



## Shades of paternalistic leadership across cultures



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### ABSTRACT

Previous research has shown that Paternalistic Leadership (PL), an emerging non-western theory, is endorsed in high power distance and collectivistic societies. However, the ambiguous nature of PL calls for a better understanding of its endorsement across cultures. Based on GLOBE's project data from 59 societies, we examine PL acceptance around the world. Our findings suggest that PL is not universally nor homogeneously endorsed, but that different patterns of endorsement give rise to idiosyncratic shades of PL across cultures. Specifically, among the 22 societies that endorse some form of paternalism, our results allowed us to distinguish between Benevolent and Exploitative PL.

### 1. Introduction

Management and leadership scholars have frequently discussed whether leadership is culturally specific or whether it can be generalized across cultures (Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, Dastmalchian, & House, 2012; Lee, Scandura, & Sharif, 2014). Receiving growing interest from organizational researchers, paternalistic leadership (PL), defined as a leadership “style that combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence” (Farh & Cheng, 2000: 91), may reflect this emic vs. etic discussion (e.g., Aycan, Schyns, Sun, Felfe, & Saher, 2013; Chou, Sibley, Liu, Lin, & Cheng, 2015; Chan, 2014; Cheng et al., 2014; Jackson, 2016; Zhang, Huai, & Xie, 2015). Being a non-western leadership approach, paternalistic leadership has the potential to augment and enrich global knowledge of leadership behaviors (Li, Leung, Chen, & Luo, 2012), either by its relational and harmonious approach, known to humanize the workplace (Aycan, 2006), or by its authoritarian behaviors, which have been shown to effectively facilitate the achievement of organizational objectives in challenging and resource-strained environments (Huang, Xu, Chiu, Lam, & Farh, 2015).

While some researchers focus on understanding paternalistic leadership from the perspective of cultural insiders (e.g., Farh & Cheng, 2000), others seek convergences and divergences across cultures (e.g., Aycan et al., 2013). The dominant approach, however, has assumed that the endorsement of PL is culturally bounded (Aycan, 2006; Farh & Cheng, 2000) and that cultural context determines its meaning (Aycan, 2006). While PL is considered to be highly endorsed in traditional, hierarchical and collectivistic ‘eastern’ cultures such as Asia, Latin America or the Middle East, it is perceived negatively in

egalitarian, industrialized and individualistic ‘western’ cultures, where it is described as “benevolent dictatorship” that leads to “non-coercive exploitation” (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). This distinction arises from the different perceptions of the ‘duality of control and care’, seen by western scholars as autonomy-constraining and suspicious on its benevolent intent (Aycan, 2006; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008).

Notwithstanding, recent empirical studies comparing paternalistic leadership in eastern and western societies have not always supported this distinction (e.g., Pellegrini, Scandura, & Jayaraman, 2010). The overall mixed support of PL effectiveness across cultures is likely to be due to the limited number of comparative studies across multiple and diverse societies, the divergences on its operationalization, but more importantly because empirical studies have not been taking into account the different forms that PL can assume (Aycan, 2006; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). While some studies have relied on an aggregated measure of PL (e.g., Pellegrini et al., 2010), others have examined PL dimensions independently, analyzing the effects of each one on a series of outcomes (e.g., Chen & Kao, 2009; Chen et al., 2014; Chen, Eberly, Chiang, Farh, & Cheng, 2014).

However, what defines paternalism is the combination of its key dimensions, meaning that control and care must coexist (e.g., high benevolence without authority cannot be considered paternalism). In light of this coexistence, Aycan (2006) distinguishes Benevolent from Exploitative Paternalism based on leaders' behaviors and their underlying intent. Benevolent leaders show generosity and genuine care towards subordinates, who, in turn, reciprocate with loyalty and respect. Conversely, exploitative leaders use their authority to control decision-making with a focus on organizational outcomes, using rewards and

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punishments to make subordinates comply and obey. Exploring these distinct shades of PL across societies may help to reconcile the inconsistent findings of previous studies and to understand PL acceptance by different cultures.

Given this context of paternalistic leadership research and cultural contingencies, we raise the following questions: is paternalistic leadership culturally bounded, or can it be generalized across cultures? Do distinct societies endorse the dimensions of paternalistic leadership differently? Do these differences give rise to distinctive shades of paternalistic leadership? Can these distinctive shades be explained by societal cultural values? To address the above questions and to expand the understanding of PL, we examine the generalizability of paternalistic leadership dimensions using data from the GLOBE project and compare these dimensions across societies. GLOBE project should be of particular interest, as it includes data from societies in nearly all parts of the world (Dorfman et al., 2012).

Overall, this study contributes to the PL literature in three major ways. First, we improve the understanding of the endorsement of PL dimensions in a broad range of contrasting societies. Second, by examining similarities and differences among societies and mapping the distribution and prevalence of the combination of PL dimensions, we provide evidence of the levels of endorsement and, ultimately, of paternalistic leadership “shades” around the world. Third, we shed light on the societal values that may be responsible for these different shades of PL. From a practical perspective, our study may help practitioners to prepare for expatriate assignments by familiarizing them with culturally specific leadership schemas and may also help policy makers by shedding light on ideal paternalistic practices that could be adopted by nations worldwide.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Paternalistic leadership construct

In the context of leadership, paternalism is usually referred as a leadership style that combines fatherly benevolence and authoritarianism (Farh & Cheng, 2000). Paternalistic leaders show individualized consideration and care while at the same time they control and centralize decision-making (Martinez, 2003). Sinha (1990) suggests that paternalistic leaders meet the ‘twin requirements’ of compliance and harmony, such that the coexistence of benevolence and authority stems from the father figure, who is nurturing, caring, and dependable, as well as authoritative, demanding and disciplinarian. Followers, in return, are expected to be loyal and deferent to their leaders in exchange for concern and resources.

In an attempt to delineate the domain of paternalistic leadership, Farh, Cheng, and colleagues (Cheng, Chou, & Farh, 2000; Cheng, Chou, Wu, Huang, & Farh, 2004; Farh & Cheng, 2000; Farh, Cheng, Chou, & Chu, 2006) and Aycan (2006) have developed two seminal frameworks of PL that share several fundamental similarities with a few conceptual distinctions. Farh and Cheng (2000) defined paternalistic leadership as a style that combined strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence and moral integrity. Their operationalization of PL combines three distinct dimensions: authoritarianism, benevolence, and morality. Each dimension is measured as an independent leadership style, each linked to a specific response by subordinates (Cheng et al., 2000, 2004), and it is widely used among PL researchers. Differently, based on role theories of leadership, Aycan (2006) defined PL as a hierarchical superior-subordinate relationship, where leaders provide care, protection and guidance to subordinates in both work and non-work domains, who in turn are expected to be loyal and deferent to the leader. Aycan (2006) argued that, what differentiates paternalistic leadership from other leadership constructs is the creation of a familiar environment through the involvement in both work and non-work lives of subordinates which leads to an expectation of loyalty in return (Aycan et al., 2013).

Although Aycan’s (2006) and Farh and Cheng’s (2000) models do not completely converge, they help us to identify the core characteristics of paternalistic leadership. Both models focus on the role of a leader’s authority in the hierarchical relationship between leader and followers. Paternalistic leaders use their authority to control and centralize decision-making, demanding obedience from subordinates (Farh & Cheng, 2000). Yet, Farh and Cheng (2000) stress that paternalistic leaders do not abuse authority for personal gain and are exemplar in his or her personal and work conduct, being able to assume a counseling role for their followers, both professionally and personally. Similarly, Aycan (2006) highlights that paternalism is not equal to authoritarianism, suggesting that while authoritarian leaders primarily rely on control and exploitation as a way to make subordinates dependent and compliant, paternalistic leaders use their control coupled with care and nurturance, getting loyalty and deference in return.

This nurturing facet present in both models highlights benevolence as a key component of paternalistic leadership, thus establishing a duality between control and care. In other words, at the same time that paternalistic leaders use their status, hierarchy and power to influence followers, they also are involved with, care for, and protect them. Farh and Cheng (2000) and Aycan (2006) both argue that paternalistic leaders demonstrate individualized, holistic concern for their subordinates’ professional, personal and familial well-being, emphasizing an understanding of their emotions and needs. They help followers by providing multiple resources (attention, time, money, etc.), enabling the establishment of a proximal relationship and interpersonal acceptance. The frameworks also stress that subordinates should feel grateful and obligated to reciprocate their leader’s individualized consideration (Aycan, 2006; Farh et al., 2006).

Despite the existence of a common essence grounded in the centrality of authority and benevolence, these frameworks adopt different assumptions regarding the nature of leadership. While Cheng and colleagues (Cheng et al., 2000; Farh & Cheng, 2000) propose a ‘value-laden’ framework, portraying PL in positive terms, Aycan’s (2006) framework portrays it in neutral terms (Aycan, 2015). From one hand, the conceptualization of Cheng et al. (2000) assume that the leader is benevolent and moral, reflecting a limited view of PL that is context-specific (rooted in Confucianism, familialism, patriarchalism). Differently, Aycan (2006) focus on the role expectations in the relationship between superior and subordinate, conceptualizing paternalistic leadership more neutrally. A neutral definition captures the concept of paternalism without forcing the conclusion that any instance of paternalism is morally wrong or right (Bullock, 2015). As empirical research has found PL to be associated with negative behaviors at work (e.g., Soyulu, 2011), remaining neutral on the moral acceptability of paternalism may allow a better understanding of its complexity and mixed effects on organizational outcomes.

Building on this value-neutral definition, Aycan (2006) further clarified the ‘duality between control and care’ inherent in paternalism, distinguishing two types of PL: Benevolent and Exploitative Paternalism. Aycan (2006) suggests that the difference between these two types of PL lies on the underlying motifs behind leaders’ care and subordinates’ loyalty. In other words, leaders show care as a primary behavior and exercise the use of control according to their intent, which can be sincere or self-serving. In Benevolent Paternalism, the leader genuinely cares about subordinates’ general well-being, exercising the use of control to maintain order and harmonious relationships (Aycan, 2006). This “parental tenderness” (Hayek, Novicevic, Humphreys, & Jones, 2010) is coupled with moderate authority and command to guarantee social control (e.g., Humphreys, Randolph-Seng, Haden, & Novicevic, 2015).

Conversely, in Exploitative Paternalism, leader’s care is a mean to achieve organizational goals. They offer protection and care so they can demand more from workers (Brumley, 2014). The care that exploitative leaders exhibit is egoistic in nature and is provided solely to elicit employees’ compliance, who conform because of the fear of being

punished, or because of the economic advantages they can receive (Aycan, 2006; Hayek et al., 2010). In this sense, leader's nurturing behavior is primarily self-serving, used to guarantee that subordinates are compliant and deferent towards the leader.

Regardless the differences between the two types of paternalistic leadership, PL is generally perceived as appropriate in collectivistic and high power distance socio-cultural contexts (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). However, the differences in levels of cultural values in a given society may pave the way for a distinct endorsement of benevolent or exploitative paternalistic leadership. That is, societies who are collectivistic, but not highly hierarchical might accept paternalistic leadership differently from societies that are hierarchical, but not highly collectivistic. Thus, we argue that paternalistic leaders' conflicting and coexistent roles, triggered by their intentional stance, need to be cross-culturally analyzed, such that PL acceptance may be contingent to societies' unique combination of cultural values.

## 2.2. Cross-cultural paternalistic leadership studies

Leadership in general, and paternalistic leadership in particular, cannot be examined without considering its cultural context (Aycan, 2008). Specifically, disentangling the "cultural specificity" of this paradoxical and complex construct cannot be achieved without understanding its cultural influences. As PL embraces conflicting elements (authority coupled with individualized care) that operate via distinct psychological mechanisms (Farh, Liang, Chou, & Cheng, 2008), different cultures may endorse paternalistic leadership in different ways. Based on that, we propose that cross-cultural comparisons of types of PL are needed to deepen our understanding of the construct and its generalizability across cultures.

Traditionally, paternalistic leadership is assumed to be prevalent in hierarchical and collectivistic societies (Aycan et al., 2013; Dorfman et al., 2012; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Previous empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of paternalistic leadership in high power distance and collectivist cultures, such as in China, Turkey, Mexico, Indonesia and Malaysia, reinforcing the idea that paternalistic leadership is culturally bounded (e.g., Martinez, 2003; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006).

In high power distance societies, human inequality and power differentials are not questioned or challenged, and subordinates accept and legitimate leaders' authority and intervention (e.g., VanDeVeer, 2014). Thus, in high power distance societies, subordinates approve and do not resent paternalistic leaders superiority. On the other hand, in low power distance societies, subordinates tend to view themselves as equals of their leaders, taking initiatives to make changes and exercising autonomy. As such, subordinates do not easily accept authority, questioning inequality and power differences inherent of paternalism.

Similarly, in collectivistic societies, where interdependence, conformity, and responsibility for others are highly valued, paternalistic leadership is viewed positively. Leaders' protection and support for subordinates, with the creation of a proximate and familiar environment (Aycan, 2006), is consistent with the interdependence in social relationships of highly collectivistic societies. The establishment of close and individualized relationships, associated with the involvement in both work and private lives of subordinates, are behaviors encouraged in collectivistic societies, where professional/personal dichotomy is less clear (Aycan, 2006). Differently, in individualistic societies that value autonomy, self-reliance, and self-determination, paternalism is negatively perceived. Leaders' deep involvement with subordinates may be interpreted as invasion or violation of privacy (Aycan, 2006). Research conducted in high power distance and collectivistic societies has provided evidence that, in these cultural contexts, paternalistic leadership behaviors positively influence organizational commitment (Erben & Güneşer, 2008), subordinates' voice (Zhang et al., 2015), and performance (Chen et al., 2014).

However, recent studies have also found positive effects of paternalistic leadership on followers' outcomes, such as commitment and job satisfaction, in low power distance and individualistic societies, suggesting that PL may be more universally accepted than initially thought (e.g., Pellegrini et al., 2010). Moreover, studies that focused on leadership styles that overlap with some of the dimensions of paternalistic leadership have also found positive effects on several outcomes, in both eastern and western societies. For example, autocratic, directive, nurturant and participative leadership – styles that share many similarities with PL dimensions – have been related to followers' job satisfaction, performance and perceptions of leadership effectiveness (e.g., De Hoogh, Greer, & Den Hartog, 2015; Tiedens, Unzueta, & Young, 2007).

Some of these unexpected findings may be due to the way PL was operationalized. While some studies have focused on the overall concept of paternalistic leadership, either in eastern or western societies (e.g., Göncü, Aycan, & Johnson, 2014), others have looked at single dimensions of paternalistic leadership across cultures (e.g., Wang & Cheng, 2010). Very few, however, have delved into the combined effects of the main components of the paternalistic leadership concept, their interactions or, specifically, PL types. For example, Chan, Huang, Snape, and Lam (2013) proposed that authoritarianism and benevolence had a joint effect on followers' performance, such that the positive effects of benevolence mitigated the negative effects of authoritarianism, resulting in a positive overall effect on performance. Farh et al. (2008), on the other hand, showed that different arrangements of low and high authoritarianism, benevolence and morality yield different effects on followers. Yet, no previous study has empirically investigated types of PL from a cross-cultural perspective.

As such, relying on Aycan's (2006) conceptualization of Exploitative and Benevolent paternalism, we investigate the effect of some societal cultural values on the endorsement of these two types of paternalistic leadership based on a set of hypotheses presented below.

## 2.3. Hypotheses

Our hypotheses are not meant to be exhaustive and were formulated based on the understanding of how Exploitative and Benevolent Paternalism would relate to different cultural values. Specifically, we consider the relationship between the endorsement of types of PL and cultural values of collectivism, power distance, assertiveness and humane orientation.

### 2.3.1. Collectivism

The cultural value of collectivism addresses the concern for individuals' surrounding collectives, implying that the well-being of group members prevails over self-interested goals (Earley, 1993). Collectivism strongly emphasizes human integration, fostering the maintenance of affective bonds between group members in a trustworthy environment. The GLOBE study differentiates in-group collectivism from institutional collectivism. The first refers to "the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families" (House et al., 1999, p. 192), while the latter is defined as "the degree to which organizational and societal institutional norms and practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action" (House et al., 1999, p. 192).

Although paternalistic leadership is known to be endorsed in collectivistic societies, the focus on sincere welfare and improvement of employees' lives of benevolent paternalism should be more strongly related to the "we" consciousness of collectivism, which implies that the interest and well-being of group members prevail over individuals' goals, triggering collaboration and social integration to benefit social entities (House et al., 2004; Singh, 1990). Differently, the protection of exploitative paternalistic leaders is more self-centered, being used as means to the accomplishment of organizational goals, which is less aligned with collectivistic values.

Moreover, collectivistic societies also strive for maintaining social harmony and personalized relationships, emphasizing a more affective and interdependent relation among individuals and the focus on the group, orientations that are more strongly related to the genuine protection and order keeping control of benevolent paternalistic leaders (Aycaan, 2006). Conversely, these collectivistic values should be less related to exploitative leader's control and egoistic nature of care, mainly used to maintain compliance in a more instrumental relationship with subordinates. Thus, we suggest:

**Hypothesis 1.** *Societies that endorse benevolent paternalism are more collectivistic than those that endorse exploitative paternalism.*

### 2.3.2. Power distance

Power distance refers to “the degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be unequally shared” (House et al., 1999, p.192). The unequal power distribution indicates that individuals are more status conscious, procedural, and value hierarchical structures, power and prestige (Daniels & Greguras, 2014). While authorities demand respect and deference, power inequalities make subordinates generally behave in a submissive, deferent and obedient way (Jaw, Ling, Wang, & Chang, 2007).

As such, since high power distance cultures share norms for differential prestige, power, and wealth (Singh, 1990), the more centralized use of authority of exploitative paternalistic leaders should be more naturally accepted and legitimized by subordinates. Moreover, benevolent paternalism emphasis on caring and nurturing behavior with a harmony focused control should also seem to be less congruent with a society with a differentiated power structure. Based on these arguments, we expect the cultural value of power distance to be more strongly associated with exploitative than with benevolent paternalism.

**Hypothesis 2.** *Societies that endorse exploitative paternalism have higher power distance than those that endorse benevolent paternalism.*

### 2.3.3. Assertiveness

The cultural value of assertiveness may not be traditionally related to the general concept of paternalistic leadership, but it may help to understand its nuanced acceptance by different cultures. Assertiveness is defined as “the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships” (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004, p. 30). It reflects the degree to which “tough” values prevail over “tender” values, such as nurturance, emphasizing confidence, conformity, and addressing “relations to authority” (Peabody, 1985). High assertive societies are characterized as having people who try to control the environment, who are aggressive, materialistic, competitive, and oriented toward achievement of goals at the expense of others (Pearce & Wassenaar, 2014).

Based on that, we argue that assertive and authoritarian behaviors oriented towards performance are more congruent with exploitative paternalism, where control prevails over nurturance. Exploitative paternalism demands for unquestioned obedience and the use of authoritarian and strict discipline in work assignments (Wu & Xu, 2012) should be more strongly related with the aggressive behaviors endorsed by highly assertive cultures. Conversely, benevolent paternalism focus on “tender” practices and behaviors should not be so easily accepted in highly assertive cultures. Based on these arguments, we expect that:

**Hypothesis 3.** *Societies that endorse exploitative paternalism are more assertive than those that endorse benevolent paternalism.*

### 2.3.4. Humane orientation

Humane orientation reflects positive and safe work relations with supervisors, defined as “the degree to which societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring

and kind to others” (House et al., 1999, p.192). Societies high on humane orientation place importance on others (i.e., family, friends, community), giving priority to values of benevolence, love and generosity, and believing that individuals are mainly motivated by the need of belonging and affiliation. As such, it is expected that the fatherly motives in paternalistic leadership would be fostered by humane orientation and good relationships (e.g. Fikret-Pasa, 2000; Kabasakal & Bodur, 2004).

However, we expect differences in levels of humane orientation between societies that endorse the two types of paternalistic leadership. Showing concern for others, friendliness, generosity, sensitivity, and tolerance, are behaviors closely aligned with benevolent paternalism, since it embodies a compassionate, sensitive and supportive leadership approach. Conversely, exploitative paternalism self-centered motivations and use of restrictive control seem to be inconsistent with humane orientation values. Thus, we argue that:

**Hypothesis 4.** *Societies that endorse benevolent paternalism are more humane oriented than those that endorse exploitative paternalism.*

To examine the mechanisms linking cultural values and the endorsement of how each of these types of PL, we explore the heterogeneity of PL behaviors across cultures using data from the GLOBE project, which includes a broad range of different societies.

## 3. Method

### 3.1. Construct development

In the present study, we used data from the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project (House et al., 1999, 2004), a research program on leadership and culture across 62 societies. As part of GLOBE's data collection efforts, all participants completed a survey instrument designed to measure perceptions of the qualities and attributes that contribute to outstanding leadership. Then, one half of the participants completed scales designed to assess organizational culture (Form A) while the other half completed scales that examined societal culture (Form B). The dataset used in the present study examined responses pertaining to both forms.

Regarding our study's methodological procedures, following Mittal and Dorfman (2012) and Resick, Hanges, Dickson, and Mitchelson (2006), as a first step in defining paternalistic leadership attributes, we asked leadership experts to identify which of the leadership attributes and behavioral descriptors included in the GLOBE questionnaires were associated with paternalistic leadership. GLOBE's leadership scales were originally developed to assess 21 dimensions of leadership that were derived from 112 characteristics or behavioral descriptors (Hangs & Dickson, 2004). Participants were asked to rate each descriptor on a 7-point response scale, ranging from 1 for ‘This behavior or characteristic greatly inhibits a person from being an outstanding leader’ to 7 for ‘This behavior or characteristic contributes greatly to a person being an outstanding leader’. Because the GLOBE project did not originally develop scales to measure any specific style of leadership, we used the 112 characteristic and behavioral descriptor items to derive paternalistic leadership dimensions.

We invited researchers who had recently published in “The Leadership Quarterly” (2014–2015). Nine experts graciously agreed to participate, five of them reported having conducted research on PL and seven having conducted cross-cultural research in leadership. After explaining our research objectives and presenting a brief summary of the paternalistic leadership concept, we asked experts to rate the 112 items from GLOBE according to the extent to which they believed each item contributed to define a paternalistic leader.

A total of 25 items were identified as capturing the construct of paternalistic leadership. We considered those items that received a rating of at least 3 on a 7-point scale by each expert and that had a mean above 5. Then, using Bernoulli randomization, we split the

**Table 1**  
Factor structure of items related to paternalistic leadership.

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
V2_4 – Bossy	0.51		
V2_36 – Autocratic	0.62		
V4_33 – Domineering	0.58		
V4_48 – Ruler	0.62		
V2_39 – Fraternal		0.60	
V2_40 – Generous		0.77	
V2_51 – Compassionate		0.54	
V2_15 – Sincere			0.66
V2_16 – Trustworthy			0.71
V2_20 – Just			0.64
V4_32 – Honest			0.61

Method: Confirmatory factor analysis with robust maximum likelihood estimation (RMLE).

database in two datasets. With one of the datasets, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis across all countries using the 25 selected items. We excluded items with factor loadings below 0.5 or with factor loadings above 0.4 in two or more factors. A three-factor solution that included 11 of the 25 items was retained. Then, using the other dataset, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis using MPlus (7.0) to test the fit of a model in which each of the 11 items was set to load only on its respective factor. We tested the hypothesized model using the robust maximum likelihood estimation (RMLE) method (Yang-Wallentin, Jöreskog, & Luo, 2010).

The results of the CFA suggested that a model that included the three constructs and allowed for covariances among them fit the data well ( $\chi^2(41) = 1,266.3$ , CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.047). Moreover, a single factor model had a significantly worse fit ( $\chi^2(44) = 10,245.6$ , CFI = 0.65, TLI = 0.57, RMSEA = 0.13), providing evidence to support the three-factor solution for the underlying structure of PL. CFA factor loadings were all acceptable, ranging between 0.51 and 0.77, and the composite reliabilities were also acceptable (0.67, 0.67 and 0.75). Table 1 presents the factor structure and respective loadings.

The three factors that emerged from our data were closely aligned with key components of PL frameworks described in the literature. Table 2 presents the three factors and their respective items. We labeled the first factor Authority (four items), as it mirrors the notions of control, centralization, hierarchy and discipline imposed by the leader. The second factor was labeled Benevolence (three items) because it depicts the compassionate, sensitive and fraternal nature of the leader, which allows the leader to establish close and individualized relationships with followers. The third factor was labeled Integrity (four items) as it

**Table 2**  
Paternalistic leadership dimensions emerged in the present study<sup>a</sup>.

Dimensions	Items	Description
Authority	● Autocratic	Makes decisions in dictatorial way
	● Bossy	Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way
	● Domineering	Inclined to dominate others
	● Ruler	Is in charge and does not tolerate disagreement or questioning; gives orders
Benevolence	● Compassionate	Has empathy for others; inclined to be helpful or show mercy
	● Fraternal	Tends to be a good friend of subordinates
	● Generous	Willing to give time, money, resources, and help to others
Integrity	● Just	Acts according to what is right or fair
	● Honest	Speaks and acts truthfully
	● Sincere	Means what he/she says; earnest
	● Trustworthy	Deserves trust, can be believed and relied upon to keep his/her word

<sup>a</sup> Columns identify the individual items (GLOBE's traits) that compose each dimension.

**Table 3**  
Paternalistic leadership dimensions, descriptive statistics, reliabilities and correlations.

Dimensions	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Authority	2.70	1.17	(0.67)		
2. Benevolence	4.66	1.14	−0.106**	(0.67)	
3. Integrity	6.14	0.89	−0.318**	0.330**	(0.75)

N = 13,646. Composites reliabilities are shown in main diagonal.

\*\* p < 0.01 (2-tailed).

reflects leaders' trustworthiness, honesty and sincerity towards followers.

The descriptive statistics and correlations for the paternalistic leadership dimensions are shown in Table 3. The correlations ranged from −0.32 to 0.33. As expected, authority is negatively related with both benevolence and integrity, while these two were positively correlated. The negative correlation between authority and benevolence is consistent with other studies (e.g., Chen et al., 2014; Erben & Güneşer, 2008), reflecting the paradoxical duality between control and care present in paternalistic leadership.

### 3.2. Measurement invariance

Once the overall factor structure was confirmed, we tested its invariance across GLOBE's clusters of societies in order to allow us to make group comparisons. However, before proceeding we evaluated the appropriateness of the measurement model in each of the 10 cultural clusters. The results showed acceptable fit statistics for all 10 cultural clusters (RMSEA ranging from 0.04 to 0.08, CFI from 0.88 to 0.97 and TLI from 0.84 to 0.96). Table 4 presents the results. Then, we tested measurement invariance of paternalistic leadership among clusters using multi-group CFA (e.g., Cheng et al., 2014; Gunkel, Schlaegel, & Taras, 2016; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). We first compared an unrestricted model – with all parameters freely estimated for each construct in each group (configural model) – to a model with equal loadings among groups (metric invariance model). Finally, a constraint on the equality of intercepts was added (scalar invariance model).

Although the chi-square tests for nested model comparisons were significant, the large sample size causes these tests to be oversensitive (Bollen, 1989). Consequently, we followed Chen's (2007) suggestion regarding sample sizes larger than 300, which states that the measurement model can be considered invariant among groups unless there is a decrease higher than −0.01 in CFI and an increase higher than 0.015 in RMSEA or a change higher than 0.03 in SRMR (for loading invariance) and 0.01 (for intercept invariance) in the nested model comparisons. Accordingly, as shown in Table 5, metric invariance was supported (metric compared to configural invariance model:  $\Delta$  RMSEA = 0.002,  $\Delta$  CFI = −0.017), while full scalar invariance was not supported (scalar compared to metric invariance model:  $\Delta$  RMSEA = 0.040,  $\Delta$  CFI = −0.171). This result was not surprising, as it is quite unrealistic to expect full scalar invariance across large number

**Table 4**  
Fit indexes of measurement models per cluster.

Cluster	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	df	$\chi^2$
1. Anglo	0.075	0.886	0.847	41	434
2. Confucian Asian	0.042	0.968	0.958	41	140.3
3. Eastern European	0.052	0.955	0.94	41	226.5
4. Germanic European	0.067	0.935	0.913	41	261.9
5. Latin American	0.053	0.937	0.916	41	226.9
6. Latin European	0.062	0.942	0.922	41	300.7
7. The Middle Eastern	0.051	0.954	0.938	41	116.9
8. Nordic European	0.08	0.882	0.842	41	398.5
9. Southeast Asian	0.072	0.923	0.896	41	299.7
10. Sub-Saharan African	0.057	0.953	0.937	41	128.4

**Table 5**  
Fit indexes for measurement invariance models.

Model	Chi-square	df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
Configural	2658.2	410	0.063	0.931	0.907
Metric (equal loadings)	3275.9	482	0.065	0.914	0.902
Scalar (equal intercepts)	8900.5	554	0.105	0.743	0.745

of groups (e.g., Muthén & Asparouhov, 2013; Davidov, Meuleman, Cieciuch, Schmidt, & Billiet, 2014), which is “an unachievable ideal that can only in practice be approximated” (Marsh et al., 2017, p. 1). Similarly to other recent paternalistic leadership (Cheng et al., 2014) and cross-cultural studies (Gunkel et al., 2016), we obtained full invariance in the factor loadings but not in the intercepts.

The standard approach in this case would be to search for partial invariance by eliminating constraints on some intercepts based on modification indices (Byrne, Shavelson, & Muthén, 1989). For large number of groups, however, this strategy may imply a high number of non-invariant intercepts – for example, Cheng et al. (2014) identify 17 non-invariant intercepts out of 45. Moreover, this procedure may lead to results due to chance (Byrne et al., 1989) as well as non-optimal solutions (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014).

Instead, we adopt a novel strategy – approximate invariance using the alignment method (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014) – which is particularly adequate for large number of groups (Marsh et al., 2017) such as the 10 cultural clusters we study in this paper. In this method, the traditional process of relaxing constraints to obtain partial invariance is automatized in order to discover the optimal invariance pattern. This procedure is similar to rotation in exploratory factor analysis (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014). More than simply considering each parameter as invariant or non-invariant, the approximate invariance approach allows to estimate the proportion of variance in intercepts and loadings related to differences between group means relative to the variance explained by differences in the measurement parameters across groups. Thus, in the final solution it is possible to analyze the number of invariants parameters as well as their degree of invariance. The overall fit is the same observed in the configural model (Marsh et al., 2017).

The alignment approach to approximate invariance has been shown to recover group factor means with less bias than the traditional partial invariance models (Marsh et al., 2017). In spite of being a freshly developed tool, it has been recently used in cross-national studies with Bayesian (Zercher, Schmidt, Cieciuch, & Davidov, 2015), as well as maximum likelihood estimators (Duell et al., 2016) with large number of groups.

Once the optimal approximate invariance solution is found, factor scores are calculated and may be used for subsequent analyses across groups. Differently from invariant measurement models in which summated scales may represent the constructs of interest, in the alignment model, the use of the factor score is especially relevant as it takes into account the differences in measurement models across groups (Van De Schoot et al., 2013) unlike summated scales (Steinmetz, 2013). Thus, all subsequent analyses in this paper were conducted using these factor scores. Notwithstanding, as a robustness check we also evaluate the results using summated scales.

The results of the alignment method estimated by maximum likelihood indicated that 70 out of 110 intercepts (10 clusters and 11 indicators) and 99 out of 110 loadings were invariant among the groups. Among the 30 construct-cluster groups (10 clusters and 3 PL dimensions), we obtained 26 with at least 2 invariant indicators, and 3 with one invariant indicator. Furthermore, most of the variance of items across the groups was due to differences in factor means and factor variances rather than to non-invariance in the intercepts (50% to 85% for authority items, 29% to 93% for benevolence items and 25% to 93%

for integrity items), which indicates a considerable level of invariance and reinforces the comparability of the factor scores across clusters.

### 3.3. Data aggregation and unit of analysis

Before proceeding with the comparison of PL dimensions scores at the cluster level, we examined the adequacy of aggregating the scores at this level of analysis. Results showed significant differences among clusters regarding the endorsement of the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership: Authority ( $F_{(9,49)} = 7.20, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.57$ ), Benevolence ( $F_{(9,49)} = 3.60, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.40$ ) and Integrity ( $F_{(9,49)} = 2.50, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.31$ ). Estimated Eta-squared ( $\eta^2$ ) effect size statistics, which represents the proportion of variance in the factor explained by categorization in one of the cultural clusters, indicated that cultural clusters had considerable influence on the significance of the paternalistic scores. For example, approximately 57% of the variability in scores across societies regarding the endorsement of Authority was attributable to the cluster in which a particular society was categorized. In summary, the derived PL dimensions may be aggregated at the cluster level and used to compare clusters and to examine the endorsement of the shades of PL across societal cultures as the measurement models were comparable and clusters explained a relevant proportion of the PL dimensions variance, making the comparisons meaningful.

Regarding the unit of analysis of our study, we started by focusing on the cultural cluster level similarly to other cross-cultural studies using the GLOBE database (e.g., Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Resick et al., 2006). However, to take into count intra-cluster variability, we advanced to compare societies, which led to the identification of new clusters specifically tailored to identify PL variations across cultures. Then, we compared cultural values across these new clusters in order to test the proposed hypotheses. Similarly to the procedures at the cluster level, we employed the alignment method at the country level to analyze the comparability of measurement models across societies – out of 1298 parameters (59 societies, 11 indicators and 2 parameters per indicator), 1128 were found to be invariant.

For the analyses we used a database that comprised 59 societies and 10 cultural clusters, counting 13,646 individual observations after eliminating cases with more than 50% of missing data in the variables of interest. We list the societies included in our study in Table 6.

**Table 6**  
Societies included in this study grouped by Culture Cluster Membership<sup>a</sup>.

Culture Cluster	Societies (n)	n
Anglo	Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand, United States, White South Africa (7)	1,668
Confucian Asian	China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan (6)	1,211
Eastern European	Albania, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Slovenia (9)	1,733
Germanic European	Austria, Germany (Former East), Germany (Former GDR), Netherlands, Switzerland (5)	1,229
Latin American	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela (9)	1,524
Latin European	France, French Switzerland, Israel, Italy, Portugal, Spain (6)	1,758
Middle Eastern	Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Turkey (5)	712
Nordic European	Denmark, Finland, Sweden (3)	1,644
Southeast Asian	India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand (5)	1,408
Sub-Saharan Africa	Black South Africa, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe (4)	759

<sup>a</sup> Note: Data from Iran, Namibia, El Salvador, were excluded from the analyses as it contained more than 50% of cases with missing observations in the variables of interest or because they had less than 20 valid observations.

**Table 7**  
Ranking of societal culture clusters based on the endorsement of paternalistic leadership factors.

Score Range	Authority	Benevolence	Integrity
Higher	Confucian Asian	Southeast Asian	Nordic European
M Range	3.21	5.12	6.40
Medium	Eastern European	Middle Eastern	Germanic European
	Sub-Saharan Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin American
	Africa	Confucian Asian	
	Middle Eastern	Anglo	Anglo
	Latin American	Latin American	Southeast Asian
	Latin European	Latin European	Eastern European
	Southeast Asian		Latin European
	Anglo		Middle Eastern
M Range	2.47–3.00	4.52–4.93	5.93–6.32
Lower	Nordic European	Eastern European	Confucian Asian
	Germanic European	Nordic European	
	European	Germanic European	
M Range	1.94–2.39	4.23–4.28	5.82

Method: Student-Newman-Kreuls procedure.

#### 4. Results

##### 4.1. Cross-cultural endorsement of paternalistic leadership dimensions

o explore the differences of endorsement of PL dimensions across clusters, we conducted a series of post hoc analyses using the Student–Newman–Keuls (S–N–K) procedure. Based on the S–N–K results, clusters were grouped into higher, middle and lower bands for each dimension and ranked from high to low according to the cluster-level factor scores. Within each band, the clusters did not differ significantly from one another. Table 7 presents the results of these analyses.

The results highlight the relative differences among clusters for each PL dimension. For example, despite the universal rejection of Authority as an important trait of an effective leader, Authority was endorsed at a significantly greater degree by the Confucian Asian societies (3.21) and was more strongly rejected by Germanic and Nordic European societies (1.94 and 2.39, respectively). On the other hand, while there was a positive general endorsement of Benevolence, the results indicate that the Southeast Asian cluster (5.12) endorsed Benevolence as important for effective leadership to a significantly greater extent than Eastern, Nordic and Germanic European societies (4.23, 4.24, 4.28, respectively). Similarly, despite the wide consideration of Integrity as an universal positive leadership trait, it was valued relatively more important by Nordic Europeans (6.40), while it was considered less relevant for leadership by the Confucian Asian societies (5.82).

These differences on the endorsement levels of PL dimensions provided us with some cues on the prevalence of PL around the world. Fig. 1 shows that while the Nordic European cluster did not endorse paternalistic leadership as a broad construct, the Southeast and Confucian Asian clusters appeared to consistently value paternalistic leadership, albeit not in the same manner. While Confucian Asians gave higher importance to Authority, Southeast Asians placed greater value on Benevolence. These results suggest that paternalistic leadership is not a homogeneously endorsed construct across clusters, but that different patterns and combinations of PL dimensions may give rise to shades of paternalistic leadership across societies.

##### 4.2. Identifying the shades of paternalistic leadership

To explore these shades of paternalistic leadership, we disaggregated the unit of analysis of the endorsement of PL to the societal level as, although the clusters comprise similar societies, the existing variance within each cluster may hide subtle nuances in the

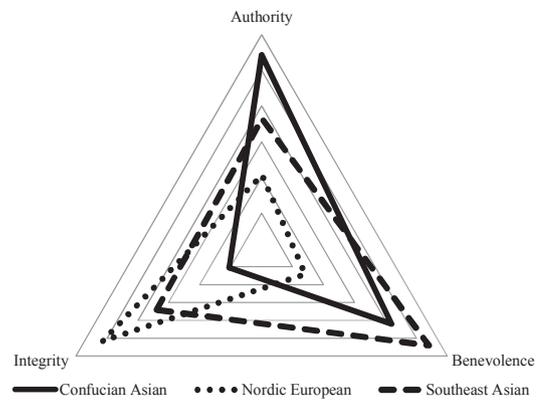


Fig. 1. Paternalistic Leadership dimensions per cluster.

endorsement of paternalistic leadership. Indeed, a series of 3-level hierarchical linear models (HLMs) estimated for each PL dimension indicates substantial variability between societies within cultural clusters. Variance among countries was significant ( $ICC_{(1)} = 13\%$ ,  $14\%$  and  $14\%$  for authority, benevolence and integrity, respectively). These results support the disaggregation of PL dimensions at the country level, confirming that the analysis of the endorsement of PL by cultural clusters could not precisely define which societies really endorse each type of PL due to high intra-cluster variability. To further explore the variability in the endorsement of PL at the societal level, we first identified which societies endorsed some form of paternalism. To do so, we focused on the duality inherent to paternalistic leadership definition – authority and benevolence – as their existence is what differentiates societies that endorse PL to those who do not. That is, in order to be paternalistic, a society must endorse (at least at a medium level) both control and care, which are at ‘the root of paternalism’ (Aycan, 2006). Fig. 2 illustrates the endorsement of each of these two dimensions across all 59 societies, using standardized factor scores.

As shown in Fig. 2, the results illustrate that while Mexico and South Korea represent authoritarian forms of paternalism (higher endorsement of authority and medium endorsement of benevolence), China represents a benevolent shade of PL (higher endorsement of benevolence and medium endorsement of authority), even being part of the Confucian Asian Cluster (higher endorsement of authority). Some societies clearly do not endorse authority or benevolence (e.g., West Germany), while others highly endorse only one of them (e.g., Russia), thus rejecting the concept of paternalistic leadership as a whole.

In order to classify the societies into different shades of PL, we proceeded to include only those that endorse some form of paternalism. As such, we excluded societies that had a standardized factor score below the mean in either benevolence or authority. A subset of 22 societies was thus retained for further analysis (societies in the upper right quadrant of Fig. 2). We then performed a cluster analysis, using the K-means procedure, including the factor scores of the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership as clustering variables. However, while authority and benevolence are necessary conditions for the existence of PL, both are not sufficient to determine its types, or its ‘shades’. Therefore, to better distinguish between lighter and darker shades of PL endorsement we also used integrity as a clustering variable. Integrity represents leaders’ motives, as it is composed of traits that are related to positive intentions driven to others (e.g., sincerity and trustworthiness; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007).

We examined the results of a two-cluster, three-cluster, and a four-cluster solution. The two-cluster solution was the one that had a better fit with the theory. The two clusters that emerged showed similarity to the conceptualization of Exploitative and Benevolent types of PL (Aycan, 2006). The first cluster presented significant higher levels of benevolence and integrity and a lower level of authority ( $M_{Benevolence} = 5.14; M_{Authority} = 2.87; M_{Integrity} = 6.18$ ). We used the

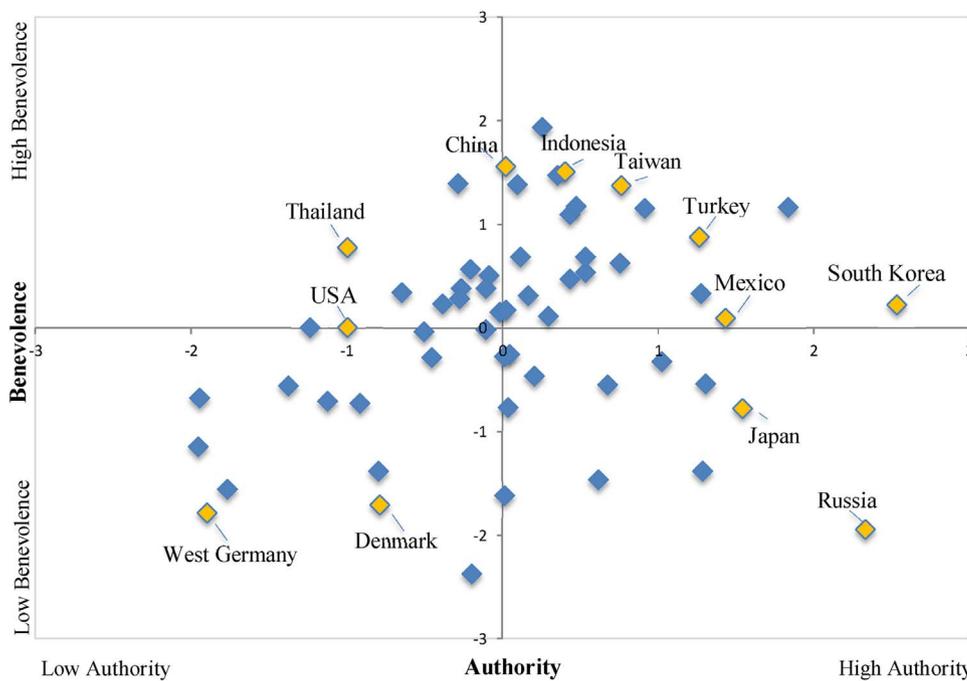


Fig. 2. Endorsement of authority and benevolence across societies.

**Table 8**  
Average of summated items of PL dimensions in Exploitative and Benevolent Paternalism.

Dimensions	Benevolent Paternalism (n = 14)	Exploitative Paternalism (n = 8)	F test	World Mean <sup>a</sup>
Authority	2.87	3.31	8.31**	2.73
Benevolence	5.14	4.84	7.39*	4.67
Integrity	6.18	5.89	4.91*	6.10
Countries	Bolivia, China, Ecuador, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Nigeria, Philippines, Taiwan, Turkey, Zambia and Zimbabwe.	Albania, Egypt, Hong Kong, Israel, Mexico, Singapore, South Africa (Black Sample) and South Korea.		All 59 countries

Note: a: Mean calculated among 59 societies.

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

term ‘Benevolent Paternalism’ to label this cluster (N = 14). The second cluster presented significant higher level of authority and lower levels of benevolence and integrity ( $M_{\text{Benevolence}} = 4.84$ ;  $M_{\text{Authority}} = 3.31$ ;  $M_{\text{Integrity}} = 5.89$ ). We used the term ‘Exploitative Paternalism’ to label this cluster (N = 8).

As a robustness check, we conducted one-way ANOVAs to compare the means of the summated scales of PL dimensions across the two groups, to ensure between-cluster heterogeneity on the three dimensions of PL. The results indicated that the two clusters differed on authority, benevolence and integrity means, highlighting that the two groups of societies distinctively endorse different shades of PL. Table 8 presents the list of societies that were classified in each cluster, as well as the means of each PL dimension.

#### 4.3. Societal cultural values and types of paternalistic leadership

The results presented so far showed that societies differ in their endorsement of paternalistic leadership. To further evaluate the validity of the different types of paternalistic leadership and to test the study hypotheses, we examined the correlations of the nine cultural values studied by GLOBE with the two groups of societies representing PL types. Table 9 presents the results of the means and point-biserial

**Table 9**  
Means of societal cultural values of Exploitative and Benevolent Paternalism Clusters.

Societal Cultural Values	Benevolent Paternalism	Exploitative Paternalism	$r^a$	World Mean <sup>b</sup>
Assertiveness	4.18	4.00	0.123	4.57
Collectivism I (Institutional)	4.90	4.46	0.519 <sup>+</sup>	4.69
Collectivism II (In-group)	5.69	5.44	0.375 <sup>+</sup>	5.61
Future Orientation	5.70	5.53	0.253	5.42
Gender Egalitarianism	4.18	4.27	0.100	4.51
Humane Orientation	5.38	5.37	0.008	5.38
Performance Orientation	6.00	5.62	0.491 <sup>+</sup>	5.86
Power Distance	2.80	3.10	0.410 <sup>+</sup>	2.77
Uncertainty Avoidance	5.01	4.84	0.235	4.57

Note: n = 22 societies.

<sup>a</sup> Point-biserial correlation between PL cluster and cultural values.

<sup>b</sup> Mean calculated among 59 societies.

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.10$ .

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

correlations between cultural values and the two clusters of PL.

The results indicate that the two paternalistic leadership groups of societies significantly differ on the cultural values of collectivism, power distance and performance orientation. Supporting H1, we found that the means for Institutional Collectivism were higher for the Benevolent Paternalism when compared to Exploitative Paternalism ( $M_{\text{Benevolent}} = 4.90$ ;  $M_{\text{Exploitative}} = 4.46$ ;  $r = 0.519$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), a pattern that was similar for In-group Collectivism ( $M_{\text{Benevolent}} = 5.69$ ;  $M_{\text{Exploitative}} = 5.44$ ;  $r = 0.375$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ). Supporting H2, our results also showed that the Exploitative group had significant higher levels of Power Distance when compared to the Benevolent group ( $M_{\text{Benevolent}} = 3.10$ ;  $M_{\text{Exploitative}} = 2.80$ ;  $r = 0.410$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ). Surprisingly, results showed a significant difference between the clusters regarding the value of Performance Orientation. The Benevolent group presented higher means of performance orientation than the Exploitative group ( $M_{\text{Benevolent}} = 6.00$ ;  $M_{\text{Exploitative}} = 5.62$ ;  $r = 0.491$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Regarding H3 and H4, which predicted significant differences in both Assertiveness and Humane Orientation values between the Exploitative and Benevolent groups were not supported. Overall, these findings shed some light regarding the different societal cultural values shared by societies that endorse different forms of paternalism, which support the idea of distinctive shades of paternalistic leadership across cultures. We explore these results in the discussion section.

## 5. Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to clarify the role of culture in the endorsement of paternalistic leadership across societies. To accomplish this objective, we examined differences in the extent to which paternalistic leadership is cross-culturally endorsed, thus leading to distinctive shades of paternalism around the world. The results showed that there are significant differences in the importance given by societies to the dimensions that constitute paternalistic leadership, suggesting that paternalism as a leadership style is not universally endorsed. While some cultural clusters endorse paternalistic leadership's key dimensions (e.g., Southeast Asia), others tend to value only a few of its less distinctive features, but not paternalism as a whole (e.g., Nordic European and Germanic clusters).

Specifically, the results showed that Authority and Benevolence—which, combined, represent the *crux* of *paternalistic leadership* (Aycan, 2006)—are quite heterogeneously endorsed among the clusters and among societies. For example, China endorses a more benevolent type of paternalism, while Mexico endorses a more authoritarian form of paternalistic leadership. If we assumed a one-dimensional perspective of paternalistic leadership without systematically considering the possibility that combinations of these dimensions may differ meaningfully in different contexts, we would conclude that Mexico and China endorse paternalistic practices equally. In other words, a one-dimensional perspective would not allow us to fully understand leadership effectiveness because societies endorse different forms of paternalism.

Besides these two distinctive features of paternalism leadership, Integrity emerged as a relevant characteristic of paternalistic leaders, which may reflect leaders' underlying motifs when using control and care. Indeed, literature on social cognition (e.g., Fiske et al., 2007) suggests that warmth traits, for example, sincerity and trustworthiness, are related to perceived intent. Therefore, high integrity may represent a tendency to act on behalf of others, while low integrity may represent a tendency to act in a more self-interested way. Examining the patterns of combination between these three dimensions helped us to differentiate types of PL that characterize idiosyncratic shades of paternalism across cultures.

From the 59 societies analyzed, 22 societies were found to endorse some form of paternalistic leadership. These 22 societies were then clustered into two groups that were consistent with the Exploitative and

Benevolent types of paternalism proposed by Aycan (2006). The Benevolent group (14 societies) endorsed high levels of benevolence and integrity combined with moderate levels of authority, representing a 'lighter' shade of PL. A benevolent paternalistic leader shows "parental tenderness" coupled with moderate authority in order to maintain social control in an harmonious environment (e.g., Humphreys et al., 2015). The Exploitative group (8 societies) endorsed high levels of authority combined with moderate levels of benevolence and low levels of integrity, thus representing a 'darker' shade of PL. These features of the exploitative paternalism seem to corroborate a self-serving (or even deceptive) attitude of the leader, whose moderate nurturing behavior is used to guarantee that subordinates are compliant and deferent. These findings enabled us to differentiate societies that endorse a more benevolent or exploitative form of paternalistic leadership, thus providing a better framework to analyze and distinguish the sometimes-contradictory effects of paternalism at work.

Furthermore, to better understand how and why these two groups of societies differ in their endorsement of paternalistic leadership, we also explored their relationship with cultural values. Cultural values represent the deepest beliefs and aspirations of people in a society. As such, they are likely to influence the endorsement of attributes that contribute to the perception of effective leadership. Our results showed that societies who endorsed a benevolent shade of PL have higher levels of collectivism, together with lower levels of power distance in comparison to societies that endorse a more exploitative shade of PL. The higher value that these 'benevolent' societies place in the encouragement of collective action and loyalty-based relationships (House et al., 2004) are consistent with the endorsement of a leadership style that fosters genuine concern for subordinates' welfare.

Even though we did not propose different hypotheses for the two GLOBE measures of collectivism, our findings suggest that benevolent and exploitative paternalistic clusters value Institutional and In-Group collectivism differently. Although 'benevolent' societies value to a greater extent both dimensions of collectivism, the differences between exploitative and benevolent clusters are greater for Institutional collectivism than for In-Group collectivism. In high institutional collectivistic societies, individuals emphasize group loyalty at the expense of individual goals and the economic system emphasizes collective interests (House et al., 2004), which is more aligned with the genuine intent of benevolent paternalistic leaders than with the self-serving bias of exploitative paternalistic ones. In-Group Collectivism, on the other hand, expresses the level of interdependence of individuals in their organizations and families. As such, because both types of PL emphasize relatedness with groups as core feature of being paternalistic, the differences between clusters should be less salient. Indeed, the caring side of leaders, regardless of their intent, is present in both Benevolent and Exploitative paternalism, which may explain the less distinctive valuation of In-Group Collectivism between clusters.

The balanced use of control by benevolent leaders to maintain order in a more affective and humane way (e.g., Jackson, 1999) is consistent with lower values of power distance of Benevolent paternalistic societies. On the other hand, the emphasis on a more restrictive and autocratic control used with self-centered motivations – characteristic of societies that endorsed a more exploitative form of PL – are congruent with the higher value societies give to power differentials, hierarchy and status. Moreover, the high power distance combined with the lower importance given to collective action, tend to decrease the power and interdependence of the group, and increase subordinates' dependence on the leader (Emerson, 1976), typical of a more exploitative leader-subordinate relationship exchange.

Surprisingly, our results showed that societies also valued performance orientation differently. Despite the focus of exploitative paternalistic leaders on the achievement of organizational goals, our findings suggest that societies endorsing benevolent paternalism place higher value on performance orientation. Indeed, the nurturing and protective behavior of more benevolent leaders may facilitate the

creation of an environment with shared goals that rewards group members for achievement and excellence, not only in benefit of the leader. Notably, performance orientation was also found to be positively related to servant leadership (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012) and participative and charismatic/value-based leadership in the GLOBE study (Javidan, 2004).

Contrary to our predictions, the level of humane orientation values did not differ between benevolent and exploitative paternalistic societies. In spite of different underlying intents, both types of paternalistic leaders show individualized consideration towards subordinates, which might explain the non-significant difference. Also, Schlösser et al. (2012) suggested the vagueness of the scale of humane orientation, which may obscure the interpretation of research findings using it. According to the authors, the GLOBE humane orientation scale does not disentangle in-group from out-group humane orientation and thus shows little variance across cultures as in-group orientation tends to be universally endorsed. Thus, we suggest this could be a reason for the unexpected result obtained.

Finally, and also contrary to H4, findings suggest that societies that endorse exploitative PL were not significantly more assertive than societies that endorse benevolent PL. In fact, societies from both paternalistic groups value assertiveness in a significant lesser extent than the rest of the world (as shown in Table 9). This finding suggests that both types of paternalistic leaders are not perceived as confrontational or aggressive, despite their underlying intents. Paternalism involves the creation of a familiar environment at work, which is not consistent with an overly assertive behavior. A non-significant correlation between assertiveness and paternalistic clusters is therefore reasonable.

## 6. Contributions, limitations and future research

In examining the implications of this study, we highlight the following contributions. First, we presented a cross-cultural examination of paternalistic leadership, in contrast to the majority of research that has contextualized PL within a single society (e.g., Chen et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2015) or within groups of societies with similar cultural values (e.g., Cheng et al., 2014). Although there have been studies that have compared cultures (e.g., Cem Ersoy, Born, Derous, & Molen, 2012; Pellegrini et al., 2010), to our knowledge there has been no cross-cultural research on PL from a global perspective. By exploring paternalistic leadership from a global perspective, we contribute to a better understanding of its nature in a wide range of societies. So far, due to the limited research in some African, Latin American and Asian societies, in which PL may be perceived as a positive leadership style (Jackson, 2016), our knowledge of the endorsement of PL was somewhat limited. Our study addressed this gap in the literature by providing evidence regarding differences in the extent to which societies endorse PL.

Moreover, we provide evidence that paternalistic leadership is neither universally nor homogeneously endorsed across cultures. Whereas the majority of studied societies do not endorse paternalism as an effective leadership style, others endorse PL, yet in different ways. Indeed, the endorsement of the different combinations of PL features give rise to idiosyncratic shades of paternalistic leadership. While societies, such as South Korea, Mexico and Hong Kong, endorse a 'darker' exploitative paternalism, others, such as China, Turkey and India endorse a 'lighter' benevolent paternalism.

Additionally, we explored the relationship between cultural values and the endorsement of different shades of paternalistic leadership in an attempt to better understand why 'paternalist' societies have a differential endorsement of either a more benevolent or more exploitative form of PL. However, we must recognize that our study only provided an initial and modest attempt to understand the interface between culture and paternalistic leadership. Future studies should further explore the complex interplay between culture and leadership.

From a more methodological perspective, our research also sheds

light on the controversy regarding the dimensional structure of PL construct. The unclear relationship between the PL and its dimensions has given rise to a debate regarding its mono or multidimensionality (e.g., Li & Sun, 2015). Our results provide evidence regarding the need to consider the unique combinations of PL dimensions and not its aggregate average.

Regarding our study limitations, although we based our study on a large and reliable dataset that allowed us to examine beliefs about several of the important aspects of paternalistic leadership across 59 different societies, the GLOBE dataset was not originally designed to address the paternalistic leadership construct. More importantly, the leadership scale was developed under a western perspective, thus taking into account leadership styles considered to be effective in western contexts (Hanges & Dickson, 2004). As such, the list of 112 leadership items did not include specific characteristics that might be important for non-western leaders (e.g., Leung, Wang & Deng, 2016), possibly limiting a more precise operationalization of PL. Nevertheless, we believe our measure covered the major features of paternalistic leadership, thus enabling us to draw meaningful conclusions from our analyses.

We must also acknowledge that the multi-group factor analysis alignment technique that we used to establish measurement invariance is still being developed. Despite its promise as an avenue for the evolution of invariance analysis (Davidov et al., 2014) and its valuable statistical properties (Marsh et al., 2017; Van De Schoot et al., 2013), this method assumes that achieving approximate invariance is possible; however, the test of this assumption is ongoing (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014). Nevertheless, this method has been successfully applied in recent cross-cultural studies with large number of groups (e.g., Duell et al., 2016; Zercher et al., 2015).

From a conceptual and linguistic perspective, we must also acknowledge the gendered flavor of paternalistic leadership research (Jackson, 2016). However, in a period that public opinion appears to favor more women as leaders, the question remains: why not discuss the concept of maternalistic leadership? Future research should explore the emergence of more maternal (communal) leadership behaviors and compare their endorsement cross-culturally.

## 7. Managerial relevance

Driven by the global economy, the cultural interaction between people in different countries is increasing dramatically. As such, there is a need for leaders who understand and operate effectively in different cultures. Recognizing this trend, multinational corporations have been developing leadership development programs aiming to improve the intercultural competence of their leaders. However, research has shown that these leadership development programs are also cross-culturally sensitive (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009). In order to design culturally appropriate leadership development programs and prepare expatriates with culturally specific leadership schemas it is necessary to understand the nuances of the interplay between culturally desirable behaviors in a society and effective leadership in that culture (Sully de Luque, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2011).

Our findings regarding paternalistic leadership highlight the need for organizations to consider the heterogeneity in the degree of endorsement of paternalistic leadership dimensions and PL's different pattern combinations when structuring leadership development programs and managing business internationalization processes. It is important for expatriates and local managers to consider etic (universal) and emic (culturally-contingent) lenses so that they can be more effective when working with people from different cultures (Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006). For example, some behaviors related with authority could not only be related to negative reactions by employees, but also undermine leader's legitimacy in some cultures (Li & Sun, 2015). Thus, leaders in international assignments can use the findings highlighted in this study to adapt their initial observations of seemingly

universal leadership behaviors to the unique contexts of different countries.

Moreover, from a public policy perspective, by disentangling different forms of paternalism and its endorsement by different societies, our study may help policy makers of nations around the world to design public policies that accounts for the demands and interests of the state and the welfare of the people. That is, policy makers should acknowledge the culturally endorsed paternalistic practices in a society to design regulations in a way that align the interests of the state and the wellbeing of the people. For example, more hierarchical societies might have a need for a more authoritarian approach; societies with clear norms and self-control might prefer a 'soft' and benevolent paternalism; finally, societies that value the power of choice may adopt a more 'libertarian' form of paternalism (Thaler & Sunstein, 2003).

## 8. Conclusion

Understanding how to effectively lead people within diverse cultural contexts has become an imperative for international business research. Our study is an attempt to contribute to the literature on paternalistic leadership, a non-western leadership theory, by analyzing its endorsement globally. Through our study, we have shown that paternalistic leadership is not endorsed universally or homogeneously across societies. In fact, we observed that cultures value distinct 'shades' of paternalistic leadership. Our findings, however, are not an "answer" but rather a starting point of how to conceptualize paternalistic leadership and better understand it cross-culturally, thus triggering further advances in theoretical and practical research in the fields of leadership and cross-cultural management.

## Conflict of interest statement

The authors certify that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest, or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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