate followers to meet high performance standards.

With affective trust as the focal construct, we adopt the theoretical framework of social exchange to explicate the relationships between paternalistic leadership and employee performance and the mediating role of affective trust. Social exchange has been used extensively as a theoretical framework linking leadership behaviors to employee outcomes (e.g., Kacmar, Bachrach, Harris, & Zivnuska, in press; Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009; Tse, Dasborough, & Ashkanasy, 2008), and it is particularly relevant to the Chinese context where reciprocity values are strongly endorsed and relationships are highly valued (Chen, Chen, & Portnoy, 2009). In this article, we first review the literature on Chinese paternalistic leadership and explain how it is related to employee performance and affective trust. We then report findings of an empirical study conducted in Taiwan and conclude by discussing the generalizability of these findings in non-Chinese cultural contexts and their implications for the leadership and trust literature.

The present study makes several contributions to the paternalistic leadership and trust literatures. First, by examining the role of affective trust in linking paternalistic leadership and employee performance, this study establishes theoretical bases in connecting these constructs. While trust has been studied extensively in relation to Western-oriented leadership styles, it has not yet been linked to paternalistic leadership. Second, by adopting Farh and Cheng’s (2000) three-dimension model of paternalistic leadership, we follow a strong call made by Pellegrini and Scandura (2008) to shed further light on the effects and interrelations of the three dimensions. In particular, Pellegrini and Scandura urged researchers to identify the dimensions’ performance impact by examining, for example, “whether benevolence is more strongly related to performance than authoritarian behavior” (2008: 585). To answer these questions is exactly what we sought to do. Such dimensional analyses may deepen our understanding of paternalistic leadership. Third, this study considers the Chinese cultural context when explicating the salient role of affective trust in paternalistic leadership. Such a cultural perspective within the trust literature is still limited but critical in understanding how leadership and trust evolve for individuals with certain value systems (Noorderhaven, 1999; Tan & Chee, 2005).

Background and Theory Development

The Three-Dimension Model of Paternalistic Leadership in China

The importance of leadership on employee job attitudes and behaviors cannot be overestimated in China due to its deep-rooted Confucius values of hierarchy and relationalism (Hwang, 2000). Hierarchy stems from the “five cardinal relations”¹ and refers to a principle

of respecting superiors, which advocates that the individual who occupies the higher position should have the power to make decisions. *Relationalism* refers to a principle of favoring intimates, advocating that individuals with close relationships are expected to exchange favors beyond instrumental purposes (Hwang, 2000, 2008). The construct of paternalistic leadership has been proposed to capture the fundamental characteristics of Chinese business leader behaviors in family businesses and modern organizations (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Redding, 1990; Silin, 1976; Westwood, 1997). Despite diverse descriptions offered by different authors across time and cultures (for a review, see Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008), more recent research typically defines paternalistic leadership as “a style that combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence” (Farh & Cheng, 2000: 91).

Accumulated research has shown that paternalistic leadership is not a unified construct; rather, it consists of three dimensions—authoritarianism, benevolence, and morality (Aycan, 2006; Farh & Cheng, 2000; Farh et al., 2006). *Authoritarianism* refers to a leader’s behavior of asserting strong authority and control over subordinates and demanding unquestioned obedience from them. Chinese managers often enact these values by setting up centralized structures and by assuming a father-like role with a direct and authoritative leadership style (Peng, Lu, Shenkar, & Wang, 2001). *Benevolence* implies that a leader demonstrates individualized, holistic concern for subordinates’ personal and familial well-being. *Morality* is broadly depicted as a leader’s behavior that demonstrates superior moral character and integrity through acting unselfishly and leading by example. In general, paternalistic leaders take on a father-like role and provide protection and care for their employees’ professional and personal lives in exchange for loyalty and compliance (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008).

While paternalistic leadership shares conceptual elements with other elemental leadership theories, such as transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) and ethical leadership (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005), it is theoretically and empirically distinct. Paternalistic leadership is distinct from transformational leadership for several reasons. A key motivational mechanism of transformational leadership is the transformation of followers into leaders themselves (Bass & Bass, 2008). To accomplish this goal, transformational leaders challenge their followers intellectually, empower them, communicate a vision, and appeal to them at an emotional level, often through the expression of positive emotions such as optimism and enthusiasm (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Due to its Confucian-oriented values, however, paternalistic leadership does not incorporate the concepts of delegation and empowerment. Decision making is typically centralized, and followers expect their leaders to make decisions. Once these decisions are made, they follow their leaders’ directions obediently and without question (Pellegrini et al., 2010). Furthermore, the communication of a vision is not a critical aspect of paternalistic leadership, under which working toward a common goal is achieved through a culture-based value system rather than through an organizational vision statement.

While both paternalistic leadership and transformational leadership induce emotional reactions from followers, these emotions are different in three aspects. First, the emotions induced by transformational leaders are described as optimism, excitement, or stimulation, whereas the emotions induced by paternalistic leadership are often related to admiration, respect, liking, gratitude, or fear. Second, the emotions induced by transformational leaders could be directed toward both the leader and the organization as a whole. In contrast, the

emotions induced by paternalistic leaders most likely remain at the interpersonal level, that is, toward the leaders who exercise the paternalistic leadership rather than toward the entire organization. Third, transformational leaders rely more heavily on the outward expression of intense positive emotions and benefit from being emotionally expressive, an idea that has not been advanced in the paternalistic leadership literature (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Bono & Ilies, 2006).

Finally, a critical distinction between paternalistic and transformational leadership is the extent to which leaders are concerned about the personal welfare of their followers. Transformational leaders provide individualized care, but this is primarily limited to the work context. In Western-oriented cultures, followers would perceive their leaders' involvement in their personal lives as a violation of privacy; work and home are often clearly distinguished (Chua et al., 2008). Paternalistic leaders, however, provide individualized care in their followers' work *and* personal lives. They act like parents and ensure that the whole person is being attended to. For example, it is not uncommon for leaders in Eastern-oriented cultures to know their employees' financial situations and to help out with their own personal resources when necessary (Chen & Peng, 2008; Chen, Friedman, Yu, Fang, & Lu, 2009).

Paternalistic leadership is also distinct from ethical leadership, defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown et al., 2005: 120). Clearly, ethical leadership is related to the morality component of paternalistic leadership. But in addition to suggesting that effective leaders set high moral standards and exhibit personal integrity, ethical leadership also emphasizes how ethical leaders are role models who followers emulate so that they ultimately engage in ethical decision-making and prosocial behaviors (Brown et al., 2005). This social learning component is not a prominent feature in paternalistic leadership theory. Furthermore, ethical leadership implies that leaders and followers are equals who engage in two-way communication, whereas paternalistic leadership emphasizes a one-way communication through which leaders make decisions and demands while followers are expected to listen and obey.

In summary, the mechanisms through which transformational, ethical, and paternalistic leaders induce commitment, identification, motivation, and ultimately high performance are quite distinct. Empirical research—while still limited—supports such distinction. For example, Cheng, Shieh, and Chou (2002) found that paternalistic leadership predicted OCBs, even after controlling for transformational leadership. While they did not report factor analytic results in this particular article, the fact that paternalistic leadership was able to explain additional variance above and beyond transformational leadership suggests that these two constructs are tapping into different leadership aspects. Similarly, Li, Meng, and Shi (2007) and Cheng et al. (2004) found that paternalistic leadership had significant effects on leadership effectiveness and subordinate responses, respectively, after controlling for transformational leadership. All three groups of authors argue that paternalistic leadership is expected to explain additional variance above and beyond transformational leadership because of its unique emic leadership components, which are not captured by the Western-oriented leadership style of transformational leadership. Finally, supporting paternalistic leadership's validity as a unique leadership construct, Pellegrini and colleagues found in two studies that paternalistic

leadership was empirically distinct from leader–member exchange (Pellegini & Scandura 2006; Pellegrini et al., 2010). In this article, we focus only on paternalistic leadership and its impact on employee trust and performance.

Paternalistic Leadership and Employee Performance

As noted earlier, the research linking paternalistic leadership with performance outcomes has suffered from the common method error and the inclusion of only one performance dimension at a time (e.g., Cheng et al., 2004; Cheng, Huang, et al., 2002; Farh et al., 2006; Wu et al., 2002). In this study, we test a comprehensive model and suggest that each dimension of paternalistic leadership as rated by subordinates is significantly related to subordinate in-role and extra-role performance as rated by leaders. Consistent with its theoretical foundations, social exchange theory provides the overarching framework for our model (Blau, 1964). Social exchange theory is based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), which suggests that people are generally motivated to reciprocate beneficial behaviors based on the sense of indebtedness and felt obligation toward the person providing the initial favor. Blau distinguished between economic and social exchanges. Economic exchange is instrumental in nature and focuses on the exchange of predefined economic resources, whereas social exchange also involves the exchange of socioemotional resources (Shore, Tetrick, Lynch, & Barksdale, 2006), indicating a broader investment in the relationship. This broader investment, and the resulting trust between exchange partners, facilitates the exchange of unspecified resources. Thus, the extent to which authoritarian, benevolent, and moral leader behaviors signal an economic versus social exchange process may explain whether followers reciprocate with in-role and/or extra-role performance.

Specifically, we propose that authoritarian leadership behaviors, referred to as *li-wei* (awe- and fear-inspiring), would induce employee compliance because authoritarianism is part of the Confucian value system that “higher ups govern, lower ranks obey” (Beamer, 1998: 54). Based on the Confucian value of hierarchy, it is the position power leaders possess in the hierarchy that influences employee behavior (Hwang, 2000, 2008). Following this logic, the more position power a leader has, the more authority a leader presents, and the more obedience employees will show. Since in-role job performance is within a person’s required duty for exchange of pay and benefits, a more authoritative and demanding leader is likely to get higher performance. However, supervisor–subordinate relationships based on hierarchical difference are often formal, instrumental exchange oriented, and short term (Hwang, 1987). Therefore, authoritarian leader behaviors may be effective at soliciting conformity, but they stop short at truly motivating followers to dedicate maximum effort to go the extra mile (Farh et al., 2006). Furthermore, the overjustification effect (Deci & Ryan, 1995) would suggest that these controlling and rigorous leadership behaviors may reduce employees’ intrinsic motivation for work because the external pressure to perform is made salient by the authoritarian leader. Authoritarianism does not offer the socioemotional benefits needed to initiate reciprocal interrelations based on social exchange and therefore does not encourage followers to go beyond the call of duty. It is conceivable then that the more authoritarianism a leader shows, the lower the intrinsic motivation the follower will develop toward his or her work or the organization. As a result, the follower will be less likely to

perform extra-role behaviors that are not part of the job description and focus his or her attention on those behaviors rewarded by the organization.

On the other hand, benevolent leadership behaviors, referred to as *shi-en* (granting favors), and moral leadership behaviors, referred to as *shu-de* (setting an example), should be both positively related to follower in-role and extra-role performance. Leaders automatically possess legitimate hierarchical power that would induce employee compliance behavior, but to be able to make people go the extra mile, other qualities that can facilitate forming intimate relationships between the leader and the follower and hence align with the relationship value of Confucianism need to be present. Leadership research in China has found benevolence and moral character to be indispensable components of effective leadership (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Ling, Chen, & Wang, 1987). When a leader acts like a kind father with long-term care and concern for the followers' job-related and personal well-being (Cheng et al., 2004), the followers are likely to develop warm feelings and gratitude toward the leader, thus forming an emotional bond and a reciprocal relationship to continue the positive cycle (Blau, 1964; Yang, 1957).

Likewise, moral leaders, those who demonstrate integrity and are concerned with the collective good rather than self-interest, are highly respected, admired, and viewed as ideal leaders by Chinese employees (Niu, Wang, & Cheng, 2009). These leaders are likely to serve as role models for employees and exert referent power on them, which are important ingredients for forming a more personalized emotional bond between the leader and the follower (French & Raven, 1959). As a result, both benevolence and morality will likely motivate followers to engage in social exchanges by putting more effort into work and going above and beyond for their leaders (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Loi, Mao, & Ngo, 2009).

Based on the above discussion, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Leader authoritarianism is (a) positively related to employee in-role performance but (b) negatively related to extra-role performance.

Hypothesis 1b: Leader benevolence is positively related to employee (a) in-role and (b) extra-role performance.

Hypothesis 1c: Leader morality is positively related to employee (a) in-role and (b) extra-role performance.

The Role of Affective Trust in Paternalistic Leadership

To explain how paternalistic leaders impact follower performance, we propose affective trust as a mediating mechanism. Trust is theorized to be at the core of social exchange and is often used as an indicator to identify whether a social exchange relationship exists (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2007). *Affective trust* refers to trust based on the personal bond and sharing of positive affect between two people (Webber, 2008). An individual develops affective trust toward a partner when the individual attributes the partner's behaviors to selfless and sincere motives (McAllister, 1995) and develops positive feelings toward the partner based on the partner's demonstration of character. Affective trust signals a strong sense of sharing within the relationship where individuals are willing to express new ideas and concerns without fears of being reprimanded or ridiculed. Few studies have examined this relationship-based form of trust (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), although it is critical to do so to provide a more

nuanced explanation for how leadership may translate into work outcomes such as job attitudes and performance (Yang & Mossholder, 2010).

Due to the relationalism value of Confucian culture, the importance of affective trust in Chinese life cannot be overestimated. *Guanxi*, the traditional Chinese concept of personal relationships, represents a good example. *Guanxi* is defined as “an informal, particularistic personal connection between two individuals who are bounded by an implicit psychological contract to follow the social norm of *guanxi* such as maintaining a long-term relationship, mutual commitment, loyalty, and obligation” (Chen & Chen, 2004: 306). *Guanxi* is prevalent in all walks and all aspects of Chinese life and is recognized as a key factor for success when doing business in China (Hwang & Staley, 2005). The Chinese are described as cultivating their personal relational networks “energetically, subtly, and imaginatively” (Hwang, Goleman, Chen, Wang, & Hung, 2009: 235). Trust has always been a core component of *guanxi*, and when individuals fail to meet their *guanxi* responsibilities, a loss of trust by other members of the network is a likely result (Hwang et al., 2009). According to Chen and Chen (2004), a high-quality *guanxi* is essentially composed of two types of trust: cognition-based and affect-based trust, with affect-based trust being more important in determining the nature and strength of the relationship. Recent research on Chinese supervisor–subordinate *guanxi* shows that it consists of three components: affective attachment, personal life inclusion, and deference to supervisor, with the first two components reflecting characteristics of communal sharing and social exchange and the third component reflecting the characteristic of authority inherent in a relationship that involves power difference (Chen, Friedman, et al., 2009). Researchers have also established that trust between supervisors and subordinates has affective elements not easily explained by mere cognitive factors such as competence (Kramer, 1999; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Thus, affect-based or affective trust should have significant effects in a relationship-oriented society such as China. Based on this discussion, we hypothesize that within the Chinese context affective trust is a key explanatory mechanism linking paternalistic leadership to follower performance (Chang & Chi, 2007; Chen, Chen, & Meindl, 1998; Tan & Chee, 2005).

Authoritarianism and affective trust. We earlier proposed a negative relationship between authoritarianism and extra-role performance, and we believe it may be explained by the lack of affective trust such controlling, obedient-demanding behaviors may solicit. Research on authoritarianism has shown that it triggers negative emotions such as fear and anger in subordinates (Cheng, 1995; Cheng et al., 2004; Farh et al., 2006; Wu et al., 2002) and is therefore unlikely to induce the positive emotions that are at the core of affective trust. Authoritarian behaviors are actually defined as fear- and awe-inspiring (Cheng et al., 2004) and hence are likely to reduce followers’ affective trust. The assertion of absolute authority and control over followers likely does not promote the free exchange of ideas and concerns in the leader–follower relationship but, rather, encourages followers to accept and comply with the leader’s ideas without voicing dissent.

Authoritarian leadership highlights followers’ dependence on the leader for desired outcomes, and the lack of affective trust and associated fear may paralyze followers such that they are not willing to step outside their job descriptions for fear of doing something wrong and being reprimanded. The lack of affective trust in an authoritarian leader also signals that

the leader–follower relationship is instrumental rather than social in nature (Colquitt et al., 2007) so that resources in the relationship are exchanged purely for economic reasons. Followers therefore likely willingly abide by their leader's work methods, rules, and requests and put forth effort to avoid punishment and secure desired economic resources. They are likely to conform to their job descriptions as defined by their leader but will not be motivated to go above and beyond this call of duty because a deeper level trust, as present in social exchange relationships, is generally needed to motivate extra-role behaviors. Thus, we propose that affective trust mediates the negative relationship between authoritarianism and extra-role performance.

On the other hand, we do not believe that affective trust is the key mechanism explaining the positive relationship between authoritarianism and in-role performance. In-role performance is required of employees to receive pay and other benefits from the organization. Leaders exercising authority to demand high performance are likely to get it, not because of affective trust, but because of obedience requested in the organizational context or other instrumental motives. We therefore do not include this relationship in our mediation hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2a: Employee affective trust mediates the relationship between leader authoritarianism and employee extra-role performance.

Benevolence, morality and affective trust. Because benevolent leaders express sincere and holistic concern about their followers' personal welfare (both work and nonwork related), they are likely to induce positive emotional feelings in their followers and therefore tap into the affective underpinnings of the relationship (Colquitt et al., 2007). Chinese see themselves as interconnected to others; they place great importance on relationships and nurture them carefully (Chen et al., 1998; Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In China, social interactions are attached with intrinsic value and "marked by strong affective and relational underpinnings" (Tan & Chee, 2005: 200). These affective elements grow as individuals engage in acts of mutual social reciprocity (Chen & Chen, 2004). When leaders show genuine care for their subordinates and do things to support them, the feeling of gratitude and indebtedness in the subordinate ensures a continuous give-and-take in the relationship (Yang, 1957). These reciprocal interpersonal relations further strengthen the affective bonds of trust. Follower reciprocation then is marked not only by mere compliance with the leader's requests (in-role performance) but also by going beyond what is normally required (extra-role performance).

Similarly, moral leadership behaviors induce positive emotions in followers that provide the basis from which a positive personal bond may develop. Fu, Tsui, Liu, and Li (in press), for example, showed that top Chinese business executives whose values were congruent with their transformational behaviors were perceived as moral and elicited greater affective commitment from middle managers. Cheng et al. (2004) and Farh et al. (2006) also found that moral supervisors induced high levels of loyalty from subordinates. Since affective commitment and loyalty are often outcomes of affective trust (e.g., Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), we expect leader morality to be positively associated with follower affective trust. When leaders act in line with high moral standards and integrity, followers are more likely to be proud and view them as role models, thus developing emotional rapport with their leaders.

In addition, when leader actions are in line with expressed moral standards, followers will likely perceive them as intrinsically motivated, which may also increase affective trust (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). In general, followers would be less willing to freely express new ideas and voice possible problems and difficulties if they knew that their leaders would take advantage of them, attempt to gain personal benefits from the situation, and/or mock them for standing up for their own values and principles.

Moral and benevolent leadership behaviors are trustworthy behaviors that can initiate strong reciprocal leader–follower interactions (Colquitt et al., 2007). When followers develop affective trust with their leader based on the leader’s demonstration of benevolent and moral leadership behaviors, their relationship becomes more of social exchange in nature (cf. Blau, 1964). Once they see their relationship with their leader as beyond the standard economic contract, they will be willing to reciprocate the socioemotional benefits a paternalistic leader offers in the relationship. Social exchange theory posits that a “reciprocal feedback loop” may develop between leaders and followers (Kacmar et al., in press: 2). That is, individuals who perceive their leader demonstrating care and consideration will reciprocate this sentiment in the form of desired behaviors. As a result, they are likely to spend more time on required tasks and be willing to go above and beyond their job roles to benefit broader organizational goals (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994). Followers engage in extra-role behaviors not just because they are motivated to do so based on the socioemotional benefits exchanged in the leader–follower relationship but also because they feel less vulnerable and do not fear punishment when things may not go as desired. We therefore hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 2b: Employee affective trust mediates the relationships between leader benevolence and employee (a) in-role and (b) extra-role performance.

Hypothesis 2c: Employee affective trust mediates the relationships between leader morality and employee (a) in-role and (b) extra-role performance.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Six hundred and one supervisor–subordinate dyads from 27 companies of a Taiwanese conglomerate participated in our study. The 27 companies represented various industries, including manufacturing, construction, finance, media, and service. The surveys were collected from executive students who studied in an executive master’s degree in business administration program at a university in Taiwan. All executive students worked for the Taiwanese conglomerate. Each executive student was asked to distribute 10 to 20 packages in their companies. Each package contained one supervisor survey and two subordinate questionnaires. We required that participants directly mail their completed questionnaires back to us. A total of 804 supervisor–subordinate dyadic surveys were distributed, among which 601 were returned, representing a response rate of 74.8%.

Fifty-five percent of the sampled subordinates were male, and 44.5% of the subordinates were female. Moreover, 48.1% of subordinates were younger than 30, 43.7% were between 31 and 40, and 8.2% were older than 40. Approximately 53.9% of the subordinate participants

held college or higher educational degrees, and 51.9% had worked for their companies for more than three years. Of the participants, 37.9% worked in sales and marketing; 25.3% in human resources; and the remainder in production, engineering, and import/export. Of the subordinates, 8.7% were technicians, 66.7% were professionals, 18.1% were first-line managers, and 5.4% were middle and senior managers. In the supervisor sample, 75.3% were male and 24.7% were female. From the other available demographics we concluded that the supervisor sample was more senior in age and job tenure and had received more education than the subordinate sample.

Measures

All measures were reported by subordinates except for their in-role and extra-role performances, which were evaluated by their direct supervisors. The paternalistic leadership scale and the extra-role performance scale were originally written in Chinese. The trust scale and the in-role performance scale were translated from English into Chinese and back translated into English to ensure the equivalence in the meaning of the items in the scales. All scales were measured using a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 6 = *strongly agree*) to avoid the central tendency bias found among Chinese respondents (Yang & Chiu, 1987).

Paternalistic leadership. The paternalistic leadership measure has been developed through a series of qualitative and quantitative studies, including establishing the construct domains by observing and interviewing Chinese business leaders and developing the scale through rigorous reliability and validity examinations (Cheng, 1995; Farh & Cheng, 2000). Cheng, Chou, and Farh (2000) constructed a 42-item scale that has three subscales corresponding to the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership. Seven studies have used this scale to examine the effects of paternalistic leadership on employee job attitudes and performance in mainland China and Taiwan, drawing on samples from a variety of organizations, including private businesses, high-tech firms, and primary schools (Cheng et al., 2004; Cheng, Shieh, et al., 2002; Cheng, Chou, Huang, Farh, & Peng, 2003; Farh et al., 2006; Wu et al., 2002). All these studies demonstrated the scale's consistent and good psychometric properties; at the same time, the scale evolved and was validated with increasing empirical evidence.

In the current study, we adopted Cheng and colleagues' (2004) 26-item paternalistic leadership measure because this scale demonstrated distinctive validity from transformational leadership. Subordinates provided responses to statements regarding their supervisors' paternalistic leader behaviors. Sample items included "My supervisor asks me to obey his/her instructions completely" (authoritarianism), "My supervisor is like a family member when he/she gets along with us" (benevolence), and "My supervisor employs people according to their virtues" (morality). The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) for each dimension were .89, .95, and .85, respectively. The complete scale is presented in the appendix.

Affective trust. Trust in the leader was self-reported by subordinates. We used McAllister's (1995) affect-based trust scale and eliminated two items that were not applicable to the Chinese culture because they assumed equal power within the relationship. This resulted in

a three-item measure: “We can both freely share our ideas, feelings, and hopes,” “I can talk freely to my supervisor about difficulties I am having at work and know that (s)he will want to listen,” and “If I shared my problems with my supervisor, I know (s)he would respond constructively and caringly.” The reliability coefficient (Cronbach’s alpha) for this scale was .82.

In-role performance. Supervisors rated the in-role performance of their subordinates, using a four-item scale developed by Chen, Tsui, and Farh (2002). Sample items of this scale included “S/he always completes job assignments on time” and “Her/his performance always meets the expectations of the supervisor.” The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .88.

Extra-role performance. Supervisors rated their subordinates’ extra-role performance. We adopted Farh, Earley, and Lin’s (1997) OCB construct and scale. The scale is composed of five components—identification with company, altruism toward colleagues, conscientiousness, interpersonal harmony, and protecting company resources. According to Farh and colleagues, the five components can be further categorized as etic (culturally “neutral”) and emic (culture specific) OCBs. That is, identification, altruism, and conscientiousness are etic OCBs, whereas interpersonal harmony and protecting company resources are Chinese-specific OCBs. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the scale and found support for a two-factor model ($\chi^2 = 1,022.82$, $df = 154$, comparative fit index [CFI] = .93, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .07). We thus used the first three components to create a composite index for OCB-etic and the last two components to create a composite index for OCB-emic. The reliability coefficients for the two types of OCB were .89 and .89, respectively.

Control variables. Subordinates’ gender, age, education, and organizational tenure and supervisors’ gender were included as control variables.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables are depicted in Table 1. It can be seen that benevolence and morality are positively related to affective trust ($r_B = .69$, $p < .01$; $r_M = .61$, $p < .01$) and the three performance measures (r s ranging from .16 to .27, $p < .01$). Authoritarianism is negatively related to affective trust ($r = -.35$, $p < .01$) and performance (r s ranging from $-.13$ to $-.22$, $p < .01$). Moreover, affective trust is positively related to in-role performance, OCB-etic, and OCB-emic (r s ranging from .18 to .29, $p < .01$).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We first conducted a CFA to examine the construct distinctiveness of the seven main variables used in the current study. The three components of paternalistic leadership, affective trust, in-role performance, and the two types of OCB were included in the CFA. We report

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Subordinate gender	1.44	0.50												
2. Subordinate age	3.72	1.19	-.30**											
3. Subordinate education	3.48	0.82	.00	-.15**										
4. Subordinate tenure	3.22	1.93	-.11**	.59**	-.26**									
5. Supervisor gender	1.25	0.43	.45**	-.21**	.03	-.17**								
6. Benevolence	3.90	0.87	-.12**	.00	-.01	.02	-.02	(.95)						
7. Morality	4.54	0.84	.03	-.03	-.01	.01	.03	.61**	(.85)					
8. Authoritarianism	3.15	0.82	-.16**	.11**	-.08	.06	-.08	-.36**	-.52**	(.89)				
9. Affective trust	4.34	0.80	-.08*	.05	.01	.06	.02	.69**	.61**	-.35**	(.82)			
10. In-role performance	4.37	0.80	.03	.08	.05	.15**	-.02	.16**	.16**	-.13**	.22**	(.88)		
11. OCB-etic	4.36	0.63	-.07	.04	.12**	.08	.01	.27**	.22**	-.20**	.29**	.64**	(.89)	
12. OCB-emic	4.87	0.80	-.01	-.08*	.12**	-.14**	.03	.14**	.18**	-.22**	.18**	.34**	.40**	(.89)

Note: Cronbach's alphas are listed on the diagonal. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 2
Comparison of Measurement Models for Main Variables in the Study

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2/df	$\Delta\chi^2$	CFI	RMSEA
Null model (all indicators are independent)	7,137.78	210	33.99	—	—	—
Baseline model (seven factors)	393.04	166	2.37	—	.97	.05
Model 1 (five factors; benevolence, morality, and authoritarianism were combined into one factor)	1,380.73	177	7.80	987.69**	.83	.11
Model 2 (five factors; in-role performance, OCB-etic, and OCB-emic were combined into one factor)	725.75	177	4.10	332.71**	.92	.08

Note: CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

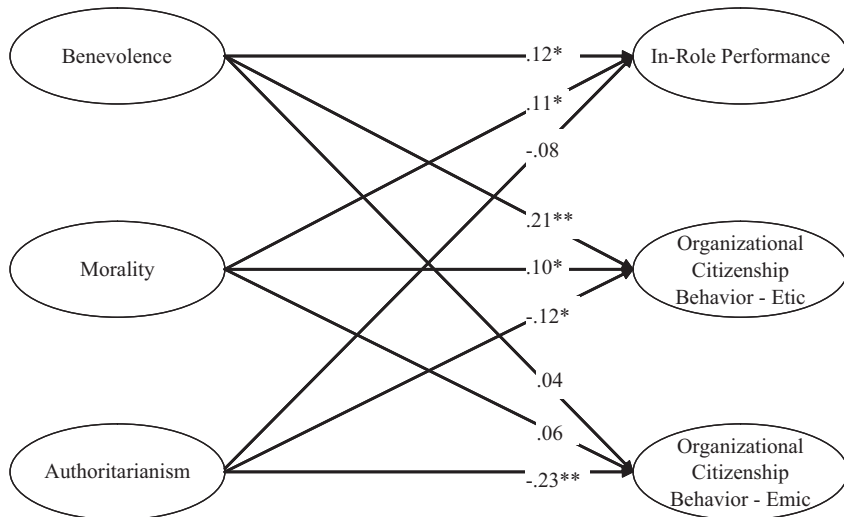
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

the CFI and RMSEA based on suggestions from Williams, Vandenberg, and Edwards (2009). The results shown in Table 2 indicate that the baseline seven-factor model fits the data well ($\chi^2 = 393.04$, $df = 166$, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .05). We also tested two alternative models: a five-factor model combining the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership into one factor (Model 1) and another five-factor model combining in-role performance, OCB-etic, and OCB-emic into one factor (Model 2). The results show that the baseline model fits the data significantly better than both alternative models ($\Delta\chi^2 = 987.69$ and 332.71, respectively, $p < .01$), supporting the construct distinctiveness of these variables.

Hypotheses Testing

In testing Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c, we simultaneously entered the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership and follower performance (in-role performance and OCB) in the

Figure 1
Structural Equation Model Results of Paternalistic Leadership and Subordinate Performance



Note: All coefficients are standardized coefficients.

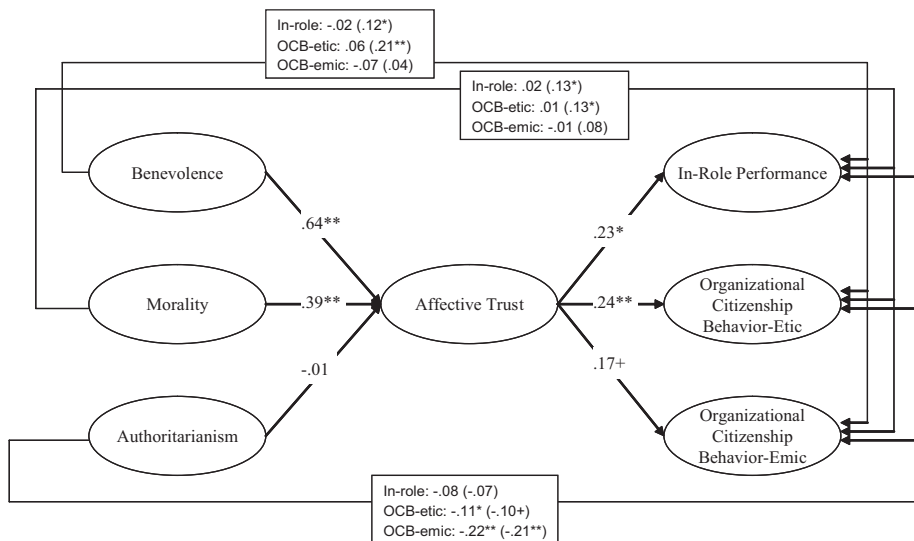
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

structural equation model (SEM) and entered subordinate's gender, age, education, and tenure and leader's gender as control variables. The results are presented in Figure 1. It can be seen that the positive relationship between authoritarianism and in-role performance was not supported ($\beta = -.08$, ns). However, the negative relationship between authoritarianism and extra-role performance was supported (OCB-etic: $\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$; OCB-emic: $\beta = -.23$, $p < .01$). In addition, both benevolence and morality were positively related to in-role performance ($\beta_B = .12$, $p < .05$; $\beta_M = .11$, $p < .05$) and OCB-etic ($\beta_B = .21$, $p < .01$; $\beta_M = .10$, $p < .05$), while both benevolence and morality were not significantly related to OCB-emic ($\beta_B = .04$, $\beta_M = .06$, ns). These results provide general support for Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c and provide justification for treating paternalistic leadership as a three-dimensional construct.

To test Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c that affective trust mediates all the relationships between paternalistic leadership and employee performance except for the relationship between authoritarianism and in-role performance, we followed suggestions by Barger and Grandey (2006) who examined mediating effects in a path model. According to the authors, mediation is supported if (1) in the full model the predictor is significantly associated with the proposed mediator and not associated with the dependent variable and (2) if a nested model that constrains the path from the mediator to the dependent variable results in a significantly worse fit and the predictor is significantly associated with the dependent variable.

Figure 2 shows the SEM results. In Step 1, we found that the full model with direct links from the three paternalistic leadership dimensions to the performance variables fit the data

Figure 2
The Mediating Model of Affective Trust



Note: All coefficients are standardized coefficients. Values in parentheses are the path coefficients when the three direct paths of the mediators to dependent variables (in-role performance, OCB-etic, and OCB-emic) are simultaneously constrained to zero.

+ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

well, $\chi^2(257) = 979.74$, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .07. In support of our mediation Hypotheses 2b and 2c, the path coefficients from benevolence and morality to affective trust were both significant ($\beta_B = .64$, $p < .01$; $\beta_M = .39$, $p < .01$, respectively), whereas the path coefficients from benevolence and morality to in-role performance, OCB-etic, and OCB-emic were not. On the other hand, we found that the coefficient from authoritarianism to affective trust was not significant ($\beta = -.01$, ns), suggesting that mediation Hypothesis 2a may not be supported.

In Step 2, we simultaneously constrained the paths between affective trust and subordinate performance to test whether the model fit the data significantly worse and whether benevolence and morality were significantly associated with subordinate performance. As expected, this analysis showed that the full model did indeed fit the data significantly worse, $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 8.77$, $p < .05$. The path coefficients from benevolence and morality to in-role performance ($\beta_B = .12$, $p < .05$; $\beta_M = .13$, $p < .05$) and OCB-etic ($\beta_B = .21$, $p < .01$; $\beta_M = .13$, $p < .05$) became significant. However, the path coefficients from benevolence and morality to OCB-emic were not significant ($\beta_B = .04$, $\beta_M = .08$, ns).

In sum, the SEM results support the mediating effects of affective trust in the relationships between (1) leader benevolence and subordinate in-role performance and OCB-etic and (2) leader morality and subordinate in-role performance and OCB-etic. Meanwhile, these results suggest that affective trust does not play a mediating role between authoritarianism and employee performance.

Discussion

Although the importance of paternalism in leadership has been considered for decades (e.g., Weber, 1947), it has not been systematically investigated until recently. With the introduction of Farh and Cheng's (2000) three-dimension model and the corresponding scales they developed, paternalistic leadership has received increased research attention in the past few years. Empirical research, however, remains rather limited, and Pellegrini and Scandura (2008) specifically called upon the field to examine paternalistic leadership's impact on performance. We followed this call and have added to the empirical base of paternalistic leadership research by illuminating its relationships to follower trust and performance within a Chinese context.

As hypothesized, we found that all three dimensions of paternalistic leadership are related to employee performance. Whereas both benevolence and morality had positive relationships with in-role and extra-role performance, authoritarianism in fact had a negative relationship with extra-role performance. More importantly, we found that affective trust played a mediating role between leader benevolence, morality, and employee in-role performance and OCB-etic, whereas affective trust was not significantly related to authoritarianism at all.

These findings are promising and intriguing. They are promising because our study is among the first to examine the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee in-role and extra-role performance simultaneously, with multisource dyadic data, and we show that indeed such relationship exists. We also show that the nature of the relationship differs with different dimensions of paternalistic leadership, thus painting a more nuanced picture of the dimensional effect. It is evident that benevolence and morality are highly related to greater performance, while authoritarianism is associated with lower levels of extra-role performance. These findings are intriguing because they show the prominence of affective trust in translating leader benevolence and morality into employee performance, a proposition that has been theorized by many scholars but that has not been tested empirically until now (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The two unexpected findings, that is, affective trust did not mediate the relationship between benevolence, morality, and OCB-emic, and authoritarianism influenced employee OCB through mechanisms other than affective trust, are also intriguing. We offer several explanations below.

A plausible explanation regarding the insignificant role of affective trust in relating benevolence and morality to the emic dimensions of OCB may be related to the nature of these OCBs. As Chinese ideology is deeply rooted in human relationships (Farh et al., 1997), it is likely that employees of benevolent and moral leaders will perceive maintaining interpersonal harmony as part of their duty, which does not require emotional attachment. Similarly, protecting company resources is also likely to be a function of duty or compliance, as opposed to the emotional bond one has developed with the supervisor, because rule-following employees are not supposed to use company resources for personal benefits.

The explanations for the nonsignificant relationship between authoritarianism and affective trust may be more complex. Previous research has shown that authoritarian leaders evoke emotions such as fear and anger (Cheng, 1995; Cheng et al., 2004; Farh et al., 2006; Wu et al., 2002), but affective trust seems unaffected by authoritarianism, indicating that

emotions and affective trust may be distinct constructs. In the case of leadership, since Chinese people respect the authority associated with hierarchical positions, even though they experience negative emotions under authoritarian leadership, their trust level to the leader remains intact. Meanwhile, this finding suggests that other psychological mechanisms may be involved through which authoritarianism influences employee OCB. One plausible mechanism might be affective commitment (e.g., Loi et al., 2009); that is, the fear and anger induced by authoritarian behaviors reduce employee affective commitment toward the leader and in turn reduce their willingness to engage in extra-role behaviors. Another plausible mechanism may be the heightened external pressure to perform, which reduces employee intrinsic motivation for work: the higher the pressure, the lower the willingness to engage in extra-role behaviors.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Corroborating research on trust and leadership on a general level, our study emphasizes the importance for leaders to establish trusting relationships with their followers in an effort to positively affect performance. However, it adds to this general research stream several important theoretical and practical implications. First, our study suggests that trust is also an important explanatory mechanism for the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee performance—a relationship that has not yet been much explored (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Only limited research was available examining the psychological dynamics through which paternalistic leaders can impact employee outcomes. This study offers affective trust as a powerful mechanism. In particular, it emphasizes the importance of affective trust in the leadership process in Chinese culture and therefore hopefully encourages continued research on the salient role of affective trust for relationship building.

Second, the study shows that the three paternalistic leader behavior dimensions are not created equal. Affective trust plays a particularly critical role in influencing follower performance, so the behaviors, which may solicit affective trust (benevolence and morality), are critical for leaders to exhibit. Authoritarianism in this particular sample is not effective at eliciting affective trust and has some negative performance consequences. Combined, our results suggest that Chinese leaders should emphasize benevolence and morality over authoritarian behaviors if they wish to positively influence their subordinates' performance. This research then also provides further evidence for the dimensionality of paternalistic leadership and provides the basis for further inquiry into the differential effects of the three dimensions.

Third, by examining trust in a non-Western context, we add a cultural perspective to the trust literature. Only a few studies so far have explicitly examined trust in China. For example, Casimir, Waldman, Bartram, and Yang (2006) conducted a two-sample study in Australia and China and found that trust mediated the effects of transactional and transformational leadership on followers' in-role performance in the Australian sample but not in the Chinese sample. They concluded that "in some contexts (e.g., China) performance is driven not so much by leadership" (Casimir et al., 2006: 79) and that the positivity of

transactional and transformational leadership may not translate into all cultures as previously suggested (e.g., Bass, 1997). We concur with the latter observation but caution against ruling out leadership as a significant influence on follower performance in Eastern cultures. Rather, it is important to examine leadership styles that are prevalent in the culture under investigation and examine its cultural roots and dominant psychological mechanisms. In this article, we did so and showed that paternalistic leaders influence their followers' performance, and affective trust is an important mechanism underlying the positive effects of benevolence and morality. Authoritarianism, on the other hand, may be the least useful leadership behavior. Supervisors who endorse authoritarianism are therefore in a position where their deeply rooted beliefs about effective leadership are challenged. Top management teams may benefit from training their supervisors on exerting control and soliciting buy-in from subordinates, without the strict obedience and unquestioning respect that was normative in the past. Hiring and promotion criteria may also be adjusted to reflect the increased ambivalence associated with authoritarianism.

Limitations and Future Research

The results of our study should be interpreted in light of the following methodological limitations. First, although our study results are consistent with the basic premises of social exchange theory, the cross-sectional nature of our study does not allow for the inference of causality. It is feasible to suggest that followers' affective trust in their leaders leads them to view their leaders as paternalistic. However, we believe this explanation is rather unlikely because the paternalistic leadership scale actually asks subordinates to rate the frequency of specific leader behaviors. While trust may permeate followers' perceptions of paternalistic leadership, it is less likely to influence the frequency with which they observe their leaders exhibiting paternalistic behaviors. Similarly, leaders' performance ratings of their followers may influence the way they interact with their followers. For example, leaders may be particularly caring and show concern for good performers. Longitudinal research is needed to shed light on the dynamics of these relationships.

Second, we collected data for both the leader behaviors and affective trust from subordinates, thus increasing the chance that some of our observed results are due to common method variance. We attempted to minimize this problem by using supervisor ratings of performance as the dependent variable. Common method variance may not account for our differential findings with authoritarianism (nonsignificant relationship with in-role performance, negative relationship with extra-role performance). Finally, our research within a single cultural context does not allow any test of the causative influence of the context. Future research should therefore include samples from multiple cultures that differ on theoretically critical cultural values such as relationalism and power distance to test the influence of culture on the responses to paternalistic leadership. In addition, research is needed in cultures that are outside the Chinese context but that share similar characteristics in order to examine our findings' generalizability.

In our review, we trace the concept of paternalistic leadership to the Confucian ideology, which assumes that men occupy most if not all leadership roles. The question arises as to what extent paternalistic leadership may generalize to female leaders. Supervisor gender was not a main focus of the current study, and we included it only as a control variable in our analyses. We believe, however, that future research may benefit from theoretically exploring potential gender differences in the enactment and effects of paternalistic leadership. Women possibly may not be as believable as paternalistic leaders because they are historically not viewed as the ones in power. At the same time, however, their believability or effectiveness may depend on the type of paternalistic behavior enacted. For example, the extent to which the leadership behaviors match the general dispositions of men and women may determine the behaviors' effectiveness. Women are generally more sensitive to the feelings of others and value interpersonal harmony more than men do, while men are often more competitive and value dominance more than women do (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999). Women may therefore be more effective at demonstrating benevolent behaviors, while men may be more effective at demonstrating authoritarian behaviors. Clearly, future research would benefit greatly from delineating these gender differences.

Research in paternalistic leadership is still in its infancy, and much can still be learned by examining this leadership construct in various contexts. Based on the results of our study, it would be interesting to further explore the effects of authoritarianism. It is a particularly intriguing aspect of paternalistic leadership due to its deep roots in Chinese culture but its seemingly ambivalent effects on affective trust. The questions remain as to under what circumstances authoritarianism may be beneficial and when and how it exerts an influence on employee performance. Past research suggests that traditionality may play a role, but certainly other factors may also be proposed to influence the effectiveness of authoritarianism. For example, when the organization or unit is under crisis, more demanding and disciplinary leader behaviors may be effective at resolving the challenges at hand, and followers may look for more guidance during those times. Taking into consideration the organizational context within which paternalistic leader behaviors take place may be a fruitful area of future inquiry.

Conclusion

Paternalistic leadership is a new, exciting area of inquiry in the leadership literature. Grounded in Confucian ideology, it has been shown to have significant positive effects in Asian cultures. Our study has accumulated additional evidence for these effects and illustrated that affective trust is an important mechanism in explaining why followers of benevolent and moral paternalistic leaders perform their jobs better and exhibit more citizenship behaviors. There is much yet to be explored, and we hope that this study encourages future inquiry into the effects of paternalistic leadership and the influence of the context within which they operate.

Appendix

Paternalistic Leadership Measure

A. Benevolence

1. My supervisor is like a family member when he/she gets along with us.
2. My supervisor devotes all his/her energy to taking care of me.
3. Beyond work relations, my supervisor expresses concern about my daily life.
4. My supervisor ordinarily shows a kind concern for my comfort.
5. My supervisor will help me when I'm in an emergency.
6. My supervisor takes very thoughtful care of subordinates who have spent a long time with him/her.
7. My supervisor meets my needs according to my personal requests.
8. My supervisor encourages me when I encounter arduous problems.
9. My supervisor takes good care of my family members as well.
10. My supervisor tries to understand what the cause is when I don't perform well.
11. My supervisor handles what is difficult to do or manage in everyday life for me.

B. Morality

1. My supervisor avenges a personal wrong in the name of public interest when he/she is offended. (reversed)
2. My supervisor employs people according to their virtues and does not envy others' abilities and virtues.
3. My supervisor uses his/her authority to seek special privileges for himself/herself. (reversed)
4. My supervisor doesn't take the credit for my achievements and contributions for himself/herself.
5. My supervisor does not take advantage of me for personal gain.
6. My supervisor does not use *guanxi* (personal relationships) or back-door practices to obtain illicit personal gains.

C. Authoritarianism

1. My supervisor asks me to obey his/her instructions completely.
2. My supervisor determines all decisions in the organization whether they are important or not.
3. My supervisor always has the last say in the meeting.
4. My supervisor always behaves in a commanding fashion in front of employees.
5. I feel pressured when working with him/her.
6. My supervisor exercises strict discipline over subordinates.
7. My supervisor scolds us when we can't accomplish our tasks.
8. My supervisor emphasizes that our group must have the best performance of all the units in the organization.
9. We have to follow his/her rules to get things done. If not, he/she punishes us severely.

Note

1. The dyadic roles in the five cardinal relations are emperor–official, father–son, husband–wife, elder brother–younger brother, and friend–friend (Confucius, 1915).

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