# Paternalistic Leadership and Follower Work Outcomes:
# A Meta-analysis

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**Abstract**

This research describes the results of a meta-analysis of the relationship between paternalistic leadership and the follower work outcomes task performance, organisational citizenship behaviour and creativity. The results, based on 46 independent samples (total $N$ = 16484), show that paternalistic leadership as one construct, benevolent leadership and moral leadership are positively related and authoritarian leadership is negatively related to the follower work outcomes. The moderating analysis found no support for the categorical moderator of country. With respect to continuous moderators of sample characteristics employee age and gender, mixed evidence was found. Indicating that as the mean age of the employee increases, the relation between paternalistic leadership and authoritarian leadership and its outcomes increases. Additionally, the moderating analyses imply that as the male ratio increases, the relation between benevolent leadership and creativity decreases. Several implications as well as directions for future research are discussed, including the need conduct more research in countries outside of Confucian Asia.

*Keywords:* paternalistic leadership; authoritarian leadership; benevolent leadership; moral leadership; follower work outcomes; meta-analysis

## 1. Introduction

Paternalistic leadership (PL) can be defined as a father-like leadership where the leader acts to his subordinates in a manner a father would behave to his children. The leader provides them with care and guidance, whereas the subordinates accept this attitude and in turn, show loyalty and commitment to their leaders (Aycan, 2006). Farh and Cheng (2000) also describe paternalistic leadership as a style that combines discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence and moral integrity encompassed in a personalistic atmosphere. There has been a growing interest on paternalistic leadership the past decades, as research has discussed numeral outcomes that emphasize the importance of this leadership style (Bedi, 2019; Pelligrini & Scandura, 2008).

Nonetheless, paternalistic leadership is still a controversial and much-debated concept as there is great disparity among research concerning the definition and the outcomes of this leadership style (Pelligrini & Scandura, 2008). Firstly, the conceptualisation of paternalistic leadership varies, as some research describe it as a multi-dimensional concept, whereas others consider it to be a unidimensional construct. Although some researchers design their own scale to measure paternalistic leadership (i.e. Özçelik, & Cenkci, 2014; Wagstaff, Collela, Triana, Smith, & Watkins, 2015), studies mostly use two main conceptualization and

measurement scales of paternalistic leadership: Aycan (2006) and Cheng, Chou, and Farh (2000). Aycan (2006) describes two forms of paternalistic leadership; exploitative and benevolent paternalism, which is mostly used in Turkey. Cheng et al. (2000), on the other hand, consider paternalistic leadership as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of authoritarianism, benevolence and morality, which is mostly used in Far East countries, such as China.

In addition to the different conceptualizations of the construct, research found contradictory evidence concerning the outcomes of paternalistic leadership. Loyalty towards leaders, for instance, is found to be positively correlated to the benevolence and morality dimensions of paternalistic leadership (Cheng, Shieh, & Chou, 2002; Sheer, 2013). Organisation citizenship behaviour, on the other hand, had a negative relationship with the authoritarianism dimension of paternalistic leadership (Afsar, 2014; Chan, 2008; Chen, Eberly, Chiang, Farh, & Cheng 2008). Paternalistic leadership as a whole construct was found to have a positive relationship with job performance (Chou, Chen, & Jen, 2005) and job satisfaction (Pellegrini, Scandura, & Jayaraman, 2010). It can thus be concluded that the relationship between paternalistic leadership and its dimensions and outcomes, vary in terms of their direction and magnitude. This may be a result of research examining the outcomes of paternalistic leadership from different perspectives and with different conceptualizations. Recent meta-analyses have shed some light on the aforementioned. It was found that the dimensions of benevolent and moral leadership mostly lead to positive outcomes whereas authoritarian leadership leads to negative outcomes (Bedi, 2019; Hiller, Sin, Ponnapalli, & Ozgen, 2019).

However, research that entails the bigger picture of paternalistic leadership and its follower work outcomes, such as meta-analyses, is still preliminary on this subject. Therefore, this research will also aim at writing a meta-analysis on paternalistic leadership and its follower work outcomes in order to provide a clearer idea about the construct of paternalistic leadership and its outcomes. Moreover, the meta-analysis of both Bedi (2019) and Hiller et al. (2019) only included articles up to 2017, and new research has been done on paternalistic leadership since then. Up to 40 studies since then have been found that researched paternalistic leadership and its outcomes. Additionally, the number of the articles included in Bedi's (2019) meta-analysis was relatively small. Some of the outcome variables in this meta-analysis do not or barely meet the suggested criteria by Arthur, Bennett, Edens, and Bell (2003) stating that outcome variables with less than five effect sizes should be interpreted with caution.

One of the first aims of this research will therefore be to create a more recent and inclusive picture of the outcomes of paternalistic leadership as well as decreasing possible bias including a higher number of studies, and thus a larger sample size on specific relationships. Another way in which this research distinguishing itself from Bedi's (2019) and Hiller et al.'s (2019) meta-analyses is the continuous moderators it will focus on. Moderators concerning the employee characteristics of each study, such as age, have not yet been researched by these studies. However, research has shown that sample characteristics can have a moderating effect on follower work outcomes (Bal, De Lange, Jansen, & Van Der Velde, 2008; Kim, Murrmann, & Lee, 2009). Therefore, this research will as well focus on studying these characteristics as possible moderators, which will be elaborated on.

## 1.1 Conceptualisation of Paternalistic Leadership

Research states that meta-analyses that include different measurement scales might be interpreted with caution (Tendal et al., 2009). Therefore, in order to study the relationship between paternalistic leadership and its outcomes, this meta-analysis will focus on research that used Cheng et al.'s scale (2000), as this scale is the most widely known and applied measurement scale for PL (Bedi, 2019). Furthermore, Cheng et al.'s scale (2000) also includes several dimensions of PL that might seem paradoxical at first sight. However, most research was conducted in Confucian cultures, which are inspired by a holistic approach. This relates to the idea that two opposites might be interdependent in nature, however, together form a meaningful whole (Chen, 2002). Opposing leader behaviour within one construct of paternalistic leadership might thus relate to a fundamental principle of Confucian culture.

Despite the frequent adaptation of Cheng et al.'s scale (2000), critics have discussed numeral concerns regarding its validity (Bedi, 2019). Some research argues that it should be considered as a one-dimensional construct (Wagstaff, Collela, Triana, Smith, & Watkins, 2015), whereas others discussed the concern that authoritarianism correlates negatively with benevolence and moral leadership. Additionally, it is argued that the scale measures three different types of leadership (Aycan, 2006; Pelligrini & Scandura, 2008). Although these are relevant concerns, this research still chose to use Cheng et al.'s (2000) scale for the very same reasons. Exclusively using Cheng et al.'s (2000) scale, enables this research to include the majority of the research, as well as to study the relations between each of its dimensions and outcomes separately. It will also make the present research able to investigate the relationship between PL, as a unidimensional construct, and its outcomes.

*1.2 Paternalistic leadership and follower work outcomes*

According to previous research, follower work outcomes can be divided in follower work attitude outcomes, for instance commitment and job satisfaction, and follower behaviour related outcomes, such as job performance and extra effort (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004). This research focuses on the behavioural outcomes of paternalistic leadership as it is shown that these are strongly related to several important business performance outcomes, such as productivity and profit (Avolio et al., 2004). More specifically, the follower behavioural outcomes that will be studied in the present research are task performance, organisation citizenship behaviour (OCB) and creativity. Creativity and task performance can serve as indicators for in-role performance (Wang, Chiang, Tsai, Cheng, & Bor-Shiun, 2013), whereas OCB concerns the extra-role performance (Colbert, Mount, Harter, Witt, & Barrick, 2004). Job performance and OCB are both considered to be critical indicators of subordinate performance (Colbert et al., 2004). Moreover, creativity within a job can be of great importance for topics such as problem-solving and the creation of new products or services (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). This meta-analysis will consider the relationship between these variables to each separate PL dimension: authoritarian, benevolent and moral leadership. Additionally, it will discuss the relationship of the three outcome variables to PL as one construct.

Authoritarian leadership is characterized as the assertion of full authority and control over subordinates that enforces discipline and follower compliance (Farh & Cheng, 2000). Concrete behaviour that applies to this includes domination, underestimating abilities of subordinates and instructing them in a didactic style (Cheng, 1995). To attain this, leaders may impose strict discipline and use threats. Such behaviour is perceived negatively by their followers and makes them more likely to respond with negative attitudes and behaviours (Farh & Cheng, 2000).

Indeed, a lot of research has shown negative relations between authoritarian leadership and follower work outcomes. For instance, numeral studies have found that authoritarian leadership has a negative association with behavioural outcomes such as OCB (Chan, 2008; Schuh, Zhang, & Tian, 2013; Zheng, 2016) and task performance (Chou, Sibley, Liu, Lin, & Cheng, 2015; Schaubroeck, Chong, & Shen, 2017; Wang et al., 2018). As well as follower attitudinal outcomes such as subordinates' trust in leader (Rawat & Lyndon, 2016), and commitment (Schaubroeck, Shen, & Chong, 2017; Wang & Kwan, 2017). It is therefore expected that authoritarian leadership has a negative relation with follower work outcomes.

*Hypothesis 1: Authoritarian leadership negatively influences follower behavioural outcomes a) job performance b) OCB and c) creativity.*

Benevolent leadership refers to the individualized care for the subordinate's personal life and well-being, relates to genuine concern and support (Farh & Cheng, 2000) and facilitates growth and development (Wang & Chen, 2010). In turn, employees tend to reciprocate positive behaviour of their leader with advantageous work outcomes and attitudes (Gouldner, 1960). These relations are confirmed by several studies, showing mostly positive relations for benevolent leadership and its follower outcomes. Benevolent leadership has a positive association with work outcomes such as creativity (Dedahanov, 2016; Wang & Chen, 2009; Wang et al, 2013), innovative behaviour (Tian & Sanchez, 2017; Zhiying, 2017) and task performance (Chan, 2008; Schuh, Zhang, & Tian, 2013; Zheng, 2016). Other positive relations are also found for attitudinal outcomes such as work engagement (Tuan, 2018) and job satisfaction (Li, 2014; Sheer, 2010; Sheer, 2013). A positive relation between benevolent leadership and its outcomes is thus expected.

*Hypothesis 2: Benevolent leadership positively influences follower behavioural outcomes a) job performance b) OCB and c) creativity.*

Moral leadership describes the virtue and adherence of moral principles, characterized by integrity and acting beyond self-interest (Farh & Cheng, 2000). In response to the leader's *shuh-der* (setting an example) followers might internalize and imitate the leader's values and behaviours (Cheng, Chou, Wu, & Huang, 2004). Furthermore, moral leadership may create a fair and supportive environment, hereby enhancing positive experiences at work (Bedi, 2019). For instance, moral leadership shows to have a positive effect on employees' intrinsic task motivation and trust in leader (Li, Wu, Johnson, & Wu 2012; Wu, Huang, Liu, & Liu, 2012). In addition, employees with a high moral leader tend to be more sociable and more active in OCB (Yeh, Chi, & Chiou, 2008) and show higher commitment (Erben & Güneser, 2008). Hence a positive relation between moral leadership and follower work outcomes is expected.

*Hypothesis 3: Moral leadership positively influences follower behavioural outcomes a) job performance b) OCB and c) creativity.*

Finally, paternalistic leadership as one construct is expected to have a positive association with follower work outcomes. A lot of research has already shown that paternalistic leadership leads to positive follower work outcomes (Bedi, 2019; Hiller et al., 2019; Pelligrini & Scandura 2008). Moreover, elements of paternalistic leadership such as the paradoxical characteristics within one leadership style (Chen, 2002) and the employer's use of authority in exchange for loyalty (Aycan, 2006) positively relate to fundamental principles of

Confucian culture, where most research took place. This positive influence is also explained by the family-like environment of support, compassion and morals that paternalistic leadership establishes (Farh & Cheng 2000) which makes it more likely to result in positive work experiences (Bedi, 2019). For considering the relationships of PL as one construct, this research will calculate the composite scores for Cheng et al's. (2000) scale. In this way this meta-analysis will also differentiate itself from the previous meta-analyses on PL as using the composite scores of this specific scale to examine follower work outcomes has not been done yet.

*Hypothesis 4: Paternalistic leadership positively influences follower behavioural outcomes such as a) job performance b) OCB and c) creativity.*

*1.3 Conceptual moderators*

Another aim of this study is to look at the moderating role of the country the research was conducted in. As mentioned, paternalistic leadership relates to fundamental principles of Confucian culture (Chen, 2002) as well as to several cultural dimensions. These cultural dimensions are mainly power distance and individualism/collectivism (Aycan, 2006; Aycan, Schyns, Syn, Felfe, & Saher, 2013), dimensions proposed by Hofstede (2011). Cultures with high power distance and a high degree of collectivism relate more strongly to paternalistic leadership compared to cultures that score low on power distance and high on individualism. Scholars explain the effectiveness of paternalistic leadership partly by the way it relates to the principles of a certain culture (Aycan, 2006). The relation between PL and its outcomes might thus be influenced by the country where the research was conducted. Although most research took place in south-east Asia, these countries, still score differently on the aforementioned dimensions (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). Therefore, comparing the influence of PL in different countries might result in different outcomes.

*Research Question 1: Are the relationships between paternalistic leadership and follower work outcomes moderated by the country of the study sample?*

Finally, the second kind of moderator that will be considered focuses on sample characteristics. Although previous studies show a diverse set of e.g. average age and gender, research has not yet focused on the moderating role of these characteristics concerning the relationship between PL and its outcome variables. Earlier research has however shown that sample characteristics such age (Bal, De Lange, Jansen, & Van Der Velde, 2008) and gender (Kim, Murrmann, & Lee, 2009) can have a moderating effect on follower work outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction of job performance. With respect to the age of employees, Bal et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis describes that older worker's job

satisfaction might stem more from the relation with the employer than younger worker's job satisfaction. As the younger workers' job satisfaction might depend more on the work they conduct and their career prospects. Translating this to PL, the negative relation-focused behaviour of authoritarian leadership and positive relation-focused behaviour of benevolent and moral leadership (Cheng, 2000) might have an increased effect when employees are older. Moreover, research showed that female employees expressed higher preferences for relation-oriented worker-centered leadership behaviours than male employees (Boatwright & Forrest, 2000) and that women tend to value the relational aspects of their work environment more than men (Elizur, 1994). As PL entails leadership encompassed in a personalistic atmosphere (Farh & Cheng, 2000) the behaviour that paternalistic leaders display might have different effects on women compared to men. To get more insight into the relevance and influence of sample characteristics, the moderating role of employee age and gender on PL and its outcomes will be considered.

> *Hypothesis 5: The relationships between PL and follower work outcomes are moderated by sample characteristics in such a way that a) as the age of the employees increase the relationships between PL and its outcomes increase b) the relationship between PL and its outcomes is stronger when it concerns female employees than male employees.*

## 2. Method

*2.1 Literature search*

In order to identify all previous research of the relationship between PL and its outcomes, two reviewers looked for all the research on paternalistic leadership from the time period 1998 to 2019, since the concept of paternalistic leadership was first operationalised in 1998 (cf. Aycan & Kanungo, 1998). Firstly, the following search engines were used: PsycINFO, Web of Science, EBSCO Academic search premier, JSTOR and Social Science Research Network (SSRN). Second, in order to reach out for unpublished studies, conference proceedings and PhD theses as well, Google scholar was used. The search terms that were used were *"Paternalistic Leader, Paternalistic Leadership, Benevolent, Authoritarian and Moral Leadership".* An exploratory search yielded approximately 700 studies in total, hereby adding the number of the results of all different search engines. Third, when the meta-analysis conducted by Bedi became available in February 2019, their reference list was checked to see whether all the relevant research was included in the present review. Finally, paper requests were sent to researches whose studies were inaccessible. After excluding all studies that were

either double (the same studies appeared in different search engines), non-accessible or irrelevant, 132 studies remained.

*2.2 Inclusion criteria of studies in the meta-analysis*

Several inclusion criteria were used for the studies obtained after the literature search. First, all research that examined the relation between paternalistic leadership and several outcome variables in an organisational context was selected. Secondly, the research was excluded when: a) the dependent variable was examined on team level b) the research was either not empirical or quantitative c) the research did not contain adequate information to calculate the effect sizes (e.g. correlation coefficients). Third, from this selection only the research that used Cheng et al.'s (2000) scale was included. Finally, only the studies that examined the relation between paternalistic leadership and the outcome variable of either job performance, OCB or creativity as an outcome variable were selected.

These inclusion criteria resulted in 41 studies containing 151 effect sizes from 46 independent samples. The data was divided in four different datasets in order to conduct separate meta-analysis. These data-sets were based on the different dimensions of PL, and consisted of one of the three dimensions of PL (authoritarian, benevolent or moral) and PL as a whole construct. The number of individualized responses of subordinates was taken as the sample size, which reached 16484 respondents. The industries they worked in varied largely, such as technology, education, manufacturing companies, hospitals, non-profit organisations and commercial banks.

*2.3 Data classification and coding*

To create a good overview of the studies, 14 indicators were extracted from the literature: (1) title of the article (2) authors (3) publication date (4) country (5) sample size (6) outcome variables (7) sample characteristics (8) industry (9) type of job (10) measurement scales (11) reliabilities for PL scales (12) reliabilities for outcome variables (13) PL dimensions (14) recommendation for inclusion. After that, the information that was eventually coded contained the essential aspects for the main analysis (i.e. sample size, effect sizes and reliability coefficients), as well as the categorial (i.e. country) and continuous moderators (i.e. age and gender).

The categorical moderator of country was coded in two ways. Firstly, the coding divided the countries in different cultural clusters, based on Livermore (2013). The cultural clusters described in the literature are: *Nordic Europe, Anglo, Germanic Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin Europe, Latin America, Confucian Asia, Southern Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab.* However, within the selected studies, only a few cultural clusters appeared.

Therefore, *Confucian Asia, Southern Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa* and *Arab* were respectively coded as 1, 2, 3 and 4. In addition, each different country was also coded separately. The countries were coded as follows: 1 = China, 2 = Hong Kong, 3 = Korea, 4 = Taiwan, 5 = Vietnam, 6 = Malaysia, 7 = Pakistan 8 = Thailand, 9 = Nigeria, 10 = South-Africa, 11 = Turkey.

The continuous moderators that were considered for the study were employee age and gender. First, for employee age, the average reported in the study was taken. Finally, for gender, the female/male ratio was coded by indicating the percentage of males.

*2.3 Meta-analysis procedures*

For the data preparation for the analyses, this meta-analysis followed the procedures presented in Schmidt and Hunter (2015), which allows for an estimation of true correlations by correcting for sampling error and measurement error. The analyses were aided by the Hunter-Schmidt Meta-Analysis Programs 2.0 (Schmidt & Le, 2014) an interactive software that uses a random effects model. Before both the main and moderator analyses were conducted, several steps were followed, in order to prepare the data.

First, when studies had multiple effect sizes for one outcome variable the composite scores were calculated, using the formula described in Schmidt and Hunter (2015). Due to this, each study only contributed one correlation coefficient to the meta-analysis. For this meta-analysis Pearson correlations (*r*) were used. Calculating the composite scores was only possible when the intercorrelations among the variables with multiple effect sizes were available. When this information was not available, the average of the effect sizes was calculated to be able to obtain composite scores (Ceri-Booms, Curşeu, & Oerlemans, 2017). This procedure was followed for the next two situations: 1) when correlations that referred to different outcome variables could be grouped under one of the main outcome variables (OCB, task performance) were provided in one study 2) in order to obtain the correlations between PL as a unidimensional construct and the outcomes variables, as most primary studies merely measured the relation of each separate PL dimension to an outcome variable.

Second, the effect sizes from previous studies were corrected for the statistical artifact of measurement error by correcting for the reliability values of both the dependent and independent variables. Cronbach's alpha reliability (α) coefficients were used for these corrections. When the authors reported a range of reliability coefficients, the highest one was taken (e.g. Veloen, 2016) in order to be conservative in the corrections. When the information for the appropriate reliabilities was missing for the dependent variable (e.g. Wu, 2018) the average reliability value of each variable across all the samples included in the meta-analyses

(.88) was used for correction. In case of multiple reliabilities that applied to one construct (e.g. PL and OCB), the average of these reliabilities was calculated.

Finally, this research did not correct for range restriction. No information on range restriction could be found in the aforementioned studies. Therefore, the estimations resulting from the analyses might be slight underestimates of the true relationships (Ceri-Booms, Curşeu, & Oerlemans, 2017).

### 3. Results

Since this meta-analysis used four different data-sets, namely authoritarian, benevolent, moral and paternalistic leadership relating to the three follower work outcomes, the results will be discussed separately for each dataset. Furthermore, for each dataset, an Egger's test was conducted to see whether there was any publication bias. However, none of the Egger's test showed a significant result (See Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, Table 4) making publication bias improbable. First, the results of the main analyses will be introduced. Subsequently, analyses concerning the categorical moderator of country and the continuous moderators of employee age and gender will be presented.

*3.1 Authoritarian leadership and follower work outcomes*

The first dataset consisted of the relation between authoritarian leadership and follower work outcomes of task performance (see Table 1), OCB and creativity. Firstly, SAMD values were checked for. Based on Huffcutt and Arthur's (1995) sample-adjusted meta-analytic deviancy (SAMD) with corrections recommended by Beal, Corey, and Dunlop (2002), one potential outlier (SAMD greater than ±2.25) was found within the dataset of creativity (i.e. Hou & Hong, 2019). Results from the analyses without this outlier in the data showed a difference in effect sizes. Accordingly, this outlier was omitted from the analyses (Bank, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016).

Subsequently, three analyses were conducted. The first results indicated that authoritarian leadership had a weak negative relationship with task performance ($\rho = -.121$) The analysis included 22 effect sizes representing 7154 individual respondents. The second analysis showed that authoritarian leadership had a weak negative relationship with OCB ($\rho = -.046$) and represented 5254 individual respondents and 12 effect sizes. The last analysis indicated a weak negative relationship with authoritarian leadership and creativity ($\rho = -203$), representing 3367 respondents and 12 effect sizes. For each analysis the credibility and confidence intervals did not contain zero, which indicates that the results were significant and could be generalized across situations. The variances accounted for by artifacts were low,

ranging between 5.23% and 23.37% for all three analyses. According to the 75% rule of Schmidt & Hunter (2015), the amount of variation that could not be explained by artifacts indicates the possibility of moderators.

Table 1

*Relationship between Authoritarian Leadership and Follower Work Outcomes*

| Authoritarian leadership | N | k | r̄ | *SD*r̄ | ρ | *SD*ρ | *95% CV (ρ)* | *80% CI (ρ)* | %VE | Egger's test (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Task performance | 9130 | 22 | -.143 | 0.112 | -.121 | .10 | (-0.168, -0.074) | (-0.251, 0.009) | 18.57 | .24 |
| OCB | 5254 | 12 | -.071 | 0.209 | -.046 | .20 | (-0.164, -0.072) | (-0.306, 0.214) | 5.23 | .58 |
| Creativity | 3177 | 11 | -.184 | 0.117 | -.203 | .10 | (-0.272, -0.134) | (-0.334, -0.072) | 23.37 | .34 |

*Note.* N = total number of individual respondents; k = number of effect sizes included; r̄ = weighted mean correlation; *SD*r̄; standard deviation for weighted mean correlation; ρ = correlation for population estimate corrected for attenuation due to measurement error, sampling error variance and dichotomization on the predictor, if eligible; SDρ = standard deviation for population estimate; CV = confidence interval for the corrected correlation, CI = credibility interval for the corrected correlation. % VE = variance accounted for by artifacts.

### 3.2 Benevolent leadership and follower work outcomes

The second dataset examined the relation between benevolent leadership and follower work outcomes of task performance, OCB and creativity (see Table 2). First, the SAMD values showed two potential outliers within de effect sizes of OCB (i.e. Tang & Jian, 2015; Tan, Zawawi, & Aziz, 2016), and results from the analyses without this outlier showed a difference in effect sizes. This outlier was left out from the analyses (Bank et al., 2016).

Second, three analyses were again conducted. The first results indicated that benevolent leadership had a weak positive relationship with task performance (ρ = .200) and included 19 effect sizes representing 8275 individual respondents. The second analyses showed that benevolent leadership had a weak positive relationship with OCB (ρ = .209) and represented 4958 individual respondents and 13 effect sizes. The last analysis indicated a weak positive relationship with benevolent leadership and creativity (ρ = .251), containing 2664 respondents and 11 effect sizes. For each analysis, the credibility and confidence intervals did not contain zero, again indicating a significant result and generalizability across situations. The variances accounted for by artifacts were low ranging between 15.89% and 30.01% This indicates that studies contained variations beyond sampling and measurement

error. Potential moderators might thus affect the relationship between benevolent leadership and its outcome variables.

Table 2

*Relationship between Benevolent Leadership and Follower Work Outcomes*

| Benevolent leadership | N | k | r̄ | SDr̄ | ρ | SDρ | 95% CV (ρ) | 80% CI (ρ) | %VE | Egger's test (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Task performance | 8275 | 19 | 0.199 | 0.099 | 0.200 | .09 | (0.156, 0.245) | (0.088, 0.313) | 21.61 | .84 |
| OCB | 4615 | 11 | 0.213 | 0.085 | 0.209 | .07 | (0.159, 0.260) | (0.118, 0.301) | 30.01 | .71 |
| Creativity | 2664 | 11 | 0.306 | 0.151 | 0.251 | .14 | (0.162, 0.340) | (0.073, 0.429) | 15.89 | .054 |

*Note.* N = total number of individual respondents; k = number of effect sizes included; r̄ = weighted mean correlation; SDr̄; standard deviation for weighted mean correlation; ρ = correlation for population estimate corrected for attenuation due to measurement error, sampling error variance and dichotomization on the predictor, if eligible; SDρ = standard deviation for population estimate; CV = confidence interval for the corrected correlation, CI = credibility interval for the corrected correlation. % VE = variance accounted for by artifacts.

### 3.3 Moral leadership and follower work outcomes

The third dataset examined the relation between moral leadership and follower work outcomes of task performance, OCB and creativity (see Table 3). The SAMD values showed one potential outlier, namely within the dataset of OCB (i.e. Afsar, 2014). As this outlier affected the magnitude of effect sizes, this outlier was omitted from the analyses. (Bank et al., 2016).

The first analyses revealed a positive relationship with task performance ($\rho = .129$) and included 10 effect sizes representing 4667 individual respondents. The second analysis also showed that moral leadership had a positive relationship with OCB ($\rho = .237$), including 4562 individual respondents and 10 effect sizes. Finally, moral leadership had a moderate positive relationship with creativity ($\rho = .387$). This analysis contained 2940 respondents and 7 effect sizes. For all three analyses the credibility and confidence intervals indicated significant results as it did not contain zero. The variances accounted for by artifacts were low ranging between 6.66% and 18.56%.

Table 3

*Relationship between Moral leadership and Follower Work Outcomes*

| Moral leadership | N | k | r̄ | *SD*r̄ | ρ | SDρ | *95% CV (ρ)* | *80% CI (ρ)* | %VE | Egger's test (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Task performance | 4467 | 1 | 0.153 | 0.116 | 0.129 | .11 | (0.061, 0.198) | (-0.008, 0.264) | 17.03 | .57 |
| OCB | 3764 | 10 | 0.261 | 0.113 | 0.237 | .10 | (0.167, 0.307) | (0.107, 0.368) | 18.56 | .30 |
| Creativity | 2940 | 7 | 0.403 | 0.161 | 0.387 | .16 | (0.268, 0.507) | (0.188, 0.587) | 6.66 | .64 |

*Note.* N = total number of individual respondents; k = number of effect sizes included; r̄ = weighted mean correlation; *SD*r̄; standard deviation for weighted mean correlation; ρ = correlation for population estimate corrected for attenuation due to measurement error, sampling error variance and dichotomization on the predictor, if eligible; SDρ = standard deviation for population estimate; CV = confidence interval for the corrected correlation, CI = credibility interval for the corrected correlation. % VE = variance accounted for by artifacts.

### 3.4 Paternalistic leadership and follower work outcomes

The last dataset examined the relation between PL as one construct and the follower work outcomes task performance, OCB and creativity (see Table 4). The SAMD values showed one outlier within the effect sizes of OCB (i.e. Tuan, 2018). Results from the analyses without this outlier in the data showed a difference in effect sizes. Accordingly, this outlier was not included in the analyses (Bank et al., 2016).

The first analysis showed that PL had a weak positive relationship with task performance ($\rho$ = .098) and included 18 effect sizes representing 7854 individual respondents. The second analyses indicated a positive relationship between PL and OCB ($\rho$ = .109) and represented 5786 individual respondents and 14 effect sizes. Finally, the analysis between PL and creativity yielded a moderate positive relationship ($\rho$ = .301), containing 3379 respondents and 10 effect sizes. The credibility and confidence intervals did not contain zero, which made the results significant and generalizable across situations. The variances accounted for by artifacts ranged between 4.09% and 53.89%.

Table 4

*Relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Follower Work Outcomes*

| Paternalistic leadership | N | k | r̄ | *SD*r̄ | ρ | SDρ | *95% CV (ρ)* | *80% CI (ρ)* | %VE | Egger's test (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Task performance | 7854 | 18 | .085 | 0.065 | 0.098 | .04 | (0.068, 0.127) | (0.041, 0.154) | 53.89 | .49 |
| OCB | 5359 | 13 | .153 | 0.150 | 0.109 | .14 | (0.028, 0.191) | (-0.072, 0.291) | 10.58 | .11 |
| Creativity | 3379 | 10 | .292 | 0.245 | 0.301 | .24 | (0.149, 0.452) | (-0.007, 0.608) | 4.09 | .67 |

*Note.* N = total number of individual respondents; k = number of effect sizes included; r̄ = weighted mean correlation; *SD*r̄; standard deviation for weighted mean correlation; ρ = correlation for population estimate corrected for attenuation due to measurement error, sampling error variance and dichotomization on the predictor, if eligible; SDρ = standard deviation for population estimate; CV = confidence interval for the corrected correlation, CI = credibility interval for the corrected correlation. % VE = variance accounted for by artifacts.

*3.5 Moderator analysis*

As mentioned, the results indicated that a significant variation between PL and its follower work outcomes existed across studies. These results suggest that moderators might influence these relationships. Following the method of Schmidt and Hunter (2015) moderators were tested with a random-effects model, which allows that true effect sizes differ from study to study. The moderator of country was categorical whereas the moderators of employee age and gender (male ratio) where continuous moderators.

For both moderating analyses, the sample size and the reliability values (Cronbach's alpha) were used for correction of measurement error. The corrected correlation coefficients were transformed to Fisher's Z in order to normalise the effects, as the distribution around Pearson's *r* around a given population is inherently skewed (Hedges & Olkin, 1985). For the interpretation of the effect sizes, the Z were converted back to *r*. Subsequently, the inverse weight variance was calculated in order for larger studies to carry more weight in the analyses. An effect size with a larger sample size is namely assumed to be a more precise estimate of the population than a small sample size (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). The following moderating analyses examined whether the effect of country showed a difference between the relationship of PL (i.e. authoritarian, benevolent, moral or PL as one construct) and its follower work outcomes. In order to conduct moderating analyses, the SPSS macro developed by Wilson and Lipsey (2001) was used with a random effects model with unrestricted maximum likelihood. In this way, the analyses also controlled for a potential effect of a certain variable, when needed (Ceri-Booms & Wendt, 2018).

*3.5.1 Categorical moderator*

For these analyses the MetaReg command in Lipsey and Wilson's (2001) macro was used. Country reflects the country the research was conducted in. Firstly, this research coded for cultural clusters based on Livermore (2013), as well as for each separate country. However, as there was low variation across research in cultural clusters and as almost every article was coded as *Confucian Asia,* this research eventually coded for each separate country. Due to a lack of data the analysis could not be done for every relationship of the PL dimensions and the outcome variables, as there was low variation within the most datasets concerning the country the research took place.

The results of the random effect model show no support for the moderating effect of country. First, for the dataset of authoritarian leadership, the moderating effect of country on authoritarian leadership and task performance contained no significant result ($p = .89$). For the remaining follower work outcomes (i.e. OCB and creativity) sufficient data to run the analysis lacked. Second, the dataset of benevolent leadership found no significant results for the moderating effect of benevolent leadership on task performance ($p = .85$) or OCB ($p = .65$). The dataset of benevolent leadership and creativity lacked sufficient data to run the analysis. Third, the moderating analysis with moral leadership found no significant difference for the relation of task performance ($p = .58$). For the other follower work outcomes (i.e. OCB and creativity) there were not enough data points to run the analysis. Finally, the dataset of paternalistic leadership did not find support for the moderating role of country for the variable of task performance ($p = .58$). There was inadequate data to run the analysis for OCB and creativity.

However, as there was minimum variation of countries among the dataset, the abovementioned moderating analyses only examined the moderating role of the two countries China and Taiwan. The lack of support this analysis found for the moderating role of countries thus only applies for the comparison of China and Taiwan.

*3.5.2 Continuous moderators*

*3.5.2.1 Age of employees.* For this analysis the MetaF command in Lipsey and Wilson's (2001) macro was used. Age of employees was the first continuous moderator that was researched. This research took the mean age of the employee sample. The following analyses examined whether the age of employee had a moderating effect on the relationship of PL (i.e. authoritarian, benevolent, moral or PL as one construct) and its follower work outcomes (see Table 5).

*Authoritarian leadership.* The analyses for authoritarian leadership found no significant difference for task performance ($p$ = .185). Illustrating no moderating effect of age on this relationship. However, significant difference was found for the moderating relationship of age concerning the relationship between authoritarian leadership and OCB ($p$ = .010) and creativity ($p$ = .0049), showing a negative coefficient for both relations, respectively $\beta$ = -.2083 and $\beta$ = -.590. This implies that the negative effect of authoritarian leadership on OCB and creativity increases as the age of the employees increases.

*Benevolent leadership.* The moderating analyses for benevolent leadership and the three outcome variables of task performance, OCB and creativity showed no significant effect ($p$ = .735; $p$ = .235; $p$ = .064 respectively). This indicates no moderating effect of age on the association between benevolent leadership and its outcome variables.

*Moral leadership.* This analyses of moral leadership and outcome variables showed no significant difference for task performance ($p$ =.485), OCB ($p$ = .721) and ($p$ = .981), again indicating no moderating effect of the employee age.

*Paternalistic leadership.* The analyses for paternalistic leadership as a whole construct found no significant difference for task performance ($p$ = .592) and OCB ($p$ = .488), implying no moderating effect of age on these relationships. A significant effect was found for the moderating relationship of age concerning the relationship between paternalistic leadership and creativity ($p$ > .001), demonstrating a positive coefficient ($\beta$ = .951.) This implies that the positive relation of paternalistic leadership with creativity increases as the employee age increases.

Table 5

*Paternalistic Leadership and Follower Work Outcomes: Moderator Analysis for Continuous Variable of Mean Age*

| Follower work outcomes | k | B | se | β |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Authoritarian leadership | | | | |
|   Task performance | 16 | -0.017 | 0.013 | -0.336 |
|   OCB | 7 | -0.015 | 0.006 | -0.208* |
|   Creativity | 4 | -0.017 | 0.006 | -0.590* |
| Benevolent leadership | | | | |
|   Task performance | 15 | -0.003 | 0.009 | -0.093 |
|   OCB | 8 | -0.013 | 0.011 | -0.439 |
|   Creativity | 7 | 0.028 | 0.015 | 0.615 |
| Moral leadership | | | | |
|   Task performance | 9 | -0.005 | 0.007 | -0.245 |
|   OCB | 7 | -0.002 | 0.006 | -0.158 |
|   Creativity | 3 | 0.002 | 0.064 | 0.023 |
| Paternalistic leadership | | | | |
|   Task performance | 15 | -0.001 | 0.003 | -0.135 |
|   OCB | 8 | -0.002 | 0.002 | -0.277 |
|   Creativity | 4 | 0.060 | 0.011 | 0.952* |

*Note. k*=the number of studies/samples, B= unstandardized beta coefficients, se=standard error, β=standardized beta coefficients, *$p<0.1$, * $p<0.05$.

    *3.5.2.2 Gender of employees.* The gender of the employees was also examined as a potential moderator. To research this possible effect, the male ratio of each sample was taken into account as a continuous moderator. The following analyses examined whether the male ratio had a moderating effect on the relationship of different PL dimensions (i.e. authoritarian, benevolent, moral or PL as one construct) and the outcome variables of task performance, OCB and creativity. For the dataset of benevolent leadership and creativity, a significant effect was found ($p$ = .007), illustrating a negative coefficient of β = -.545. This implies that as the male ratio increases, the positive relation of benevolent leadership on task performance decreases. Except for the relation of benevolent leadership and creativity, no significant effect was found for the moderation effect of male ratio. No further support was found for the moderating role of gender on the relation of PL and its outcome variables.

## 4. Discussion

This meta-analysis had three main aims: 1) to replicate the recently published meta-analyses of Bedi (2019) and Hiller et al. (2019) with a larger and/or more recent sample of studies, 2) to examine the moderating role of country within the relationship between different dimensions of PL and follower work outcomes and 3) to research the moderating role of sample characteristics (i.e. age and gender) on PL and its outcomes.

Considering the first aim, this study to a large extent confirmed the results that were found in Bedi (2019) and Hiller et al (2019). Results from previous meta-analyses indicated authoritarian leadership to have negative relations and benevolent, moral and paternalistic leadership to have positive relations with follower work outcomes. The results of this study indeed show that the dimension of authoritarian leadership has a negative association with task performance, OCB and creativity, whereas benevolent and moral leadership have a positive relation with these outcomes. Paternalistic leadership as a unidimensional construct was as well positively related to these outcomes. Findings of this research are thus in line with previous research.

The results of this study showed slightly weaker correlations compared to the ones that were found in the research of Bedi (2019) and Hiller et al. (2019). For instance, the effect size of task performance in relation to authoritarian leadership was respectively $\rho = -.046$ compared to $\rho = -.131$ (Bedi, 2019), and the effect size between moral leadership and creativity also showed a slight difference of $\rho = .387$ (Hiller et al., 2019) and $\rho = .35$ within this research. The differences might be due to a different sample the previous meta-analyses included. They both included studies up to 2017 and Hiller et al. (2019) also considered articles in different languages, whereas the current research included studies conducted in 2018 and 2019 and only included English literature. The relations between PL as one construct and its outcome variables, however, differed greatly (i.e. $\rho = .21$ and $\rho = .04$). The current meta-analysis was the first one that considered the composite scores of Cheng et al.'s scale (2000), whereas Hiller et al. (2019) and Bedi (2019) only computed composite scores for respectively Aycan's scale (2006) and Aycan et al.'s scale (2000). Hence, this difference might be due to the use of difference measurement scales.

Moreover, when considering the correlation between PL as one construct and its outcome variables, it can be concluded that there was a great disparity among the effect sizes. This was also illustrated when observing the funnel plot of both the OCB and creativity analyses that contained a scattered pattern and numeral outliers. This might indicate that PL

should not be taken as a unidimensional construct, as combining these dimensions does not result in one pattern in effect sizes, but a scattered image instead. With this information in mind, using Cheng et al.'s (2000) conceptualisation could therefore be seen as a justified way of measuring PL, as this scale also focuses on measuring PL with different dimensions instead of considering it as one construct.

The second aim was to look at the moderating role of the country where the research took place. No significant effects for this moderating effect were found, indicating that country has no influence on the relationship between PL and its outcome variables. However, for the moderating analysis there was little variation in countries. This resulted in the mere comparison between China and Taiwan. The lack of support for the moderation effect might be due to the fact that these countries barely differ in the cultural dimensions power distance and collectivism (Hofstede Insights, n.d.), dimensions that were pointed out as most relevant as these are the one that relate the most to PL (Aycan, 2006; Aycan et al., 2013).

Although no significant difference was found, a subtle trend could be seen, which showed that paternalistic leadership had a stronger effect when it took place in China than when it took place in Taiwan (respectively $\rho = .217$ and $\rho = .205$). Taiwan indeed scores slightly lower on power distance and collectivism compared to China (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). This supports the idea that PL might show a greater effect when this leadership style finds resonance in a certain culture. For China and Taiwan, this difference is neglectable. Nonetheless, when countries differ more from each other on these cultural dimensions, differences might be found.

With regard to the final aim of this research, it looked at the moderating role of sample characteristics, more specifically at employee age and gender. Concerning the effect of age, the results that have been found show that as age increases, the negative effect of authoritarian leadership on OCB and creativity increase and the effect of PL as one construct on creativity increase. Indicating that the effect of these relations PL becomes stronger as the age of employees increase. These results are in line with the aforementioned expectations, explained by the meta-analysis of Bal et al. (2008). This meta-analysis describes that older workers' job satisfaction stem from the relation with the employer more than younger workers, whose satisfaction might depend on the work they conduct. Translating this to PL, this relates to the dimensions of authoritarian and benevolent leadership. The negative relation-focused behaviour of authoritarian leadership or relation-focused positive behaviour of paternalistic leadership as a whole (Cheng et al., 2000) might thus have a greater effect on older employees. Nonetheless, the results that are found are limited. This might be explained by the

small range of mean age of the samples, ranging from 26 (i.e. Chou et al., 2015) to 40.1 (i.e. Zheng, 2016), however, most ages ranged from 28 to 36.

Finally, this research found support for the moderating role of gender for one relation, namely between benevolent leadership and creativity. The negative relation ($\beta$ = -.545) indicates that as the male ratio increases, the positive effect of benevolent leadership decreases. This is in line with the expectation based on previous research describing that female employees value the relational aspects of their work environment more than men (Elizur, 1994), translating this to the result this meta-analysis found, the positive benevolent behaviour of leaders, might have a stronger effect on female employees than on male employees. This might apply to benevolent leadership in particular as this dimension has a more prominent relational focus such as the genuine care and support of the employee, which might also explain why this effect was not found for the other dimensions.

*4.1 Implications*

Considering theoretical implications this study confirms the findings of earlier meta-analyses on PL stating that, when considering Cheng et al.'s (2000) scale, this leadership style leads to different outcomes depending on which dimension is considered and that it leads to positive outcomes when it is considered as one construct. The effects of PL are again confirmed with datasets that were different from previous meta-analyses, hereby finding more robust support for the relationships of PL. Furthermore, this research finds support of measuring PL as a multi-dimensional construct.

Given the practical implications, PL might thus be considered as an effective type of leadership, as it leads to positive outcomes. The fact that this meta-analysis again found positive effects for this leadership style provides more support and certainty to give the advice to implement this leadership style in practice. Based on these findings, leaders (e.g. managers) might be given the advice to display benevolent and moral leadership, and authoritarian leadership may be discouraged in order for their employees to perform better. Even in countries where the power distance is high, and thus relates to the culture, authoritarian leadership still leads to negative outcomes. Interestingly, a relevant topic of discussion is that authoritarian leadership belongs to the construct of PL (Cheng et al., 2000) as this opposing behaviour is still a part of the whole construct of PL (Chen, 2002). Neglecting the element of authoritarian leadership might leave us with the question if the behaviour that is displayed can still be considered as PL. Finally, the effects that have been found mainly apply to countries in Confucian Asia. Expat leaders or leaders that work with employees from Confucian

countries can keep in mind or even try to carry out the elements of PL, as these lead to positive outcomes for their employees.

*4.2 Limitations and future research suggestions*

Apart from the contributions this meta-analysis made, several limitations will be discussed as well. Firstly, although this research supported why it only considered Cheng et al.'s scale (2000), a lot of research that used different scales therefore had to be omitted. Research on the relevance or quality of these scales and how they might lead to different outcomes is something is still preliminary (Bedi, 2019). However, this might be a very relevant topic to look at. This research only tried to explain the disparity among research by comparing the correlations, however this disparity also rises from different ways of measuring the construct. In order to get more insight into this, future research might focus even more on comparing the value and outcomes of different scales.

The abovementioned is also related to another limitation of the literature of PL in general. As Bedi (2019) already discussed in his meta-analysis: most research on PL was conducted in Confucian Asia. And although a lot of research also took place in different countries, such as Turkey, using Aycan's scale. Or a few countries such as Malaysia (Tan, Zawawi, & Aziz 2016) or Nigeria (Guo, Decoster, Babalola, De Schutter, Garba, & Riisla, 2018), most countries, and hereby cultural clusters still remain excluded, making it difficult to generalize the results obtained in this study to other cultures. Since Confucian countries mostly differ on the dimensions of collectivism and power distance from Germanic or Nordic countries such as the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark these countries might be the most interesting to research and compare the relation with PL to several work outcomes. However, due to limited data of research that was conducted in these countries, this is nearly impossible. In order to get more insight into the generalizability of the effects of PL across cultures and the moderating role of country, the effect of PL in diverse cultural clusters should be examined.

Third, this research was only able to include English literature. However, a lot of research that concerns PL was written in Turkish, and even more was written in Chinese. This research found a database that included numeral articles on PL (CNKI), however these were exclusively available in Chinese. Hence, there was a high number of articles that might have been relevant that were not included in the current meta-analysis.

*4.3 Conclusion*

In conclusion this study confirmed and expanded the still relatively preliminary research on paternalistic leadership. In spite of the fact that this research has gained more

insights into the outcomes of paternalistic leadership there is still limited knowledge concerning numeral aspects of PL. Future research can attempt to focus on aspects such as comparing different scales and conceptualisations of PL and conducting research in different cultural clusters in order to unravel the multifaceted construct of paternalistic leadership.

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