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The Effects of Employee Dark Triad Traits and Leadership Styles on Work-Related Outcomes in China: An Agency-Communion Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of employees' dark triad traits and leadership styles on employees' work outcomes among Chinese employees ($N=332$). Four leadership scenarios were designed, based on a combination of leadership agency and communion, in order to capture goal-oriented and people-oriented leadership behaviors. Participants were randomly assigned to a leadership scenario and filled out a work-related questionnaire after reading it. We used hierarchical regression models to conduct the analyses. Next to significant direct effects of employees' dark triad traits and leadership styles on work outcomes, there were significant interaction effects between employees' Machiavellianism and leadership styles on their work outcomes. More specifically, compared to other leadership styles, high agency-low communion leadership was more likely to activate counterproductive work behavior (CWB) and emotional exhaustion among Machiavellians. No interaction effects occurred for narcissism and psychopathy.

Research on the three dark triad traits—narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy—has received significant attention in recent years, primarily focusing on leaders who exhibit high levels of these traits (e.g., Davis, 2023; Furtner et al., 2017; Pfeffer, 2021). In contrast to this focus on leaders, there is still limited research on employees who display elevated dark triad traits. The relevance of investigating employees' dark triad traits has been shown by Nevicka and Sedikides (2021) and Spurk et al. (2016), who reported that employees with high dark triad traits are often more likely to attain career success and be promoted to leadership positions. The present study further examines the behaviors and attitudes of such employees in the workplace, aiming to provide valuable insights into the influences of dark triad traits on workplace dynamics. Specifically, we focus on the effect of employees' leader's behavior on their own conduct. Previous research, for instance, has found that abusive leadership activates high Machiavellian employees' unethical behaviors at work (e.g., social undermining toward coworkers; Greenbaum et al., 2017), whereas transformational leadership stimulates Machiavellians' pro-organizational behaviors (Belschak et al., 2015) and strengthens

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narcissists' creative self-efficacy at work (Zhang & Cui, 2022). These findings illustrate how leadership styles may shape the work behaviors of employees high on dark personality traits.

Research on this topic has merely focused on how leadership styles influence Machiavellians' work behaviors in western societies, where individuals' own goals and achievements are greatly valued (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, an eastern, collectivistic culture emphasizes interpersonal relatedness and collective goals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Employees scoring high on the dark triad traits are usually self-focused and try to achieve their own gains recklessly (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). A detrimental leadership style may exacerbate these people's negative expressions at work, fostering deviant behaviors that significantly impair group and organizational performance (Ren & Gray, 2009). In this study, we explore how different leadership styles may provoke negative work outcomes and hinder positive work outcomes among high dark triad employees within the context of a collectivistic culture. To this end, we adopt an agency-communion perspective to address this research question.

The present study aims for three contributions to the personality, leadership, and organizational research literature. First, the present study attempts to reveal the effects of high dark triad employees and leadership styles on employee work outcomes from an overarching agency-communion perspective. This goal may provide further empirical evidence for the "Big Two" conceptualization (i.e., agency and communion) in social interactions at work (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014), which may also serve to be a new direction for understanding employee-leader interpersonal interactions. Second, based on trait activation theory (Tett et al., 2021), we test whether a leadership style that contains the elements of high agency and low communion, will serve as a trait-relevant situational cue that triggers the dark triad traits to be expressed, resulting in a systematic pattern of work-related outcomes among high dark triad employees. To systematically investigate high dark triad employees' working patterns when their dark nature is provoked, we selected six typical employee work outcomes in the current study, which cover a wide array of employees' behaviors and attitudes in the workplace, including not only positive ones, but also negative ones. Specifically, we incorporated in-role performance (refers to fulfilling job duties; Riketta, 2002), organizational citizenship behavior (OCB; mainly refers to helping behaviors intended for individuals or the whole organization; Riketta, 2002), and work engagement (a positive state at work that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption; Schaufeli et al., 2006) to measure employees' positive behaviors and attitudes. We included counterproductive work behavior (CWB; harmful behaviors to others or the whole organization at work; Spector et al., 2010), turnover intention (refers to one's planning to leave the current company; Tett & Meyer, 1993), and emotional exhaustion (defined as a state of mental fatigue by one's job; Demerouti et al., 2010), to measure employees' negative behaviors and attitudes at work. Our third and final aim relates to the fact that most of the studies in this field have been conducted in western, individualistic societies. The current study, instead, focuses on a collectivistic culture and thus contributes to an investigation of the cross-cultural generalizability of dark triad employee-leadership working patterns.

Theoretical Background

The Dark Triad Traits and Work Outcomes

The dark triad traits model, encompassing narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, is regarded as the most well-known dark personality framework (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Schyns et al., 2019). These three dark traits share a common core, implying that people who score high on the dark triad traits usually strive for personal success at the expense of others (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). However, each trait possesses unique characteristics that distinguish them from one another. Narcissism is characterized by self-entitlement and a sense of grandiosity (Schyns et al., 2019). Machiavellianism comprises attributes such as amoral manipulation, distrust of others, and a focus on instrumental outcomes (Dahling et al., 2009). Finally, psychopathy is considered as the most severe of the three traits, marked by impulsivity and irresponsibility (Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

In recent decades, dark triad traits have attracted considerable attention in organizational research. Scholars have explored the relationships between these traits and a wide range of employees' behaviors and attitudes in the workplace, such as job performance and counterproductive work behavior (CWB; O'Boyle et al., 2012), and various job attitudes such as job satisfaction and stress (LeBreton et al., 2018). In the current study, we focused on six organizational criteria that cover a broad range of employee behaviors and attitudes and are widely recognized as important in the dark triad research tradition (LeBreton et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2018). These criteria are in-role performance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), work engagement, CWB, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intention. Earlier studies have indicated that the impact of dark triad traits on organizational criteria can yield both positive and negative outcomes, influenced by various moderators and mediators. For instance, O'Boyle et al. (2012) found that the relationship between narcissism and job performance, as well as CWB, was more pronounced in contexts characterized by high authority and strong in-group collectivism. Other research has shown that leadership styles can significantly shape the work behaviors or attitudes of individuals with Machiavellian tendencies (Belschak et al., 2015; Belschak et al., 2018; Greenbaum et al., 2017).

In this study, we adopt the agency-communion framework (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014) as an overarching framework to systematically investigate the role of different leadership styles in moderating the relationships between employees' dark triad traits and the six aforementioned criteria. Below, we elaborate on this framework by categorizing various leadership styles within it. Additionally, we discuss the desirability of these leadership styles in a collectivistic culture, the context in which our study was conducted.

The Agency-Communion Framework, Leadership Styles, and Culture

Agency and communion are regarded as two fundamental dimensions to describe different concepts in human life (e.g., leadership styles, individual differences, and cultural values; Abele & Wojciszke, 2014). Specifically, in the domain of personality psychology, agency emphasizes peoples' goal achievement strivings, which involves

facets like being proactive, competent, dominant, and assured (Wiggins, 1991; Wojciszke & Abele, 2008). Communion emphasizes positive functioning in social relations, such as being helpful, honest, warm, and friendly (Wiggins, 1991; Wojciszke & Abele, 2008). Individuals who score high on the dark triad traits in general are considered to be low in communion and simultaneously high in agency (Dowgwillo & Pincus, 2017). More specifically, such individuals are described as self-interested, cold-blooded, aggressive, and seen as pursuing their self-interests by exploiting others' efforts (Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

In the domain of leadership research, the agency-communion framework has traditionally been used to describe leadership behaviors under the labels of initiating structure and consideration, respectively (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Halpin & Winer, 1957). Initiating structure (i.e., agency) reflects leaders' goal-setting, maintaining performance standards, and defining rules for employees, which has been shown to be positively related to leader performance and group performance (Judge et al., 2004). Consideration (i.e., communion) refers to leaders' friendliness and striving for employees' welfare, which is positively related to follower motivation and satisfaction (Judge et al., 2004).

The combination of the two dimensions serves as the foundation to describe and integrate various leadership styles (e.g., Redeker et al., 2014), which helps to break down various leadership style concepts to two basic dimensions and to study leadership under an overarching theoretical perspective (i.e., agency-communion perspective). Specifically, high agency-high communion leadership is described as a leadership style focusing on both goal attainment and maintaining relationships within the team. This leadership style emphasizes the importance of showing appreciation for followers and stimulating them to perform better (Redeker et al., 2014). High agency-high communion leadership is regarded as a highly desirable leadership style, which has been found to be positively related to follower job satisfaction, follower motivation, group or organizational performance, and leader effectiveness (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Redeker et al., 2014).

High agency-low communion leadership refers to a leadership style that focuses on achieving goals, but neglects creating harmonious relationships with subordinates. Such leadership has been associated with contradictory results in different cultures. For instance, it was found to be positively related to employee performance and career satisfaction in individualistic cultures (e.g., Vecchio et al., 2008). In contrast, it was found to be positively related to work stress and workplace deviance in collectivistic cultures (Yao et al., 2014).

Low agency-low communion leadership describes leaders who do not care about goal attainment nor about harmonic relationships in their team. This leadership is considered universally as an undesirable leadership style, which was found to lower follower job satisfaction (Judge & Piccolo, 2004), and to increase their CWB and negative emotions at work (Bruursema, 2004).

Low agency-high communion leadership refers to a leadership style focusing on relationship maintenance within one's team while neglecting goal achievement for the team. This style has not received much attention in research up to now. Yet, in a relationship-oriented culture, such as China, it can be speculated that this type of leadership may fit well with followers' needs for harmonious relationships, which may potentially result in different outcomes in a collectivistic culture.

In general, agency and communion distinguish between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Whereas agency reflects autonomy, independence and striving for self-goals in individualistic cultures, communion reflects connections, interdependence, and striving for collective interests which are important in collectivistic cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, in sum, the central themes in our study (i.e., the dark triad traits, leadership styles, and culture) can be well-integrated into the agency-communion framework.

The Dark Triad Traits and High Agency-Low Communion Leadership

After a long debate in psychology on the determinants of human behavior (e.g., see Caprara, 1987; Ekehammar, 1974), the general idea prevails that the interactionist perspective holds, in which human behaviors are attributed to the interactions between personality traits and situations (Ten Berge & De Raad, 2001). An important theory in the interactionist tradition is trait activation theory, which suggests that the expression of personality traits depends on trait-relevant situations, namely that personality traits are activated and expressed in situations that are relevant to the expression of those traits (Tett & Burnett, 2003). These situations serve to trigger individuals to behave in a trait-relevant manner (Murray, 1938). In line with this theory, we assume that among the four leadership types, high agency-low communion leadership in particular may serve as a trait-relevant situational cue for employees with high level of dark triad traits, who also hold a high agency-low communion nature. In other words, we believe that high dark triad employees' negative expressions at work are more likely to be activated and their positive expressions are more likely to be further constrained when they are supervised by high agency-low communion leaders.

Specifically, high agency-low communion leaders who are eager to pursue goal achievement by controlling and pushing their followers may threaten high dark triad employees' personal interests and their strong desire of control in interpersonal relationships (LeBreton et al., 2018). This type of leadership provides a situational cue for high dark triad employees to express their dominant-hostile nature, in order to seek dominant roles over others (Greenbaum et al., 2017). This may cause high dark triad employees to respond in a more aggressive way, such as exerting CWBs to revenge and safeguard their own benefits. Furthermore, high dark triad employees usually have a transactional psychological contract with their organizations (Zagenczyk et al., 2014). The abusive supervision of high agency-low communion leaders may breach high dark triad employees' psychological contract with their organizations, which will lower their commitment to organizations and decrease their inclination to help others in organizations (Zagenczyk et al., 2013; Zagenczyk et al., 2014). The potentially destructive interactions between high agency-low communion leader and high dark triad employees may further lower high dark triad employees' engagement at work and distract their attention from fulfilling job duties and meeting job expectations (Thompson et al., 2018), resulting in lower in-role performance. Furthermore, high agency-low communion leadership can activate high dark triad employees' desire for control and power over others (Belschak et al., 2018). This may cause particularly strong and negative effects on employees in a Chinese work context, in which interpersonal relationships

and hierarchy between superiors and followers are of importance. Under such circumstances, high dark triad employees are expected to experience higher stress and more emotional exhaustion at work, and to develop stronger intentions to quit the current job.

Thus, we propose in the following hypothesis that under the supervision of high agency-low communion leaders in a Chinese context, employees who score high on dark triad traits will show more negative work outcomes (e.g., emotional exhaustion, turnover intention, and CWB) and fewer positive work outcomes (e.g., in-role performance, OCB, work engagement), compared to other leadership styles.

> **Hypothesis 1:** The negative relationships between the dark triad traits and positive work outcomes are stronger under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership, compared to other types of leadership styles.

> **Hypothesis 2:** The positive relationships between the dark triad traits and negative work outcomes are stronger under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership, compared to other types of leadership styles.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

Before collecting data, we used G* Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) to determine the sample size for this study. Specifically, we selected linear multiple regression (Fixed model, single regression coefficients, *t*-test) as our statistical test. For input parameters, we set the test as a two-tailed test, the α error probability at .05, its power at .95, and the number of predictors at 15. In order to detect a minimum effect of Cohen's d = .05, the output showed that the total sample size needs to be 262. We did not preregister the study.

We conducted a three-wave online survey study with a large group of full-time Chinese employees (N = 534), employing network sampling (Spreen & Zwaagstra, 1994). These employees held various job titles in different organizations across different sectors and were primarily based in the eastern region of China. In the first wave (T0), we distributed an online personality questionnaire to assess their dark triad traits. One week later, in the second wave (T1), we sent another survey to the participants who had completed the personality questionnaire (N = 511) to measure their general work-related behaviors and attitudes. After one more week, in the third wave (T2), we distributed a third online survey to those who had completed both the first and second waves (N = 359). In this third wave, participants were randomly assigned to one of four leadership scenarios: high agency-high communion leadership, low agency-low communion leadership, high agency-low communion leadership, and low agency-low communion leadership. After reading their assigned scenario, participants were asked to imagine working for the described leader and to indicate how they would behave and feel in that context. Details of the four leadership scenarios can be found in the appendix.

In total, 332 participants completed all questionnaires, and these participants therefore formed the final sample for data analyses (total drop-out rate from T0 to T2 = 37.83%). Their average age was 32.14 (SD = 8.59) years and 40.7% of the participants were women. More than half of the participants had obtained a bachelor's degree

(56.0%), and 16.9% held a graduate degree. Participants worked in different occupational sectors, with the majority working in finance (24.1%), industry (13.6%), education (11.4%), and government (8.4%). One average, participants worked 42.93 h ($SD = 12.09$) per week. We checked the attrition bias for participants who dropped out in the study and the results revealed that these participants did not differ significantly from the final sample on the three dark triad traits and demographical variables, such as age, gender, and educational levels.

The three-wave survey design helps to reduce the issue of common method bias for predictors and outcomes (Podsakoff et al., 2003), prevents participants' tiredness due to the long length of the total number of questions, and reduces any priming effects that might occur as participants need to fill out a work outcome questionnaire about what they generally do at work and another scenario-based work outcome questionnaire about what they would hypothetically do given a leadership scenario.

Measures and Materials

All materials and scales were translated from English to Chinese by three experts and back translated independently by three other experts. These experts held at least a master's degree in psychology and were fluent in both English and Chinese. The work outcome variables were measured twice (on T1 and on T2). At T1, we used the original scales to measure participants' general score on each work outcome. At T2, we adapted the scales in order to refer to the leadership scenario, such that all items were rephrased with the following stem: "If I were supervised by this leader, I would …". For example, "I feel bursting with energy at work" was adapted to "… I would feel bursting with energy at work". The answering options were kept the same for the T1 and T2 scales. We tested α reliabilities for all scales and reported them in the measures section below.

Leadership Scenarios

We created four leadership scenarios based on the definitions of initiating structure and consideration (Bass & Avolio, 2000) to ensure that the essence of agency and communion in leadership was captured and measured by these scenarios. A manipulation check was conducted to assess whether participants' perceptions of the four leadership scenarios differed in terms of agency and communion in the way that we had intended. Specifically, we asked participants to rate on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) the extent to which they perceived the leader in this work situation to be focused on achieving goals and the extent to which they perceived the leader in this work situation to be focused on maintaining relationships within the team. The results of the manipulation check all were in line with our intentions (see Table 1).

To assess the ecological validity of the four leadership scenarios, we asked participants to indicate the extent to which they had experienced a leadership situation that was similar to the scenario they had read by means of a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Participants were also asked to rate on a seven-point Likert scale (0= never, 6 = always), the extent to which they thought such a leadership situation could occur in reality. The results in Table 1 show that

Table 1. Manipulation Check.

		Agency		Communion		Experience		Frequency		Contrast	Agency	Communion	Experience	Frequency
	N	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD					
HAHC	87	3.91	0.74	3.99	0.80	3.37	0.81	3.09	1.12	HAHC vs HALC	−0.23	1.81**	0.52**	0.22
										HAHC vs LALC	1.71**	1.89**	0.89**	0.90**
										HAHC vs LAHC	1.45**	0.11	0.68**	0.80**
HALC	80	4.14	0.91	2.18	1.10	2.85	1.02	2.88	1.27	HALC vs HAHC	0.23	−1.81**	−0.52**	−0.22
										HALC vs LALC	1.94**	0.08	0.37*	−0.68**
										HALC vs LAHC	1.68**	−1.70**	0.16	0.59**
LALC	82	2.20	1.20	2.10	1.16	2.48	1.12	2.20	1.24	LALC vs HAHC	−1.71**	−1.89**	−0.89**	−0.90**
										LALC vs HALC	−1.94**	−0.08	−0.37*	−0.68**
										LALC vs LAHC	−0.26	−1.78**	−0.21	−0.09
LAHC	83	2.46	1.06	3.88	0.82	2.69	1.11	2.29	0.99	LAHC vs HAHC	−1.45**	−0.11	−0.68**	−0.80**
										LAHC vs HALC	−1.68**	1.70**	−0.16	−0.59**
										LAHC vs LALC	0.26	1.78**	0.21	0.09

Note: HAHC: High agency-high communion leadership scenario; HALC: High agency-low communion leadership scenario; LALC: Low agency-low communion leadership scenario; LAHC: Low agency-high communion leadership scenario.
Agency: The leader in this work situation focuses on achieving goals. Communion: The leader in this work situation focuses on maintaining relationships within the team. Experience: I have experienced a work situation that is similar to the work situation I have just read. Frequency: How often do you think such a work situation could occur in reality?.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

participants experienced high agency-high communion leadership ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.81$) significantly more often than other leadership styles, followed by high agency-low communion leadership ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.02$), low agency-high communion leadership ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.11$) and low agency-low communion leadership ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.12$). In terms of actual occurrence, participants reported that high agency-high communion leadership ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.12$) and high agency-low communion leadership ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.27$) occurred more often than the other leadership styles in reality, although there was no significant difference between these two leadership scenarios ($\Delta M = 0.22$, $p > .05$). The results for all the contrasts between different scenarios are displayed in Table 1.

Measures

Dark Triad
The three dark triad traits were measured by The Short Dark Triad Scale (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). Specifically, narcissism was measured by seven items (e.g., "People see me as a natural leader", Cronbach's α = .73), nine items indicated Machiavellianism (e.g., "I like to use clever manipulation to get my way", Cronbach's α = .74), and seven items measured psychopathy (e.g., "I like to get revenge on authorities", Cronbach's α = .79). The items were rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In-Role Performance
We used the three-item individual task proficiency scale (Griffin et al., 2007) to measure in-role performance. An example item is "I carry out the core parts of my job well" (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach's α for T1 and T2 were .92 and .93, respectively.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
We used the three-item scale from Goodman and Svyantek (1999) to measure OCB. An item example is "I help my colleagues with their work when they return from a period of absence" (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach's α for T1 and T2 were .82 and .88, respectively.

Work Engagement
The nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) was used to measure work engagement. An item example is "At my work, I feel bursting with energy" (Cronbach's $α_{T1}$ = .92, Cronbach's $α_{T2}$ = .95). Items were rated on a seven-point Likert scale from 0 (never) to 6 (always).

Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB)
A ten-item scale from Spector et al. (2010) was used to measure CWB. Participants responded to the items (e.g., "I would purposely waste my employer's materials/supplies") on a frequency scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always). Cronbach's α for T1 and T2 were .92 and .94, respectively.

Emotional Exhaustion

The four negatively phrased items included in the 8-item emotional exhaustion subscale of the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Demerouti et al., 2010) were used to measure emotional exhaustion. An item example is "During my work, I often feel emotionally drained" (Cronbach's α_{T1} = .75, Cronbach's α_{T2} = .86). Items were rated on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree).

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention was measured with a three-item scale from Seashore et al. (1982). An item example is "I often think of leaving my organization" (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Cronbach's α for T1 and T2 were .74 and .80, respectively.

Analytical Strategy

Our primary interest in this study was to examine the interactions between employees' dark triad traits and high agency-low communion leadership on work outcomes. Therefore, we performed hierarchical regression analyses with dummies for each work outcome. We used high agency-low communion leadership as our reference group. This leadership style is thought to serve as a trigger for high dark triad employees and therefore it is important to compare this leadership style with other types of leadership styles, as well as to test the interaction effects between the dark triad traits and leadership styles on employee outcomes accordingly. We created the following three dummy variables: D1 (high agency-high communion leadership vs high agency-low communion leadership), D2 (low agency-low communion leadership vs high agency-low communion leadership), and D3 (low agency-high communion leadership vs high agency-low communion leadership).

In step 1, we controlled for employees' age and gender in the regression, which may influence participants' perceptions of leaderships styles as well as their reactions toward these leadership styles (Vecchio & Boatwright, 2002). In step 2, we entered T1 work outcomes in the regression to control for participants' baseline work behaviors and attitudes at work. In step 3, we entered the three dummy variables. In step 4, we centered the three dark triad traits to avoid possible multicollinearity between predictors and interaction terms (Cohen et al., 2014) and entered them simultaneously in the regression. In step 5, we created and entered the three interaction terms between narcissism and the dummies (step 5a), three between Machiavellianism and the dummies (step 5b), and three between psychopathy and the dummies (step 5c) separately into the regression.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 displays means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations among all variables used in the current study.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 proposed that the negative relationships between the dark triad traits and positive work outcomes are stronger under the supervision of high agency-low

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the All the Variables.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1.Gender	0.59	0.49	–																			
2.Age	32.14	8.59	.12*	–																		
3.Narcissism	2.61	0.55	-0.22**	-0.07	(.73)																	
4.Machiavellianism	3.20	0.53	-0.12*	-0.02	.28**	(.74)																
5.Psychopathy	2.17	0.65	-0.25**	.15***	.43**	.26**	(.79)															
6.In-role performance (T1)	5.61	1.09	.03	-0.06	-0.12*	.10	-0.37**	(.92)														
7.OCB (T1)	5.24	1.10	-0.01	-0.10	.03	.05	-0.35**	.70**	(.82)													
8.Work engagement (T1)	3.42	1.03	-0.10	-0.09	.26**	.18**	-0.14**	.34**	.42**	(.92)												
9. CWB (T1)	1.21	0.96	-0.04	.09	.13*	.04	.43**	-0.46**	-0.43**	-0.33**	(.92)											
10.Turnover intention (T1)	2.59	0.87	.03	-0.03	-0.07	.05	.19**	-0.19**	-0.19**	-0.39**	.40**	(.74)										
11.Exhaustion (T1)	2.39	0.51	-0.06	.06	.03	-0.03	.25**	-0.23**	-0.11*	-0.26**	.36**	.27**	(.75)									
12.D1	0.26	0.44	-0.01	.03	-0.06	.05	.07	-0.08	-0.04	-0.09	.10	.09	.08	–								
13.D2	0.25	0.43	.03	-0.02	.02	.01	-0.04	.01	-0.02	.01	.00	-0.03	-0.05	-0.34**	–							
14.D3	0.25	0.43	-0.03	.04	.14*	.07	-0.02	.01	.06	.11	-0.06	-0.08	-0.04	-0.34**	-0.33**	–						
15.Inrole performance (T2)	4.99	1.41	.05	-0.10	-0.03	.12*	-0.22**	.32**	.35**	.29**	-0.27**	-0.06	-0.04	.23**	-0.24**	.01	(.93)					
16.OCB (T2)	4.88	1.26	.02	-0.07	.01	.06	-0.14*	.27**	.39**	.33**	-0.30**	-0.11*	-0.09	.23**	-0.18**	.10	.72**	(.88)				
17.Work engagement (T2)	2.89	1.27	-0.02	.05	.18**	.06	.02	.01	.16**	.32**	-0.09	-0.08	-0.03	.36**	-0.26**	.05	.55**	.55**	(.95)			
18.CWB (T2)	1.37	1.04	-0.11*	-0.01	.07	.02	.27**	-0.34**	-0.36**	-0.31**	.55**	.24**	.26**	-0.14*	.16**	-0.01	-0.46**	-0.41**	-0.28**	(.94)		
19.Turnover intention (T2)	2.84	0.86	.03	-0.04	-0.07	.01	.04	.06	-0.07	-0.16**	.14*	.29**	.09	-0.29**	.27**	-0.13*	-0.25**	-0.30**	-0.59**	.36**	(.80)	
20.Exhaustion (T2)	2.39	0.62	-0.01	.12*	-0.14*	-0.03	.16**	-0.13*	-0.17**	-0.28**	.23**	.20**	.38**	-0.14*	.05	-0.08	-0.30**	-0.29**	-0.36**	.39**	.45**	(.86)

*Note: N=332. *p < .05; **p < .01; D1: Dummy variable comparing high agency-high communion leadership with high agency-low communion leadership. D2: Dummy variable comparing low agency-low communion leadership with high agency-low communion leadership, D3: Dummy variable comparing low agency-high communion leadership with high agency-low communion leadership;*
T1 work outcomes: refers to participants' baseline work outcomes.
T2 work outcomes: refers to participants' work outcomes in leadership scenarios.

communion leadership, whereas hypothesis 2 proposed that the positive relationships between the dark triad traits and negative work outcomes are stronger under the supervision of high-agency-low communion leadership, compared to other leadership styles. We found that the expected interaction effects were only significant for CWB and emotional exhaustion—the results of which are reported in Table 4. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported and hypothesis 2 could be partially supported. Due to the word limit, the non-significant interaction results are available in the online supplemental document.

The relationship between Machiavellianism and CWB was significantly positive and stronger under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership, compared to low agency-low communion leadership (B 95% CI = 0.70 [0.22, 1.19], β = .18**, p = .004). The relationship between Machiavellianism and CWB was also significantly stronger under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership (B 95% CI = 0.56 [0.09, 1.04], β = .15**, p = .020), compared to low agency-high communion leadership. Yet, the positive relationship between Machiavellianism and CWB in high agency-low communion leadership was stronger but only marginally so, when compared to high agency-high communion leadership (B 95% CI = 0.42 [0.06, 0.90], β = .11, p = .089). Thus, these results partially supported hypothesis 2. Figure 1 visualizes the results.

The relationship between Machiavellianism and emotional exhaustion was significantly and positively stronger under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership, compared to low agency-high communion leadership (B 95% CI = 0.37 [0.06, 0.67], β = .16**, p = .020). Yet, the relationship between Machiavellianism and emotional exhaustion was not significantly stronger when comparing high agency-low communion leadership with high agency-high communion leadership (B 95% CI = 0.14 [0.18, 0.45], β = .06, p = .390) and low agency-low communion leadership (B 95% CI = 0.09 [0.23, 0.40], β = .04, p = .593). These results partially confirmed hypothesis 2. Figure 2 visualizes the results. All in all, hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

Additional Analyses

Main Effects of the DT Traits

Table 3 shows that employees' dark triad traits were significantly related to T2 in-role performance, work engagement, and emotional exhaustion after controlling for age, gender, their baseline work outcomes (T1) and the effects of leaderships. The results showed that Machiavellianism was positively related to T2 in-role performance (B 95% CI = 0.38 [0.10, 0.65], β = .14**, p = .008). Narcissism was positively related to T2 work engagement (B 95% CI = 0.29 [0.03, 0.52], β = .13*, p = .029) and negatively related to T2 emotional exhaustion (B 95% CI = −0.23 [−0.36, −0.11], β = −0.21**, p < .001) at T2, respectively. Psychopathy was negatively related to T2 in-role performance (B 95% CI = −0.40 [−0.67, −0.14], β = −0.19*, p = .003) and positively related to T2 emotional exhaustion (B 95% CI = 0.16 [0.05, 0.27], β = .17**, p = .005). For the other outcomes (i.e., OCB, CWB, turnover intention) at T2, the relationships between the dark triad traits and these outcomes were not found to be significant.

In summary, the findings suggest that the effects of dark triad traits can manifest as both positive and negative within organizational settings. Specifically, Machiavellianism
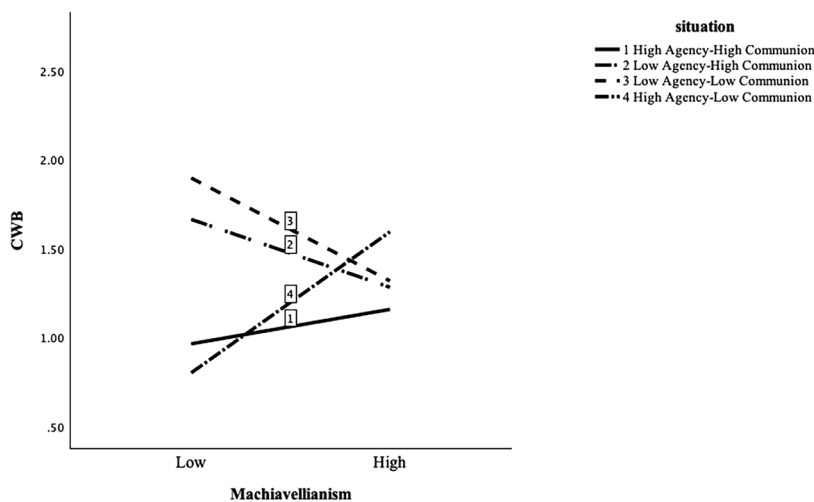
Figure 1. Interaction Plot Between Machiavellianism and Leadership Styles on Counterproductive Work Behavior.
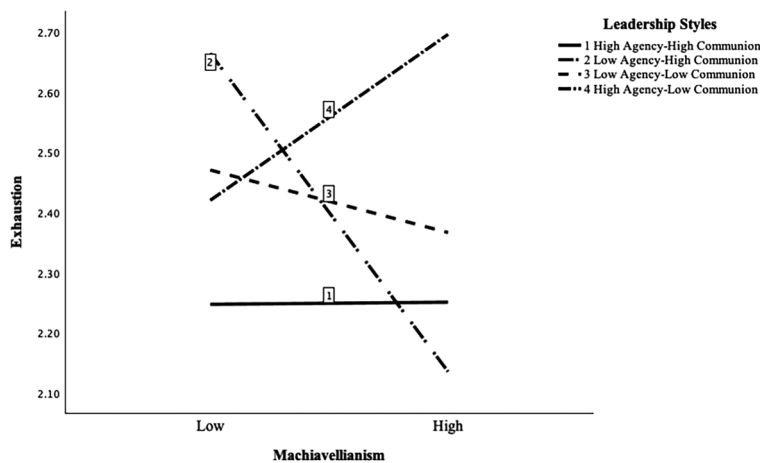
Figure 2. Interaction Plot Between Machiavellianism and Leadership Styles on Exhaustion.

and narcissism are associated with certain positive outcomes, indicating that individuals with these traits can sometimes leverage their characteristics for beneficial results in the workplace. In contrast, psychopathy appears to be linked solely to negative outcomes, highlighting its detrimental impact on organizational functioning and employee relations.

Main Effects of Leadership Styles
The results in Table 5 show that employees in the high agency-high communion leadership scenario showed higher scores on all positive work outcomes at T2 (including in-role performance, OCB, and work engagement), as well as lower scores on all negative T2 work outcomes (including CWB, turnover intention, and emotional

Table 3. Main Effect of the Dark Triad Traits on Work Outcomes (T2).

	Narcissism			Machiavellianism			Psychopathy			Cohen's f^2
	B 95% CI	β		B 95% CI	β		B 95% CI	β		
In-role performance	0.14 [−0.15, 0.43]	.05		0.38 [0.10, 0.65]	.14**		−0.40 [−0.67, −0.14]	−0.19**		.02
OCB	−0.03 [−0.29, 0.23]	−0.13		0.13 [−0.11, 0.37]	.06		−0.04 [−0.28, 0.20]	−0.02		.00
Work engagement	0.29 [0.03, 0.52]	.13*		−0.01 [−0.25, 0.23]	−0.00		−0.02 [−0.25, 0.20]	−0.01		.01
CWB	−0.13 [−0.32, 0.06]	−0.07		−0.06 [−0.24, 0.13]	−0.03		0.13 [−0.05, 0.31]	.08		.01
Turnover intention	−0.10 [−0.28, 0.08]	−0.07		−0.01 [−0.17, 0.16]	−0.01		0.06[−0.10, 0.21]	.04		.00
Exhaustion	−0.23 [−0.36, −0.11]	−0.21**		−0.01 [−0.13, 0.11]	−0.01		0.16 [0.05, 0.27]	.17**		.03

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01.

Table 4. Interaction Effects of the DT Traits and Leadership Styles (T2).

	CWB		Cohen's f^2	Exhaustion		Cohen's f^2
	B 95% CI	β		B 95% CI	β	
D1*Narcissism	0.17 [−0.31, 0.65]	.05	.00	0.25 [−0.06, 0.56]	.12	.01
D2*Narcissism	0.07 [−0.46, 0.60]	.02		0.15 [−0.19, 0.49]	.06	
D3*Narcissism	0.14 [−0.35, 0.62]	.04		0.15 [−0.17, 0.46]	.07	
D1* Machiavellianism	−0.42 [−0.90, 0.06]	−0.11	.02	−0.14 [−0.45, 0.18]	−0.06	.01
D2* Machiavellianism	−0.70 [−1.19, −0.17]	−0.18**		−0.09 [−0.40, 0.23]	−0.04	
D3* Machiavellianism	−0.56 [−1.11, −0.22]	−0.15**		−0.37 [−0.67, −0.06]	−0.16**	
D1*Psychopathy	−0.27 [−0.65, 0.11]	−0.09	.00	−0.07 [−0.32, 0.18]	−0.04	.00
D2*Psychopathy	−0.28 [−0.68, 0.12]	−0.08		0.00 [−0.26, 0.26]	.00	
D3*Psychopathy	0.12 [−0.27, 0.51]	.04		0.09 [−0.16, 0.35]	.05	

Note: D1: Dummy variable 1 comparing high agency-high communion leadership with high agency-low communion leadership.
D2: Dummy variable 2 comparing low agency-low communion leadership with high agency-low communion leadership.
D3: Dummy variable 3 comparing low agency-high communion leadership with high agency-low communion leadership.
*p < .05; **p < .01.

exhaustion), compared to high agency-low communion leadership. Employees in the low agency-high communion leadership scenario were found to score higher on two T2 positive outcomes (i.e., OCB and work engagement) and score lower on two T2 negative outcome (i.e., turnover intention and emotional exhaustion), compared to high agency-low communion leadership. Employees in low agency-low communion leadership scenario reported a lower score on T2 in-role performance (B 95% CI = −0.51 [−0.91, −0.12], β = −0.16*, p = .011), and a higher score on T2 CWB (B 95% CI = 0.27 [0.01, 0.53], β = .11*, p = .044), compared to high agency-low communion leadership.

In sum, these results seem to suggest that in a collectivistic culture, both high communion leadership styles (i.e., high agency-high communion leadership and low agency-high communion leadership) are relatively good leadership styles, whereas both low communion leadership styles (i.e., high agency-low communion leadership and low agency-low communion leadership) are detrimental.

Effect Sizes for All Results

We calculated Cohen's f^2 (Cohen, 1988) to assess the effects sizes for all main effects and interaction effects. These effect sizes ranged from .05 to .23 (small to medium) for

Table 5. Main Effects of Leadership Styles on Work Outcomes (T2).

	HAHC vs HALC		LAHC vs HALC		LALC vs HALC		Cohen's
	B 95% CI	β	B 95% CI	β	B 95% CI	β	f^2
In-role performance	0.72 [0.33, 1.11]	.22**	0.14 [−0.26, 0.53]	.04	−0.51 [−0.91, −0.12]	−0.16*	.11
OCB	0.88 [0.55, 1.22]	.31**	0.54 [0.20, 0.88]	.18**	−0.03 [−0.38, 0.31]	−0.01	.10
Work engagement	1.18 [0.85, 1.51]	.41**	0.37 [0.04, 0.71]	.13*	−0.25 [−0.58, 0.09]	−0.08	.23
CWB	−0.37 [−0.63, −0.11]	−0.16**	0.02 [−0.24, 0.29]	.01	0.27 [0.01, 0.53]	.11*	.05
Turnover intention	−0.70 [−0.93, −0.47]	−0.36**	−0.41 [−0.64, −0.17]	−0.20**	0.19 [−0.04, 0.42]	.10	.20
Exhaustion	−0.37 [−0.54, −0.21]	−0.27**	−0.27 [−0.44, −0.10]	−0.19**	−0.12[−0.29, 0.05]	−0.08	.06

Note: $^+p < .10$; $^*p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; HAHC: High agency-high communion leadership scenario; HALC: High agency-low communion leadership scenario; LALC: Low agency-low communion leadership scenario; LAHC: Low agency-high communion leadership scenario. Effect sizes (Cohen's f^2) for each outcome were calculated based on the R^2 for the first three columns.

the main effects of leadership styles on work outcomes. The effects sizes for the main effects of the dark triad traits on each outcome ranged between .00 and .03 (small). The effect sizes for the significant interaction effects between leadership styles and Machiavellianism on CWB and emotional exhaustion ranged between .01 and .02 (small).

Discussion

This study examined the influence of employees' dark triad traits and different leadership styles on their positive and negative work outcomes within a collectivistic culture. The findings contribute to the fields of personality, social psychology, and organizational research in several meaningful ways. By highlighting how these dark traits interact with leadership styles, the present study offers insights into managing and optimizing employee performance and well-being in a cultural context that prioritizes group cohesion and collective success.

Theoretical Contributions

First, drawing on an agency-communion perspective, the present study decomposed different leadership styles into a combination of the two fundamental dimensions of agency and communion and revealed the importance of leadership agency versus leadership communion for the strength of the relationship of Machiavellianism with two work outcomes, namely counterproductive work behavior (CWB) and emotional exhaustion. Specifically, our results confirm that a leadership style that contains a combination of high agency and low communion triggers Machiavellians' CWB at work in collectivist China. The relationship between Machiavellianism and CWB was stronger under high agency-low communion leadership, compared to low agency-low communion leadership. This implies that high agency in combination with low communion may play a more important role in terms of triggering Machiavellians' negative expressions, compared to the combination of low agency and low communion. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that compared to high agency-low communion leadership, high agency-high communion leadership may still trigger high Machiavellian employees' CWB at work, yet to a lesser degree. Thus, it might also be suspected that

high communion in leadership behaviors may help to suppress Machiavellian employees' CWB to a certain extent.

The results further revealed that compared to low agency-high communion leadership, the relationship between employees' Machiavellianism and emotional exhaustion was stronger under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership. Yet, this relationship was not significantly stronger when comparing high agency-low communion leadership with the other two leadership styles (i.e., low agency-low communion leadership and high agency-high communion leadership). Thus, it can be speculated that the leadership characteristic of high agency combined with low communion needs to be present to trigger Machiavellians' emotional exhaustion at work in a collectivistic culture, while the presence of either of the two leadership characteristics alone may not be sufficient to trigger high Machiavellian employees' emotional exhaustion.

Second, the result that Machiavellians were more likely to exert CWB and feel exhausted when supervised by high agency-low communion leaders, provides empirical support for the trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) in relation to Machiavellianism. That is, a high agency-low communion leadership style aligns with Machiavellians' characteristics of being callous, pragmatic, and highly goal-oriented (Jones & Paulhus, 2014), as it forms a trait-relevant situational cue for Machiavellians to activate their negative expressions (e.g., CWB and emotional exhaustion) in organizations. Yet, while high agency-low communion leadership activated Machiavellians' negative work outcomes, our findings showed that the relationships between Machiavellianism and positive work outcomes seemed not to be particularly influenced by this leadership style. The significant effects on negative but not on positive work outcomes, seem to provide support for trait activation theory by suggesting that personality traits are triggered and expressed in a trait-relevant way (Tett & Burnett, 2003). More specifically, high agency-low communion leaders seem to cause Machiavellians to enact their core features, such as distrusting others, seeking control and power, and engaging in amoral manipulation (Dahling et al., 2009). These enacted core features may be more closely related to employees' negative work behaviors (e.g., CWB) and attitudes (e.g., emotional exhaustion) than to positive work outcomes, which might be the reason for the uninfluenced relationships between Machiavellianism and positive work outcomes under the supervision of high agency-low communion leadership.

Moreover, the effects of specific leadership styles on Machiavellians' work behavior seem to highlight Machiavellians' unique 'environmental sensitivity' feature (Jones & Mueller, 2022). This feature implies that Machiavellians are more likely to be influenced by situational factors and thus adapt their behaviors and attitudes to work situations, compared to narcissists and psychopaths. Machiavellians have been described as 'social chameleons', who are able to be cooperative and to show pro-social behavior, and only show their dark nature when triggered (Dahling et al., 2009). Compared to narcissists and psychopaths who may show consistent behaviors and attitudes at work, Machiavellians seem to be more sensitive to leaders' relevant behaviors (i.e., leaders high in agency and low in communion) that may potentially threaten their own gains, in certain circumstances such as unethical organizational climate (De Hoogh et al., 2021), Machiavellians' strong negative reactions might be elicited. In line with this notion, our findings provide evidence to support Machiavellians' unique characteristic of

environmental sensitivity, and help to distinguish Machiavellianism from the other two dark triad traits (Jones & Mueller, 2022).

Third, the current study investigated the cross-cultural generalizability of high dark triad employee-leadership working patterns in a collectivistic culture. Previous research has suggested that abusive leadership and leaders high in Machiavellianism may trigger Machiavellians' unethical behaviors or stress at work in individualistic cultures (Belschak et al., 2018; Greenbaum et al., 2017). In line with these studies, our finding confirms the cross-cultural generalizability of high agency-low communion leadership triggering Machiavellians' negative work outcomes.

The direct effects of employees' dark triad traits on their contextualized work outcomes (measured in leadership situations) revealed several bright sides of dark traits in collectivist China. Specifically, narcissism was positively related to contextualized work engagement and negatively related to contextualized emotional exhaustion (measured in leadership situations). These findings seem to reflect narcissism's agentic nature of pursuing goals at work (Javidan et al., 2006). Machiavellianism was positively related to contextualized in-role performance. This finding might be explained by Machiavellians' skill at utilizing interpersonal relationships to achieve high performance at work (Nelson & Gilbertson, 1991), especially in collectivist China, where interpersonal connections are greatly valued. While these findings reveal bright sides of the dark triad traits in collectivistic Chinese culture, psychopathy was found to only display harmful behavior at work. Psychopathy was found to be negatively related to in-role performance, and positively to emotional exhaustion. These findings seem to support the proposition that psychopathy is the darkest trait among the dark triad model universally (Muris et al., 2017), the impact of which is hardly influenced by situational factors (Ma et al., 2021).

The direct effects of leadership styles on employees' work outcomes that were found in our study confirm the idea that high agency-high communion leadership is a beneficial leadership style in China, which is in line with universal attributes of leadership effectiveness, such as being visionary, inspirational, and a team builder (Javidan et al., 2006). However, in contrast to negative effects of low agency-high communion leadership found in individualistic cultures (Redeker et al., 2014), in the present study low agency-high communion leadership was found to be beneficial in terms of increasing followers' work engagement and OCB, and reducing their turnover intentions and work-related emotional exhaustion in a collectivistic culture. Low agency-high communion leadership may stimulate cooperation and create a harmonious work environment (Gartzia & van Knippenberg, 2016), which fits people who greatly value interpersonal relatedness in collectivistic cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Furthermore, our findings provide evidence for the idea that high agency-low communion leadership is regarded as maladaptive in a collectivistic culture. These results are in line with previous research in collectivistic cultures, which found this type of leadership (e.g., transactional leadership and authoritarian leadership; Yao et al., 2014) to be positively related to employees' job stress and CWB (Yao et al., 2014), and to be negatively related to employees' job performance, organizational commitment, and intention to stay (Schaubroeck et al., 2017). These findings differ from previous research in individualistic cultures, which found that high agency-low communion leadership has positive effects on follower satisfaction, follower motivation, leadership performance,

and leadership effectiveness (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Finally, our findings imply that low agency-low communion leadership can be regarded as a maladaptive leadership style in collectivist China. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that this type of leadership is a destructive leadership style (Skogstad et al., 2007).

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations of the present study need to be mentioned. First, the study created four different leadership scenarios to summarize and represent various leadership styles, based on the agency and communion framework. Although we tested the ecological validity of these leadership scenarios, participants' responses to their perceptions of the leadership scenarios still might be different from their actual reactions to leaders in the workplace, which is an inherent limitation of scenario studies. In addition, the agency-communion framework captures fundamental similarities but may neglect more nuanced differences between different leadership styles. For example, transactional leadership and authoritarian leadership share a common core of high agency and low communion. Yet, transactional leadership focuses more on setting up rewarding systems and taking actions to correct followers' problems (Judge & Piccolo, 2004), whereas authoritarian leadership focuses more on forcing followers to comply with their requests (Redeker et al., 2014). Therefore, a field study that assesses the unique influences of the specific leadership styles at work might be a fruitful next study in organizational research.

Second, the present study used self-report questionnaires, which might lead to self-enhancement bias for high dark triad employees on their work and their interactions with others (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). To assess high dark triad employees at work more accurately, leaders' perceptions of followers' dark triad traits and work outcomes could also be taken into consideration in future research.

Finally, the present study provided each participant with one leadership scenario and asked them to respond to this specific leadership style, which fails to capture the within-person fluctuations or consistencies of followers' reactions to different leadership styles. Thus, a scenario study with several leadership situations presented to the same participant or a diary study which captures the dynamics of leadership behaviors and high dark triad followers' work outcomes within a short period of time might be a direction for future research.

Practical Implications

The present work draws attention to the issue that leadership effectiveness might be culture dependent. Specifically, our findings indicate the importance of relationship-oriented leadership styles in a collectivistic culture. A manager who can focus on both relationship maintenance and goal achievement may produce the best results among collectivistic employees. Next to cultural factors, leader-follower fit needs to be considered to successfully manage employees, in particularly for high Machiavellian employees in a collectivistic context. Specifically, in order to suppress Machiavellians' deviant behaviors or prevent them to be emotionally exhausted at work in such culture, leadership styles that contain features of both high agency and low communion need

to be avoided. As such, a customized training for managers might be developed for international companies, where these cultural influences and employees' individual differences need to be taken into consideration (Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992).

Conclusions

The present study revealed that, first, high agency-low communion leadership serves as a situational cue to trigger Machiavellians' CWB and emotional exhaustion at work in a collectivistic culture. High agency may play a more important role than low communion in triggering Machiavellians' CWB, whereas high agency and low communion are equally important in terms of triggering Machiavellians' emotional exhaustion. Second, narcissism and Machiavellianism have positive effects on employees' in-role performance and work engagement, whereas psychopathy only shows negative effects. Third, leadership styles with a focus on relationship maintenance seems to be more functional than leadership styles that neglect this aspect in a collectivistic culture.

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Ethical Approval

This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any of the authors. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. It is a purely survey study, where ethical approval was not a requirement by Ethics Review Committee DPECS, ESSB when the data was collected.

Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Disclosure Statement

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Data and/or Code Availability

The link to all of the data, analysis, and materials are available at: https://osf.io/zqaps/.

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Appendix. Leadership Scenarios

High Agency-High Communion Leadership Scenario

Please carefully read the description of a work situation below and imagine that you are the person in this hypothetical situation.

You work for an insurance sales agency and sell property insurance, health insurance, life insurance, and other types of insurances to prospective customers. You work within a small team, under the supervision of a leader, John Woods (Chinese: Wei Wang).

John is passionate about achieving the team goals and explains clearly what needs to be done by every team member to accomplish these goals. Moreover, he emphasizes the importance of deadlines and maintains specific standards of performance. He asks all of you to do your best to achieve the goals. For example, he sets up sales targets and deadlines for you and your colleagues. Every month, he checks if your targets are fulfilled or not. If your work does not meet his standards, he will urge you to work harder to attain the expected performance.

John is friendly and approachable. He finds time to listen to his team members, and tries to make you and your colleagues feel at ease. In addition, he tries to create a warm team atmosphere. For example, he always walks by your colleagues' offices and yours to ask how each of you is doing. He is open to listen to you and your colleagues' concerns about work and personal issues. He also looks for some time to organize dinners after work and likes to spend time with each and every one of you during social events.

All in all, John makes sure that the team achieves its goals. Also, he strives for harmonic relationships within the team.

Low Agency-High Communion Leadership Scenario

Please carefully read the description of a work situation below and imagine that you are the person in this hypothetical situation.

You work for an insurance sales agency and sell property insurance, health insurance, life insurance, and other types of insurances to prospective customers. You work within a small team, under the supervision of a leader, John Woods (Chinese: Wei Wang).

John is not concerned about achieving the team goals and seldom talks about what needs to be done by every team member to accomplish these goals. Moreover, he does not communicate any requirements, deadlines, or specific standards of performance. He rarely asks any of you to do your best to achieve the goals. For example, when you and your colleagues ask him what the sales targets are every month, he avoids giving clear answers, or he responds to your questions too late. If your work is poorer than the standards, he neither criticizes you nor encourages you to catch up with the expected performance.

John is friendly and approachable. He finds time to listen to his team members, and tries to make you and your colleagues feel at ease. In addition, he tries to create a warm team atmosphere. For example, he always walks by your colleagues' offices and yours to ask how each of you is doing. He is open to listen to you and your colleagues' concerns about work and personal issues. He also looks for some time to organize dinners after work and likes to spend time with each and every one of you during social events.

All in all, John neglects to make sure that the team achieves its goals, and he strives for harmonic relationships within the team.

High Agency-Low Communion Leadership Scenario

Please carefully read the description of a work situation below and imagine that you are the person in this hypothetical situation.

You work for an insurance sales agency and sell property insurance, health insurance, life insurance, and other types of insurances to prospective customers. You work within a small team, under the supervision of a leader, John Woods (Chinese: Wei Wang).

John is passionate about achieving the team goals and explains clearly what needs to be done by every team member to accomplish these goals. Moreover, he emphasizes the importance of deadlines and maintains specific standards of performance. He asks all of you to do your best to achieve the goals. For example, he sets up sales targets and deadlines for you and your colleagues. Every month, he checks if your targets are fulfilled or not. If your work does not meet his standards, he will urge you to work harder to attain the expected performance.

John is not particularly friendly and approachable. He hardly finds time to listen to his team members, and does little to make it pleasant for you and your colleagues to be members of the team. He does not find it important to create a warm team atmosphere. For example, he would never walk by your colleagues' offices and yours to ask how each of you is doing. He is not open to listen to you and your colleagues' concerns about work and personal issues. In addition, he rarely organizes and joins dinners after work or participates in social events with you.

All in all, John makes sure that the team achieves its goals, and he does not strive for harmonic relationships within the team.

Low Agency-Low Communion Leadership Scenario

Please carefully read the description of a work situation below and imagine that you are the person in this hypothetical situation.

You work for an insurance sales agency and sell property insurance, health insurance, life insurance, and other types of insurances to prospective customers. You work within a small team, under the supervision of a leader, John Woods (Chinese: Wei Wang).

John is not concerned about achieving the team goals and seldom talks about what needs to be done by every team member to accomplish these goals. Moreover, he does not communicate any requirements, deadlines, or specific standards of performance. He rarely asks any of you to do your best to achieve the goals. For example, when you and your colleagues ask him what the sales targets are every month, he avoids giving clear answers, or he responds to your questions too late. If your work is poorer than the standards, he neither criticizes you nor encourages you to catch up with the expected performance.

John is not particularly friendly and approachable. He hardly finds time to listen to his team members, and does little to make it pleasant for you and your colleagues to be members of the team. He does not find it important to create a warm team atmosphere. For example, he would never walk by your colleagues' offices and yours to ask how each of you is doing. He is not open to listen to you and your colleagues' concerns about work and personal issues. In addition, he rarely organizes and joins dinners after work or participates in social events with you.

Al in all, John neglects to make sure that the team achieves its goals. Also, he does not strive for harmonic relationships within the team

Manipulation Check

Below there are some statements about the work situation you read previously. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

1. The leader in this work situation focuses on achieving goals. 1= Strongly disagree 5= Strongly agree
2. The leader in this work situation focuses on maintaining relationships within the team. 1= Strongly disagree 5= Strongly agree
3. I have experienced a work situation that is similar to the work situation you have just read. 1= Strongly disagree 5= Strongly agree
4. How often do you think such a work situation could occur in reality? 0= Never 6= Always