

Impact of paternalistic leadership on employee creativity with the mediating role of psychological empowerment dimensions: a study of IT sector in Pakistan

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Abstract

Drawing on Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) theory, the current study examined the impact of paternalistic leadership on employee creativity in the Pakistani IT industry through the mediating role of psychological empowerment dimensions. The inquiry begins with a review of the literature on organizations in the IT industry. Employees in the Pakistan's IT industry were asked to complete a close-ended questionnaire in order to provide the information. Convenient Sampling technique was used in the study, and sample size was 400 employees and 350 responses were received. The reliability, descriptive, frequency, correlation, and regression of obtained data were performed using SPSS. The results confirmed the Paternalistic Leadership-Employee Creativity relationship through the mediating roles of competence, self-determination and impact, with forbid exception of mediating role of Meaning.

Keywords: Paternalistic Leadership, Employee Creativity, Psychological Empowerment Dimensions, IT Industry

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1. Introduction:

One of the most important problems faced by organizations today is how to foster the creative potential of their workforce in the turbulent and complex business environment (Blaique et al. 2022; Desmet & Roberts, 2022). Employee creativity is defined as the propensity to come up with fresh, innovative, and beneficial concepts for workplace goods, services, or activities (Jahanzeb et al., 2021). Creativity has been a focus of research for many different fields of study due to its significant relevance (Zarei et al. 2022, Wasim et al. 2022). Over several decades, research on creativity has developed across fields, leading to a diverse range of concepts. Employees with creative potential can find fresh perspectives and chances that lead to creativity (Mickiewicz & Kaasa, 2022). One's creativity can be stimulated or restrained by cognitive processes, positive cognitive processes stimulate cognition and broaden cognitive capacity, which boosts creativity (Gip et al. 2022; Oh et al. 2022).The sequential method of cognitive processing is affected by leadership style, which force one's cognitive processes to concentrate on discrete pieces of information (Li et al. 2022).

Numerous studies have attempted to evaluate the effects of different leadership styles, but solutions have

proven elusive, and leadership scholars are currently experiencing a number of challenges (Ford et al. 2022). Although the field of leadership has generated an impressive body of knowledge, there are additional types of positive and negative leadership styles that deserve scholarly investigation (Liu et al., 2022; Song et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2022; Pizzolitto et al., 2022; Islam et al. 2022; Khan et al., 2022). Academics have urged for further empirical research on the mechanisms through which leadership influences employee creativity (Song et al., 2022; Grego-Planer, 2022). Despite the fact that the Paternalistic style of leadership is attracting scholarly interest worldwide, there is still scope for further research (Xia et al., 2022; Gyamerah et al., 2022; Bibi et al., 2022). A study by Li et al. (2017) discovered that employee creativity in the Chinese IT sector was positively associated with paternalistic leadership. A study by Yousafzai et al. (2019) found that a lack of support for innovative ideas was a major barrier to creativity in the IT sector of Pakistan. The authors noted that employees often face resistance from superiors and colleagues when proposing new ideas, leading to a lack of motivation and creativity. Moreover, Pakistan has the lowest creativity score among the South Asian countries.

According to Global Innovation Index 2022, Pakistan was ranked at 87th position among 128 countries. Furthermore, in Pakistan, employees often perceive a lack of autonomy because decision-making and actions are tightly controlled by supervisors or due to organizational constraints (Ahmad et al., 2022). A research by Shaukat et al. (2020) suggests that employees in Pakistan frequently perceive their work as mundane, lacking in significance, and disconnected from their personal values. This perception of unfulfilling work diminishes their intrinsic motivation and reduces their willingness to engage in creative endeavors. Many recent studies found Employees' psychological empowerment positively associated with different styles of leadership (Zhang et al., 2022; Dedahanov et al., 2022). Gyamerah et al. (2022) urged that there is a need to investigate how different dimensions of psychological empowerment (for example meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) with paternalistic leadership and employee creativity. According to The Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) (Deci & Ryan, 1985) if a person perceives the presence of supportiveness in his/her environment at workplace it intrinsically motivates them to be competent and self-determined similarly if they perceive negativity in the environment it demotivates them. Following the logic of CET it is depicted that when there is paternalistic leader at workplace it will foster the trust among the employees (Eissa & Lester, 2017), as it makes the employees feel that our leaders is supportive towards our psychological needs of being competent, self-determined and have an impact that leads towards the creative potential among the employees. It has been seen that individual behavior is based on the evaluation of supportiveness and non-supportiveness in the external environment, so the presence of supportiveness at workplace fosters the positive outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

2. Literature Review

Paternalistic Leadership and Employee Creativity

Paternalistic leadership is characterized as a management approach that combines strict authority, moral uprightness, and fatherly compassion (Chen et al. 2020; Liu et al. 2021). According to Surusu et al. (2023), Paternalistic leadership, characterized by leaders who delegate authority, provide support, and encourage employee participation, has garnered significant attention in relation to employee creativity. Paternalistic leaders create a supportive work environment that encourages open communication, feedback, and idea sharing. This supportive climate promotes psychological safety, allowing employees to freely express their innovative ideas without fear of criticism or negative consequences. (Cheah et al., 2022; Lu et al., 2021). Employee outcomes are significantly impacted by paternalistic leadership styles (Dedahanov et al., 2022). Therefore, earlier studies have looked at the relationship between work outcomes and paternalistic leadership style (Islam et al. 2022; Liu et al. 2022; Peng et al. 2017). Employee creativity is defined as the propensity to come up with fresh, innovative, and beneficial concepts for workplace goods, services, or activities (Jahanzeb et al., 2020). Research demonstrates that leadership has a significant impact on employee creativity (Fu et al. 2022). There is a growing understanding among leaders that they must foster and build the Creative Intelligence (CiQ) of their teams as well as for the businesses they lead and direct (Yagnik & Luttig, 2022). Numerous studies show that paternalistic leadership has a positive impact on employee creativity (Gyamerah et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2017)

H1: Paternalistic leadership has a positive relationship with employee creativity

Paternalistic leadership and Psychological empowerment and employee creativity

Studies depicted that there is a positive association between paternalistic leadership and psychological empowerment but need to investigate how the different dimensions of psychological empowerment (for example meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) can explain the relationship between Paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Alghamdi et al. , 2021; Gyamerah et al.,2022).

Meaning

One of the dimensions of psychological empowerment, Meaning, deals with how one's beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes aligned with the demands of their distinct professional jobs (Gyamerah et al. 2022). According to Handayani & Hartijasti (2022), paternalistic leadership was positively related with meaning in the startup companies in Indonesia. The authors found that under Paternalistic leadership, employees considered their work valuable and it contributes towards the betterment of the society.

H2: Paternalistic leadership has a positive relationship with meaning

According to Wang et al. (2023), Paternalistic leadership is often associated with intrinsic motivation, as it fulfills employees' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When employees feel empowered, their intrinsic motivation is heightened, leading to increased engagement, satisfaction, and creativity in their work. Similar findings were made by Zhang et al., (2023) that workers who expressed a high level of meaning in their work were more likely to engage in original thought and problem-solving. According to the authors, having a feeling of meaning and purpose might boost motivation and raise one's readiness to try new things and take chances. The strong link between meaning and employee creativity is further supported by a review of the literature by Lu et al. (2022). The authors discovered that workers who find a lot of significance in their jobs are more likely to exhibit creative behavior and come up with novel ideas. The authors contend that companies can develop a culture by assisting workers in finding the purpose and value in their jobs.

H3: Meaning has a positive relationship with employee creativity

H4: Meaning mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity

Competence

Competence, which is one of the dimensions of psychological empowerment, is the belief in one's ability to do tasks at work (Xu et al. 2022). Competence is the capacity to successfully apply one's education, experience, knowledge, and abilities to carry out a task in a safe manner. According to Alzghoul et al. (2023), Paternalistic leaders invest in the development of their employees' skills and provide them with the necessary resources and training. This support enhances employees' confidence and competence, empowering them to engage in creative problem-solving and generate innovative solutions. Research demonstrates that leadership has a significant impact on employee competence (Fu et al., 2022; Yagnik & Luttig, 2022). Studies have shown that paternalistic leadership can have a positive impact on competence at the workplace (Iqbal et al., 2022; Lee & Chen, 2020; Lu & Dai, 2021; Shen et al., 2022).

H5: Paternalistic leadership has a positive relationship with competence

It can also lead to other desired outcomes like risk-taking by the individual. Competence is one of the

dimensions of psychological empowerment brought on by favorable circumstances and includes outcomes like creativity and innovative work behavior such as idea generation and implementation (Zhang et al., 2023). Competent employees have long been connected to productive behavior in the workplace due to its positive connotation. According to Lin et al. (2022), if an employee has a positive opinion of their leader and that leader also adequately addresses every question, they will undoubtedly pay back with higher performance and creative work behavior. In a study by Wang et al. (2021), the authors found that employees with a high level of competence were more likely to engage in creative behavior and generate innovative ideas.

H6: Competence has a positive relationship with employee creativity

H7: Competence mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity

Self Determination

A person's sense of independence, control, or starting or regulating their behaviors is referred to as self-determination (Gillison et al., 2019). Similar to the traditional Chinese concept of "fatherly leadership," paternalistic leadership is a style in which the leader portray themselves as a "strict father" who enforces strict rules and discipline, paternalistic bosses frequently show their staff members they care about them and that they are loved. At the same time, they set a good moral example for their subordinates (Zhou et al., 2022).

A study by Wong et al. (2021) found that paternalistic leadership was positively allied with self-determination in the service industry. The authors found that under paternalistic leadership, employees felt more in charge of their job and independence, leading to higher levels of self-determination. According to Chen, Chang, and Hsu's 2020 study, paternalistic leadership was found to be positively correlated with self-determination in the retail sector.

H8: Paternalistic leadership has a positive relationship with self-determination

According to research by Nuzul (2020), employees who expressed high levels of self-determination were more likely to engage in creative activity and generate original ideas. The authors contend that a feeling of autonomy and control over one's work can increase intrinsic drive, increase a person's desire to try new things, and increase their willingness to take risks, all of which are essential for fostering creativity. Kim et al. (2020) found a similar relationship between high self-determination levels among employees and their propensity for innovative ideas and problem-solving. Additionally, the analysis of the literature by Lu et al. (2022) supports the connection between employee creativity and self-determination. As a result, employees feel more self-determined and likely to be innovative for the organization (Sia & Appu, 2017).

H9: Self-determination has a positive relationship with employee creativity

H10: Self-determination mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity

Impact

Impact measures how much people believe in their abilities may affect work-related activities and outcomes (Gardner, 2019)It refers to self-control in one's working life and also actively participating in their work are regarded as psychologically empowering. As a result, psychological empowerment enhances employees' intrinsic motivational abilities, which may lead to excellent work-related outcomes (Sun et al., 2022). According to a study by Zhang et al. (2017), paternalistic leadership was found to increase employees' perceptions of the importance of their jobs and their engagement in decision-making. According to the authors, paternalistic leaders provide their staff members a sense of support and value, which raises their feelings of empowerment and job satisfaction. A review of the literature by Zhang et al. (2021) also supports the positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and impact.

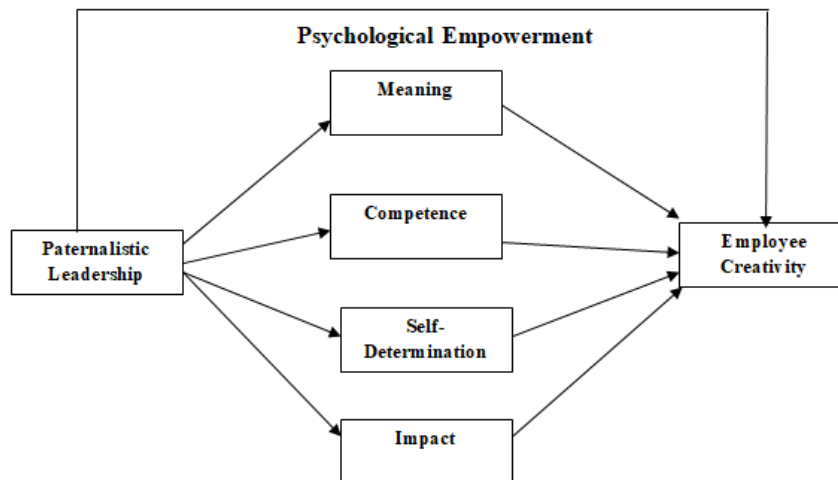
H11: Paternalistic leadership is positively related to impact

Employees with a higher level of impact were found by Knezovic and Musrati (2018) to be more likely to engage in creative behavior and produce more creative ideas. The authors claim that accepting the consequences of one's actions may boost intrinsic motivation, which in turn boosts creativity. The strong relationship between impact and employee creativity is further supported by the studies of Li et al. (2020) and Lu et al (2022), since employees are more independent at work, so they are able to work at their own pace and produce more innovative work. According to De Spiegelaere et al., (2018), one of the key factors affecting an employee's contentment at work is their level of work impact.

H12: Impact is positively related to employee creativity

H13: Impact mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework



3. Research Methodology

Population and Sample

Data has been gathered from those who were employed in Pakistan's IT industry by Self-administered questionnaire. Convenient sampling technique has been used in the study. Data has only been collected from the IT employees in the offices of Islamabad/Rawalpindi, which includes software developers, application developers and web developers. Over 400 questionnaires were distributed and 350 complete survey questionnaires were received, which gave a response rate of 87.5 percent.

Table 1: Demographic analysis of the study sample

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	220	37.1
	Female	130	62.9
Age	25-30	166	47.4
	31-40	143	40.9
	41-50	40	1.4
	51 and above	1	0.3
Education	Bachelors	52	14.9
	Masters	137	39.1
	MS/MPhil	153	43.7
	Others	8	2.3

Sources of Instrumentation

For measuring paternalistic leadership, 10 items were adapted by Zeynep et al. (2013) using five point Likert scale, e.g. “My supervisor behaves like a family member towards his / her employees”. A scale developed by Spreitzer (1995) was used to measure the dimensions of psychological empowerment. Meaning has been measured by using 3 items scale e.g. “The work that I do is important to me.”, Competence has been measured on 3 items e.g. “I am confident about my ability to do my job.”, Self-determination has been measured by 3 items scale e.g. “I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job” and Impact has been measured on 3 items scale e.g. “My impact on what happens in my department is large.” The 13 items scale measuring the employee creativity is adapted (Zhou & George, 2001) e.g., sample items included was “I suggest new ways to achieve goals or objectives” etc.

Table 2: Reliability analysis of the variables

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Paternalistic Leadership	10	0.951
Meaning	3	0.893
Competence	3	0.896
Self-determination	3	0.895
Impact	3	0.904
Employee creativity	13	0.937

4. Results

Table 3: Descriptive & Correlation analysis

Variables	Mean	Std dev	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Paternalistic leadership	3.61	.9451	1					
2.Meaning	3.76	.9474	.656**	1				
3.Competence	3.89	.8868	.562**	.702**	1			
4.Self- determination	3.67	.9485	.689**	.705**	.677**	1		
5.Impact	3.61	.9931	.681**	.628**	.573**	.751**	1	
6.Employee Creativity	3.82	.6813	.510**	.523**	.595**	.606**	.603**	1

The table 3 shows that the hypothesized variables are correlated with each other. For Regression analysis Preacher and Hayes macro model was used.

Table 4: Regression Analysis (Paternalistic Leadership, Meaning and Employee Creativity)

	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	R-sq	F
Outcome variable=Meaning								
Paternalistic Leadership	.6571	.0406	16.1939	.0000	.5773	.7369	.4297	262.2410
Outcome variable= EC								
Meaning	0.376	.0274	6.786	.0000	-.1047	-.1787		
Paternalistic Leadership	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166	.5426	38.6668
TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS								
Total effect of X on Y	.3709	.0340	10.9066	.0000	.3040	.4377		
Direct effect of X on Y	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166		
Indirect effect of X on Y								
Meaning	-.0087	.0345			-.0738	.0610		

Referring to table 4, it has been confirmed that Employee creativity and paternalistic leadership have a significant positive relationship. The relationship is significant with the coeff value of .0302, $T > 1.96$ and the p-value < 0.005 . Hypothesis 1 is therefore accepted. The result of testing Hypothesis 2, the relationship is significant as the coefficient value is .6571, with the p-value < 0.001 . As a result, hypothesis 2 is likewise accepted. The outcome of testing hypothesis 3, the relationship is highly significant because the coefficient value is .376 the value of $T > 1.96$, with the p-value < 0.001 . Therefore, hypothesis 3 is accepted. The results shows that mediating role of meaning has an insignificant role between the relationship of paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Coeff=-.0087, LLCI=-.0738 and ULCI=.0610). Hence Hypothesis 4 is rejected.

Table 5: Regression Analysis (Paternalistic Leadership, Competence and Employee Creativity)

	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	R-sq	F
Outcome variable=Competence								
Paternalistic Leadership	.5298	.0426	12.4482	.0000	.5847	.7475	.4336	66.0160
Outcome variable= EC								
Competence	.2364	.0457	5.1734	.0000	.01465	.1868		
Paternalistic Leadership	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166		
TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS								
Total effect of X on Y	.3709	.0340	10.9066	.0000	.3040	.4377		
Direct effect of X on Y	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.5610	.1166		
Indirect effect of X on Y								
Competence	.1241	.0288			.0739	.1868		

Table (5) displays the findings, that shows paternalistic leadership and competence have a significant positive relationship. The relationship is significant with the coeff value of .0302, $T > 1.96$ and the p-value < 0.005 . Hypothesis 5 is therefore accepted. The result of testing Hypothesis 6, the relationship is significant as the coefficient value is .5298, with the p-value < 0.001 . As a result, hypothesis 6 is likewise accepted. The

outcome of testing hypothesis 7, shows that mediating role of competence has a significant role between the relationship of paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Coeff=.1241, LLCI=.0739 and ULCI=.1868).Hence Hypothesis 7 is accepted.

Table 6: Regression Analysis (Paternalistic Leadership, Self-determination and Employee Creativity)

	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	R-sq	F
Outcome variable=SD								
Paternalistic Leadership	.6940	.0399	17.3934	.0000	.6155	.7725	.4749	78.0157
Outcome variable= EC								
Self determination	.1232	.0513	2.3991	.0070	.0222	.2242		
Paternalistic Leadership	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166		
	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	R-sq	F
TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS								
Total effect of X on Y	.3709	.0340	10.9066	.0000	.3040	.4377		
Direct effect of X on Y	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166		
Indirect effect of X on Y								
Self determination	.0855	.0381			.0081	.1541		

Table (6) displays the findings, that shows paternalistic leadership and self-determination have a significant positive relationship. The relationship is significant with the coeff value of =.6940, T >1.96 and the p-value < 0.001. Hypothesis 8 is therefore accepted. The result of testing Hypothesis 9, the relationship is significant as the coefficient value is .1232, with the p-value <0.01.As a result, hypothesis 9 is likewise accepted. The outcome of testing hypothesis 10, shows that mediating role of self-determination has a significant role between the relationship of paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Coeff=.0855, LLCI=.0081 and ULCI=.1514).Hence Hypothesis 10 is accepted.

Table 7: Regression Analysis (Paternalistic Leadership, Impact and Employee Creativity)

<i>t</i>	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	R-sq	F
	.7066	.0422	16.7607	.0000	.6237	.7895	.4654	75.0877
Outcome variable= EC								
Impact	.1961	.0441	4.4495	.0000	.1094	.2828		
Paternalistic Leadership	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166		
TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS								
Total effect of X on Y	.3709	.0340	10.9066	.0000	.3040	.4377		
Direct effect of X on Y	.0302	.0439	.6886	.0016	.0561	.1166		
Indirect effect of X on Y								
Impact	.1385	.0345			.0751	.2084		

Table (7) displays the findings, that shows paternalistic leadership and Impact have a significant positive relationship. The relationship is significant with the coeff value of =.7066, T >1.96 and the p-value < 0.001. Hypothesis 11 is therefore accepted. The result of testing Hypothesis12, the relationship is significant as the coefficient value is .1961, with the p-value <0.001.As a result, hypothesis 12 is likewise accepted. The outcome of testing hypothesis 13, shows that mediating role of impact has a significant role between the relationship of paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Coeff=.1385, LLCI=.0751 and ULCI=.2084).Hence Hypothesis 13 is accepted.

5. Discussion

Using psychological empowerment dimensions as mediator, this study examined the effect of paternalistic leadership on employee creativity in the Pakistani IT industry. The present study discovered a significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity. The results of the current study supported our hypotheses that competence, self-determination, and impact play a mediating role in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity, except the mediating role of Meaning was not supported in this context. Li et al. (2021) also found that paternalistic leadership positively impacts cognitive processes of the employees. We used CET theory as the foundation of our research that suggests each person's intrinsic drive is fueled by the three fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. According to our model, paternalistic leadership can boost intrinsic motivation at work, encourage initiative, and satiate a person's need for relatedness, all of which may encourage creativity. Employees are more inclined to propose, implement, and challenge the status quo when they feel more protected and trusted by their superiors because they are less likely to fear unjust treatment. Paternalistic leadership is understood to be this. As a result, employees will have more authority, which will encourage them to risk failure with their ideas. For instance, a study by Bai et al. (2022) identified a link between employee innovation and paternalistic leadership in the technology sector. According to the study, paternalistic leaders gave their staff members a warm and encouraging environment, giving them the confidence to speak up and take chances. These findings support the findings of other researchers who found a positive relationship between Paternalistic leadership and creativity (Li et al. 2020; Bai et al. 2022; Kim, 2020). Similarly previous studies supports that there is a positive relationship between Paternalistic leadership and meaning which is consistent with our current findings (Oh et al. 2022; Ivcevic et al. 2021). Studies show that people who are encouraged and allowed to have a meaningful and focused goal or purpose by the leadership, they tend to be more confident in their skills and taking more risks without a fear of failing, which

has an effect on how creative they are (Peng et al., 2017). Results indicate a positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and competence that are supported by the findings of other researchers who found a positive relationship between competence and employee creativity (Alipour et al., 2022; Tanaka et al. 2020; Tang, 2021; Wang, 2016).

According to past researches (Gyamerah et al. 2022; Lin et al. 2015), when a worker perceives that their leader is in some way defending their fundamental rights, such as social, economic, and others, motivates individuals and has an impact on their psychological freedom. Employees are happy with their jobs and exhibit pro-active behavior and develop competence. When employees feel their job is valued, they are given privileges, and they are protected, they form emotional bonds with the organization. Because of this, they put out their all, which is seen in their enhanced creative performance and ability. This research findings support the previous studies that finds the mediation of competence between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Lin et al. 2015). People feel a certain amount of self-determination above job setup when they believe they have the skills and are provided with the tools necessary to do a task efficiently (Sia & Appu, 2017). These findings support the findings of other researchers who found a positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and self-determination (Zhang et al. 2020). Results indicate a positive relationship between Self-determination and EC. This outcome is consistent with theoretical claims that paternalistic leadership positively impacts self-determination. Fawehinmi et al. (2022) also asserted that the psychological factors affect how driven individuals are in order to achieve a particular task. The controlling and informative situational aspects, in accordance with CET theory, have an impact on how accurately personnel assess their own skills and self-control for a particular activity. These findings support the findings of other researchers who found a positive relationship between self-determination and employee creativity (Zhang et al. 2020).

According to Lin et al (2015), employees are subject to a variety of restrictions and are under pressure to reach predetermined goals due to external situational circumstances. Instead of exerting pressure on workers to perform in a particular way, the social component of contextual variables educates people about their task competency and self-determination. Therefore, the social component has a big impact on how creative people are for a given task position hence supporting previous research that there is mediation of self-determination between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Lin et al. 2015). In a study by Lin and Chen (2019), the authors also found that employees with a higher level of impact were more likely to engage in creative behavior and generate more creative ideas. The authors suggest that feeling that one's actions have an impact can lead to increased intrinsic motivation, which in turn leads to higher levels of creativity. Similarly, a study by Thompson et al. (2021) found that psychological empowerment, including impact, was positively related to employee creativity. The authors suggest that empowering employees to make decisions and contribute to the organization can increase their motivation and lead towards more creative and innovative behavior. This outcome is consistent with theoretical claims that paternalistic leadership positively affects impact, and support the findings of the past researchers (Thompson et al, 2021; Wang et al; 2016).

Paternalistic leaders may empower their employees by granting them work autonomy and the opportunity to shape how their activities are completed (Tu et al. 2020). Similar to this, employees feel more in authority, are more likely to come up with creative ideas, and are more likely to stay loyal to the same firm when they work for a great employer who offers them the flexibility and resources they need to carry out their obligations (Chen et al. 2017). This suggests that paternalistic leadership may have an impact on employees' behavior with relation to the performance of their jobs, particularly in terms of creativity. Our findings support the findings support the previous studies that found the mediation of self-determination between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity (Chen et al. 2017; Tu et al. 2020). The study discovered that paternalistic leaders' function as motivational elements by expressing care, support, respect, and gratitude for their subordinates' accomplishments (Dedahanov et al., 2019). People experience greater psychological empowerment as a result. For instance, paternalistic leaders may enable their staff by giving them authority over their work and the chance to choose how their tasks are carried out (Gip et al. 2022) can lead towards creativity at workplace.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This research provides a nuanced understanding of the specific dimensions of psychological empowerment that mediate the paternalistic leadership-employee creativity relationship. It highlights that while the meaning dimension may not be significant in this particular context, other dimensions of

psychological empowerment still play a vital role in facilitating employee creativity. Our knowledge of how Paternalistic leadership dynamics affect employee creativity is deepened and advanced by this. By showing how Psychological empowerment dimensions and creativity are connected to Paternalistic leadership, this study offers something novel. The current study tells that employees and leaders engagement due to Paternalistic leader will create favorable results for organization in a form of more creative workforce.

The findings suggest that organizations in the IT sector of Pakistan can enhance employee creativity by adopting a paternalistic leadership approach that emphasizes competence, self-determination, and impact. Managers and leaders can focus on providing opportunities for skill development and training to enhance employees' competence. Additionally, allowing employees to have autonomy in decision-making and providing a sense of influence and control over their work can foster their self-determination. Furthermore, leaders can encourage employees to have a sense of impact by emphasizing the significance of their work and how it contributes to the organization's goals. By integrating these aspects of psychological empowerment into their leadership practices, managers can create a work environment that nurtures and supports employee creativity. It also highlights the importance of recognizing and leveraging the specific psychological empowerment dimensions that mediate the paternalistic leadership-employee creativity relationship in the IT sector of Pakistan. Organizations can tailor their interventions and practices to target these dimensions effectively. For example, they can provide training programs and resources that enhance employees' technical competence in their respective IT roles. Managers can also promote a culture of autonomy and participation, allowing employees to have a say in decision-making processes and fostering their self-determination. Additionally, leaders can provide meaningful feedback and recognition to employees, highlighting the impact of their creative contributions in the IT sector. By addressing these dimensions in a targeted manner, organizations can create an environment that empowers employees, stimulates their creativity, and ultimately contributes to innovation and growth in the IT sector of Pakistan.

6. Conclusion

Based on Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), this study investigated the effect of paternalistic leadership on employee creativity in the Pakistani IT industry. This investigation will be conducted by examining the mediating role of psychological empowerment dimensions. The present study discovered a significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity. The results of the current study supported our hypotheses that competence, self-determination, and impact play a mediating role in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity, except the mediating effect of meaning between the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee creativity. The study is significant because previous studies have primarily examined Paternalistic leadership in its negative dimension, while this study treats it as a positive and composite variable in relation to psychological empowerment dimensions and employee creativity. Additionally, the study focuses on Pakistan's IT industry, which has received little attention in research on Paternalistic Leadership and employee creativity. Therefore, this study can offer valuable insights to academic researchers and top leadership regarding employee creativity.

7. Limitations and Future Direction

Like any other research, this study is not immune to limitations, which are mainly due to time and resource constraints. Firstly, the study solely focuses on the IT industry in Pakistan, and as a result, the generalizability of the findings to other industries and cultural contexts may be limited. Secondly, the study adopts a cross-sectional design, which may predict biasness. While longitudinal studies are more reliable, they require more time and resources. B; he study did not confirm the mediating role of the meaning dimension of psychological empowerment. This implies that the meaning dimension may not play a significant role in connecting paternalistic leadership to employee creativity. However, further research is necessary to understand the role of meaning and its potential impact on creativity in the context of paternalistic leadership in other industries. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for further research to better understand the complex relationship between paternalistic leadership, psychological empowerment and employee creativity in other manufacturing and service industries. Future studies could explore additional psychological empowerment dimensions, as well as other potential moderators or mediators to provide a more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics.

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