

# The Impact of Perceived Teacher Paternalistic Leadership on Voice Behavior Among College Students in Hebei Province, China

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*Student voice behavior is an important aspect of school culture. Raising awareness of student voice can support academic achievement and deepen school reforms, and this study explored the influence of college students' perception of teacher-parent leadership on their voice behavior based on the Chinese cultural background. Based on social exchange theory, a convenience sampling method was applied to conduct a questionnaire survey on 709 college students from 5 universities in Hebei Province, China. After analyzing by SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), the study showed that: In teacher paternalistic leadership, benevolent leadership and moral leadership have a significant positive impact on voice behavior while authoritarian leadership has a meaningful negative impact. Therefore, teacher paternalistic leadership can provide psychological care and academic support for students, set a fair and moral example, and avoid making authoritarian decisions, providing a supportive voice environment for students.*

*Keywords: teacher paternalistic leadership, benevolent leadership, moral leadership, authoritarian leadership, voice behavior*

## INTRODUCTION

There is increasing research on student voice behavior in higher education (Sun et al., 2022). Students express their voice in various ways, from providing input on their learning experiences to participating in course design and decision-making processes (Strydom & Loots, 2020). Student voice behavior has been a driving force in improving the educational environment and teaching management (Keddie, 2015; Sun et al., 2022; Weisi & Ahmadi, 2023), and has become a valuable educational strategy to engage students (Conner, 2022). School leaders should support students in forming their own unique viewpoints, provide space and audience for student voice behavior (Lundy, 2007), and ensure that their suggestions are heard and adopted (Jones & Bubb, 2020). However, due to the high power distance and collectivist characteristics of Chinese culture, which emphasize respecting authority and maintaining harmonious relationships (Bush & Qiang, 2000; Hofstede et al., 2010; Walker & Qian, 2018), there is a tendency for “top-down” influence rather than “bottom-up” influence (Lin et al., 2016). Even if individuals are aware of problems or have ideas for improvement, they are more inclined to remain silent (Zhang et al., 2015). Therefore, it is particularly important to explore how to encourage Chinese students to actively provide voice.

Leadership is an important antecedent variable that influences student voice behavior (Detert & Burris, 2007). In the field of student voice, teachers play an important role in shaping student voice through their leadership power, especially in guiding students to express their opinions and views in student/teacher partnerships (Nelson, 2018). The concept of leadership under different power systems and cultural backgrounds profoundly affects the practice of student voice behavior (Ahmadi, 2021; Aycan, 2006). Paternalistic leadership is considered a unique fatherly and protective leadership style that is unique to Eastern culture (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006; Salminen-Karlsson, 2015), and it is widely present in various organizations in China, such as family businesses, private companies, government agencies, and school institutions (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Aycan, 2006). Teacher-student relationships under paternalistic leadership reflect the unique attributes of teachers in traditional Chinese educational culture (Wang et al., 2023). It is necessary to study the emotional interaction between teachers and students through paternalistic leadership in a specific cultural background in China (Zheng et al., 2020). Unlike treating students equally in the West (Goodman, 2009), Confucian culture attaches great importance to benevolence to cultivate harmonious interpersonal relationships (Chen & Lee, 2008). Moreover, the tradition of respect for authority is widespread in the Chinese school environment (Bush & Qiang, 2000).

According to the social exchange theory proposed by Blau (1964), students' high degree of participation in school's advice highly depends on the social exchange relationship between teachers and students (Cook-Sather, 2007). A good teacher-student exchange relationship is not only a driving force to enhance student participation (Wang et al., 2023), but also an important factor in cultivating students' personalities and promoting student advice (Jones & Bubb, 2020). Teachers convey respect and support to students through effective leadership behavior, and students can feel the attention and expectations from teachers (Monteiro et al., 2021), further feeling safe and supported, and generating a sense of belonging (Benner et al., 2019; Simonsen & Rundmo, 2020). When students' sense of belonging needs are met, they will have a greater sense of behavioral investment, promoting the generation of advice behavior (Korpershoek, 2019). Conversely, when the exchange relationship is poor, it will have a disharmonious impact on the overall class environment and atmosphere, causing students to psychologically deviate, reducing students' school identity, and thus reducing students' participation in advice (Conner et al., 2022; Wisniewski et al., 2020).

In conclusion, this study aims to explore the different impacts of teacher paternalistic leadership on student voice behavior in Chinese culture. Through empirical research, it proposes that teacher paternalistic leadership is conducive to improving college students' advice behavior. This study, which has great practical significance, provides an important direction for university teachers to increase student advice.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Farh and Cheng (2000) divided paternalistic leadership into three dimensions: authoritarian, benevolent, and moral. It reflects a motherly kindness, strict authority, and fair moral leadership style (Farh et al., 2006), widely used in research on paternalistic leadership (Aycan, 2015; Chen et al., 2015; Cheng & Wang, 2014; Zhang et al., 2016). Since each dimension is measured as an independent leadership style, and each dimension is associated with specific subordinates' reactions (Cheng et al., 2004), it is necessary to systematically consider the possibility of meaningful differences in the different dimensions of paternalistic leadership in different organizational contexts (Mansur et al., 2017). Different dimensions of paternalistic leadership also lead to different advising behaviors (Jia et al., 2020). Therefore, this study explores the impact of college students' perception of teacher paternalistic leadership in different dimensions (benevolent leadership; moral leadership; authoritarian leadership) on student voice behavior.

### **The Impact of Perceived Benevolent Leadership on Voice Behavior Among College Students**

The dimension of benevolent will treat members of the organization like family, showing personalized attention, interest, care, and grace towards their development (Aycan, 2015; Chen et al., 2015; Farh et al., 2008), and providing timely support when they encounter difficulties and awkward situations (Chan & Mak, 2012). Through daily communication and interaction, these supportive, protective, and encouraging behaviors provide followers with a safe and accepting environment to freely express themselves (Öge et

al., 2018). At the same time, they also discard concerns about the risk of trouble that members' advice may cause (McCullough et al., 2002). The management style of benevolent leaders is rooted in the universally valued values of "kindness" and "humanity" (Hou et al., 2019). The teacher-student relationship is the first step in cultivating student voice behavior (Mitra, 2003). In contrast, teachers with benevolent leadership behaviors value good relationships with their students. Teachers' care, support, encouragement, and understanding of the real reasons for students' dissatisfaction help students adjust their inner feelings, thus enhancing the teacher-student relationship (Zheng et al., 2020). By establishing a positive teacher-student interaction relationship and creating a supportive environment, teachers can motivate students to actively participate in different activities, promoting voice behavior (Monteiro et al., 2021). Therefore, teachers demonstrate concern and support for students through benevolent leadership behaviors, showing parental love to students to build a harmonious teacher-student relationship, which can enhance students' motivation to engage in (Wang et al., 2023), help students better cope with the emotions in their school life and studies, reduce their fear of giving advice, (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015; Zheng et al., 2018), and thus become an important factor in cultivating students' personalities and promoting their advice-giving. (Jones & Bubb, 2020).

Based on this, hypothesis H1 is proposed: College students perceive that benevolent leadership by teachers has a significant positive impact on voice behavior.

### **The Impact of Perceived Moral Leadership on Voice Behavior Among College Students**

Moral leadership involves maintaining high moral standards, disciplined behavior, and treating organization members with sincerity and equality, demonstrating personal and professional ethics in the workplace (Cheng & Wang, 2014). A leader's high moral standards can intensify followers' sense of safety when they speak, as they are less likely to fear moral judgment or punishment from the leader (Chen et al., 2014; Son et al., 2014). In addition, the sincerity and equality of moral leaders also reflect their acceptance of the opinions of organizational members, reducing their concerns when making suggestions and promoting the emergence of voice behavior (Jia et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2010). Teachers can also demonstrate honesty, reliability, openness, and consistency through moral leadership, creating a trustworthy image and more opportunities for positive interaction with students (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). When teachers respond positively to students' dependence, providing necessary support and care, they can meet students' moral expectations, lead by example, show high concern for the collective interest, and act selflessly (Monteiro et al., 2020). Paternalistic leadership behavior that prioritizes the collective interest over personal interest is often more respected and admired by students (Niu et al., 2009). Once school teachers are seen as consistent role models of good conduct by students, they are more likely to gain students' trust and promote student voice behavior (Qian & Walker, 2021).

Based on this, hypothesis H2 is proposed: College students perceive that moral leadership by teachers has a significant positive impact on voice behavior.

### **The Impact of Perceived Authoritarian Leadership on Voice Behavior Among College Students**

Authoritarian leadership emphasizes the strong and unquestionable authority of the organizational leadership over its members (Öge et al., 2018). Authoritarian leaders rarely share information and knowledge related to their personal work with organizational members (Tian & Sanchez, 2017), and often ignore the suggestions provided by subordinates (Ekrot et al., 2016), showing dominance and control over followers, and punishing their disobedience and mistakes (Chen et al., 2018). Therefore, authoritarian leadership can increase others' insecurity towards authority (Duan et al., 2017), further amplifying the fear of offering advice among organization members (Brinsfield et al., 2009), making them unwilling to express their different viewpoints, which is not conducive to the emergence of voice behavior (Shi et al., 2020). Authoritarian leadership by teachers can degrade certain aspects of students' personal dignity, such as belittling students' advice, strict control of students, and insistence on absolute obedience (Zheng et al., 2020), which may lead to negative responses from students and damage the credibility of the teacher in students' minds (Wu et al., 2012). When students interact with teachers who exhibit authoritarian leadership behavior, they may be afraid to express their true emotions (i.e. fear, anger), which can lead to disguising

and concealing their true emotions, resulting in suppressing their emotions (Zheng et al., 2020). Therefore, authoritarian leadership by teachers is not conducive to normal communication between teachers and students, damaging the social relationship between them, and the teacher's commands and control over students will inhibit students' voice behavior (Shi et al., 2020).

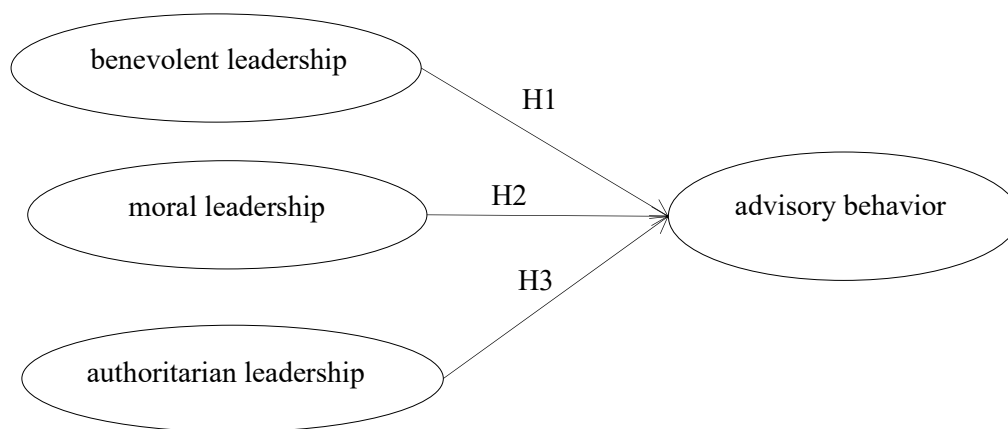
Based on this, hypothesis H2 is proposed: College students perceive that authoritarian leadership by teachers has a significant negative impact on voice behavior.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Framework

This study explores the impact of different dimensions of teacher paternalistic leadership (benevolent leadership, moral leadership, authoritarian leadership) on voice behavior based on the research purpose and the social exchange theory framework, and establishes the research framework as shown in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1**  
**RESEARCH FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM**



### Sample and Research Procedures

The Education Department of Hebei Province (2021) has issued the “Fourteenth Five-Year Plan”, explicitly stating that universities should pay attention to collecting and reflecting students' opinions, encouraging students to actively participate in school affairs, express problems and demands, and provide students with opportunities to participate in educational decision-making at school. In recent years, many universities in Hebei Province have organized a variety of student voice behavior activities, such as student representative conferences, brainstorming activities, and principal symposiums, to achieve democratic participation of students and democratic management of schools. Consequently, this study focuses on college students in Hebei Province, China.

Approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Hengshui College in China, this study adopted a convenience sampling method. According to Sudman's (1976) suggestion, it is more appropriate to select 500-1000 people for regional research. Given the situation of ineffective responses, 800 college students from 5 universities in Hebei Province, China were selected for a questionnaire survey. Before distributing the questionnaire, the privacy and willingness of the subjects were fully considered, and they were informed of the purpose of the study. The collected data is only used for academic research and does not involve personal privacy. During the questionnaire answering process, the subjects can refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. According to the Helsinki Declaration, a survey and research will be conducted after all participants voluntarily cooperate and sign informed consent forms. Distribute online questionnaires through online questionnaire collection methods, and participants can scan QR codes or click on hyperlinks to fill out electronic questionnaires.

In October 2023, our research team contacted the class management teacher to distribute 800 questionnaires through the Wenjuanxing platform (www.wjx.cn). After excluding invalid questionnaires with consistent answers and insufficient completion time, 709 valid questionnaires were collected, resulting in a recovery rate of 88.6%. The specific results are shown in Table 1. Regarding gender, there were 333 male students (47%) and 376 female students (53%). In terms of grade level, there were 163 freshmen (23%), 204 sophomores (28%), 205 juniors (28.9%), and 137 seniors (19.3%). In terms of majors, there were 215 students in science and engineering (30.3%), 171 in liberal arts (24.1%), 165 in economics and management (23.3%), and 158 in arts and sports (22.3%).

**TABLE 1**  
**SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON BACKGROUND VARIABLES**

| Background variables | Category                 | Number | Percentage% |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------------|
| Gender               | male                     | 333    | 47          |
|                      | female                   | 376    | 53          |
| Grade level          | freshmen                 | 163    | 23          |
|                      | sophomore                | 204    | 28          |
|                      | junior                   | 205    | 28.9        |
|                      | senior                   | 137    | 19.3        |
| Major                | science and engineering  | 215    | 30.3        |
|                      | liberal arts             | 171    | 24.1        |
|                      | economics and management | 165    | 23.3        |
|                      | arts and sports          | 158    | 22.3        |

## Measures

### *Paternalistic Leadership Scale*

A 33-item scale developed by Zheng et al. (2000) was used in this study to measure benevolent, moral, authoritarian leadership (Paternalistic Leadership Scale, PLS). The 5-point scales were anchored by ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’; higher scores indicate that students perceive higher levels of teacher paternalistic leadership. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis in this study show that the standardized factor loadings range from 0.771 to 0.827, and the squared multiple correlations (SMC) range from 0.572 to 0.684, both exceeding 0.500, indicating good overall measurement reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The composite reliability (CR) values for the latent variables are as follows: 0.940 for benevolent leadership, 0.941 for moral leadership, and 0.943 for authoritarian leadership, all exceeding 0.600, demonstrating high internal consistency for all constructs (Nunnally, 1978). In terms of average variance extracted (AVE) for each latent variable, the AVE values are 0.611 for benevolent leadership, 0.640 for moral leadership, and 0.624 for authoritarian leadership, all exceeding 0.500. In summary, the analysis indicates that the Paternalistic Leadership Scale used in this study demonstrates good validity and reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

In terms of the overall fit of the scale:  $df = 492$ ,  $\chi^2 / df = 1.183$ ,  $GFI = .952$ ,  $AGFI = .945$ ,  $RMR = .030$ ,  $SRMR = .021$ ,  $RMSEA = .016$ ,  $NFI = .967$ ,  $RFI = .965$ ,  $PNFI = .901$ ,  $PGFI = .835$ ,  $CN = 663$ . The inspection of the above fitting indicators indicates that the model fits well (Hair et al., 2010).

### *Voice Behavior Scale*

A 10-item scale developed by Liang et al. (2012) was used in this study to measure promoting and inhibiting advice through college students. The 5-point scales were anchored by ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’, with higher scores indicating a higher level of student voice behavior. In this study, it can be seen from the confirmatory factor analysis that the standardized factor loadings range from 0.764 to 0.812, the squared multiple correlations (SMC) range from 0.584 to 0.659, both higher than 0.500,

indicating good overall measurement reliability of the scale (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The composite reliabilities (CR) of the latent variables are as follows: 0.891 for the inhibiting advice, and 0.895 for the promoting advice. Both values exceed 0.600, indicating high internal consistency for all constructs (Nunnally, 1978). The average variance extracted (AVE) for the latent variables are as follows: 0.620 for the inhibiting advice, and 0.630 for the promoting advice, both exceeding 0.500. The above analysis indicates that the advice behavior scale used in this study has good reliability and validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

In terms of the overall fit of the scale, the chi-square value ( $\chi^2$ ) of this scale is 30.415, which is not significant,  $df = 34$ ,  $\chi^2 / df = 0.895$ , meeting the standard of less than 2. GFI = 0.991, AGFI = 0.986, RMR = 0.020, SRMR = 0.014, NFI = 0.992, RFI = 0.990, PNFI = 0.750, PGFI = 0.613, CN = 1132. Based on the above fitting indicators, it indicates that the model fits well (Hair et al., 2010).

### Analysis Strategy

SPSS and AMOS software were used for data management and analysis. SPSS was employed for preliminary data processing, descriptive statistics, testing reliability and validity, and analyzing correlations between variables. AMOS was applied for confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

## RESULTS

### Common Method Bias

To assess the presence of common method bias on this study, a Harman's single-factor test was conducted using SPSS software. An exploratory factor analysis included 43 items related to teacher paternalistic leadership and student voice behavior, and the unrotated factor analysis results were examined. Through principal component factor analysis, six factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were obtained, and the variance explained by the first factor was 39.964%, which did not exceed 50% (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Therefore, the impact of common method bias on the results of this study was not significant.

### Correlation Analysis

According to Table 2, there is a significant positive correlation between benevolent leadership and voice behavior ( $r=0.447$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), a significant positive correlation between moral leadership and voice behavior ( $r=0.426$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and a significant negative correlation between authoritarian leadership and voice behavior ( $r=-0.475$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). The absolute correlation coefficients of each dimension between variables range from 0.407 to 0.468, all of which do not exceed 0.800, indicating that there is no high correlation between the variables. No serious multicollinearity issues have occurred (Dormann et al., 2013).

**TABLE 2**  
**SUMMARY OF CORRELATION ANALYSIS BETWEEN VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF PATERNALISTIC LEADERSHIP AND VOICE BEHAVIOR**

| Dimension | PLB       | PLM       | PLA       | VB1      | VB2 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----|
| PLB       | 1         |           |           |          |     |
| PLM       | 0.444***  | 1         |           |          |     |
| PLA       | -0.458*** | -0.442*** | 1         |          |     |
| VB1       | 0.447***  | 0.426***  | -0.475*** | 1        |     |
| VB2       | 0.430***  | 0.440***  | -0.425*** | 0.424*** | 1   |

Note: PLB= paternalistic benevolent leadership; PLM= paternalistic moral leadership; PLA= paternalistic authoritarian leadership; VB1= inhibit voice behavior; VB2= promote voice behavior. \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

### Structural Equation Model

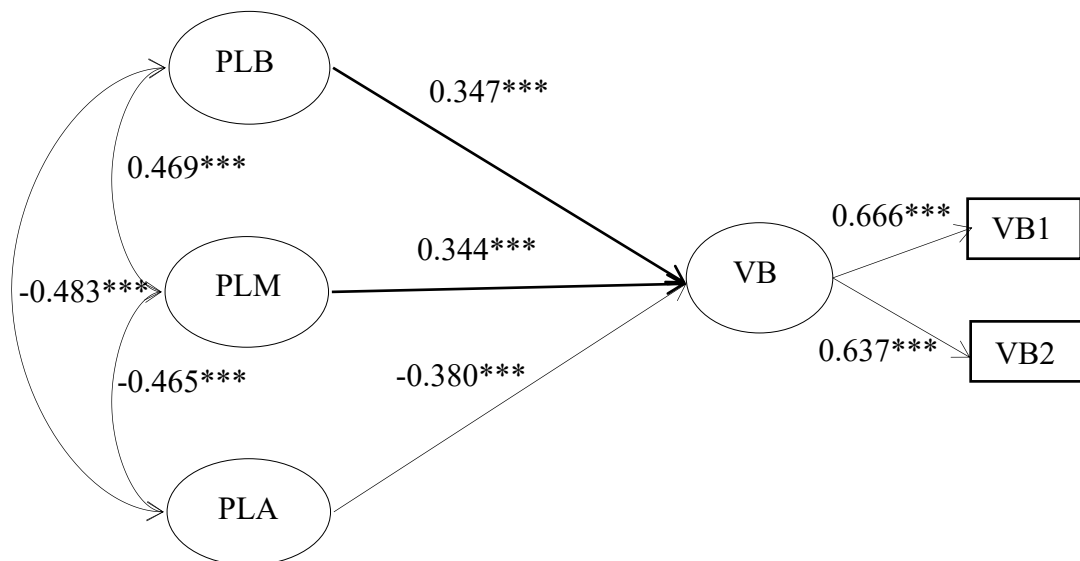
This study constructed an SEM model (Figure 1) of the impact of perceived paternalistic leadership by college students on their voice behavior. It evaluated the structural equation model based on the suggestions of Bagozzi and Yi (1988) and Hair et al. (2010) from two aspects: the basic fit of the model and the overall fit of the model.

In terms of verifying the basic adaptability of the model, all measurement errors are between 0.113 and 0.583, with no negative error variation. The standardized factor loading ranges from -0.482 to 0.827, all of which do not exceed 1; the standard error ranges from 0.028 to 0.095, and there is no significant standard error. The above parameter values all meet the basic fitness index (Bagozzi&Yi, 1988), indicating that the structural equation model fits well.

In terms of verifying the overall adaptability of the model,  $\chi^2 / df = 1.181$ , GFI = .949, AGFI = .942, RMR = .030, SRMR = .022, RMSEA = .016, NFI = .964, CFI = .994, RFI = .961, IFI = .994, PNFI = .898, PGFI = .835, CN = 660. Based on the above fitting indicators, the results suggest that the model fits well (Hair et al., 2010).

According to the path analysis of the SEM model (Figure 2), it can be observed that college students perceive a significant impact of paternalistic leadership by teachers on their voice behavior. Specifically, benevolent leadership has a significant positive influence on the voice behavior ( $\beta = .347, p < .001$ ), and moral leadership also has a great positive influence on the voice behavior ( $\beta = .344, p < .001$ ), while authoritarian leadership has a meaningful negative influence on the voice behavior ( $\beta = -.380, p < .001$ ). In other words, benevolent and moral leadership of teachers can promote voice behavior, while authoritarian leadership can inhibit voice behavior. Students' perception of benevolent and moral leadership of teachers is positively associated with voice behavior, whereas perceiving authoritarian leadership of teachers is negatively associated with voice behavior. Therefore, this study assumes that H1, H2, and H3 are all supported.

**FIGURE 2**  
**THE EFFECT MODEL OF PATERNALISTIC LEADERSHIP ON VOICE BEHAVIOR**



Note: PLB= paternalistic benevolent leadership; PLM= paternalistic moral leadership; PLA= paternalistic authoritarian leadership; VB1= inhibit voice behavior; VB2= promote voice behavior. \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

## DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION

### Discussion

This study validates the impact of paternalistic leadership on student voice behavior across different dimensions. Empirical research supports the importance of paternalistic relationships in cultivating student voice behavior (Mitra, 2003), with teachers playing a crucial role in shaping this behavior through their leadership power, particularly in guiding students to express their opinions and ideas in the student-teacher partnership (Nelson, 2018).

The research results show that the benevolent leadership perception of teachers has a significant positive impact on the voice behavior among college students in Hebei Province, China, which is similar to previous research findings (Jia et al., 2020; Rawat & Lyndon, 2016; Shi et al., 2020). This may be because teachers care for students through benevolent leadership behavior, demonstrate parental love, and establish a harmonious teacher-student relationship. Such harmonious relationship not only enhances students' motivation to participate (Wang et al., 2023), but also promotes the development of their individuality and encourages them to give advice (Jones & Bubb, 2020). It can help students better cope with emotions in school life and reduce their fear of giving advice (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015; Zheng et al., 2018), making it easier for them to express their ideas and dare to engage in voice behavior (Zhang et al., 2015).

The perception of teacher moral leadership significantly impacts their voice behavior among college students in Hebei Province, China, which is similar to previous research findings. (Cheng et al., 2002; Farh et al., 2008). In traditional Chinese culture, a good leader is always regarded as a role model for the group (Shi et al., 2020). Therefore, teachers must guide students in moral values and lead by example. This aligns with the findings of Walker and Qian (2018), who proposed in their research that “consistent with the expectations of high-level leadership moral behavior in traditional Confucianism, leadership practices in Chinese schools are also expected to become role models in various aspects”. In influencing student voice behavior, a teacher's selflessness, humility, integrity, honesty, and other personal qualities become extremely important (Shi et al., 2021). Through moral leadership, teachers can demonstrate characteristics such as honesty, openness, inclusiveness, and consistency in speech and action, and shape a trustworthy personality image, thereby creating more opportunities for positive interactions with students (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hashmi et al., 2021; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Students rely on the fair and just treatment provided by teachers and do not have to worry about any punishment for their suggestions, so they are more willing to offer advice (Cheng & Wang, 2014; Jia et al., 2020).

In Hebei province of China, college students perceive that authoritarian leadership by teachers has a significant negative impact on their voice behavior, similar to previous research findings. (Cheng et al., 2002; Farh et al., 2008; Shi et al., 2020; Zheng et al., 2020). The most negative feature of authoritarian leadership is that it may lead to low enthusiasm among organizational members, hinder organizational identity and belonging, prevent new ideas from being proposed, and limit the willingness to give suggestions (Goleman, 2018). Authoritarian leaders often mention their power of punishment, reward, and strict management (Harms et al., 2018). The authoritarian leadership behavior of teachers toward students may lead to negative responses and damage their credibility (Wu et al., 2012). When students interact with teachers who exhibit authoritarian leadership behavior, they may be afraid to express their true emotions (i.e. fear, anger), leading them to conceal their true feelings and suppress their emotions (Zheng et al., 2020). Therefore, authoritarian leadership by teachers is not conducive to normal communication between teachers and students, as it impairs the social relationship between them, and the commands and control by teachers may inhibit students' willingness to give suggestions (Shi et al., 2020).

In summary, the benevolent and moral leadership in paternalistic leadership can effectively promote student voice behavior, while authoritarian leadership is not conducive to creating a supportive environment for feedback and inhibits student voice behavior.



## **Suggestion**

### *Practical Suggestions*

In terms of benevolent leadership, teachers should consider the difficulties and needs of students in their life and studies, provide overall care for students' learning or non-learning issues, such as psychological care or academic support, and encourage students to actively participate in school activities. Secondly, schools can provide leadership training courses for teachers to improve their application of benevolent leadership behavior, advocate for the generosity and respect of benevolent leadership, and enable teachers to provide a supportive voice environment for all students.

In terms of moral leadership, university teachers need to have a profound understanding of the significance of moral character, adhere to the principle of treating others fairly, prioritize selfless dedication and the collective interests of the class. In daily award activities, teachers should strictly follow various standards and regulations for selection, avoiding any favoritism or bias based on emotions or personal connections. This approach ensures that students perceive a universally fair, just and open process. When disciplining students for violations, teachers should treat everyone equally without showing favoritism or engaging in cover-ups. Teachers can enhance their influence within the student community by setting a fair moral example for students.

In terms of authoritarian leadership by teachers, in this new era where students' personalities, values, and self-expression are significantly changing, teachers need to be cautious in using authoritarian leadership methods, avoiding making autocratic decisions. They can empower students with self-management authority, provide channels for students to make suggestions, set reward standards or system guarantees for voice behaviors, enhance communication between teachers and students, solve practical problems for students in dialogue, and create a good and warm teacher-student relationship and a harmonious learning atmosphere. Teachers should also consider students' opinions to increase their sense of participation and importance when it comes to teaching methods and some matters involving students' vital interests.

Therefore, paternalistic leadership by teachers can strengthen benevolent and moral leadership, provide psychological care and academic support for students, set an example of fairness and morality. Simultaneously, to restrain authoritarian leadership behavior and helps avoid making authoritarian decisions, thus fostering a supportive environment for students to express their voice.

### *Research Suggestions*

First, future research can draw on "dual leadership" (Schreuders & Legesse, 2012), combining different dimensions of parental leadership style, further exploring the complexity and dynamics of paternalistic leadership.

Secondly, future research could choose to collect multi-source longitudinal data through longitudinal research methods designed with qualitative or mixed methods at different time periods, providing supplementary evaluation for teacher-parent leadership practices through classroom observations, interviews, and teacher personal reports.

## **LIMITATION**

Firstly, this study did not integrate the different dimensions of paternalistic leadership styles. Leadership should not be black or white, as leaders may adopt a combination of different leadership styles during management. This means that leadership styles are not purely benevolent or moral, nor purely authoritarian.

Secondly, this study relies on a single data source, and the evaluation of teachers' paternalistic leadership behavior is solely based on students' perception of teacher leadership behavior practice, without combining actual feedback from teachers, which limits the comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the interaction between teachers and students.

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