



## The Role of Paternalistic Leadership in Organizational Virtuousness

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**Abstract.** *The study aimed to investigate the influence of paternalistic leadership on organizational virtue within the Dean's educational group. To achieve this goal, the study utilized paternalistic leadership, including ethical, authoritarian, and benevolent leadership, and organisational virtuousness, including optimism, trust, empathy, integrity, and forgiveness. Using a questionnaire including (125) workers of Karbala Cement Company, a random sample of them was chosen for the study area. The correlation coefficient (Person) was utilized, and the significance of the correlation link between the two variables was determined using the (t) and (F) tests. The researcher found that paternalistic leadership significantly influences organizational virtuousness, as determined by calculating the percentage contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable using (R<sup>2</sup>). The study suggests that Karbala Cement Company prioritizes paternalistic leadership as a crucial aspect of its work and organizational virtue.*

**Keywords:** *Paternalistic Leadership, Organizational Virtuousness.*

### INTRODUCTION

The labour market has been significantly impacted by the challenges of globalization, market openness, and the information revolution, which have led to rapid changes in economic, social, political, technological, and organizational factors within organizations. Organizations endeavor to re-establish equilibrium in their enterprises, economies, and market positions. In this context, paternalistic leadership is identified as a beneficial aspect of business organizations, whether industrial or service-oriented, resulting in organizational virtuousness. The research investigates paternalistic leadership's function in organizational virtuousness through its conceptual and applied frameworks. A pioneering field was selected for the investigation of the research variables and hypotheses: the Karbala Cement Company.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **First: Paternalistic Leadership (PL)**

Paternalistic leadership, rooted in ancient Chinese philosophy, is characterized by moral and kind individuals prioritizing their followers' well-being, and embodying personal values, selflessness, and Virtuousness (Bedi, 2020). Paternalistic leadership is characterized by leader behaviors that demonstrate authority, control, genuine concern for followers' well-being, compassion, and personal care, demonstrating genuine concern for both work and non-work domains. It is predicated on the anticipated or typical parent-child relationship. Unlike other relationship-based leadership techniques, the personal care and engagement component focuses on the full person and their well-being, and it is meant to occur both within and outside the workplace (Hiller et al., 2019). Paternalistic leaders provide compassion and concern for their subordinates while also establishing a strong moral example, giving the impression of a severe parent who enforces rules and discipline (Lu et al., 2022). In view of the above, paternalism entails acting and behaving like a parent while also protecting others. Paternalism, a concept referring to parents who manage their children, has emerged as a significant concept in management and leadership literature (Çevik, 2023).

Consequently, paternalistic leadership is discernible by its local Chinese characteristics. This style is characterized by leaders demonstrating absolute authority, Paternalistic compassion, and moral role models within the organizational context (Lin & Chen, 2021). Zorlu (2019) defined it as a style that integrates discipline, authority, paternalistic benevolence, and moral virtue in a personal setting. The leader conducts himself with his subordinates like a father with his children, offering them care and direction. The subordinates accept this approach and, in return, demonstrate loyalty and commitment to their leaders.

**The importance of Paternalistic leadership can be summarized in the following points:**

- Paternalistic leaders provide their subordinates with the opportunity to correct their errors, regard them as family members outside of the workplace, and assist them in overcoming life's challenges (Hou et al., 2019)
- Paternalistic leadership fosters favorable employee attitudes by offering job resources like autonomy and purpose of work.
- Paternalistic leadership fosters a psychologically secure and favorable environment by allowing employees to exercise more control or autonomy in the workplace, thereby improving their work outputs (Lee et al., 2023).

- Recent research has demonstrated that paternalistic leaders positively impact the job-related outcomes of their followers, including job satisfaction, diminished intention to resign, creativity, self-efficacy, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational commitments (Islam et al., 2022).
- Paternalistic leadership promotes favorable employee attitudes and behaviors. Paternalistic leaders display virtue and prioritize the general good above self-interest (Dedahanov et al., 2019)

Researchers have differing perspectives on the dimensions of paternalistic leadership, which can be quantified. After conducting a thorough review of the existing literature, which includes (Cheng et al., 2004), (Hou et al., 2019), (Dedahanov et al., 2022), and (Yılmaz, 2023), it was determined that they concurred on the identification of three dimensions to assess paternalistic leadership:

**Benevolent leadership** may be defined as a leader's behavior expressing individual care for their workers' family well-being and needs in addition to work-related difficulties. Benevolent leaders show concern for issues surrounding employees' personal and family affairs, express concern for the well-being of individuals, provide support when individuals perform poorly, and support them when they face problems. Benevolent leaders provide opportunities for skill development and independence, which enhances employees' self-determination (Dedahanov et al., 2019).

**A. Ethical leadership:** Leadership behaviors demonstrating superior personal virtues, such as honesty, unselfishness, and the desire to fulfill obligations provide legitimacy, identity, and respect among subordinates. In addition, the ethical dimension of Paternalistic leadership includes refraining from abusing power, refusing to take advantage of subordinates, and demonstrating exemplary leadership behaviors. Paternalistic leaders are ethically characterized by their ability to fulfill their commitments and be equitable with their subordinates (Yılmaz, 2023).

**B. Autocratic leadership** entails exerting discipline, power, and control over adherents. They require workers to adhere to elevated job standards and admonish them for inadequate performance. Autocratic leaders are highly confident and strategically plan their actions to prevent subordinates from questioning their authority, thereby restricting their followers' autonomy and self-determination. They govern followers by impersonal processes and regulations, offer clear directives and expectations about compliance with instructions, and

prefer to centralize choices while limiting subordinates' ability to voice their ideas (Pizzolitto et al., 2023).

## **Second: Organizational Virtuousness (OV)**

Virtuousness necessitates that the organization responds to the external environment in a manner consistent with its values, as scholars emphasize. The organization's response is morally influenced by the societal roles, duties, and responsibilities imposed by society and societal and institutional values based on its implicit contract with society. Thus, virtue refers to the unity formed by combining various pieces. To the degree that the organization possesses virtuousness, it is a whole entity rather than a fragmented one since no aspect of the organizational self has full primacy over others. Virtuousness shows that an organization is mainly fractured and united because its members behave in a way that demonstrates their loyalty to the many values that make up the organization's identity (Fiorito & Ehrenhard, 2024).

Furthermore, virtue is the focal point of ethics and the primary concern of every ethical actor, whether a person or an organization. The primary virtue of virtuousness is commitment to the ideals that define oneself. Striving for virtuousness entails questioning, "What is our direction?" What are our uniting principles? How do they relate to the demands of ethics? As a result, organizational virtuousness requires more than consistency in words and actions, also known as behavioral virtuousness, but also the alignment of actions with self-proclaimed beliefs and identities, achieving moral legitimacy norms, and having morally justifiable responsibilities.

Accordingly, organizational virtuousness may be characterized as the continuance of the organization's particular ideals, competence, and mission. These ideals indicate anything that is seen by the organization as an aim in itself (Goodstein, 2015).

Organisational Virtuousness was defined by Boudrias et al. (2020) as the ethical values and behaviors that are perceived to be implemented within the organization. This entails acknowledging that positive employee behaviors, such as contributions from the ground up, are regarded fairly and respectfully. Organisational Virtuousness is a personal ethical excellence standard for all employees. Managers with high virtuousness must adhere to ethical principles and values related to other members, emphasizing the connection to a great purpose, as defined by Abun (2021).

**The importance of organizational virtuousness can be summarized in the following points:**

- Organizational virtuousness promotes bottom-up improvement-oriented behaviors, ultimately improving the organization's overall performance.
- Virtuousness is positively associated with employee creativity, citizenship behaviors, and opinion-expression behaviors, such as job improvement (Boudrias et al., 2020).
- Organisational Virtuousness promotes prosocial behavior toward perceived ethical acts (Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, 2016).
- Organizational virtuousness may promote resilience and long-term success.
- It fosters a positive atmosphere that boosts self-esteem, human capital, and well-being (Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020)

**Researchers have had different views on the dimensions of organizational virtuousness.** By reviewing previous literature, including (Cameron et al., 2004) (Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, 2016) (Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020) (Kumari & Kaur, 2023), it was found that they agreed to identify five dimensions to measure organizational virtuousness, as follows:

**A- Organizational Optimism:** Optimism refers to an individual's ability to focus on the positive aspects of work settings, regardless of the circumstances surrounding them. It was found that employees who score high in organizational optimism are consistent in their performance and enjoy responsibility with minimal supervision. An employee who experiences greater organizational optimism can report a higher degree of psychological ownership of the organization (Thakur et al., 2024).

**B- Organizational Trust:** It is the conviction of an individual that the other party will behave in a predictable, ethical, and fair manner. It can be said that the successful behavior of personal relationships depends largely on the feeling of trust because it is one of the basic feelings expected in relationships that develop or are developing between employees and the organization, which are expected to work together in a cooperative system. Employees need to trust themselves, their managers, and other colleagues to achieve organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, organizational trust is defined as employees' belief in the organization's honesty and the fact that the organization will make positive efforts to fulfill its promises (Akar, 2018).

**C- Organizational Compassion:** Organisational Compassion has been highlighted as a fundamental feature of excellence in work organizations. It occurs primarily in response to pain and involves feelings and actions intended to relieve suffering (Pestian et al., 2023). Organizational compassion occurs when members of an organization collectively observe, feel, and respond to the pain experienced by other members of the system. Compassion in

organizations emphasizes how the organizational environment affects an individual's ability and intention to show compassion, not only as individuals to care for others but also as members of the organization to help them (Nie et al., 2023).

**D- Organizational Integrity:** The Latin origin indicates that virtuousness is a cohesive entity that maintains honesty and is uncontaminated, and organizations that embody these qualities have the best opportunities to be more isolated and flexible than their counterparts. Organizations known for organizational virtuousness must share information that allows stakeholders to make informed decisions about their relationship with the organization (Ponomarenko, 2016). Virtuousness also refers to the state of excellence in human or organizational character. It helps organizations avoid misconduct, builds employee trust, and enhances their likelihood of seeking higher individual and societal benefits (Singh et al., 2018).

**E- Organizational Forgiveness:** The individual harmed by the behavior experiences a positive emotion of forgiveness towards the individual who caused the damage. This emotion results from the individual's recognition of the harm the negative behavior has caused the parties involved. All religious doctrines and convictions underscore the significance of forgiveness in the aftermath of adverse events. Forgiveness is a leadership quality associated with human values, including humility, optimism, love, and gratitude. Forgiveness does not arise in organizations as a collective tolerance behavior since it is a generic image that develops from individual events, making it impossible to regard it as social or institutional behavior (Akyol & Öztaban, 2022).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **First: The Problem of the Study**

The study sample's limited perception and knowledge of its variables illustrates the research challenge. Thus, recognizing paternalistic leadership from the perspective of the study sample, its prevalence in Karbala Cement Company, and the extent to which it contributes to organizational virtuousness may be used to embody the research issue. The following inquiries may help to clarify the research's field problem:

1. Does Karbala Cement Company adopt Paternalistic leadership to enhance the desired organizational virtuousness? Does paternalistic leadership have an impact on organizational virtuousness in Karbala Cement Company?
2. Is there a relationship between paternalistic leadership and organizational virtuousness in Karbala Cement Company?

3. Is there an impact of paternalistic leadership on organizational virtuousness in Karbala Cement Company?

### Second: The Importance of the Study

1. The study variables are new, necessitating both theoretical and practical analysis.
2. Selecting contemporary variables and implementing them in a location that we deem to be highly suitable.
3. Karbala Cement Company's investment in paternalistic leadership is necessary due to its extensive workforce, which necessitates focusing on paternalistic leadership to attain organizational virtuousness and excellence.
4. Identifying the benefits and shortcomings of paternalistic leadership and its impact on organizational Virtuousness in Karbala Cement Company.

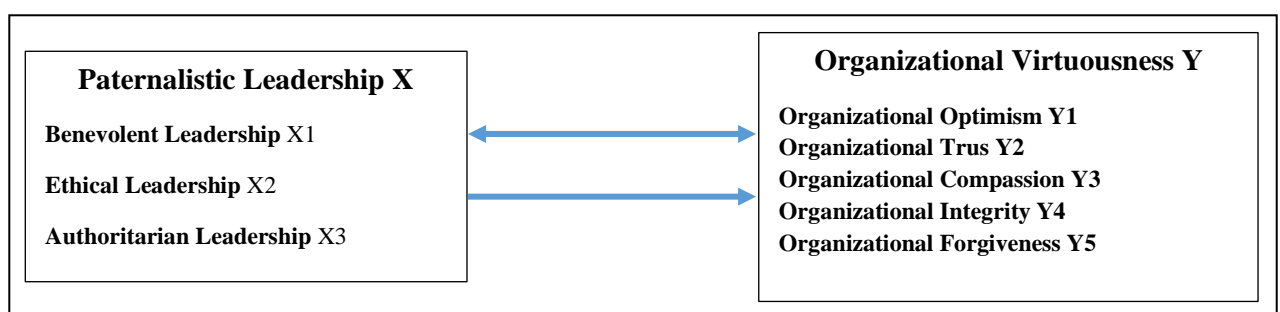
### Third: The Objectives of the Study

1. Determining the actuality of paternalistic leadership in Karbala Cement Company and attempting to quantify it to determine how it aligns with the current research.
2. Determining the actuality of Karbala Cement Company concerning its investment in paternalistic leadership to improve organizational virtuousness.
3. Evaluating Karbala Cement Company's organizational virtuousness under paternalistic leadership.

### Fourth: The Model of the Study

In order to elucidate the correlation between organizational virtuousness and paternalistic leadership, a hypothetical diagram has been developed. The research has been based on administrative literature related to organizational theory and organizational behavior. The following is depicted in this diagram:

1. **Independent Variable (X):** Paternalistic leadership is characterized by the qualities of benevolent leadership, ethical leadership, and authoritarian leadership. (Kumari & Kaur, 2023)
2. **Dependent Variable (Y):** Organisational optimism, organizational trust, organizational empathy, organizational integrity, and organizational forgiveness are the elements of organizational virtue that serve as its representation. (Yilmaz, 2023) and (Dedahanov et al., 2022) as seen in Figure (1) below:



## **Figure (1) Research model**

### **Fifth: The Hypotheses of the Study**

**H1:** There is a significant correlation between Paternalistic leadership in its dimensions and organizational virtuousness.

**H2:** There is a significant effect of Paternalistic leadership in its dimensions on organizational virtuousness.

### **Sixth: The Limitations of the Study**

- 1. Spatial boundaries:** Karbala Cement Company was selected as the research community due to its proximity and suitability for testing the research hypotheses and achieving its primary objectives. This choice underscores the significance of the research and the potential for generalization of its findings.
- 2. Time boundaries:** This encompasses the duration required by the researchers to compose the theoretical framework, disseminate the questionnaire, collect the data, and perform the requisite statistical analyses to derive conclusions and formulate pertinent recommendations for the institutions based on the sample responses during the period from August 15, 2024, to November 25, 2024.
- 3. Human boundaries:** The teachers at Karbala Cement Company, selected using the random sample technique to prevent the bias error allegedly influencing the statistical findings at both the sample and community levels, reflect this. There were 125 replies in all.

### **Seventh: The Methodology of the Study**

The theoretical aspect was approached using the descriptive inductive approach, while the practical aspect was approached using the applied analytical approach.

## **RESULTS**

### **1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation**

Table (1) illustrates the results of descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The mean and standard deviation values of paternalistic leadership and organizational virtue were  $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = .756$ , and  $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .630$ , respectively. According to the Pearson correlation



coefficient ( $r = .559$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ), paternalistic leadership and organizational virtue are positively and significantly correlated. These correlations were predicted by the study hypothesis.

**Table (1) Mean, Standard Deviations and Correlations Between Main Variables**

Variables	M	SD	1	2
Paternalistic Leadership	3.74	.756	1	.559**
Organizational Virtuosity	4.14	.630	.559**	1

Note N=125, \*\* $p < 0.01$

## 2. Reliability and Validity Measurement

The findings of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) are shown in Table (2). If parameter estimations are more than 40%, they are deemed reasonable and practical. When the standard errors are lower, the statistical parameters may be more trustworthy, and vice versa. The statistical significance of the parameter estimates is determined by the significance of the critical ratio (CR), which represents the statistical scale. The parameter estimates are significant if they exceed the critical ratio (1.96) at the (5%) level of significance; they are also significant if they exceed the critical ratio (2.56), at the (1%) level of significance (Holtzman & Sailesh, 2011). Items 8 from Benevolent Leadership and 6 from Authoritarian Leadership are the only ones that show statistical acceptance when the loading value is more than 0.40. In addition, the compliance structural equation modeling's indicators and base quality are higher than what is considered statistically acceptable. A reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha is also included in this table. The scores over 0.7 indicate that the research instrument utilized in this study has a high degree of internal consistency (Sharma, 2016). Consequently, it might be argued that this study's measuring paradigm satisfies validity and reliability requirements.

**Table (2) Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Cronbach's Alpha**

Variables (Dimensions)	Cronach's Alpha	Loading	Quality Indicators
Paternalistic Leadership	0.96		CIMN/DF=1.659
	0.93	.782	GFI=.901
		.782	CFI=.931
		.599	IFI=.932
		.810	RMSEA=.075

<b>Benevolent Leadership</b>		.756	
		.719	
		.847	
		Deleted	
		.639	
		.879	
		.729	
<b>Ethical Leadership</b>	<b>0.90</b>	.719	
		.582	
		.859	
		.868	
		.816	
		.815	
<b>Authoritarian Leadership</b>	<b>0.89</b>	.787	
		.850	
		.841	
		.907	
		.879	
		Deleted	
		.417	
		.503	
		.490	
<b>Organizational Virtuousness</b>	<b>0.92</b>	.729	<b>CIMN/DF=1.661</b> <b>GFI=.903</b> <b>CFI=.951</b> <b>IFI=.952</b> <b>RMSEA=.075</b>
<b>Organizational Optimism</b>	<b>0.84</b>	.801	
		.836	
<b>Organizational Trust</b>	<b>0.71</b>	.660	
		.588	
		.545	
<b>Organizational Compassion</b>	<b>0.71</b>	.659	
		.557	
		.554	
<b>Organizational Integrity</b>	<b>0.74</b>	.799	
		.478	
		.613	
<b>Organizational Forgiveness</b>	<b>0.71</b>	.576	
		.556	
		.728	

### 3. Tests of Hypotheses

The results confirm the second hypothesis, which states a positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and organizational virtuousness ( $\beta = 0.506, p < .001$ ). This means that the research hypothesis has been accepted. This study examined the relationship between paternalistic leadership styles and organizational virtuousness. The structural model and Table (3) show the direct impact, C.R., and P-value. The direct effect is indicated in Table (3), which is based on the Structural Modelling Equation.

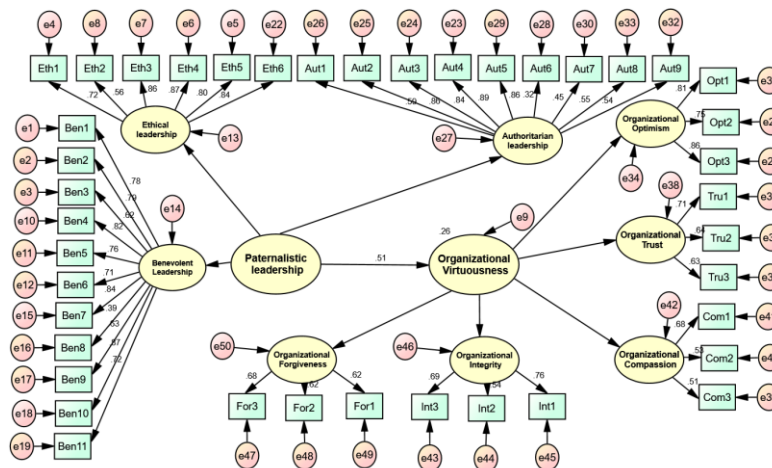


Figure (2). Structural Model

Table (3). Path Coefficients, S.E, C.R, and p-values

Effect	Hypotheses	B	S.E	C.R.	R <sup>2</sup>	P
Direct	Paternalistic leadership → Organizational Virtuousness	.506	.062	4.948	.26	***

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Paternalistic leadership is key to developing organizational virtuousness for companies seeking to be leaders in their area.
2. The significance of Paternalistic Leadership and organizational integrity in attaining high levels of integrity at the company level is widely acknowledged despite the divergent perspectives on these concepts.
3. The sample members affirmed their interest in paternalistic leadership and organizational integrity, which provides an applied dimension embodied in the potential for its implementation within the company and is an effective instrument for promoting integrity in the workplace.
4. The descriptive analysis showed the availability of the Paternalistic Leadership variable with its dimensions within the company, as it indicates to the researcher the ability that management possesses to transform the emotions and feelings of the individuals working

in it towards achieving the set goals and not allowing room for those feelings to generate negative psychological pressures that may hinder the work of the company under study.

5. The description analysis showed the availability of Organizational Virtuosity in its dimensions and at a high level in the company, and this is an achievement in the right direction, as this result expresses the type of policy used by its management in work and its course by providing individuals with the opportunity to contribute to its work.
6. The correlation analysis showed the existence of a link between Paternalistic Leadership and organizational integrity, which indicates that such feelings and emotions are embodied within a management that controls this well, and this will generate psychological reassurance in the work environment within the company, and thus provide the opportunity for initiative by employees in a way that serves its interests.
7. The analysis of the impact of Paternalistic Leadership on Organizational Virtuosity clarified, which indicates the existence of a good understanding and awareness by the research sample of the importance of this type of leadership practice to increase integrity and honesty in work, which is a healthy phenomenon in the company through the presence of the correct foundations. Hence, it creates appropriate orientations for it.

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