

# The effects of paternalistic leadership on task performance: Testing a moderated mediation model in Turkish organizations\*

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## Abstract

Drawing on the findings from a serial moderated mediation model, this study aims to expand prior research by investigating the interaction between paternalist leadership and employee task performance. Study also aims to test the indirect effects of perceived person-organization fit and psychological ownership on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance, through serial mediation models. Furthermore, the moderating role of organizational size in direct and all indirect relations between paternalistic leadership and task performance, through five different models is tested. Sample consists of 1,652 employees from various industries in İstanbul, Turkey. Hypothesized relationships were tested through structural equation modelling. The findings demonstrated the significant positive direct relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance. Psychological ownership mediated the relationship of paternalistic leadership and task performance while person-organization fit had no mediating effect. Practical implications and further recommendations are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Paternalistic leadership, Person-organization fit, Psychological ownership, Task performance, Organizational size

**JEL Codes:** C31, D23, M10, L20

## Introduction

Combining authority and considerateness in a leader's protecting and caring behaviours towards subordinates, the paternalistic style of leadership, also defined as father-like leadership, is effective in many non-Western countries (Westwood/Chan 1992; Aycan/Kanungo/Mendonca/Yu/Deller/Stahl/Kurshid 2000; Ansari/Ahmad/Aafaqi 2004; Aycan 2006; Pellegrini/Scandura 2006; Rawat/Lyndon 2016). Studies show that guiding subordinates in a parental manner, paternalistic

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leadership positively affects employees' attitudes and behaviours in the workplace such as job satisfaction (Pellegrini/Scandura/Jayaraman 2010), job performance (Pellegrini/Scandura 2006; Chen/Eberly/Chiang 2011; Uğurluoğlu/ Aldoğan/Turgut/Özatkan 2018), organizational commitment (Erben/Güneşer 2008), organizational citizenship behaviours (Chen et al. 2011) and intention to stay (Uğurluoğlu et al. 2018).

An explanation of the effectiveness of paternalistic leadership on employee attitudes and behaviours is that employees may identify with the leader. According to the social identity theory (Tajfel/Turner 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner/Hogg/Oakes/Reicher/Whetherell 1987), employee activities are congruent with their identities that satisfy their needs for belonging and self-enhancement (Pratt 1998). Subordinates may construct an identity involving child-like roles against paternalistic leaders' supporting, caring, and protecting behaviours like a father. As a parental figure of the group, paternalistic leaders tend to create a positive family-like climate in the workplace. Such positive climate helps subordinates develop organizational identification through internalizing leader's values and goals and bonding with the organization (Van Knippenberg/Van Knippenberg/De Cremer/Hogg 2004; Howell/Shamir 2005; Erben/Güneşer 2008).

Concerning the leader-oriented identification process, subordinates' perceived general fit between own and organization's values may also affect their attitudes and behaviours (Piasentin/Chapman 2006). Person-organization fit is an important predictor of employee performance (Farooqui/Nagendra 2014; Han/Chiang/ McConville/Chianet 2015). Leaders mostly contribute informally to person-organization fit by instilling in and/or transferring to employees the values, norms, and goals of the organization (Piccolo/Colquitt 2006; Hoffman/Bynum/Piccolo/ Sutton 2011). Unlike other leadership styles, paternalistic leaders create a positive family-like atmosphere in the organization that may generate in subordinates a perception of fit with their leader and organization. In this sense, the way leader shapes the organization often influences the self-determination of subordinates with the organization (Lord/Brown 2001).

One possible outcome of organizational identification including subjective perceptions of person-organization fit is a strong sense of feeling that it is "my organization" (Vandewalle /Van Dyne/Kostova 1995). In effect, organizational identification represents employee beliefs that describe themselves as part of the organization, and person-organization fit signifies congruence between individual and organizational values. Collectively, these concepts may trigger psychological ownership, in which an individual identifies self with a target with possessive feelings (Pierce/Kostova/Dirks 2001). Generally, the degree of controlling and investing self in the target primarily shapes the possessive feelings in terms of psychological ownership (Pierce/O'Driscoll/Coghlan 2004). In this regard, the

motivation of having a place – to have a home – with person-organization fit perceptions, and the sense of identification with the organization through behaviours of paternalistic leaders may generate and enhance subordinates' psychological ownership towards the organization.

In line with the explanations above, the main purpose of this study is to explore the interactive effects of paternalistic leadership, person-organization fit and psychological ownership on employee task performance. The study is designed to contribute to the knowledge on paternalistic leadership by integrating paternalistic leadership, person-organization fit, and psychological ownership, and attempts to investigate the relationships among the aforesaid variables, and identify direct and indirect effects on task performance, through a social identity theory perspective which covers both identity theory and social categorization theory (Hornsey 2008). This approach is important in that it expands the research domain of these three fields and also casts light onto issues of how and why employees' perceptions of paternalistic leadership enhances task performance in collectivistic cultures like Turkey, and which personal relationships in Turkish organizations are highly determinative.

The paper is organized as follows: Following the introduction, the Turkish cultural context is described with a view to identifying potential causes underlying the relationships among variables in terms of cultural issues. Provided next are the theoretical framework and hypotheses describing the research model relying on the extant literature. Then the methodology is briefly explained, and results and analyses are discussed. Finally, we summarize the conclusions of our study, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

## **Institutional and Cultural Context in Turkey**

In Turkey, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) account for 99,8 % of all enterprises, 74 % of employment and 54 % of value-added (EC, OECD, World Bank); large-scale business groups called private family-type holdings (Buğra/Üsdiken 1995; Kabasakal/Bodur 1998; Paşa/Kabasakal/Bodur 2001) are other economic actors. Almost all SMEs are family companies, but also it is common for founding-family members to control the management in holdings. As a result of family dominance in management, companies are characterized by highly centralized decision-making, highly personalized relationships, strong leadership, and limited delegation (House/Hanges/Javidan/Dorfman/Gupta 2004). This business environment forms an appropriate atmosphere for paternalistic leadership; along with Turkish socio-cultural values that significantly influence management styles and employee values (Berkman/Özen 2008).

The Turkish society is defined as a collectivist one with a high-power distance (Hofstede 1980, 1993; Trompenaars 1993) and where in-group collectivism is distinct (House et al. 2004). Values of Asian societies rather than Western ones

are prevalent hence the Turkish society is a high-context and polychronic one. Besides, high levels of hierarchy and conservatism indicate the importance of belongingness to a group (Yahyagil/Ötken 2011). As suggested by Smith/Guthrie/Chen (1996), higher levels of conservatism validate paternalism. In fact, power representing dominance over people and resources is the dominant value at individual level (Yahyagil/Ötken 2011). The Turkish culture represents family culture where leaders are regarded as caring fathers (Trompenaars/Hampden-Turner 1998). Assuming the “role of a parent”, leaders use ‘taking over responsibility’ behaviour for employees view leaders as the ones who know what should be done, better than employees themselves (Paşa 2000).

Leaders in Turkey are expected to perform their managerial functions as well as social roles, i.e. it is common for a leader to attend weddings, funerals, or other family affairs of their subordinates. Besides, paternalism is becoming stronger in high power distance societies (House et al. 2004). Power inequality among leaders and subordinates representing paternalistic relations is socially acceptable in Turkey, which probably results from Turkish family structure where family members are accepted without question to comply with the decisions and directions of the father (Pellegrini/Scandura 2006).

Hiller/Sin/Ponnappalli/Özgen (2019), in their meta-analytical study, reveal that when followers have high power distance and collectivist values, leaders are rated as having paternalistic characteristics. It may thus be inferred that having these prevalent values associated with paternalism, there exists evidence that paternalistic leadership is generally accepted in Turkish organizations. Recent studies (e.g. Erben/Güneşer 2008; Keleş/Aycan 2011; Erden/Ötken 2019; Ünler/Kılıç 2019) also confirm that paternalistic leadership is salient and has significant consequences in Turkish organizations.

## **Development of Hypotheses**

### *Paternalistic leadership and employee task performance*

Rooted in the Weberian view, paternalistic leaders provide care, protection, and guidance for their subordinates both in work and personal life (Aycan et al. 2000; Aycan 2006). If a leader adopts a human-oriented attitude, s/he is more likely to effectively influence subordinates (Wijesinghe 2018). Such paternalistic leader behaviours are important for positive employee outcomes such as productivity, performance, identity, and well-being (Hollander 1992; Van Knippenberg et al. 2004). As argued by the social identity theory (Tajfel/Turner 1979), followers personally identify with their leaders who represent them, and since leaders represent the identity of groups, they are important for social identity development (Reicher/Haslam/Hopkins 2005). By the social identity theory, individual self-concept which is associated with social identity and relationship with one’s leader who s/he identifies with are significant determinants of behaviour.

Since the social identity of individuals is part of their self-concept; for subordinates, paternalistic leadership behaviour may lead to an increased sense of personal identification with their leaders who act as a part of their individual identity. Haslam/Reicher/Platow (2012) offer the concept of “we-ness” by which leaders and followers are connected on a significant factor of social interaction called the feeling of “us”. Leaders play a crucial role in representing and defining a group’s identity based on we-ness. This social identification may have both motivational and behavioural consequences as behaviour and identity seem inseparable. Studies report that employee identity affected by leaders is associated with employee outcomes (Van Knippenberg/Van Knippenberg 2004; Van Knippenberg/Van Knippenberg /De Cremer/Hogg 2005).

For non-Western contexts, scholars argue that paternalistic leadership is the most prevalent and effective leadership style (Pellegrini/Scandura 2008; Aycan/Schyns/Sun/Felfe/Saher 2013). When a supervisor acts like a father and shows concern for employee job-related well-being, subordinates are likely to develop positive attitudes towards him (Cheng/Chou/Wu/Huang/Farth 2004; Chan/Huang/Snape/Lam 2013).

Research on the effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance is limited although there are studies in the literature (Tsai/Spain/Wang 2013; Özcelik/Cenkçi 2014; Uğurluoğlu et al. 2018; Wang/Tsai/Dionne/Yammarino/Spain/Ling/... /Cheng 2018; Tekin 2019). In non-Western cultures, personal and organizational identity may independently or interactively shape employee outcomes (Cha/Chang/Kim 2014). However, individuals in Western societies hold an individualistic worldview, whereas those in Eastern countries are typically collectivist (Menard/Warkentin/Lowry 2018). For Turkey, collectivism appears as the most dominant organizational value in Turkish organizations. As a result of collectivist values, leader behaviours tend to be more paternalistic and considerate (Paşa et al. 2001). As Haslam/Powell/Turner (2000) argue that employee sense of relatedness is stimulated by social identity; such relatedness with their leader will positively influence employee performance. A recent meta-analytic study examining 152 studies from Eastern cultures show that the benevolence and morality sub-dimensions of paternalistic leadership have significant positive effects on task performance, with an incremental variance (up to 19 % for sub-dimensions and 5 % for unitary construct) above and beyond other leadership styles such as transformational leadership and leader-membership exchange (LMX) concerning employee task performance and other attitudes including organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), counterproductive-work behaviour (CWB), creativity, turnover intentions, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, trust in leader, satisfaction with leader, and engagement (Hiller/Sin/Ponnalalli/Özgen 2019). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

*H1: Paternalistic leadership is positively related with employee task performance.*

#### *P-O Fit as a mediator*

One of the most promising approaches explaining an interactive relationship between self and organizational identity is the person-organization fit (P-O fit) framework (Werbel/Demarie 2005). According to Yukl (2012), employees who identify themselves with their organization are proud of their membership, a key factor in their social identity. When employees perceive that they belong to their organization, they feel belongingness and social connection (Hogg 2001). Therefore, employee identification with organization is another form of social identification.

Person-organization fit has been studied by many scholars until today. The concept is often defined as “congruence between the values of employees and of the organization” (O'Reilly/Chatman/Caldwell 1991; Posner 2010). Employees are more likely to perceive organizational values as a good fit with their own values (Chi/Pan 2012). Person-organization value congruence is widely accepted to explain P-O fit (Kristof-Brown/Zimmerman/Johnson 2005; Huang/Cheng/Chou 2005; Piasentin/Chapman 2006; Vondey 2010; Hoffman et al. 2011) which also interacts with identification. If an organization has similar values with those of employees, self-identity of employees emerges as a means of determining organizational identification (Pratt 1998; Werbel/Demarie 2005). So, when employees regard their organization as a source of social identity (Ashforth/Mael 1989), they may feel fit with the organization.

Besides commitment to organizational values, the congruence between leader's and employee's values is also critical. As organizational values are defined by leaders, when subordinates internalize their leaders' values as their own, they may identify themselves with their leaders (Wu/Huang/Li/Liu 2012). Thus, employees may develop a social identity for their organization, which in turn affects their performance (Huang/Cheng/Chou 2005). The study by Ashforth/Harrison/Corley (2008) supports the argument that stronger the identity between the employee and the organization, the stronger is the identification exhibited in their behaviours. Thus, P-O fit is apparently examined as a predictor of performance (e.g. Goodman/Svyantek 1999; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Hoffman/Woehr 2006; Bright 2007; Han et al. 2015; Hamstra/Van Vianen /Koen 2019).

In this study, we suggest that P-O fit mediates the paternalistic leadership-task performance relationship. The main reason for choosing P-O fit as a mediator is based on the relational ties between employees and organizations, mainly focusing on specific facets of relationship. Supervisors serve as intermediaries in the relationship between employees and their organization which is required in explaining employee perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours (Aselage/Eisenberger

2003). Supervisors also play a role in catalysing the distant exchange relationship between employees and their organizations. Therefore, the relationship between an employee and his/her supervisor may be noteworthy in understanding the fit perceptions (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005). The P-O fit perceptions may be increased with high-quality paternalistic relationships, increasing employee welfare, and creating a family-like atmosphere in the workplace, this is because having a high-quality relationship contributes to employees' ability to use the benefits of high P-O fit (Erdoğan/Kraimer/Liden 2004). Therefore, the following hypothesis is tested:

*H2: Person-organization fit mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance.*

### *Psychological ownership as a mediator*

In collectivist cultures, people think what belongs to one member of the group also belongs to all other members (Menard et al. 2018). Psychological research supports the assumption of Aristotle who suggests that human beings fulfil their potential only in the context of belonging (Schnell/Höge/Weber 2019). Numerous researchers (e.g. Olckers/Koekemoer 2017; Olckers/Van Zyl 2017; Stander/Coxen 2017; Pirkkalainen/Pawlowski/Bick/Tannhäuser 2018; Zhu/Hsu/Burmeister-Lamp/Fan 2018) claim that psychological ownership includes a strong sense of belongingness.

Feeling of belonging is a critical psychological need that may be fulfilled through feelings of ownership (Pierce et al. 2001) and implies a sense of "having a place" where these needs are met (Van Zyl/Van Der Vaart/Stemmet 2017). Likewise, psychological ownership is characterized as; "belongingness and self-identity related to the organization like they have a feeling of -the organization is mine-" (Avey/Avolio/Crossley/Luthans 2009; Mustafa/Martin/Hughes 2016). Individuals resort a sense of ownership to define themselves and express their self-identity to others. Strong psychological ownership means that the ties between the owner and the ownership target are strong (Liu/Wang/Hui/Lee 2012). A high level of identification will help employees to engage in behaviours that are congruent with their identity and express that identity (Gümüşlüoğlu/Karakitapoğlu/Aygün/Scandura 2017). Therefore, organizational identification appears as an important motive that leads to psychological ownership (Zhu/Chen/Li/Zhou 2013).

Numerous authors have to date attempted to explain the psychological ownership with social identity (e.g. Moon 2006; Mayhew et al. 2007; Avey et al. 2009; McIntyre et al. 2009; Pierce/Jussila 2010; Hillenbrand/Money 2015; Dawkins/Tian/Newman/Martin 2017).

Psychological ownership may be examined as an important antecedent to behavioural outcomes (Pierce/Jussila/Cummings 2009; Brown et al. 2014; Peng/Pierce 2015). In this sense, it may be stated that employees' psychological ownership is related to their feeling of emotional ownership of their work, tasks, and responsibilities (Avey/Wernsing/Palanski 2012). So, when employees develop a strong sense of psychological ownership of their job and organization, they develop high levels of commitment that result in higher belongingness. This also helps to develop positive attitudes towards the organization (Liu et al. 2012). Likewise, employees who feel stronger ownership for their organization will feel much pride, if the organization is successful and will work harder to become successful through better job performance (Kim/Beehr 2017). In addition, they may engage in extra-role behaviours that will result in higher performance over their tasks.

Based on the social identity theory, we assume that identity with the leader is an important antecedent for the development of psychological ownership. Employees may develop stronger ownership with their organization and their leader because of their identification which also creates belongingness for the organization. As previously stated, paternalistic leadership displays holistic care and concern for the welfare of the subordinate and his/her family. Such holistic care and concern produce feelings of indebtedness and obligation from subordinates, which motivate performance (Wu et al. 2012). Benevolent leadership inspires a close relationship by cultivating feelings of indebtedness and obligation. Relationship closeness at work enhances the psychological bond between subordinate and his/her immediate supervisor. Such feelings of inclusion enhance the supervisor's relationship closeness with the subordinate, further improving his/her personal attachment. Such attachment and identification lead to psychological ownership (Pierce et al. 2001). Thus, we posit that:

*H3: Psychological ownership mediates the relationships between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance.*

Based on the explanations above, we suggest that psychological ownership intervenes in the person-organization fit and employee task performance relation, for belongingness in an organization is also associated with person-organization fit. Given the gap in the literature, our study should cast light on the causal and conditional effects of psychological processes that explains the leadership on performance by proposing ownership as a potential mediator. In the light of the arguments above, we posit that:

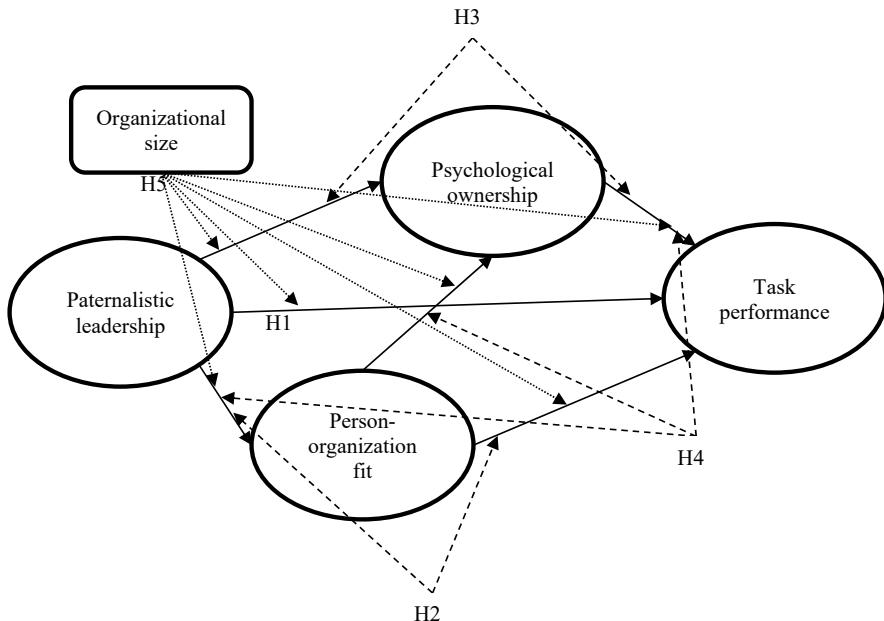
*H4: Person-organization fit and psychological ownership respectively mediate the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance.*

### *Organizational size as a moderator*

Organizational size is an important factor and may be helpful in explaining certain relationships within the organization. This paper also provides another contribution to the literature from an exploratory perspective, by testing whether organizational size has some moderating effect on the direct relationships discussed above. Some empirical studies explore the relationship, highlighting the relation between organizational size and specifically with corporate performance (e.g. Stanwick/Stanwick 1998; Real/Roldán/Leal 2014), organizational performance (e.g. Smith/Guthrie/Chen 1986; Kumar/Siddharthan 1994), innovation performance (e.g. Forés/Camisón 2016). Khan/Rehman/Fatima (2009) demonstrated that organizational size moderated the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational innovation. As far as we know, there exists no research about the effect of organizational size on the proposed relations. We assume that the examination of organizational size as a potential moderator should merit investigation. As the organization becomes larger, the leader will be less familiar with new members, thus unable to show his paternalistic behaviours towards them. Based on this assumption, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H5: Organizational size moderates direct and indirect relations between paternalistic leadership and task performance.*

Based on the hypotheses developed, the research model is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Research model**

## Method

### Participants

The sample of this study consisted of employees working in 36 organizations that operated in four distinct sectors namely manufacturing (16 firms), services (13 firms), commerce (6 firms), and logistics (1 firm) in İstanbul, Turkey. The convenience sampling method was used to collect cross-sectional data from employees through online survey questionnaires. In the introduction part of the survey, we expressed the voluntariness, confidentiality, and scientific purpose of the research for ethical reasons. Thus, we collected a total of 1,690 responses through the online form; however, after excluding the errors and omission in the data set, the sample consisted 1,652 employees. A relative majority of participants were male (n=953, 57.7 %; female n=699, 42.3 %) and married (n=927, 56.1 %; single n=724, 43.8 %). The average age of participants was 35.29 years (6=3.42) and most of the employees (n=1,147, 69.4 %) had undergraduate and graduate degrees. The tenure of 69.1 % (n=1,141) of the participants was between 1 and 5 years, and most (n=979, 59.3 %) worked in non-managerial positions, others were either low-level (n=311, 18.8 %) or mid-level (n=362, 21.9 %) managers. The organizations for which the participants worked were all domestic companies. 40.6 % (n=670) of the respondents worked for companies

that had employees fewer than 100 people, hence these companies are classified as SMEs; whereas the other companies are large-scale enterprises (59,4 %), even 15,2 % (n = 250) out of these companies have employees more than 1,000 people; these organizations represent some of Turkish holding companies.

### *Instruments*

**Paternalistic leadership:** Paternalistic leadership was measured using the 13-item Paternalism Scale (Aycan 2006; Pellegrini/Scandura 2006). The items had a five-point response format with “1: strongly disagree” to “5: strongly agree” where higher scores indicated higher level of paternalism. Participants were asked to assess their immediate supervisors on this scale. One sample item is: “My manager knows each of his employees intimately (e.g. personal problems, family life etc.)”. The internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ) for the scale items was found as 0.90.

**Person-organization fit:** The person-organization fit was measured using the 3-item Person–Organization Fit subscale of the Subjective Fit Perceptions Scale (Cable/DeRue 2002), adapted to Turkish culture by Behram/Dinç (2014). The items originally had a seven-point response format; to align however with other instruments in this study, we adapted it to a five-point response format with “1: strongly disagree” to “5: strongly agree” where higher scores indicated higher level of person-organization fit. One sample item is: “*My personal values match my organization’s values and culture*”. The internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ) for the scale items was 0.89.

**Psychological ownership:** The psychological ownership was measured using the 7-item Psychological Ownership Scale (Van Dyne/Pierce 2004), adapted to Turkish culture by Ötken (2015). The items had a five-point response format with “1: strongly disagree” to “5: strongly agree” where higher scores indicated higher level of psychological ownership. One sample item is: “*This is my organization*”. The internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ) for the scale items was 0.89.

**Task performance:** Employee task performance was measured using the 7-item “In-role Performance Scale” (Williams/Anderson 1991), adapted to Turkish culture by Tunca/Elçi/Murat (2018). The items had a five-point response format with “1: strongly disagree” to “5: strongly agree” where higher scores indicated higher level of task performance. One sample item is: “*I adequately complete my assigned duties*”. The internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ) for the scale items was 0.89.

**Organizational size:** The size of the organization was elicited directly from respondents by asking the total number of employees working in their organization by the following question: “*Please write the total number of employees in your organization.*”

### Procedure

To test the validity of instruments, we first conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to identify and assess the factorial structures, utilizing a maximum-likelihood estimation in Amos v23.0 statistical program. Since the person-organization fit scale had three items with zero degrees of freedom, the measurement model was established for understanding the construct validity. We employed chi square-degree of freedom ratio ( $\chi^2/df$ ), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) to examine the model fit (Hair/Black/Babin/Anderson/Tatham 2006).

The research hypotheses were tested using the statistical program of macro version of SPSS which is an observed variable ordinary least-squares and regression paths analysis tool for estimating direct and indirect effects through mediation and for estimating the conditional indirect effects in models with single or multiple moderators (Hayes 2013). The inferences about indirect effects were based on the bias corrected confidence intervals derived from 5.000 bootstrap resamples. In order to test the research hypotheses, eleven different models were constructed: The first and second models for the direct effect of paternalistic leadership (for the first hypothesis) and the mediating role of person-organization fit (for the second hypotheses) on task performance; the third and fourth models for the mediating role of psychological ownership on task performance (for the third hypotheses), the fifth and sixth models for the mediating roles of person-organization fit and psychological ownership respectively on task performance (for the fourth hypothesis); five different models (seventh to eleventh models) for the moderating role of organizational size on all possible mediating roles of person-organization fit and psychological ownership on task performance for determining the conditional effects (for the fifth hypothesis).

## Results

The results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of instruments are presented in Table 1. The results showed that paternalistic leadership ( $\chi^2/df=4.958$ ; CFI=.98; TLI=.97; RMSEA=.049; CR=.91; AVE=.54), psychological ownership ( $\chi^2/df=3.694$ ; CFI=.99; TLI=.99; RMSEA=.040; CR=.88; AVE=.52), task performance ( $\chi^2/df=4.159$ ; CFI=.99; TLI=.99; RMSEA=.044; CR=.90; AVE=.56), and measurement model of the research ( $\chi^2/df=4.543$ ; CFI=.96; TLI=.95; RMSEA=.046; CR=.97; AVE=.53) fitted the data well.

**Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analyses of Instruments**

Instruments	$\chi^2/sd$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	CR	AVE
1. Paternalistic leadership	4.958	.98	.97	.049	.91	.54
2. Psychological ownership	3.694	.99	.99	.040	.88	.52
3. Task performance	4.159	.99	.99	.044	.90	.56
4. Measurement model of the research	4.543	.96	.95	.046	.97	.53

The means, standard deviations, coefficient alphas and relations for the study variables are presented in Table 2. As the findings indicate, participants perceptions of paternalistic leadership may be regarded to be on average in Likert scale (*Mean*=2.82, *SD*=.87); furthermore, there was no significant difference ( $t=0.044$ ,  $p=.622$ ) between employees working for non-managerial positions and other participants working as either low-level or mid-level managers, in terms of their paternalistic leadership perceptions. The correlations were moderate between paternalistic leadership and task performance, as well as among other intervening variables as person-organization fit and psychological ownership, and the moderator variable organizational size.

**Table 2. Means, Deviations, Reliabilities and Correlations**

Variables	Mean	SD	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Age	35.29	3.42	1						
2. Gender	1.58	.48	.231**	1					
3. Marital status	1.56	.32	.410**	.175**	1				
4. Paternalistic leadership	2.82	.87	-.121**	-.007	-.030	(.90)			
5. Person-Organization fit	3.25	1.00	-.020	.068**	.014	.481**	(.89)		
6. Psychological ownership	2.30	.68	-.048	.045	.011	.501**	.490**	(.89)	
7. Task performance	3.76	.55	-.056*	-.067**	-.012	.151**	.095**	.173**	(.89)
8. Organization size	438.95	236.1	.150**	.034	.067**	-.134**	-.042	-.103**	-.081**

n=1,652, \*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

The first and second hypothesis assumed that paternalistic leadership had a positive relation with task performance and person-organization fit mediated this relationship. After controlling demographic variables (age, gender, marital status) the results showed that merely paternalistic leadership had significant positive relationship with task performance (in Model 1,  $\beta=.08$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and with person-organization fit (in Model 2,  $\beta=.55$ ,  $p<.01$ ). These results indicated that there was a significant positive direct relationship between paternalistic leadership and task performance, supporting the first hypothesis; but there was no signifi-

cant indirect effect in this relationship with a mediating role of person-organization fit (in Model 1,  $\beta=.02$ ,  $p<.19$ ), rejecting the second hypothesis.

The third hypothesis assumed that psychological ownership played a mediating role in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and task performance. The results showed that paternalistic leadership (in Model 3,  $\beta=.05$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and psychological ownership (in Model 3,  $\beta=.11$ ,  $p<.01$ ) had a significant positive relationship with task performance; and paternalistic leadership had a significant positive relationship with psychological ownership fit (in Model 4,  $\beta=.39$ ,  $p<.01$ ). The indirect effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance through psychological ownership was .04 (5000 samples 95 % bias corrected bootstrap CI:.0214 to.0627). Since the direct effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance was significant, indicating a partial mediating effect, the third hypothesis was partly supported.

In Model 3, indirect effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance through psychological ownership was .04 (5000 samples 95 % bias corrected bootstrap CI:.0214 to.0627). In model 6, indirect effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance through the person-organization fit and psychological ownership respectively was .01 (5000 samples 95 % bias corrected bootstrap CI:.0067 to.0212).

The fourth hypothesis assumed that person-organization fit and psychological ownership played mediating roles respectively in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and task performance. The results showed that paternalistic leadership (in Model 5,  $\beta=.27$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and person-organization fit (in Model 5,  $\beta=.22$ ,  $p<.01$ ) had a significant positive relationship with psychological ownership; paternalistic leadership (in Model 6,  $\beta=.05$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and psychological ownership (in Model 6,  $\beta=.11$ ,  $p<.01$ ) had a significant positive relationship with task performance. The indirect effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance through the person-organization fit and psychological ownership respectively was .01 (5000 samples 95 % bias corrected bootstrap CI:.0067 to.0212). Since the direct effect of paternalistic leadership on task performance was significant, and the direct effect of person-organization fit on task performance was not significant indicating a partial serial mediating effect, the fourth hypothesis was partly supported.

**Table 3 . Mediation Analyses**

Independent variables	Dependent variables											
	Task performance				Person-Organization fit				Task performance			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Beta	t	Beta	t	Beta	t	Beta	t	Beta	t	Beta	t
Age	-.02	-.114	.26	.02	.81	.41	-.02	.02	.28	-.00	-.27	.78
Gender	-.07	-2.56	.01	.13	2.95	.00	-.08	-2.73	.01	.06	2.12	.03
Marital Status	.01	.59	.56	.01	.41	.68	.01	.50	.62	.03	.88	.37
Paternalistic leadership	.08	4.65	.00	.55	22.34	.00	.05	2.85	.00	.39	23.37	.00
Person-Organization fit	.02	1.30	.19							.22	13.91	.00
Psychological ownership												
R		.17		.48				.20		.50		.58
R <sup>2</sup>				.03		.23		.04		.25		.33
F						9.80		128.21		14.22		140.14
Sig.						.00		.00		.00		.00

N=1,652

**Table 4. Moderation Analyses**

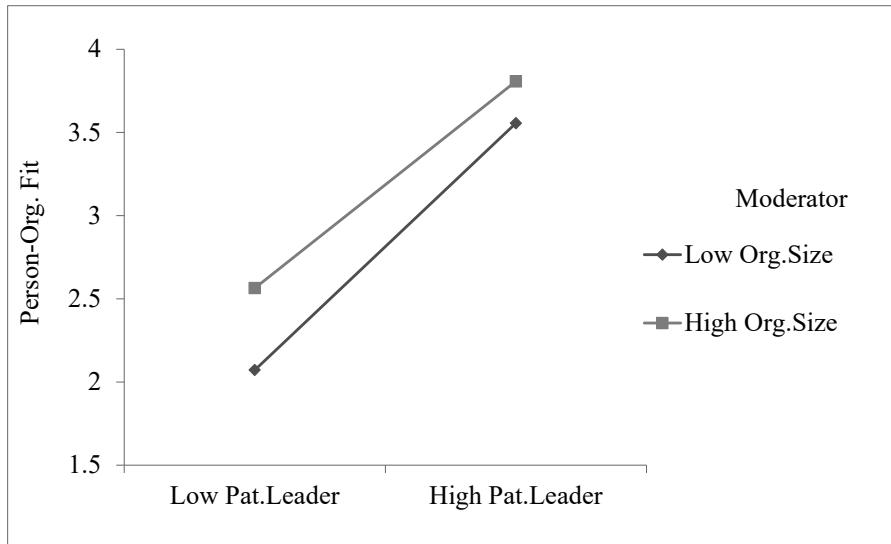
Independent variables	Dependent variables															
	Person-Organization fit				Task performance				Psychological ownership				Task performance		Psychological ownership	
	Model 7				Model 8				Model 9				Model 10		Model 11	
	Beta	t	Sig.	Beta	t	Sig.	Beta	t	Sig.	Beta	t	Sig.	Beta	t	Sig.	
Age	.02	.67	.49	-.01	-.86	.39	-.01	-.08	.93	-.02	.25	.42	-.04	-.170	.09	
Gender	.13	2.98	.00	-.07	-2.57	.01	.06	2.16	.03	-.08	-2.74	.01	.03	.89	.37	
Marital Status	.02	-.44	.66	.02	.59	.55	.03	.94	.34	.01	.51	.61	.03	.90	.37	
Paternalistic leadership	.68	12.43	.00	.09	2.08	.04	.46	12.74	.00	.04	.98	.33				
Person-Organization fit				.00	.03	.97							.27	.859	.00	
Psychological ownership													.10	.197	.04	
Organization size	.19	2.68	.01	-.05	-1.15	.25	.09	1.88	.06	-.06	-1.05	.29	-.14	-2.89	.00	
Patern.lead X Orgsize	-.06	-2.54	.01	-.00	-.06	.55	-.04	-2.51	.01	.00	.25	.80				
P-O fit X Org.size					.01	.70	.48						.03	.198	.04	
Psyc.owner X Org.size										.01	.30	.77				
R				.49			.18			.51			.21		.50	
R <sup>2</sup>				.24			.03			.26			.04		.25	
F				86.93			6.90			95.45			9.50		91.32	
Sig.				.00			.00			.00			.00		.00	

N=1,652

The fifth hypothesis assumed that organizational size played moderating roles in direct and all indirect relations between paternalistic leadership and task performance. To test this hypothesis, five different models were used in which all possible direct and indirect interactions among variables were included. In the first and second models (Model 7 / Model 8), the moderating effects of organizational size were explored in the mediating model of person-organization fit on the paternalistic leadership-task performance relationship. The results showed that the interactive effect of paternalistic leadership-organizational size on person-organization fit was significant (in Model 7,  $\beta=-.06$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

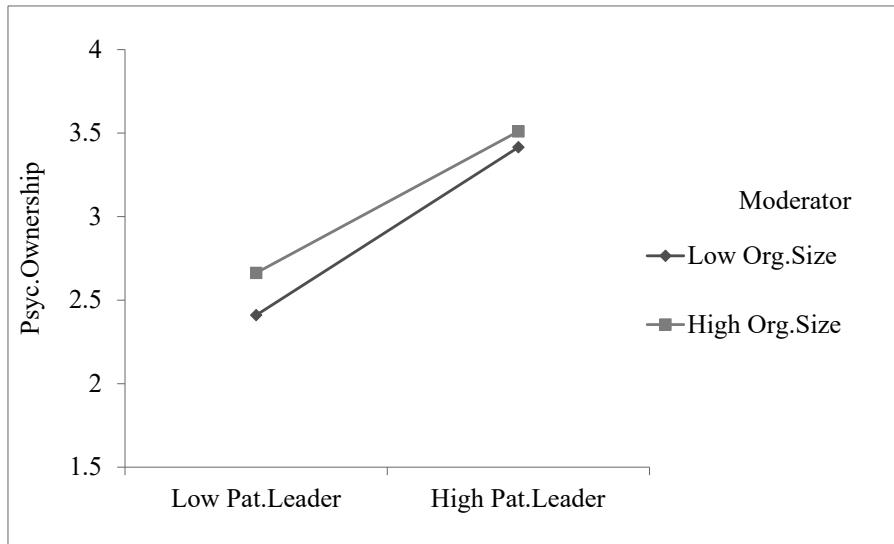
Figure 2 shows the interaction plot with simple slopes for organizational size, indicating that organizational size damped the positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and person-organization fit.

**Figure 2. The interactive effect of paternalistic leadership and organizational size on person-organization fit**



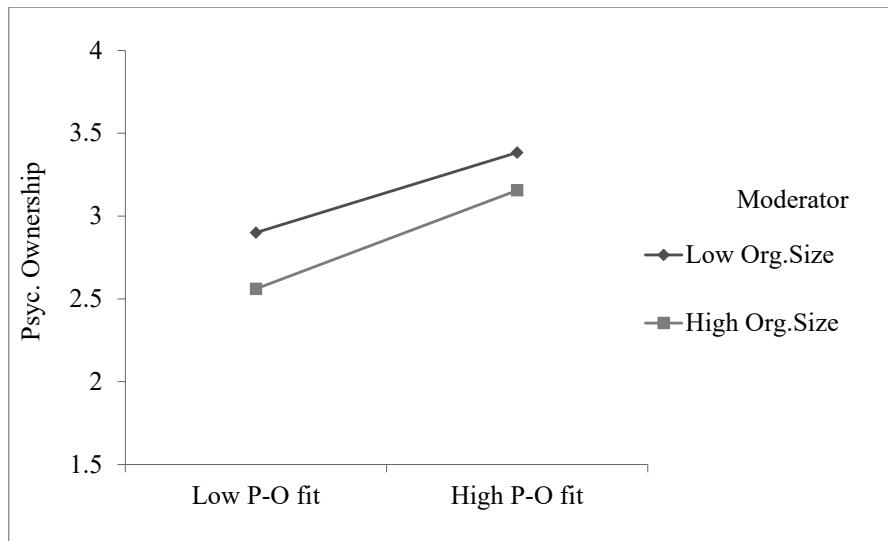
In the third and fourth models (Model 9 and Model 10), the moderating effects of organizational size was tested in the mediating model of psychological ownership on the paternalistic leadership-task performance relationship. The results showed that the interactive effect of paternalistic leadership-organizational size on psychological ownership was significant (in Model 9,  $\beta=-.04$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Figure 3 shows the interaction plot with simple slopes for organizational size, indicating that organizational size damped the positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and psychological ownership.

**Figure 3. The interactive effect of paternalistic leadership and organizational size on psychological ownership**



In the fifth model (Model 11), the moderating effects of organizational size were explored in the relationship between person-organization fit and psychological ownership. The results showed that the interactive effect of person-organization fit-organizational size on psychological ownership was significant (in Model 11,  $\beta=.03$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Figure 4 shows the interaction plot with simple slopes for organizational size, indicating that organizational size strengthened the positive relationship between person-organization fit and psychological ownership.

**Figure 4. The interactive effect of person-organization fit and organizational size on psychological ownership**



The results of moderator analyses on all possible direct and indirect interactions among variables indicated that organizational size had conditional effects on the paternalistic leadership-person-organization fit relationship, paternalistic leadership-psychological ownership relationship, and person-organization fit-psychological ownership relationship. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was partly supported.

## Discussion

This study is based on a rationale that when a leader acts with a father-like concern for employees' job-related outcomes, employees are more likely to develop positive feelings and attitudes toward the leader which helps to form an emotional bond with the organization.

Grounded in the Confucian ideology, paternalistic leadership has significant positive effects in Asian cultures (e.g. Chen et al. 2011). In terms of non-Western contexts, collectivism and high-power distance appear as the core organizational values in Turkish organizations. Leader behaviours tend to be more paternalistic and considerate based on these values. The Turkish culture with a high-power distance creates an appropriate environment for the practice of paternalistic leadership (Mert/Özgenel 2020). Similar to the findings of the previous research, conducted in collectivistic societies like Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American (Aycan 2006; Bedi 2020; Pellegrini/Scandura 2006, 2008; Pellegrini et al. 2010; Gelfand et al. 2007; Rawat/Lyndon 2016), this study also found that pater-

nalistic leadership style existed and had important consequences in Turkish organizations. Personal relationships are highly valued that promote the hierarchical structure in paternalistic relations. On the other hand, both white and blue-collar employees in Turkey tend to work extremely hard for long hours. They like to get acquainted with the people they can work, collaborate, and do business with. In fact, they most likely complete their tasks with those they trust and those that may provide a long-term relationship. Therefore, the power of leadership is critical while performing the tasks. This study demonstrates that the more paternalism a leader shows, the higher the performance of employees will be in their tasks.

Considering today's transformation in leadership models, we argue that leaders that make employees feel as owners of the organization may make people feel much responsible for their work and the organization. Paternalistic leadership behaviour, in that sense, may lead to an increased sense of belongings and ownership of subordinates, which may lead to stronger task performance. The extant literature is marked by several concerning limitations, exploring the links between paternalistic leadership and employee performance. However, more evidence is required to explore its effects on non-Western cultures. Therefore, one goal of this study is to fulfil this gap by testing a comprehensive model linking paternalistic leadership to task performance using cross-sectoral data sources.

As hypothesized, we found that paternalistic leadership positively influenced employee task performance. These findings are consistent with the previous findings indicating that paternalistic leadership is an antecedent of task performance. Our findings similarly support prior studies (Aycan et al. 2000; Ansari et al. 2004; Cheng et al. 2004; Chen et al. 2011; Karakitapoğlu-Aygün /Gümüşluoğlu/Scandura 2019; Martínez 2003; Uğurluoglu et al. 2018; Uhl-Bien/Tierney/Graen/Wakabayashi 1990) which state that paternalistic view is effective on employee performance. Distinct from recent studies, our findings are based on a wider sample from various industries.

To understand leadership, theories about psychological processes that facilitate follower action through leader behaviour are necessary (Van Knippenberg et al. 2004). The social identity theory is relied on as a theoretical background in this study to explicate the relationships between paternalistic leadership and employee performance and the mediating roles of psychological ownership and person-organization fit. Since the social identity of individuals is part of their self-concept; for subordinates, paternalistic leadership behaviour may lead to an increased sense of personal identification with their leaders who act as a part of their individual identity.

Furthermore, we assume that feeling of belongingness to an organization by employees may be a significant contributor to achieving organizational goals. Psychological ownership is linked to the identity theory and signals a powerful

sense of strong ties between employee feelings and work-related tasks and the organization. Although there is no empirical study examining the relationship between psychological ownership and employee performance, some studies (e.g. Avey et al. 2009; Ghafoor/Qureshi/Khan/Hijazi 2011; Akçin/Erat/Alnıaçık/Ciftçioğlu 2018) discuss the existence of such relationships. To explain how paternalistic leader influence employee task performance, we propose that psychological ownership triggers this relation. Findings showed that as the level of perceived psychological ownership increases, task performance also increases. We also found that psychological ownership played a mediating role between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance.

In the literature, person-organization fit is found to be positively related with task performance (e.g. Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Hoffman/Woehr 2006). Chi/Pan (2012) demonstrated that job-fit perceptions of employees mediated the relation between transformational leadership at the individual level and task performance, and Huang et al. (2005) found that person-organization fit mediated the relation between CEO charismatic leadership and employees' extra work effort. In contrast to the existing literature, this study has not found any significant effect of person organization fit on paternalistic leadership and task performance relation. However, these findings are promising because the study is among the first few to examine the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance simultaneously, with multi-sectoral data, and the results confirm that such relationship exists.

Finally, we also assessed the moderating role of organizational size in all proposed relationships. Results confirmed that larger the organization size, the weaker was the positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and person-organization fit, and the weaker as well was the positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and psychological ownership. These findings indicate that perceived paternalistic leadership is less likely to contribute person-organization fit and psychological ownership for larger organizations in comparison with smaller ones.

On the other hand, another result showed that larger the organization size the stronger was the positive relationship between person-organization fit and psychological ownership. One explanation of this finding may be associated with the effective role of human resource management practices in the larger organizations. With the help of human resources management practices such as selection or job analysis, the higher person-organization fit may further increase the ownership feelings of employees. Further studies are however needed to explore the role of human resources management practices in these interactions.

Our results provide two major theoretical contributions. The study aimed and successfully tested an adaptation of the paternalistic leadership survey, among others, through a comprehensive model for the first time to explore the relation-

ship between paternalistic leadership and employee task performance in the Turkish business context. Besides, this research extends the paternalistic leadership research by exploring the employees' perceived identification mechanism between the paternalistic leadership and employee task performance. The study also emphasizes the importance of mechanisms of psychological ownership and person-organization fit and therefore encourages further research.

## **Managerial implications**

From a management practice point of view, our research has important implications for organizations seeking to enhance employee task performance. Paternalistic leaders are in general concerned with and try to forge a close relationship with their employees. So, when subordinates face any difficulty or problem, superiors will readily support them and show benevolence. While in Western cultures paternalism and leadership are considered as mutually exclusive, Turkish managers do not consider paternalistic leadership styles as inconsistent. This fatherly figure may be influential in Turkish organizations. Managers should focus on maintaining employees' feeling of identification and the value congruence with the company. Therefore, this study is a step in theorizing the contextual dynamics of leadership.

## **Limitations and future research**

Notwithstanding its contributions, this study has some limitations which future studies should avoid or improve. It would be interesting to further explore the effects of paternalistic leadership on other job-related outcomes. The questions also remain as to what extent a father figure of a leader may be beneficial and when and how it exerts an influence on not only on employee task performance but also other types of job performance such as contextual performance. This may clarify the role of a paternalistic leader on extra role performance. Additionally, since the research findings are based on cross-sectional data, the exploration of the suggested hypothesis in a longitudinal time-frame in future studies will provide important insights.

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