Article

Hotel Employees' Voice Behavior: The Role of Paternalistic Leadership and Organizational Identification

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Abstract: This study explores the effect of paternalistic leadership (moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership) on hotel employees' voice behavior and the moderating role of organizational identification. This study samples employees of five-star hotels in northern, central, and southern Taiwan. Purposive sampling is used to distribute 450 questionnaires: 150 in northern Taiwan, 150 in central Taiwan, and 150 in southern Taiwan. The number of valid questionnaires was 359, and the effective questionnaire recovery rate was 79.78%. The analysis results indicate that (1) supervisors' moral leadership negatively affects hotel employees' voice behavior, (2) supervisors' benevolent leadership positively affects hotel employees' voice behavior, (3) supervisors' authoritarian leadership negatively affects hotel employees' voice behavior, (4) organizational identification moderates the relationship between moral leadership and voice behavior, (5) organizational identification moderates the relationship between benevolent leadership and voice behavior, and (6) organizational identification moderates the relationship between authoritarian leadership and voice behavior. This study also proposes managerial implications based on the analysis results. This research attempts to make contributions to the literatures of hospitality and tourism.

Keywords: paternalistic leadership; organizational identification; voice behavior; tourism; hospitality

1. Introduction

Hiring appropriate talent is the main concern of all organizations and a method of creating a competitive advantage [1]. Hospitality organizations have gradually shifted their focus to encouraging employees to seek opportunities to improve, and numerous practitioners and researchers consider enthusiasm at work a competitive advantage that is essential to organizational success [2,3]. Frontline employees in the hotel industry encounter problems such as long working hours, heavy workloads, lack of training, and customer misbehavior [4–7]. To adjust to changes in the industry and achieve excellent performance, organizations must constantly improve their products and frontline employees must provide constructive feedback [8]. Therefore, the antecedents of hotel industry employees' voice behavior must be identified.

Friendly and amicable managers utilize a paternalistic leadership style, which positively affects subordinates [9]. Studies on hospitality have demonstrated the effects of paternalistic leadership on employees' work engagement and extra-role customer service behavior [10]. In the hospitality industry, paternalistic leadership effectively improves employees' internal service behavior which, in turn, benefits the organization [11]. However, whether paternalistic leadership affects the voice behavior of hotel employees remains to be determined. Scholars have explored paternalistic leadership in hospitality organizations [9–11], but few studies have investigated the effect of paternalistic leadership on hotel employees' voice behavior.

The effects of paternalistic leadership on the behavior of hotel employees may be affected by situational factors. According to social identity theory, individuals are inclined to identify with groups that satisfy needs for self-esteem, belonging, control, and meaning in life [12,13]. If a hotel can satisfy this need among its employees, its employees may be able to strengthen their sense of identity. Therefore, organizational identification may be a situational variable that affects the relationship between paternalistic leadership and hotel employee voice behavior.

The current research in this area appears to be relatively lacking, this study explores the effect of paternalistic leadership on hotel employees' voice behavior and the moderating role of organizational identification to fill a gap in the literature on hospitality. The findings can serve as reference for the hotel industry to improve supervisors' leadership style or the working environment.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1. Voice Behavior

Van Dyne et al. [14] defined voice behavior as challenging the status quo and offering constructive suggestions. LePine and Van Dyne [15] indicated that voice behavior represents employees' courage to solve work-related problems by voicing their concerns. Morrison [16] defined voice behavior as the free exchange of ideas, suggestions, concerns, and opinions regarding work-related problems to improve an organization or department thereof. Bashshur and Oc [17] defined voice behavior as the free formation of ideas, opinions, suggestions, or methods of communication within or outside an organization to solve problems and improve an organization, group, or individual.

Studies have indicated that voice behavior benefits workplaces and organizations [18–20]. Studies have also indicated that voice behavior has numerous antecedents, including commitment to change [21], encouragement to participate [22], moral leadership, authoritarian leadership [23], person–organization fit [1], psychological capital [24], team-member exchange [25], transformational leadership [26], regulatory foci [18], supervisor empowerment [27], and work engagement [28]. Paternalistic leadership may also be an antecedent of hotel employees' voice behavior.

2.2. Paternalistic Leadership and Voice Behavior

Farh and Cheng [29] defined paternalistic leadership as a combination of strong discipline, authority, and paternal kindness. Paternalistic leadership consists of three aspects: morality, benevolence, and authority. Moral leadership refers to strong personal virtues, self-discipline, and selflessness. Benevolent leadership is the individualized and holistic care provided to ensure subordinates' well-being within and outside the work environment. Authoritarianism entails control, authority, and requiring subordinates to be humble and obedient [30]. In an organizational environment, paternalism requires that employees be treated as members of a large family [31]. Paternalistic supervisors exude a fatherly attitude toward their subordinates [32]. Chen [11] investigated employees of Taiwanese hotels for international travelers and discovered that paternalistic leadership improved the quality of internal services. Tuan [10] surveyed employees and supervisors of four- and five-star hotels in Vietnam and discovered that moral leadership and benevolent leadership positively affected employee work engagement and extra-role customer service behavior and that authoritarian leadership negatively affected employees' work engagement and extra-role customer service behavior. Redmond and Sharafizad [9] investigated Australian hospitality employees and found that paternalistic leadership encouraged discretionary effort among employees.

Social information processing theory dictates that individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and values are shaped by environmental cues and by information dictating what is valuable and appropriate [33]. From the perspective of social information processing theory [33], hotel employees often perceive supervisors with a moral leadership style as selfless people

who lead by example; thus, employees are less likely to voice opinions that differ from those of their supervisors. Accordingly, this study advances the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *Supervisors' moral leadership negatively affects hotel employees' voice behavior.*

According to social information processing theory [33], if supervisors have a benevolent leadership style, then employees may perceive them as kind and understanding; to express gratitude to their supervisors, employees may offer suggestions to improve the workplace. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Supervisors' benevolent leadership positively affects hotel employees' voice behavior.*

From the viewpoint of social information processing theory [33], if supervisors have an authoritarian leadership style, then employees may fear that voicing differing opinions would be disrespectful. On this basis, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Supervisors' authoritarian leadership negatively affects hotel employees' voice behavior.*

2.3. Moderating Role of Organizational Identification

Tajfel [34] developed the concept of organizational identification by using social identity theory. Organizational identification refers to employees' perspective of their membership in an organization. Organizational identification includes individuals expanding their personal self-concept to the organization. Individuals who strongly identify with an organization define themselves by using the characteristics of the organization and act in the organization's best interests [12,35]. Organizational identification also refers to employees' degree of attachment to an organization [36]. Hotel employees with a high degree of organizational identification derive a sense of belonging from their hotel and adhere to its policies for the sake of the company. In such a case, supervisors may exhibit a strong moral and authoritarian leadership style that discourages employees from offering suggestions or challenging the status quo to avoid offending their supervisors. Employees often perceive supervisors with a benevolent leadership style as caring and unlikely to exact punishment, which enables employees to offer suggestions without worry. Employees with a low degree of organizational identification are often dissatisfied with the status quo. Supervisors with a strong moral leadership style tend to lead with their hearts. Because subordinates are inspired by their supervisors, employees under such supervisors may offer suggestions for changing the status quo and improving their workplace. In instances of disagreement between employees and their company, employees often perceive supervisors with a benevolent and authoritarian leadership style as only caring about the company, which discourages voice behavior among employees. On this basis, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Organizational identification moderates the relationship between moral leadership and hotel employee voice behavior.*

Hypothesis 5 (H5). *Organizational identification moderates the relationship between benevolent leadership and hotel employees' voice behavior.*

Hypothesis 6 (H6). *Organizational identification moderates the relationship between authoritarian leadership and hotel employees' voice behavior.*

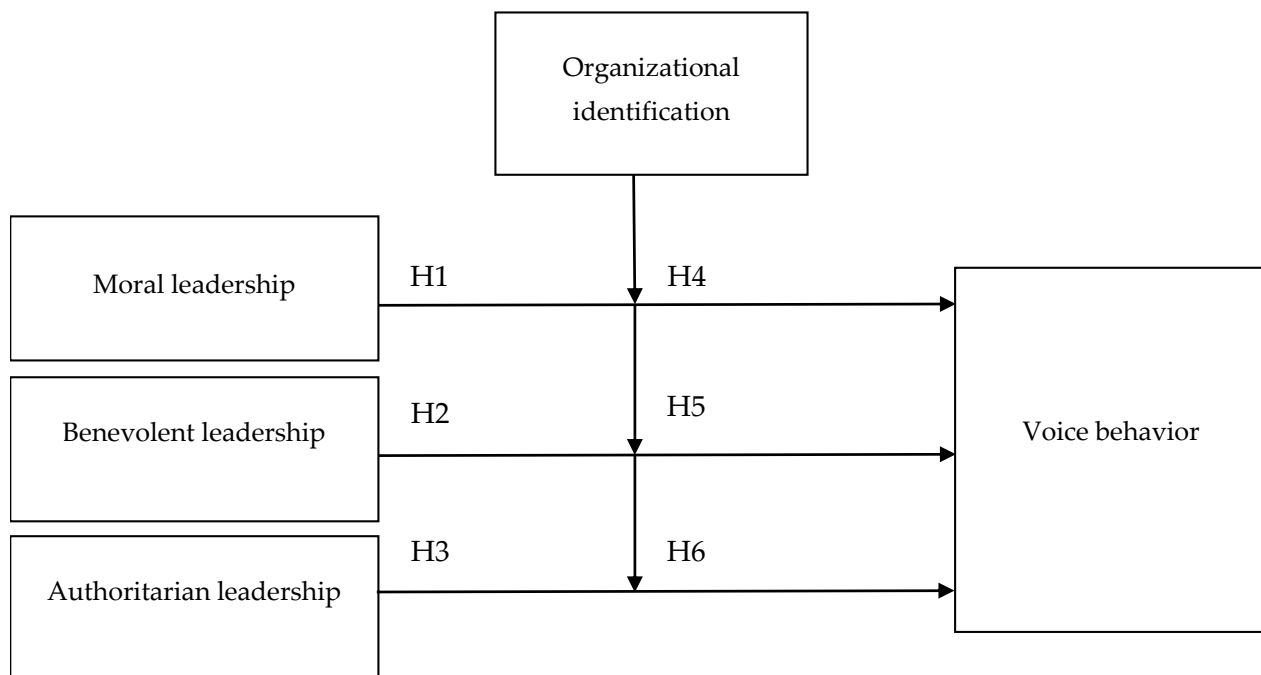Figure 1 presents the research framework based on the hypotheses.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

3. Methods

3.1. Sampling

This study sampled employees of nine five-star hotels in northern Taiwan (three hotels), central Taiwan (three hotels), and southern Taiwan (three hotels). Purposive sampling was used to distribute questionnaires to hotels on a list of Taiwanese hotels for international travelers released by the Tourism Bureau in 2019. Hair et al. [37] indicated that to develop an effective questionnaire, the number of valid samples should be 5 to 20 times the number of items in the questionnaire. Because the questionnaire has 27 items, the effective sample size is between 135 and 540. The human resources managers of these nine five-star hotels distributed questionnaires to their employees. After the exclusion of invalid questionnaires, the number of distributed questionnaires was 450 (each hotel had 50 questionnaires to distribute).

3.2. Measurement

The items used in this study are three demographic variables: gender, age, and tenure. Paternalistic leadership was measured on the 15-item scale developed by Cheng et al. [38] in terms of moral leadership (five items), benevolent leadership (five items), and authoritarian leadership (five items). A sample item for assessing moral leadership is as follows: "My supervisor is responsible". A sample item for assessing benevolent leadership is as follows: "My supervisor's care for me extends to my family". A sample item for assessing authoritarian leadership is as follows: "My supervisor deliberately keeps distance between us". Organizational identification is measured using the six-item scale of Mael and Ashforth [39]. A sample item for assessing organizational identification is as follows: "When someone criticizes my company, I feel insulted". Voice behavior is measured using the six-question scale of Van Dyne and LePine [40]. A sample item for assessing voice behavior is as follows: "I offer suggestions to my supervisor to improve the workplace".

3.3. Statistical Analysis

This study performed descriptive statistical, correlation, reliability, and confirmatory factor analyses of the valid questionnaire data and regression analysis of the research hypotheses by using SPSS (version 24.0) and AMOS (version 24.0; IBM, Armonk, NY, USA).

4. Results

4.1. Respondent Profile

After 8 invalid questionnaires were excluded, 367 questionnaires remained, of which 359 were valid, yielding a 79.78% return rate. Questionnaires that were incomplete or blank, had missing answers or double selection, failed to satisfy the sampling criteria, or exhibited high similarity in scores were deemed invalid. The analysis results indicate that the majority of the participants were women (64.1%) and aged between 19 and 24 years (53.5%). Most of the participants had 1 year or less of work experience in the hotel industry (32.3%).

4.2. Reliability Analysis

A Cronbach's α coefficient of >0.70 and a revised item–total correlation of >0.45 were used as the measurement standards. The Crobach's α of moral leadership, benevolent leadership, authoritarian leadership, organizational identification, and voice behavior are 0.92, 0.90, 0.86, 0.92, and 0.90, respectively. These results demonstrate that all dimensions have high reliability.

4.3. Validity Analysis

The confirmatory factor analysis revealed that χ^2 = 924.678, degrees of freedom = 314, root mean square error of approximation = 0.07, incremental fit index = 0.91, and comparative fit index = 0.91, all indicating acceptable goodness of fit. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to determine the validity of the scale (Table 1). A factor loading of less than 0.4 was used as the criterion to exclude items [37]. No items were deleted, and all 27 items are significant ($t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$). The significant factor loadings and high composite reliability indicate that the scale has convergent validity [41]. The average variance extracted (AVE) is 0.70 for moral leadership, 0.65 for benevolent leadership, 0.56 for authoritarian leadership, 0.65 for organizational identification, and 0.60 for voice behavior. Fornell and Larker [42] suggested that AVE must be greater than 0.50. If it is less than 0.50, more than 50% of the variation comes from measurement error, that is, the convergence validity is not sufficient. The AVE of each dimension is greater than 0.5, meeting the significance level and indicating acceptable convergent validity.

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis results.

Items	SFL	*t*-Value	AVE	CR
Moral leadership			0.70	0.92
Compared with leaders of other companies, my supervisor has superior morals.	0.843	-		
On the whole, I think my supervisor is morally admirable.	0.913	22.543		
Compared with other leaders I have met in the past, my supervisor has superior morals.	0.820	18.958		
1. My supervisor is responsible.	0.810	18.607		
2. My supervisor is a role model.	0.790	17.899		
Benevolent leadership			0.65	0.90
My supervisor's care for me extends to my family.	0.782	-		
My supervisor helps me solve problems in my life.	0.856	17.522		
My supervisor cares about my personal life.	0.816	16.535		
My supervisor satisfies my personal needs.	0.783	15.723		
My supervisor frequently asks me about my health.	0.782	15.712		

Table 1. *Cont.*

Items	SFL	*t*-Value	AVE	CR
Authoritarian leadership			0.56	0.86
My supervisor asks me to maintain propriety.	0.629	-		
My supervisor exhibits a sense of dignity.	0.728	11.149		
My supervisor deliberately keeps distance between us.	0.794	11.840		
If I were to not follow my supervisor's rules, I would be severely punished.	0.799	11.887		
When the company's goals are not achieved, my supervisor scolds me.	0.777	11.668		
Organizational identification			0.65	0.92
When someone criticizes my company, I feel insulted.	0.825	-		
I care about what others think of my company.	0.827	18.446		
I often use "we" instead of "they" to refer to my company.	0.763	16.428		
The success of the company is a success for me.	0.838	18.816		
When someone praises my company, I feel as if I have been praised.	0.811	17.933		
I feel embarrassed when news media circulate negative rumors about my company.	0.769	16.608		
Voice behavior			0.60	0.90
I offer suggestions to my supervisor to improve the workplace.	0.783	-		
I explain problems to my supervisor and encourage him or her to solve them.	0.767	15.282		
Even if my opinions regarding work differ from those of my supervisor, I still try to communicate with him or her.	0.755	14.996		
I always pay attention to workplace problems so that my opinions are useful to the team.	0.764	15.220		
I think about solutions to problems that affect my team's quality of work and life.	0.816	16.471		
I voice my opinions regarding new projects and changes to my team.	0.766	15.257		

Note: SFL: standardized factor loading; *t*-value: significance level; AVE: average variance extracted; CR: composite reliability.

A low correlation coefficient between two constructs suggests good discriminant validity [42,43]. The square root of the AVE of each dimension must be greater than the correlation coefficient between a given dimension and the other dimensions [37]. The discriminant validity analysis revealed that the square root of the AVE of each dimension ranges from 0.75 to 0.84 (Table 2), which is greater than the correlation coefficient between dimensions. Thus, the scales have favorable discriminant validity.

Table 2. Mean, standard error, square root of AVE, and correlation coefficients.

Variables	Mean	SE	A	B	C	D	E
A. Moral leadership	3.80	0.64	**0.84** 1.00				
B. Benevolent leadership	3.41	0.76	0.53	**0.81** 1.00			
C. Authoritarian leadership	3.17	0.76	0.05	0.19	**0.75** 1.00		
D. Organizational identification	3.84	0.57	0.18	0.36	0.30	**0.81** 1.00	
E. Voice behavior	3.68	0.60	0.12	0.31	0.11	0.52	**0.77** 1.00

Note: The bolded values represent the square root of AVE, and the numbers below them are the standardized correlation coefficients; SE = standard error.

4.4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1–3 concerns the relationship between supervisors' paternalistic leadership (moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership) and hotel employees' voice behavior. To verify the hypotheses, this study uses voice behavior as the dependent variable; gender, age, and tenure as control variables; moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership as independent variables; and organizational identity as the moderating variable. The interaction terms of paternalistic leadership (moral, benevolent, and authoritarian leadership) and organizational identification are added to the regression formula. The results are listed in Table 3. The results indicate that moral leadership has a significant effect on voice behavior ($\beta = -0.11$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported. Benevolent leadership has a significant effect on voice behavior ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported. Authoritarian leadership has a significant effect on voice behavior ($\beta = -0.11$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Table 3. Regression of paternalistic leadership and organizational identification for voice behavior.

|	Independent Variables
	Voice Behavior
Dependent Variable	**β**
Gender	−0.08 †
Age	−0.05
Tenure	0.07
Moral leadership	−0.11 *
Benevolent leadership	0.21 ***
Authoritarian leadership	−0.11 *
Organizational identification	0.45 ***
Moral leadership × Organizational identification	−0.20 ***
Benevolent leadership × Organizational identification	0.09 †
Authoritarian leadership × Organizational identification	−0.09 †
R^2	0.33
Adjusted R^2	0.31
F	17.09 ***

N = 359; † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Hypotheses 4–6 concerns whether organizational identification moderate the relationship between supervisors' paternalistic leadership (moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership) and hotel employees' voice behavior. The analysis results indicate that the interaction of moral leadership and organizational identification has a significant effect on voice behavior ($\beta = -0.20$, $p < 0.001$). Under a high degree of organizational identification, moral leadership negatively affects voice behavior (Figure 2a). Under a low degree of organizational identification, moral leadership positively affects voice behavior. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is supported. The interaction between benevolent leadership and organizational identification has a significant effect on voice behavior ($\beta = 0.09$, $p < 0.10$). Under a high degree of organizational identification, benevolent leadership positively affects voice behavior (Figure 2b). Under a low degree of organizational identification, benevolent leadership does not strongly affect voice behavior. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 is supported. The interaction between authoritarian leadership and organizational identification has a significant effect on voice behavior ($\beta = -0.09$, $p < 0.10$). Under a high degree of organizational identification, authoritarian leadership negatively affects voice behavior (Figure 2c). Under a low degree of organizational identification, authoritarian leadership does not strongly affect voice behavior. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 is supported.
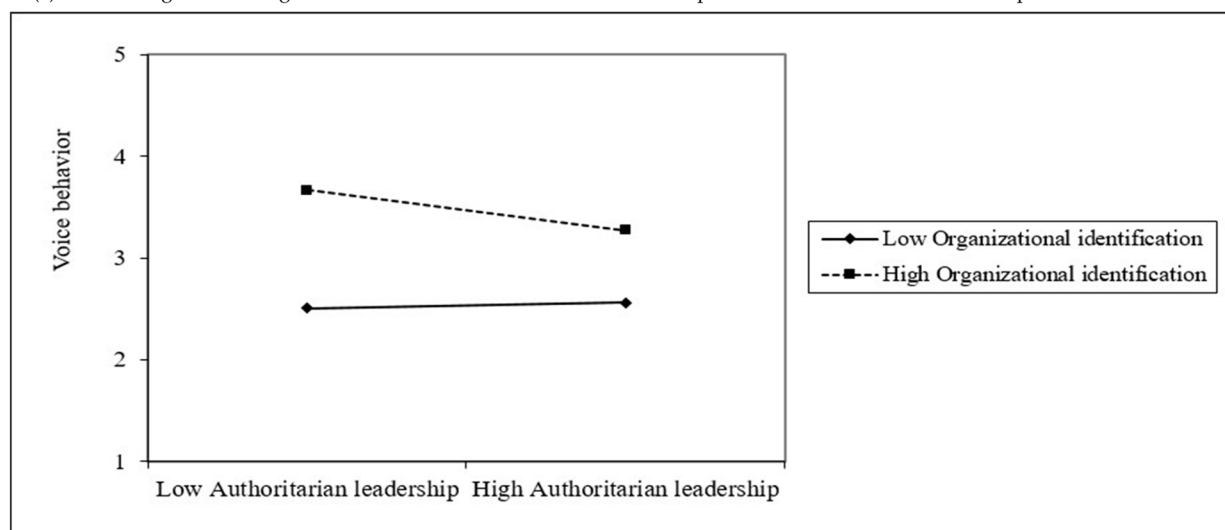
(**a**) Moderating effect of organizational identification on the relationship between moral leadership and voice behavior
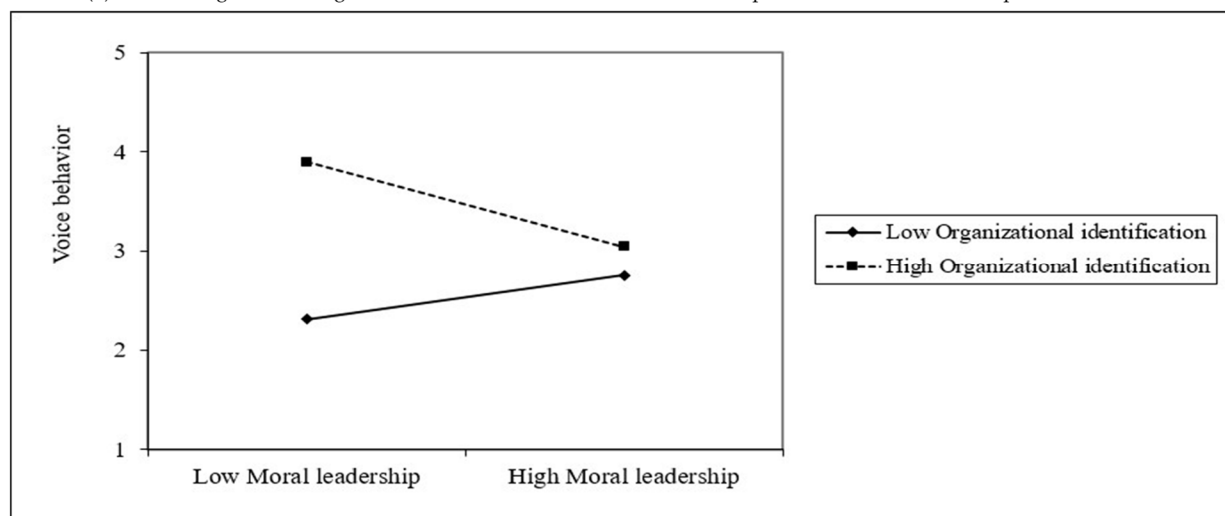
(**b**) Moderating effect of organizational identification on the relationship between benevolent leadership and voice behavior
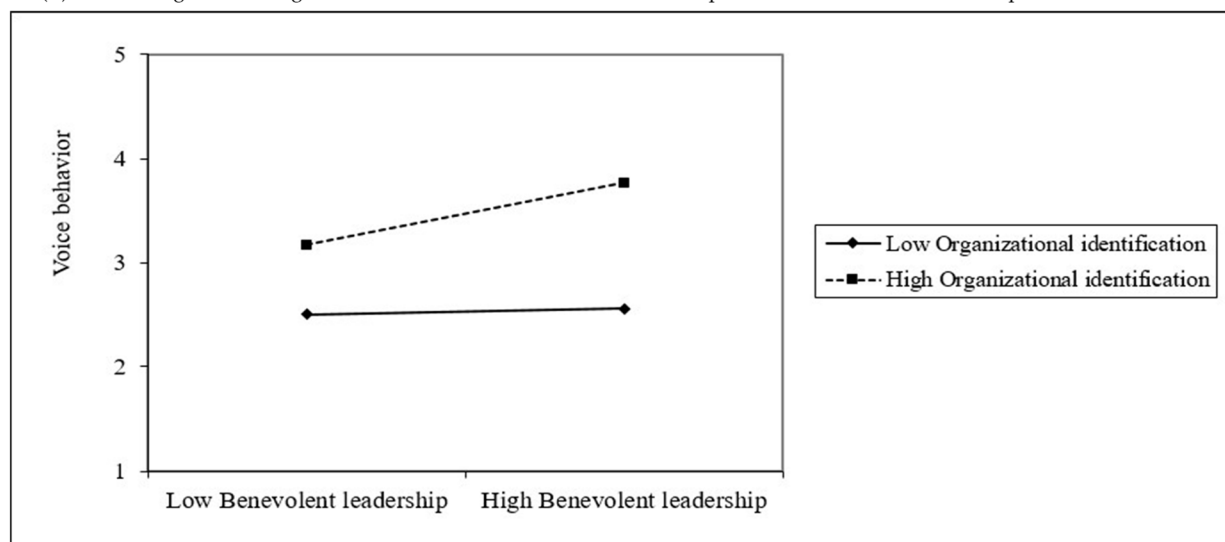
(**c**) Moderating effect of organizational identification on the relationship between authoritarian leadership and voice behavior

Figure 2. Moderating effect of organizational identification on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and voice behavior.

5. Discussion

5.1. Theoretical Implications

There are many different potential advanced methods that can be used in behavioral science research, such as multi-objective particle swarm optimization [44], mixed logit model [45], hybrid choice modeling [46], Hayes' Process macro [47] and structural equation modeling [48]. This study uses multiple regression to test the research hypotheses. All six hypotheses are empirically supported. The analysis results indicate that supervisors' moral and authoritarian leadership discourages voice behavior among hotel employees and that benevolent leadership encourages voice behavior among hotel employees. This result is consistent with the viewpoint of social information processing theory. Organizational identification moderates the relationship between paternalistic leadership (moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership) and voice behavior; this result is consistent with the viewpoint of social identity theory. The analysis results confirm the findings of Dedahanov et al. [23] that supervisors' authoritarian leadership can decrease employees' voice behavior. On the other hand, the findings of this study extend the research of Lu and Lu [1], Dai et al. [18], Svendsen and Joensson [21], Ruiz-Palomino et al. [22], Han and Hwang [24], Shih and Wijaya [25], Liang et al. [26], Park et al. [27], and Cumberland et al. [28]. Different from the studies mentioned above that discuss the effects of person–organization fit, regulatory foci, commitment to change, encouragement to participate, psychological capital, team-member exchange, transformational leadership, supervisor empowerment, and work engagement on voice behavior, this study explores the effects of paternalistic leadership (moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership) and organizational identification on employees' voice behavior from the perspective of social information processing theory and social identity theory to fill a gap in the hospitality and tourism literature.

5.2. Implications for Managerial Practice

The results support Hypothesis 1, that is, supervisors' moral leadership discourages hotel employees from offering suggestions. Hypothesis 2 was also supported, indicating that supervisors' benevolent leadership encourages voice behavior among hotel employees. Hypothesis 3 was supported and indicates that supervisors' authoritarian leadership discourages hotel employees from offering suggestions. If hotel managers understand supervisors' leadership styles, they can instruct supervisors to use a benevolent leadership style and to listen to the opinions of their employees when necessary. To ensure employees follow the rules without voicing their opinions, hotel managers should instruct supervisors to lead by example and to care for their subordinates.

Hypotheses 4–6 were supported, indicating that if employees feel a sense of belonging in their hotels, moral and authoritarian leadership from supervisors can discourage voice behavior among employees, whereas benevolent leadership from supervisors encourages employees to voice their opinions. Employees with a high degree of organizational identification are more willing to express their opinions. Therefore, hotel managers can improve the workplace by considering salary, welfare, and other aspects from the perspective of their employees. This ensures that employees feel pride in their company, follow the company's rules, and display voice behavior when required.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study and their implications; these limitations may also serve as a starting point for subsequent studies. First, the participants were employees in Taiwan's hotel industry. Whether the results can be extrapolated to other cultural contexts (such as Europe) should be investigated. Jin et al. [49] indicated that abusive behavior from supervisors can cause deviant behavior in the workplace. Abusive behavior from supervisors may affect the voice behavior of employees; this can be explored in subsequent studies. Dyne et al. [50] subdivided voice behavior into acquiescent voice, defensive voice, and prosocial voice behavior. Subse-

quent studies can explore the effects of the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership on these three types of voice behavior. Furthermore, previous studies pointed out that shared leadership positively influences proactive behavior, creativity, and innovative behavior [51–53]. Future studies can explore the effects of shared leadership on hotel employees' voice behavior. Finally, prospect theory is regarded as a leading behavioral paradigm to understand decision making under risk and has been widely applied in psychological and behavioral economic studies [54,55]. Future research can use prospect theory to explore the antecedents of hotel employees' voice behavior.

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