

Effect of Paternalistic Leadership Styles on Employees' Creativity Through Innovation Orientation

Muhammad Musarrat Nawaz^{*1}, Rizwan Qaiser Danish²

¹*PhD Scholar, Institute of Business Administration, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. & Assistant Professor, Punjab University Gujranwala Campus, Gujranwala, Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

²Associate Professor, Institute of Business Administration, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

Corresponding author: musarrat.nawaz@pugc.edu.pk

Keywords: Paternalistic leadership, Creativity, Innovation Orientation, Employee Engagement, SME Managers

DOI No:

<https://doi.org/10.56976/jsom.v5i1.415>

Creativity and voice of employees have been identified as important elements in resolving organization issues and improving innovation in the current competitive business world. The paper focuses on how the paternalistic nature of leadership impact the creativity of employees by means of innovation orientation among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) employees in Pakistan. The cross-sectional research design has been used and the data collection was conducted using a structured survey questionnaire to employees of the manufacturing SMEs. The results received in the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) show that there is a positive and significant connection between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity. Moreover, the innovation orientation was also observed to have a positive mediation role in the relationship between leadership styles and creativity of the employees. This paper gives a logical comprehension of the role played by leadership styles in order to promote creativity and innovation through promotion of employee engagement, ideas as well as problem solving skills. The implications of the findings to the SME managers and the policymakers are quite practical since they show the value of leadership styles to facilitate organizational performance that is based on innovation. The study is also one of the first studies that examine the paternalistic leadership and employee creativity using mediated variables in the framework of manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan.

1. Introduction

In the fast-changing business world today, the creativity of the employees is one of the major factors that defines competitiveness, the ability to innovate and the sustainability of the organization in the long term (Abun & Macaspac, 2023). Companies in various sectors are increasingly appreciating the importance of encouraging creative thinking and innovative behavior amongst their employees in order to accommodate changes in the market, come up with new products and services and sustain a competitive edge (Acevedo & Diaz-Molina, 2023). It is found that leadership is central in the development of the organizational climate and psychological conditions of individuals that are either supportive or disruptive towards expressions of creativity (Al Halbusi et al., 2021). As leaders, entrepreneurs play a key role in enhancing innovation of employees (Adil & Ab Hamid, 2019). Authoritarian, benevolent, and moral types of paternalistic leadership are positively and significantly related to employee creativity (Chan, 2024). According to the Kragulj & Rocha, (2026), the term "paternalism" originated from the old Latin word "pater," which means "father." Paternalism evolved as a semantic concept in the late nineteenth century. People feel that paternalism is a significant component of patriarchal societies in which male heads of family are seen as authoritative and accountable for the well-being of their dependents (Chaudhary et al., 2023). One definition of patriarchy is "the rule of the male member, such as grandfather or father, in a family having dominance of male as a result of the ideology that men are superior to women" (Manapa Sampetoding & Er, 2024).

The employees evaluate the actions of their employers as a way of how they communicate or how they lead their employee and act accordingly. The concept of exchange association of the social exchange theory can be applied in this situation. The exchange association is a scenario in which people accept favors due back with other people who offer them an advantage and profits (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Paternalistic leadership, a form of leadership that assumes a high level of power but at the same time exercises fatherly benevolence and moral uprightness, has received a fair amount of academic literature, specifically in the context of Asian and collectivistic societies (Chan, 2024). This paradigm of leadership is based on the traditional hierarchical values and also is characterized by the fact that it focuses on leaders being in charge of the welfare and moral direction of their subordinates (Khan et al., 2021). However, in contrast to the western leadership approaches, which focus on egalitarianism and participatory decision-making, paternalistic leadership incorporates authority and care in a special dynamic that affects employee attitudes, behaviors and performance outcomes (Alsughayir, 2016).

The correlation between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity is a complicated phenomenon that is many-sided. Although the authoritarian aspect of the paternalistic leadership concept might seem like a potential limitation to creative expression due to its high levels of control and hierarchy, the benevolent and moral aspects may support creativity by instilling trust, support, and ethical role models (Ahmad Bodla et al., 2019; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016; Fehr et al., 2015). The interaction of these dimensions and how they affect creativity, as well as understanding of these mechanisms, is paramount to the development of theories and their practical use (Ahmad Bodla et al., 2019). The effect that

paternalistic leadership styles have on the creativity of employees and the possible mediating effect that innovation orientation has on this effect are presented in this report (Bai & Wendy Pan, 2022). An organizational level construct that could mediate the leadership behaviours and individual creative outcomes is innovation orientation, which is defined as the organizational climate typified by openness to new ideas, support of experimentation, and shared preparedness to innovate. Although the current literature has profoundly reported the individual-level mediators including psychological empowerment, self-efficacy, and organizational identification, little has been done on the mediator of innovation orientation as an organizational climate (Amarteifio & Agbeblewu, 2020).

Gu et al. (2020) found a significant association between paternalistic leadership conduct and employee inventiveness. There are limited studies on the connection between the paternalistic leadership style, creativity, and the orientation of employees in terms of creativity and innovativeness. The literature that is available has been mainly concerned with research on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and other outcomes like creativity, intention to stay. These studies have however failed to consider the mediating effect innovation orientation on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and creativity.

The research contributes to the extant body of leadership literature by providing a greater understanding of the mediating role of innovation orientation in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and creativity. The study plays a number of significant roles in terms of contribution to the existing literature. First, it expands the paternalistic leadership studies by investigating its influence on employee creativity in the SME sector in a developing country where leadership styles are not similar to the Western organizations (Li & Wang, 2021; Y. Wang et al., 2019). Second, the paper presents innovation orientation as a mediating process by which the behavior of leadership can translate into creative performance, which is a gap in the literature of leadership-innovation that is bridged (Abun & Macaspac, 2023; Tamontseva & Akkermans, 2024). Third, this study presents empirical data of manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan, which is a setting that has not been well explored despite its economic value (Acar, 2025).

Lastly, the research incorporates the Social Exchange Theory and the perspectives of innovation, and provides a holistic approach of why in the context of supportive leadership, reciprocal creative behavior emerges between employees (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Hanafy et al., 2025). The main role of this study is to further understand the processes by which paternalistic leadership influences employee creativity of the employee (Wang et al., 2019). Specifically, this research examined the mediating effect of innovation orientation. The study's purpose is to understand employee creativity and key outcomes and procedures better when employees are at work.

2. Literature Reviews

2.1 Employees Creativity in Organization

The aspect of creativity of employees can be explained as the generation of new and feasible ideas, products, process, or solutions within the organizational structure (Acar, 2025). The differences between innovation and creativity are as follows because the former is

concerned with the creation of this idea whereas the latter is concerned with the implementation of the idea and commercialisation (Abun & Macaspac, 2023; Adil & Ab Hamid, 2019). It can be said that creativity is the willingness to generate or see ideas, options or possibilities that can be useful in solving problems, communication with people and to entertain ourselves and others (Amabile, 1983). It is however used interchangeably in literature where the two terms are used simultaneously when both the generation of ideas is involved, and the application is done (Hanafy et al., 2025). The organizational creativity research has provided some antecedents that occur at individual, team and organizational levels. There are leadership behaviors that enable or inhibit creativity, which are unique to both the leadership style, organizational and personal factors of the followers (Wang & Cheng, 2010).

2.2 Paternalistic Leadership

The style of leadership that is paternalistic is the type of management where a strong leader heads the organization and he acts like the father or mother and regards the workers and the associates as a large and extended family (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). As in their turn, employees are supposed to be loyal and trustful to the leader. Paternalistic leadership is conceptualized as leadership that is authoritative and highly disciplined but in a benevolence of a father and moral uprightness (Wang et al., 2019). The construct is typically operationalized into three dimensions including authoritarianism, benevolence and morality (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Authoritarianism refers to the kind of behaviors that leaders embrace, which provides an overall power feeling, blind obedience, and strict control over the subordinates (Tian & Sanchez, 2017). Authoritarian leaders establish definitive ranks, make decisions on their own and do not wish to be challenged. It is a dimension that reflects the power distance of the traditional hierarchical relationships (Wang, 2019).

Benevolence describes the actions of the leader that show personal concern of the personal and family welfare of the subordinates the personal issues not related to work (Zheng et al., 2021). Benevolent leaders are benevolent, supportive and kind and considerate towards their subordinates during their personal problems (Wang et al., 2018). This point denotes the mutual responsibility and the family-like relations of the paternalistic systems (Gu et al., 2020). Morality involves activities of the leaders that depict superior self-control, personal virtues and selflessness (Dagogo & Roseline, 2020). Moral leaders are ethical models, they prioritize the general good over their own interests and of great integrity (Al Halbusi et al., 2021). Compared to benevolence and morality which have a tendency of producing a positive outcome during the process of social exchange and identification, authoritarianism produces negative or situation outcome during the process of constraint and control (Dempsey et al., 2020; Tian & Sanchez, 2017; A. Wang & Cheng, 2010).

H1: Paternalistic Leadership has positive and significant impact on employee creativity

2.3 Authoritarian Leadership and Employee Creativity

The evidence suggests that the authoritarian leadership has negative direct impact on creativity of employees (Wang et al., 2018). Various researches carried out in different settings have noted that there were strong negative correlations between authoritarian behaviours and creative performances (Zheng et al., 2021). Wu discovered through authoritarian leadership

that the behaviour of employees towards innovation among knowledge workers is impacted negatively (Wang, 2019). Likewise, Hui et al. (2015), did also find that authoritarian leadership has major negative effects on the innovativeness behaviour of employees in a sample of 312 Chinese enterprise employees. Zhang et al. established that there were significant negative impacts of perceived authoritarian leadership on creativity among 775 Chinese college teachers (Gu et al., 2020). According to Balducci et al. (2018), the combination of benevolent and authoritarian leadership, mediated by affective trust, and innovation orientation, was related to employee innovative behaviour (Akhtar et al., 2023). This implies that the negative effects can be mitigated or even converted to positive as long as authoritarian demands are mixed with actual care and support in given circumstances.

H1a: Authoritarian leadership has positive and significant impact on employee creativity

2.4 Leadership and Employee Creativity

The most stable and strong positive direct impact on the employee creativity in the reviewed literature is evidenced by benevolent leadership (Wang & Cheng, 2010). This correlation can be found in all sorts of samples, methodologies and even in different cultural situations that it shows amazing consistency (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016). Wang & Cheng, (2010) claimed that benevolent leadership positively influences the innovation of knowledge workers among employees. Wang, (2019), discovered that the benevolent leadership has strong positive effects on employee innovation behavior in Chinese enterprises. As it was demonstrated by (Zhang, 2022), the perceived benevolent leadership resulted in strong positive effects on the creativity of Chinese college teachers. Gyamerah et al. (2022) established that benevolent leadership has got some positive effect on creativity in Ghanaian manufacturing SMEs. Kousar et al. (2017) have discovered the positive relationships of benevolent leadership and employee creativity in the construction sector in Pakistan. The theoretical basis of the positive impact of benevolent leadership is built on the social exchange and relational mechanisms. High quality relationships exist between benevolent leaders, which are defined by trust, reciprocity and felt obligation (Chhabra & Pandey, 2023). The similarity of positive effects between cultures- China to Ghana to Pakistan- is an indication that the influence of benevolent leadership on creativity may not necessarily be limited by the particular cultural context of that context but rather, the magnitude of effects may be affected by the values of that culture like collectivism and power distance (Nguyen et al., 2023).

H1b: Benevolent leadership has positive and significant impact on employee creativity

2.5 Moral Leadership and Employee Creativity

The relationship between moral leadership and employee creativity is the most complex and context-specific relationship that has been reported to have positive, non-significant, and indirect correlations (Gu et al., 2020). This diversity indicates that the role of moral leadership has more subtle channels of operation compared to the other paternalistic dimensions. A number of studies record positive direct or mediated effects. Fehr et al., (2015), discovered that moral leadership influences the innovation of the employees positively. According to Al Halbusi et al., (2021), moral leadership has substantial positive effects on the innovation behaviour of employees. Akhtar et al., (2023); Fehr et al., (2015) established that the perceived

moral leadership had strong positive influence to the creativity of Chinese college teachers. Moral leadership was positively correlated with employee creativity in construction (Niu et al., 2009). This implies that moral leadership can affect other significant consequences in the absence of direct creativity effects. Van Gils et al., (2015) discovered that organizational identification by the employees mediated between the morality element of paternalistic leadership and employee creativity where employee perceived job security moderated the relationship between them (Gyamerah et al., 2022; Niu et al., 2009). Creativity and benevolent leadership could be more proximate to moral leadership, which involves more steps in the middle to affect creative outcomes (A. Wang & Cheng, 2010). Moral leadership can have more significant effects on creativity by identification and role modeling in situations where moral authority is highly prized and ethical leadership is relevant (Dagogo & Roseline, 2020).

H1c: Moral leadership has positive and significant impact on employee creativity

2.6 Innovation Orientation

An innovation orientation describes the level of innovation in an organization, and the results have shown that innovation orientation is a setting where the proactive growth-based strategies can be implemented (Thomas et al., 2025). The similarity of organizational support of innovation, openness to new ideas, tolerance to failure and collectivism define innovation orientation as an organizational climate in relation to the willingness to embrace change (Tamontseva & Akkermans, 2024). Organizational or unit level unlike individual level psychological state is that innovation orientation is a feature of a society of norms, values and practices that either promote or are not conducive to innovative behaviors (Abun & Macaspac, 2023; Amarteifio & Agbeblewu, 2020). Innovation orientation is part of the realm of organizational climate, which represents the total perceptions and reflections on the shared patterns of behavior (Amarteifio & Agbeblewu, 2020).

2.7 Paternalistic Leadership and Innovation Orientation

One such leadership style that is common in most non-western societies is paternalistic leadership, which is more of an authority similar to fatherhood, wherein a clear hierarchy is accompanied by personal care and moral uprightness (Fu et al., 2013). It has a great influence on innovation orientation in its three dimensions (Li & Wang, 2021). It can easily hamper the creativity of employees, both in terms of psychological empowerment and creative self-efficacy (Nazir et al., 2021; Zhang, 2022).

H2a: Paternalistic Leadership has positive and significant impact on Innovation Orientation

Benevolent leadership is providing care in the personal and family life of subordinates such that they feel grateful and loyal (Nguyen et al., 2023). Existing studies have always indicated a significant positive effect in the direction of innovation orientation. Benevolent leaders provide the safe environment in which the employees feel encouraged to explore new ideas. According to meta-analyses, there is a substantive positive relationship ($r = 0.377$) with management innovation (Li & Wang, 2021). It fosters exploratory and exploitative innovation, through the increase of employee psychological empowerment and identification with the organization (Gu et al., 2020; Li & Wang, 2021).

H2b: Benevolent leadership has positive and significant impact on Innovation Orientation

Moral leadership is characterized by high level of personal integrity, discipline and unselfishness by example leading. There is a positive direct relationship between moral leadership and innovation orientation (Dempsey et al., 2020). Moral leaders exude trust, which constitutes collaboration in innovation through integrity and fairness. The outcomes of innovations are positively correlated with meta-analyses ($r = 0.319$) (Gu et al., 2020; Hanafy et al., 2025). It promotes employee voice and creative action through promoting a perspective of work based on meaning (Ahmad Tipu et al., 2012).

H2c: Moral leadership has positive and significant impact on Innovation Orientation

Innovation Orientation and Employee Creativity

Innovation orientation has also been well acknowledged as a strategic cultural orientation that emphasizes more on learning, experimentation and the pursuit of new ideas persistently hence providing conducive environments to employee innovativeness (Hanafy et al., 2025). According to the scholars, organizations that have high innovation orientation are known to have norms that embrace curiosity, originality and proactive problem solving, which have direct stimuli effects to their intrinsic drive to think creatively (Alqahtani et al., 2024; García-Piqueres et al., 2019). Cultures characterized by innovation focus on openness, risk-taking, and tolerance to failure that allow people to develop new ideas and help them that can benefit people despite their fear of repercussions (Azeem et al., 2021). Empirical studies have shown that the higher the firms focus on innovation at the strategic level, the more the employees feel more autonomy and psychological empowerment- antecedents of creative behavior (Y. Zhou et al., 2024). Therefore, the literature shows continuously that innovation orientation is among the cultural and strategic stimulants of creativity since it creates and sustains an environment of support, produces exploration, and furnishes individuals with the structural and psychological resources to perform creativity work behaviors.

H3: Innovation Orientation has positive and significant impact on employee creativity

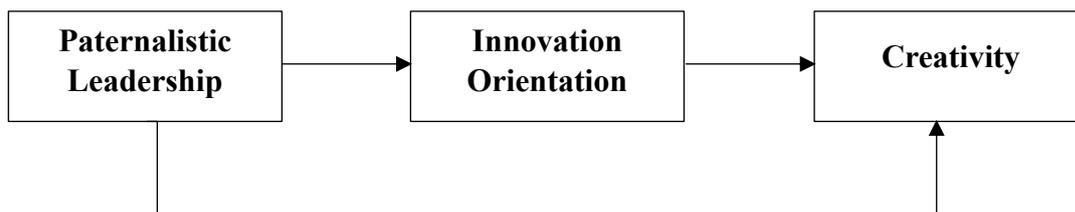
2.8 Innovation Orientation as a Mediating variable

According to the suggested model, Paternalistic Leadership dimensions do not directly affect the employee creativity but, indirectly, through this particular aspect on the Innovation Orientation of the organization or the unit. Paternalistic leaders (especially those who are high in benevolence and morality) create an innovative environment. This Innovation Orientation then serves as a channel, which gives the strategic focus and resources needed to enable employees to do creative behaviors. Although the focus on direct evidence of the specific label of the mediator of Innovation Orientation is increasing, other related constructs including Management Innovation and Innovative Work Behavior are highly backed by the mediators (Fu et al., 2013; Li Hu, 2014). Benevolence and Morality have positive effects on the Innovation Orientation, which subsequently has a significant effect on forecasting employee creativity. On the other hand, the Authoritarianism hurts the Innovation Orientation thus lowering the output of innovation.

H4: Innovation Orientation Mediate the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity

There are a number of theoretical constructs that have been used to describe the associations between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Chaudhary et al., 2023; Gyamerah et al., 2022). These models offer complementary vision of the psychological, social and motivational processes of how leadership affects creative outcomes. The social Exchange Theory assumes that leaders and followers have relationships that are directed by the norms of reciprocity where good treatment and encouragement will in turn increase the obligation by the followers to treat the leaders in the same way by making them work harder, be loyal and deliver better performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Benevolent and moral actions in the context of paternalism leadership generate positively exchange relationships, which lead to motivation in employees giving back in terms of creative contributions (Dagogo & Roseline, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2023). The social exchange theory describes the reasons why benevolence and morality encourage creativity, whereas authoritarianism that breaks the norm of reciprocity by one-sided domination does not encourage the expression of creativity (Acar, 2025)

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



3. Methodology and variable Measurement

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey as a quantitative research method to investigate the impact of paternalistic leadership styles on creativity of employees by way of innovation orientation on manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan (Chan, 2024). The primary data was gathered among employees and entrepreneurs employed in SMEs due to the fact that organizational leaders have a prominent role in defining innovation practices and employee behavior. A convenience sampling method was employed because of the aspect of accessibility and valid responses were received using structured self-administered questionnaires (Etikan, 2016). Measures of all study variables consisted of previously validated scales, such as paternalistic dimensions of leadership (authoritarian, benevolent and moral leadership), A paternalistic leadership scale was constructed by (Cheng et al., 2004) under 3 dimensions (i.e., benevolent leadership, moral leadership, and authoritarian leadership) that had 5 items, totaling 15 items. innovation orientation of the scale by (Dobni, 2010), and employee creativity of the 13 items scale, which was adapted by (Zhou & George, 2001). The responses were taken in a five-point Likert scale between strongly disagree and strongly agree. All the questionnaire items were shown strong validity and reliability. A preliminary analysis established acceptable levels of reliability and validity of the constructs.

Table No 1: Scale and Reliability Analysis

Variables	Scale	Items	Reliability
Paternalistic leadership	Cheng et al., (2004)	15	
Innovation Orientation	Thomas et al., (2025)	18	
Employee Creativity	Zhou & George, (2001)	13	

3.1 Data Analysis Techniques

Questionnaire data were used to collect the data. The descriptive statistical analysis was conducted with the help of SPSS 22, and Pearson correlation coefficient was applied to examine the relationship between variables (SPSS ANALYSIS AMOS, 2024). The data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed relationship and mediation effects (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). Reliability, validity, and data suitability were confirmed in the initial analysis of the data using statistical tests. Research held ethics by making sure that there was voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality of respondents in the course of the research. The analysis of the mediating effect was done with the help of the PROCESS program created by (Hayes, 2017), through the method of bootstrapping (Hayes, 2017).

4. Result

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The respondents were mostly aged between 36-45 years and 65.9% were men. The largest percentage of 46.4% were master graduate with 30.4% having bachelor degree and 13.3% PhDs. When it comes to the tenure of employment, 39.8 percent of the respondents were employed for 6-10 years, and the next are 27.5 percent have below 5 years' experience and 16.6 have more than 15 years of tenure in the respective organization.

Table No 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Characteristics	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	175	34.1
	Male	338	65.9
Age	up to 25	71	13.8
	26-35	102	19.9
	36-45	272	53.0
	Above 45	68	13.3
Education	Bachelors	156	30.4
	Masters	238	46.4
	Phd	68	13.3
	Others	51	9.9
	Length	1-5 years	139
	6-10 year	204	39.8
	11-15 year	85	16.6
	More than 15 year	85	16.6
	Total	513	100.0

4.2 Correlation and discriminant validity

Correlation analysis showed that there are strong and positive relationships between paternalistic leadership, innovation orientation, and employee creativity. The correlation analysis outcomes suggest the initial confirmation of all hypotheses. Table shows the correlation and the average variance extracted (AVE) of paternalistic leadership, innovation orientation, and employee creativity in which the diagonal values are the AVE of each construct (Mo & Ren, 2020). The AVE values of paternalistic leadership (0.756), innovation orientation (0.689), and creativity (0.790) are above the desired value of 0.50, and this shows that there is satisfactory convergent validity of the measurement model (Kampa & Siegert, 2010). The findings of the correlation analysis indicate that all the variables of the study have significant positive relationships between them since paternalistic leadership is positively related to innovation orientation ($r = 0.648$, $p < 0.01$) and employee creativity ($r = 0.719$, $p < 0.01$), which implies that the best leadership practice improves the organizational culture that is innovation-oriented and creative performance.

Table No 3: Correlation and discriminant validity

Sr.	Items	1	2	3
1	Paternalistic Leadership	.756		
2	Innovation Orientation	.648**	.689	
3	Creativity	.719**	.613**	.790

Note: Significance of Correlations: $p < 0.050$, ** $p < 0.010$, *** $p < 0.001$ and AVE values in bold and italic form.

Equally, innovation orientation has a positive relationship with employee creativity ($r = 0.613$, $p < 0.01$), and shows that a firm that focuses on innovation stimulates its employees to develop new and practical ideas (García-Piqueres et al., 2019). Moreover, as the values of the diagonal AVE exceed the inter-construct correlation, it is possible to determine that discriminant validity is achieved in line with Fornell-Larcker criterion, which proves the sufficiency and quality of the measurement model.

4.3 Direct and Indirect Effect

To further confirm the result, the hypothetical relationships were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS (SPSS ANALYSIS AMOS, 2024). The goodness of fit of the five-factor model (i.e., benevolent leadership, moral leadership, authoritarian leadership, Innovation orientation, and employee creativity) is found to be high as shown in table. (degree of freedom $df = 2.819 < 3$ which is acceptable, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = $0.057 < 0.08$ within acceptable range, comparative fit index (CFI) = $0.956 > 0.9$).

Table No 4: Model Fit Indexes

df	RMSEA	CFI	AGFI	GFI
2.819	0.076	0.956	0.893	0.912

The outcome of the structural model analysis proves that paternalistic leadership and its dimensions play an important role in employee creativity and innovation orientation. The direct effect results show that, paternalistic leadership exert a robust positive influence on the creativity of employees, which validates the point that the behavior of leaders is a significant factor in promoting innovative and creative results in work hence H1 is approved. The positive correlation between leadership dimensions and employee creativity indicates that benevolent leadership is the most positively correlated dimension with moral leadership, which leads to the creation of psychologically safe environments that foster employees in generating new ideas which proved H1a hypothesis. The findings are in line with the previous research conducted by (Wang & Cheng, 2010; Wang et al., 2018) who claimed that supportive and ethically based leadership can stimulate intrinsic motivation and creative involvement of employees.

Even though with H1b there is also a strong relationship between authoritarian leadership and creativity, its relatively low influence is consistent with the previous studies (Zheng et al., 2021), meaning that over-controlling and lack of autonomy might be the reasons creativity declines. Moreover, the findings indicate that paternalistic leadership is a very significant contributor to innovation orientation, which validates the assumptions that leadership practices influence the culture of organizational innovation and proved our H2. The results are supported by Benevolent and moral leadership that positively influences experimentation, knowledge sharing practices and learning that in turn favors the findings of (Nguyen et al., 2023) who stated that leadership was a key driver of innovation oriented environments which proved our hypothesis H2a, H2b and H2c. With H3 hypothesis Innovation orientation also indicates a positive impact on employee creativity in a significant way meaning that organizations that focus on innovation give employees opportunities and freedom that they need to perform creatively, as claimed by (Thomas et al., 2025).

Table No 5: Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Path	B Coefficient	t-value	p	Result
H1	P.L->E.C	0.52	8.91	<0.001	Supported
H1a	B.L->E.C	0.41	7.11	<0.001	Supported
H1b	A.L->E.C	0.18	3.42	<0.05	Supported
H1c	M.L->E.C	0.37	6.54	<0.001	Supported
H2	P.L->I.O	0.64	10.23	<0.001	Supported
H2a	B.L->I.O	0.45	7.85	<0.001	Supported
H2b	A.L->I.O	0.21	3.96	<0.05	Supported
H2c	M.L->I.O	0.39	6.72	<0.001	Supported
H3	I.O->E.C	0.49	9.02	<0.001	Supported

Note: P.L=Paternalistic Leadership, B.L=Benevolent Leadership, A.L=Authoritarian Leadership, M.L=Moral Leadership, I.O=Innovation Orientation, E.C=Employee Creativity

The mediation analysis also reaffirms the fact that innovation orientation is a viable mediator of the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Fu et al., 2013). The enormous indirect effects indicate that leadership can improve creativity not only at a direct level but also through the creation of an innovation-favorable climate within the organization. This observation corroborates the (“Social Exchange,” 2017) where employees

return the responsible leadership with innovative and creative inputs. (Thomas et al., 2025) also reported similar mediation effects when they found that innovation-oriented environments served as a significant way of transforming leadership influence into creative outcomes. On the whole, the results indicate that paternalistic leadership encourages employee creativity the most in case the leaders are also able to encourage innovation orientation in organizations.

Table No 6: Indirect effect

Hypothesis	Indirect Path	Indirect effect (β)	95% Bootstrapping (CL)	Mediation types	Result
H4	P.L->I.O->E.C	0.31	[0.91, 0.44]	Partial Mediation	Supported

Note: P.L=Paternalistic Leadership, I.O=Innovation Orientation, E.C=Employee Creativity

SEM results indicated that Paternalistic leadership has a positive and significant effect on the creativity of the employees. The benevolent and moral leadership aspects illustrated better impacts than authoritarian leadership. Employee creativity is greatly predicted by innovation orientation. The paternalistic leadership and employee creativity are mediated by innovation orientation. The results are in line with all hypotheses.

4.4 Discussion

The findings indicate that paternalistic leadership also boosts the creativity of the employees through the creation of an innovative organizational environment. In line with the Social Exchange Theory, supportive leadership behaviors are returned by creative contributions by the employees (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Leadership which is benevolent builds emotional attachment and trust that encourages employees to give in innovative ideas (Nguyen et al., 2023). Paternalistic leadership encourages equality and morality, eliminating the fear of losing and increasing creativity. Nonetheless, too much of the authoritarian leadership can detract creativity because there will be less autonomy (Duan et al., 2024). As a vital channel of transmitting leadership influence to creative performance, innovation orientation serves as a critical one (Adil & Ab Hamid, 2019). The SMEs with strong focus on the culture of innovation provide the environment that is conducive to experimentation and sharing of knowledge. The current research discussed the influence of paternalistic leadership styles on employee creativity with the intermediary of innovation orientation in manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan. The results are very empirical and offer valuable information about the impacts of leadership behaviors in promoting creativity in collectivist organizations (Acar, 2025).

First, the findings are that paternalistic leadership does increase employee creativity to a large extent. This observation supports the point that leadership is still a crucial situational element that affects the creative performance of employees (Cheng et al., 2004). Employees are more likely to return the supportive and ethical actions of leaders in terms of contributing more to the creative and innovative processes as per the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964). Employees get psychologically safe and willing to give new ideas when leaders show that they care about their well-being and offer moral guidance. The outcome is consistent with previous results by (Tu & Luo, 2020; Y. Wang et al., 2019), who noted that paternalistic leadership enhances relational trust and fosters creativity especially in collectivist societies. Out of the dimensions of leadership, benevolent leadership proved to be the most predictive of employee

creativity (Nguyen et al., 2023). As a leader, one should offer personalized attention and personal care, which promote intrinsic motivation and emotional connection, which motivates workers to explore new ideas without the fear of failure. The results are also in line with those obtained by (Almegeewly et al., 2022), who found that benevolent leadership promotes creativity via trust and psychological safety means. Equally, moral leadership was found to have a strong positive impact on creativity, which implies that fairness, integrity, and ethical role model creation provides an organizational environment conducive to creative problem-solving. Another important point that can be made beforehand is that ethical leadership minimizes the uncertainty at work and increases the desire to act innovatively in employees (Al Halbusi et al., 2021).

On the other hand, as much as authoritarian leadership exhibited strong connection with the creativity of the employees, a relatively low impact reveals the duality of paternalistic leadership (Zheng et al., 2021). High level of authority and control can restrict self-governance and deter risky behavior that can be essential towards creativity. This observation is consistent with (Chen et al., 2024), who stated that authoritarian leadership can suppress creativity in situations where the workers feel they do not have much freedom in decision making. The paper also reveals that paternalistic leadership is the most important in fostering innovation orientation, which implies that leadership practices are key variables in the development of innovation-oriented organizational cultures (Fu et al., 2013). Leaders that promote learning, experimentation, and knowledge sharing foster environments that promote practices that are driven by innovation. These results confirm the theory of innovation orientation hypothesized by (Dobni, 2010; Thomas et al., 2025), which has its basis on the role of leadership in the creation of innovative organizational capabilities.

Notably, innovation orientation was identified to be a critical mediator between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity. This implies that the creativity is not only affected by leadership in terms of interpersonal relationship but also in terms of organizational systems and innovation supportive climates (Tian et al., 2024). The outcomes of the mediation show that the employees in innovation-oriented setting have independence, resources, and flexibility that enable them to generate creative ideas. It has been found that similar mediation mechanisms can be found by (Dobni, 2010; Ul-Durar et al., 2023), who claim that innovation culture is a transmission mechanism between leadership practices and creative outcomes. Altogether, the results indicate that paternalistic leadership can be the most effective in case authority is combined with the notion of benevolence and moral responsibility, and at the same time, the leadership promotes the orientation towards innovation (Woo & Kim, 2022). Such balanced leadership styles are especially vital in improving the creativity of employees and competitiveness of the organization in new economies like Pakistan, where functional relationships are mixed with collectivist ethics.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of this research is that paternalistic leadership plays a significant role in fostering the level of creativity among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan by introducing innovation orientation. Authoritative and care-based leadership behaviors that

infuse ethical direction into the arena provide supportive environments that trigger innovation and creativity. The results indicate the strategic relevance of leadership in the context of the success of innovation-oriented organizations. The results show that paternalistic leadership has a great degree of positive impact on the creativity of employees, and benevolent and moral leadership shows a stronger positive impact than authoritarian leadership. The findings also affirm that the orientation of innovation is a critical mediating factor since it converts the behaviors of leaders into creative work performance. These results point out that the leadership practices that encourage care, ethical behavior, and support can promote in-innovation-driven organizational cultures that make employees develop new and helpful ideas. In general, the research finds that the organizations aiming to achieve sustainable growth and competitive advantage ought to focus on innovation-based leadership practices that preserve the organizational direction at the same time providing the employees with the ability to be creative in meeting organizational objectives.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

There are several valuable theoretical contributions of this study to the literature on leadership and innovation as the paper expands the concept of paternalistic leadership in regards to the employee creativity and innovation-orientation. To begin with, the research combines Social Exchange Theory and innovation orientation perspectives by showing the way in which paternalistic leadership not only has a direct impact on employee creativity but also an indirect impact on this process in the form of organizational innovation mechanisms (Amabile, 1983). Second, it can contribute to the existing body of paternalistic leadership by empirically testing its multidimensional nature authoritarian, benevolent, moral leadership, on a developing country context, where cultural norms like collectivism and power distance are the determinants of effective leadership (Chan, 2024; Duan et al., 2024). Moreover, the results add to the creativity literature since they indicate innovation orientation is a critical mediating variable that interprets how leadership behaviours can be converted to creative outputs (Acar, 2025; Duan et al., 2024). This research contributes to the overall generalizability of leadership-creativity associations in other areas other than the West organizational context, besides presenting a detailed model that connects leadership style, innovation culture, and employee creativity.

5.2 Practical Implications

The study findings have great practical implications on the owners, managers and policymakers of SMEs who aim at increasing the organizational levels of creativity and innovation. The findings indicate that leaders ought to embrace benevolent and moral leadership styles that are focused on supporting employees, being fair, and ethical so as to create psychologically safe workplaces that promote the generation of ideas and experimentation (Karakitapoğlu-Aygün et al., 2020). Innovation orientation should be fostered by managers, who should promote the exchange of knowledge, taking risk and lifelong learning practices in organization (Chen et al., 2024). Although the organizational control requires the preservation of power, the authoritarian leader must be kept to the minimum because he/she can inhibit the freedom of authority and creativity of the employees. The leadership

development and training in the SMEs ought then to revolve around finding a balance between authority and empowerment and innovation driven practices (Al Dhaheri et al., 2024). Organizations can develop the innovation-oriented cultures with the help of a good and effective leadership and inspire their employees with creative ability and sustainable competitive advantage.

5.3 Limitations and Future Recommendations

There are some limitations of this study: The SMEs that were collected were only manufacturing. Although the questionnaire was found to have high reliability and validity, it relies on subjective responses. There could be bias against self-reported measures. This is restricted by cultural context to generalization with other regions. Future research may use longitudinal research designs (Xu et al., 2024). Second, sampling is limited to a small number of high-tech enterprises in a specific industrial zone, and further studies should seek to verify the findings with different industries in different areas. Finally, this study considered only the Innovation Orientation as a mediating variable between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity, but there may be other mediating variables with a significant effect that should be explored, carry out cross-country comparative research and Research sectoral variations between manufacturing industries and services (Thomas et al., 2025).

6. References

- Abun, Fr. D., & Macaspac, L. G. R. (2023). Promoting Innovative Work Behavior Through Innovative Work Environment. *Divine Word International Journal of Management and Humanities (DWIJMH)* (ISSN: 2980-4817), 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.62025/dwijmh.v2i3.33>
- Acar, S. (2025). Creativity Assessment, Research, and Practice in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. *Creativity Research Journal*, 37(2), 181–187. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2023.2271749>
- Acevedo, J., & Diaz-Molina, I. (2023). Learning organizations in emerging economies: The effect of knowledge management on innovative culture in Chilean companies. *The Learning Organization*, 30(1), 37–54. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TLO-01-2021-0009>
- Adil, M. S., & Ab Hamid, K. B. (2019). The Relationships between Leader Creativity Expectations, Intrinsic Motivation, and Creative Performance. *SEISENSE Journal of Management*, 2(2), 58–68. <https://doi.org/10.33215/sjom.v2i2.123>
- Ahmad Bodla, A., Tang, N., Van Dick, R., & Mir, U. R. (2019). Authoritarian leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational deviance: Curvilinear relationships. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 40(5), 583–599. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-08-2018-0313>
- Ahmad Tipu, S. A., Ryan, J. C., & Fantazy, K. A. (2012). Transformational Leadership in Pakistan: An Examination of the Relationship of Transformational Leadership to Organizational Culture and Innovation Propensity. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 997–1046. <https://doi.org/10.5172/jmo.2012.997>
- Akhtar, S., Li, C., Sohu, J. M., Rasool, Y., Hassan, M. I. U., & Bilal, M. (2023). Unlocking green innovation and environmental performance: The mediated moderation of green

- absorptive capacity and green innovation climate. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 31(3), 4547–4562. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-023-31403-w>
- Al Dhaheri, M. H., Ahmad, S. Z., & Papastathopoulos, A. (2024). Do environmental turbulence, dynamic capabilities, and artificial intelligence force SMEs to be innovative? *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 9(3), 100528. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2024.100528>
- Al Halbusi, H., Ruiz-Palomino, P., Morales-Sánchez, R., & Abdel Fattah, F. A. M. (F. A. M.). (2021). Managerial ethical leadership, ethical climate and employee ethical behavior: Does moral attentiveness matter? *Ethics & Behavior*, 31(8), 604–627. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2021.1937628>
- ALmegeewly, W. H., Rawdhan, A., Saleh, M., Alrimal, M., Alasmari, R., Alhamad, S., Almuqri, R., Aljebreen, M., Alsubaie, H., & Farghaly Abdelaliem, S. M. (2022). Correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among undergraduate nursing students. *International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences*, 17, 100491. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijans.2022.100491>
- Alqahtani, F., Alshehri, A., Mulyata, J., & Cranfield, D. (2024). A Study of the Effect of Innovation and Technology on Saudi Arabian Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Internationalization. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 14(09), 1157–1180. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ajibm.2024.149060>
- Alsughayir, A. (2016). Employee Participation in Decision-making (PDM) and Firm Performance. *International Business Research*, 9(7), 64. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v9n7p64>
- Amabile, T. M. (1983). The social psychology of creativity: A componential conceptualization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45(2), 357–376. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.45.2.357>
- Amarteifio, E. N. A., & Agbeblewu, S. (2020). Entrepreneurial Orientation and Firm Performance of Tourist Accommodation Establishment in Ghana. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 08(04), 1619–1640. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2020.84103>
- Azeem, M., Ahmed, M., Haider, S., & Sajjad, M. (2021). Expanding competitive advantage through organizational culture, knowledge sharing and organizational innovation. *Technology in Society*, 66, 101635. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101635>
- Bai, H., & Wendy Pan, H.-L. (2022). The Influence of Paternalistic Leadership on the Development of Oriental Critical Thinking. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 17(2), 56. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v17n2p56>
- Balducci, C., Avanzi, L., & Fraccaroli, F. (2018). The Individual “Costs” of Workaholism: An Analysis Based on Multisource and Prospective Data. *Journal of Management*, 44(7), 2961–2986. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316658348>
- Chan, S. C. H. (2024). Paternalistic leadership, efficacy beliefs and followers’ performance: Testing a multilevel model. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 45(3), 442–460. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-04-2022-0175>
- Chaudhary, A., Islam, T., Ali, H. F., & Jamil, S. (2023). Can paternalistic leaders enhance knowledge sharing? The roles of organizational commitment and Islamic work ethics. *Global*

- Knowledge, Memory and Communication*, 72(1/2), 98–118. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GKMC-06-2021-0109>
- Chen, L., Huang, X., Sun, J., Zheng, Y., Graham, L., & Jiang, J. (2024). The virtue of a controlling leadership style: Authoritarian leadership, work stressors, and leader power distance orientation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 41(2), 507–547. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-022-09860-7>
- Cheng, B., Chou, L., Wu, T., Huang, M., & Farh, J. (2004). Paternalistic leadership and subordinate responses: Establishing a leadership model in Chinese organizations. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 7(1), 89–117. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-839X.2004.00137.x>
- Chhabra, B., & Pandey, P. (2023). Job insecurity as a barrier to thriving during COVID-19 pandemic: A moderated mediation model of knowledge hiding and benevolent leadership. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 27(3), 632–654. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-05-2021-0403>
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874–900. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
- Dagogo, T. M., & Roseline, M. B. (2020). Morality And Employee Engagement In Organizations. *European Journal of Human Resource*, 4(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.47672/ejh.454>
- Dempsey, E. E., Moore, C., Johnson, S. A., Stewart, S. H., & Smith, I. M. (2020). Morality in autism spectrum disorder: A systematic review. *Development and Psychopathology*, 32(3), 1069–1085. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579419001160>
- Dobni, C. B. (2010). The Relationship Between An Innovation Orientation And Competitive Strategy. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 14(02), 331–357. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S1363919610002660>
- Duan, J., Wang, X., Liu, Y., & Han, L. (2024). Linking paternalistic leadership to employee creativity: A meaning-based perspective. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 45(2), 283–303. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-11-2021-0497>
- Erkutlu, H., & Chafra, J. (2016). Benevolent leadership and psychological well-being: The moderating effects of psychological safety and psychological contract breach. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 37(3), 369–386. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-07-2014-0129>
- Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Fehr, R., Yam, K. C. (Sam), & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized Leadership: The Construction and Consequences of Ethical Leader Perceptions. *Academy of Management Review*, 40(2), 182–209. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2013.0358>
- Fu, X., Li, Y., & Si, Y. (2013). The impact of paternalistic leadership on innovation: An integrated model. *Nankai Business Review International*, 4(1), 9–24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/20408741311303850>

- García-Piqueres, G., Serrano-Bedia, A.-M., & Pérez-Pérez, M. (2019). Knowledge Management Practices and Innovation Outcomes: The Moderating Role of Risk-Taking and Proactiveness. *Administrative Sciences*, 9(4), 75. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci9040075>
- Gu, Q., Hempel, P. S., & Yu, M. (2020). Tough Love and Creativity: How Authoritarian Leadership Tempered by Benevolence or Morality Influences Employee Creativity. *British Journal of Management*, 31(2), 305–324. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12361>
- Gyamerah, S., He, Z., Asante, D., Ampaw, E. M., & Gyamerah, E. E. D. (2022). Paternalistic leadership, employee creativity, and retention: The role of psychological empowerment. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 22(1), 83–104. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14705958221081636>
- Hanafy, H. A., Al-Hajla, A. H., & Elsharnouby, M. H. (2025). Empowering leadership and employee innovation: Unraveling the roles of psychological empowerment and knowledge sharing. *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*, 7(4), 366–391. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHASS-11-2024-0200>
- Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis, Second Edition: A Regression-Based Approach*. Guilford Publications.
- Hui, C., Lee, C., & Wang, H. (2015). Organizational Inducements and Employee Citizenship Behavior: The Mediating Role of Perceived Insider Status and the Moderating Role of Collectivism. *Human Resource Management*, 54(3), 439–456. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21620>
- Kampa, C., & Siegert, P. (2010). *Alternative Risk Transfer: The Convergence of the Insurance and Capital Markets* (SSRN Scholarly Paper 1646523). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1646523>
- Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, Z., Gumusluoglu, L., & Scandura, T. A. (2020). How Do Different Faces of Paternalistic Leaders Facilitate or Impair Task and Innovative Performance? Opening the Black Box. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 27(2), 138–152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051819833380>
- Khan, M. M., Ahmed, S. S., & Khan, E. (2021). The Emerging Paradigm of Leadership for Future: The Use of Authentic Leadership to Lead Innovation in VUCA Environment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 759241. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.759241>
- Kousar, R., Khan, M. I., & Khan, Q. M. (2017). Willingness to Purchase Green products: Evidence from Educated Segment of Southern Punjab. *Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies*, 3(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.26710/jbsee.v3i1.84>
- Kragulj, F., & Rocha, R. G. (2026). Responsible Knowledge Management: Integrating Ethics, Sustainability, and Purpose into the Management of Knowledge. In J. Marques (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Spirituality* (pp. 1181–1186). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-76750-0_232
- Li, L., & Wang, S. (2021). Influence of Paternalistic Leadership Style on Innovation Performance Based on the Research Perspective of the Mediating Effect of the Constructive Deviance of Employees. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 719281. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.719281>

- Lowry, P. B., & Gaskin, J. (2014). Partial Least Squares (PLS) Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for Building and Testing Behavioral Causal Theory: When to Choose It and How to Use It. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 57(2), 123–146. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TPC.2014.2312452>
- Manapa Sampetoding, E. A., & Er, M. (2024). Digital Transformation of Smart Village: A Systematic Literature Review. *Procedia Computer Science*, 239, 1336–1343. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2024.06.304>
- Mo, J., & Ren, F. (2020). Discrete Element Analysis on the Correlation between Marketing Means and Economic Benefits of Island Ecotourism. *Journal of Coastal Research*, 103(sp1), 1038. <https://doi.org/10.2112/SI103-216.1>
- Nazir, S., Shafi, A., Asadullah, M. A., Qun, W., & Khadim, S. (2021). Linking paternalistic leadership to follower's innovative work behavior: The influence of leader–member exchange and employee voice. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 24(4), 1354–1378. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-01-2020-0005>
- Nguyen, P. D., Khoi, N. H., Le, A. N. H., & Ho, H. X. (2023). Benevolent leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors in a higher education context: A moderated mediation model. *Personnel Review*, 52(4), 1209–1232. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-04-2021-0234>
- Niu, C., Wang, A., & Cheng, B. (2009). Effectiveness of a moral and benevolent leader: Probing the interactions of the dimensions of paternalistic leadership. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 12(1), 32–39. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-839X.2008.01267.x>
- Pellegrini, E. K., & Scandura, T. A. (2008). Paternalistic Leadership: A Review and Agenda for Future Research. *Journal of Management*, 34(3), 566–593. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308316063>
- Social Exchange. (2017). In P. M. Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (1st ed., pp. 88–114). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203792643-4>
- SPSS ANALYSIS AMOS. (2024). Confirmatory Factor Analysis SPSS AMOS- (CFA) Explained. *Statistical Analysis Services For Academic Researches*. <https://spssanalysis.com/confirmatory-factor-analysis-in-spss-amos/>
- Tamontseva, M., & Akkermans, J. (2024). Increasing the chances of career success abroad: The role of cultural orientations in the relationship between international students' protean career orientation, career competencies and perceived employability. *Human Resource Development International*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2024.2366729>
- Thomas, A., Khatri, P., Dabas, V., & Coniglio, I. M. (2025). Capturing innovation orientation in knowledge workers: Development and validation of a measurement scale. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 29(10), 3166–3195. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-12-2023-1276>
- Tian, B., Fu, J., Li, C., & Wang, Z. (2024). Determinants of competitive advantage: The roles of innovation orientation, fuzzy front end, and internal competition. *R&D Management*, 54(1), 21–38. <https://doi.org/10.1111/radm.12633>
- Tian, Q., & Sanchez, J. I. (2017). Does paternalistic leadership promote innovative behavior? The interaction between authoritarianism and benevolence. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 47(5), 235–246. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12431>

- Tu, C.-K., & Luo, B. (2020). Paternalistic leadership and pro-social rule breaking: The moderating roles of psychological empowerment and leader-member exchange. *Human Systems Management*, 39(1), 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.3233/HSM-190531>
- Ul-Durar, S., Awan, U., Varma, A., Memon, S., & Mention, A.-L. (2023). Integrating knowledge management and orientation dynamics for organization transition from eco-innovation to circular economy. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 27(8), 2217–2248. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-05-2022-0424>
- Van Gils, S., Van Quaquebeke, N., Van Knippenberg, D., Van Dijke, M., & De Cremer, D. (2015). Ethical leadership and follower organizational deviance: The moderating role of follower moral attentiveness. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26(2), 190–203. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.08.005>
- Wang, A., & Cheng, B. (2010). When does benevolent leadership lead to creativity? The moderating role of creative role identity and job autonomy. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(1), 106–121. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.634>
- Wang, A.-C. (2019). Developmental or Exploitative? How Chinese Leaders Integrate Authoritarianism and Benevolence to Cultivate Subordinates. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 5(3), 291–313. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2018.0006>
- Wang, A.-C., Tsai, C.-Y., Dionne, S. D., Yammarino, F. J., Spain, S. M., Ling, H.-C., Huang, M.-P., Chou, L.-F., & Cheng, B.-S. (2018). Benevolence-dominant, authoritarianism-dominant, and classical paternalistic leadership: Testing their relationships with subordinate performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(6), 686–697. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.06.002>
- Wang, Y., Tang, C., Naumann, S. E., & Wang, Y. (2019). Paternalistic leadership and employee creativity: A mediated moderation model. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 25(1), 137–156. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2017.8>
- Woo, H., & Kim, J.-M. (2022). Impacts of Learning Orientation on the Modeling of Programming Using Feature Selection and XGBOOST: A Gender-Focused Analysis. *Applied Sciences*, 12(10), 4922. <https://doi.org/10.3390/app12104922>
- Xu, S., Kee, K. F., Li, W., Yamamoto, M., & Riggs, R. E. (2024). Examining the Diffusion of Innovations from a Dynamic, Differential-Effects Perspective: A Longitudinal Study on AI Adoption Among Employees. *Communication Research*, 51(7), 843–866. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00936502231191832>
- Zhang, H. (2022). Does combining different types of innovation always improve SME performance? An analysis of innovation complementarity. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 7(3), 100192. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2022.100192>
- Zheng, Y., Graham, L., Farh, J.-L., & Huang, X. (2021). The Impact of Authoritarian Leadership on Ethical Voice: A Moderated Mediation Model of Felt Uncertainty and Leader Benevolence. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 170(1), 133–146. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04261-1>
- Zhou, J., & George, J. M. (2001). When Job Dissatisfaction Leads To Creativity: Encouraging The Expression Of Voice. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(4), 682–696. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3069410>



Zhou, Y., Yang, C., Liu, Z., & Gong, L. (2024). Digital technology adoption and innovation performance: A moderated mediation model. *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 36(11), 3341–3356. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09537325.2023.2209203>