The Effect of College Advisors Humility on Students' Prosocial Behavior: A Mediated Model with Moderation

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Abstract: The Humility Scale, the Self-Efficacy Scale, the Machiavellianism Scale, and the Prosocial Behavior Scale were utilized in this study's questionnaire survey of 470 college students to examine the relationship between college advisers' humility and students' prosocial behavior. The findings revealed that the association between students' prosocial behavior and college advisors' modesty was mitigated by Machiavellianism. The findings are conducive to expanding the research on the relationship between college advisor personality and student behavior and providing practical guidance for enhancing prosocial behavior among college students.

Keywords: college students, humility, self-efficacy, Machiavellianism, prosocial behavior

1.   Introduction

The country will have a future, the people will have hope, and there will be a constant and powerful force to accomplish the nation's development goals when the youthful generation has principles and devotion. College students are playing an increasingly important role in society, and their positive behavior is conducive to promoting social stability and development. How to cultivate socialist values and family sentiments among college students, and being a socialist youth with ideals and responsibilities, not only requires students to strengthen their own academic and moral cultivation but also cannot be achieved without the inculcation of teachers and the environment. Education is closely linked to the future and destiny of the country. The nation should adhere to the correct direction of schooling, strengthen the construction of a high-quality teaching team, produce a young generation with a feeling of historical duty and lofty goals, and offer powerful talent support for the growth of the nation.

1.1.   The Role of College Advisor in the Framework of Leadership

A new trend in current research on leadership is the study of members who hold leadership roles in schools. These members either consistently play the role of leader or act as a leader in a particular situation, and the role of influencing the behavior of others is also referred to as a leader. Schneier and Goktepe defined this informal leadership as someone who has an impact on the group's members [1]. According to organizational sociology research, unofficial leaders have a significant impact on the behaviors, norms, and results of groups [2]. Pescosolido asserted that a group's sense of efficacy is greatly influenced by the informal leadership that develops within the organization [3]. College

advisor is a concept that has emerged in response to the needs of our society and has expanded in connotation along with the formation and development of the counseling system. As the person with whom college students have the most contact within the school, the college advisor influences on their every word and action and acts as an informal leader within the campus.

1.2. Humility and Prosocial Behavior

Humility is a trait that combines modesty, lack of pomposity, understatement, consideration for others, and lack of complacency. It is self-awareness and a good character trait. Previous research has demonstrated the significance of humility in groups and that humble people can influence the character of those around them through their positive character [4]. As the teacher with whom college students have the most frequent contact, it is important to investigate whether a college advisor possesses humility and influences the development of students through his or her personality traits. A young person's sense of family and readiness to give back to society are significant factors in fostering social growth and ethos. The development of the young generation is a matter of the future development of a nation, and the question of how to promote the development of a prosocial consciousness and a sense of family and country among the young generation needs to be further researched.

Humility is considered to be a noteworthy virtue or strength of character [5], and other academics have noted that humility is not merely the absence of ego, conceit, or narcissism, but also acknowledges that it has beneficial and valuable qualities [6-8]. From a positive psychology perspective, humility is also considered to be a relatively stable (and still contextually influenced or moldable) positive personality trait and is an appropriate perspective and view of the self that individuals possess [9, 10]. Humble people are more open to suggestions and criticism and recognize the various contributions that diverse people and things make to our world [6, 8, 9]. According to research, a leader's level of humility can have a significant impact on how their followers act.

Prosocial behavior is the inclination of people to act in a humble, helpful, cooperative, sharing, and even self-sacrificing manner for the benefit of others while they are interacting with others, which is an important basis for maintaining good relationships between people and an important guarantee for a just and harmonious society [11]. As the backbone of social development, the prosocial behavior of college students affects not only their development, but also the development of society. Therefore, Investigating the variables that affect prosocial behavior in college students is crucial.

In the current research, the three-dimensional paradigm of modest leadership put forth by Owens et al. is generally acknowledged to be accurate is the capacity to have an accurate image of oneself, acknowledge others' contributions and abilities, and be teachable [12]. Prosocial behavior has diverse motivations and functions [13]. Self-determination theory classifies the motivation for prosocial behavior into autonomous and controlled motivation. Autonomous prosocial motivation means that the behavior individual performs the behavior autonomously and is motivated by the individual's moral values and internal identity. Given that some of the typical behaviors of humble leaders tend to focus on the development of followers and appreciate their strengths [14], leaders' humility can lead to followers' motivation to engage in prosocial behavior. Positive teacher-student interactions are linked to teacher support and rewards, according to the Interpersonal Teacher Behavior Model. while the pursuit of prosocial objectives is linked to students' and instructors' beneficial interactions [15].

Hypothesis 1: College advisor humility positively predicts students' prosocial behavior.

1.3. The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a belief that individuals have about their behavioral abilities and outcomes. Self-efficacy is considered an important determinant of behavioral change because it influences the decisions (behavioral intentions), effort, and perseverance people make when faced with challenges [16]. This belief represents the person's conviction that by acting, difficult circumstances can be managed.

A persistent sense of individuality, humility involves a high degree of other-focus and a low degree of self-focus [17]. Humble individuals can perceive themselves as capable of doing what needs to be done and do not overestimate the specialness or superiority of their abilities and skills, reflecting the individual's perception of their true self [18]. A study of 161 teams found that when leaders are humbler, followers emulate the leader's humble behavior [19]. Thus, humble leaders can increase followers' humble behavior, which in turn promotes followers' self-perceptions and enhances their self-concept [14]. Furthermore, modest leaders are open to recognizing and appreciating the special talents and contributions of their followers. This constant affirmation and behavioral support from modest leaders boost followers' self-efficacy by boosting their confidence in their skills [20].

Hypothesis 2: The self-efficacy of students is positively impacted by the humility of college advisors.

Self-efficacy is one of the characteristics that influences a person's helping behavior, according to research [21, 22]. There hasn't been much research on the connection between self-efficacy and prosocial behavior. However, studies show that those who have higher degrees of self-efficacy engage in more prosocial activities. Self-efficacy significantly predicts helping behavior in junior high school students [23], Bystander helping behavior is substantially correlated with social self-efficacy [24], and empathic self-efficacy is significantly associated with prosocial behavior [21].

Combining Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, Hypothesis 3 is proposed: The link between college advisor modesty and students' prosocial behavior is mediated by self-efficacy.

1.4. The Moderating Role of Machiavellianism

In popularly known theory, human behavior is improved by humility. However, research has found that the humble qualities of leaders may also hurt followers [14]. Some followers of humble leaders are indifferent and selfish, without regard for the welfare of others. Therefore, it is essential to examine the boundary conditions of humility.

Machiavellianism, also known as a power play, is the personality that tends to be goal-directed, interpersonally manipulative, and to use others for their benefit [25]. Machiavelli believed that people could use several unethical strategies, when necessary, these strategies include distrust of others, desire for high status, desire to control others, and manipulation of others [26]. High Machiavellianism can affect the way moral judgments are made. Machiavellians strive to dominate others in order to increase their status and rights while seeking to protect their own interests [27]. As a result, highly Machiavellian individuals tend to make decisions in terms of personal interests and likely to behave more prosocially than in their own best interests.

Humble leaders frequently exhibit a more tolerant disposition toward novel or divergent opinions, they are more likely to take on board the suggestions and comments of their followers and appreciate the abilities of their followers [6, 12], which encourages followers to challenge the leader by being outspoken, and followers are empowered to express themselves more. The proximity-inhibition theory of entitlement suggests that a sense of entitlement makes individuals keener to pursue personal interests and less concerned with the public good and the well-being of others [28]. Self-interest has a significant role in guiding highly Machiavellian persons' decision-making, and having a sense of

power makes highly Machiavellian personalities are more prone to act selfishly. Thus, the importance of humility in prosocial behavior is hampered by excessive Machiavellianism.

Hypothesis 4: Machiavellianism in its moderating role between college advisor humility and student prosocial behavior.
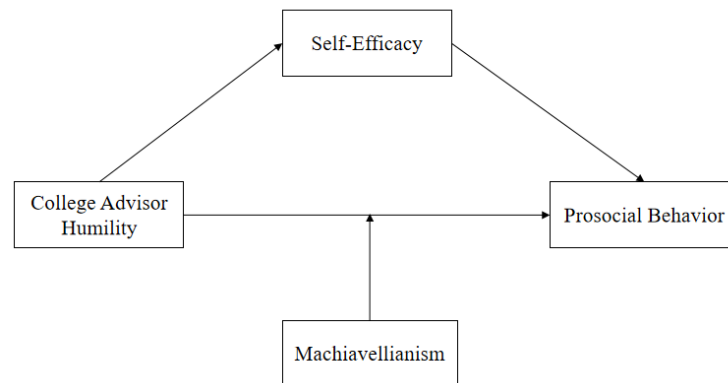

Figure 1: Theoretical model of this study.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

In this study, 470 college students in total, representing ten colleges in Jiangxi Province were selected as subjects, and those who failed the polygraph questions and those who took too short a time to answer the questions were deleted, and 450 valid questionnaires were finally obtained. The subjects were divided into 197 men, or 43.8%, and 253 females, or 56.2%; the oldest subject was 30 years old, the youngest was 18 years old, and the average age of all the subjects was around 21 years, in terms of education, the percentage of a college degree was 17.1%, the percentage of college undergraduate degree was 68%, and the percentage of subjects with a postgraduate degree or above was 14.9%.

2.2. Materials

2.2.1. College Advisor Humility

The Humility Scale developed by Owens et al. [12] was used, with nine questions. For example, "He/she is willing to learn from the strengths of others" and "He/she acknowledges when he/she sees that others have more knowledge or better skills." The measure is scored on a 7-point scale, with "1" denoting "very non-conforming" and "7" denoting "very conforming". The questionnaire has had good reliability in previous studies, with $\alpha = 0.97$ in this study.

2.2.2. Machiavellianism

A Machiavellian scale developed by Corral and Calvete [29] was used, with 20 questions. Instances include "Never tell anyone the real reason why you are doing something unless you have another purpose" and "The best way to get along with people is to tell them what they want to know." The measure is scored on a 6-point scale, with "1" denoting "complete agreement" and "6" denoting "complete disagreement". The questionnaire has had good reliability in previous studies, with $\alpha = 0.90$ in this study.

2.2.3. Self-efficacy

Ten questions from a broad self-efficacy scale created by Schwarzer et al. [30] were utilized. For instance, "I can always solve problems if I try" and "Even if others don't agree with me, I can still get what I want." The measure is scored on a 4-point scale, with "1" denoting "completely incorrect" and "4" denoting "completely correct". The questionnaire has had good reliability in previous studies, with $\alpha = 0.97$ in this study.

2.2.4. Prosocial Behavior

A revised version of the Prosocial Behavior Scale by Cong was used [31], with 23 questions. For example, "I will do my best to help others in full view of everyone" and "The greatest sense of achievement for me is to give comfort to those who are in great pain." The measure is scored on a 5-point scale, with "1" denoting "complete non-conformity" and "5" denoting "complete conformity". The questionnaire has had good reliability in previous studies, with $\alpha = 0.98$ in this study.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

The means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients for the major variables are displayed in Table 1. From Table 1, it can be seen that college advisor humility was highly significant and linked with self-efficacy ($r = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$) and prosocial behavior ($r = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$); self-efficacy and prosocial behavior had a strong, positive relationship ($r = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$); Machiavellianism and college advisor humility ($r = -0.16$, $p < 0.01$), self-efficacy ($r = -0.72$, $p < 0.01$) and prosocial behavior ($r = -0.20$, $p < 0.01$) were significantly negatively related. The later hypothesis testing is supported by these findings.

Table 1: Mean, standards deviations and correlations of main variables.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	1.56	0.50						
2. Age	20.93	1.89	-0.03					
2. Qualifications	1.98	0.57	-0.07	0.16[**]				
3. College advisor Humility	4.78	1.42	-0.06	-0.03	-0.31			
4. Self-efficacy	2.56	0.77	-0.17[**]	-0.1[*]	-0.10[*]	0.17[**]		
5. Machiavellian	3.80	0.87	0.12[*]	-0.7	0.09	-0.16[**]	-0.72[**]	
6. Prosocial Behavior	3.38	0.88	-0.12[*]	0.09[*]	-0.02	0.12[**]	0.16[**]	-0.20[**]

Notes: $n = 450$, [*] $p < 0.05$, [**] $p < 0.01$, [***] $p < 0.001$; Gender: "1" male, "2" female; Education: "1" junior college or below, "2" bachelor's degree, "3" master's degree and above.

3.2. Regression Analysis

This study looked at how college advisor humility affected students' prosocial behavior using hierarchical regression in order to evaluate the research hypothesis, using student prosocial behavior as the dependent variable, and controlling for demographic variables. The findings of Model 2 of the

table regression analysis showed a substantial beneficial influence of tutor humility on student prosocial behavior ($\beta = 0.74$, $p < 0.05$), The first hypothesis was examined.

The mediating effects were tested in four steps: (1) the main effect, H1 has been validated; (2) the impact of the mediating variable on the independent variable The outcomes of model 1 in Table 2 demonstrate that student self-efficacy is favorably impacted by college advisor humility ($\beta = 0.08$, $p < 0.001$), H2 has been validated; (3) Student self-efficacy significantly positively affects student prosocial conduct, as demonstrated by model 3 in the evaluation of the mediating variable's influence on the dependent variable in Table 2 ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$).

The mediating effect was tested by adding both tutor humility and student self-efficacy to student prosocial behavior and comparing whether the effect of tutor humility on student prosocial behavior disappeared (fully mediated) or diminished (partially mediated) with the addition of self-efficacy. The results of Model 4 in Table 2 demonstrate that prosocial conduct was significantly positively impacted by self-efficacy($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.05$), however, the impact of the college advisor's modesty on students' prosocial conduct fell from ($\beta = 0.08$, $p < 0.001$) to ($\beta = 0.06$, $p < 0.05$), demonstrating that the relationship between the student's prosocial behavior and the tutor's humility was somewhat mediated by self-efficacy, H3 was validated.

As seen in Model 6 of Table 2, prosocial behavior suffered from the interaction term between college advisor humility and Machiavellianism ($\beta = -0.08$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that Machiavellianism mediated the relationship between tutor humility and student prosocial behavior. The moderating variable was chosen one standard deviation higher or lower for the moderating effect plot, and a straightforward slope test was carried out in order to further elucidate the moderating effect model. The outcomes are displayed in Figure 1. The association between student prosocial behavior and college advisor humility was not significant when the Machiavellianism score was one standard deviation higher ($\beta = -0.005$, $t = -0.093$, $p = 0.926$), whereas when the Machiavellianism score was one standard deviation below, college advisor humility positively predicted student prosocial behavior ($\beta = 0.185$, $t = 3.204$, $p = 0.001$) In summary, H4 was validated.

Table 2: Results of hierarchical regression models.

| | Self-Efficacy | Prosocial Behavior | | | | |
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Gender	-0.25***	-1.96*	-0.17*	-0.16	-0.16	-0.14
Age	0.05*	0.47*	0.38	0.04	0.04	0.03
Qualifications	-1.63*	-0.06	-0.04	-0.04	-0.03	-0.02
College advisor Humility	0.08***	0.74*		0.06*	0.058*	
Self-efficacy			0.16**	0.14*		
Machiavellian					-0.19***	-0.15**
College advisor Humility × Machiavellian						-0.08*
R^2	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.07	0.07
Adjusted R^2	0.07	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06
F	9.17	4.34	4.82	4.78	6.14	6.46

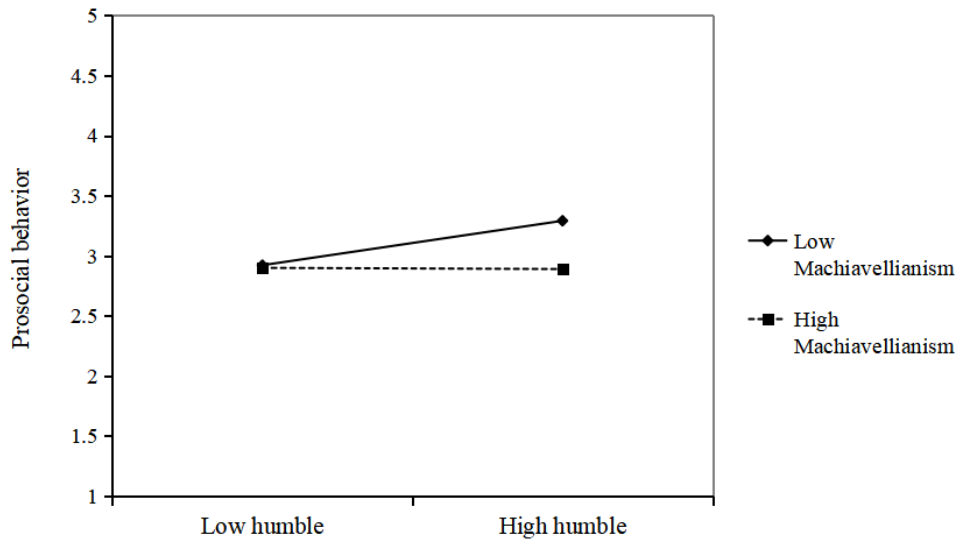Notes: $n = 450$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Figure 2: Moderation effect of Machiavellianism.

4. Discussion

This study found that tutor humility significantly and positively predicted students' prosocial behavior, demonstrating that students' prosociality rises in proportion to the extent of tutor humility. Humility consists of four dimensions: openness to new experiences and opposing viewpoints, a proper assessment of one's talents and flaws, respect for others, and a lack of self-focus [32]. Kuroda et al. suggest that developing humble personality traits in individuals can increase subjective well-being, self-esteem, and fulfillment [33]. And when individuals are around people with humble traits, their subjective well-being can also be enhanced, and the higher an individual's subjective well-being, the higher their propensity for prosocial behavior [34]. prosocial behavior is crucial to maintaining the stable development of society, and college advisors can positively influence students by enhancing their self-quality.

The study also discovered that students' self-efficacy had a role in mediating the link between prosocial conduct and tutor humility. First, student self-efficacy was positively predicted with tutor humility. This is because of the fact that humble individuals can correctly evaluate their own and others' abilities without being ostentatious [35]. Humble individuals reflect a true perception of self, and humble college advisors can enhance self-efficacy by making students' perceptions of themselves clearer through correct evaluations of them [14]. Second, self-efficacy positively predicts prosocial behavior. This is consistent with other research and implies that higher self-efficacy among students is associated with more altruistic motivation to practice prosocial behavior [21, 22].

The study also found that Machiavellianism played a moderating role between tutor humility and students' prosocial behavior. The findings demonstrated humans with high Machiavellian levels reduced their prosocial behavior in the presence of college advisor humility, while individuals with low levels of Machiavellianism increased their prosocial behavioral tendencies in the presence of college advisor humility. Individuals high in Machiavellianism often exhibit unrighteous, non-sharing, and unethical behavior [36], thus Machiavellianism positively predicts moral hypocrisy. It has also been shown that Machiavellianism can even positively predict bullying tendencies in adolescents [37] To summarise, high Machiavellians, because of their emotional indifference and lack of empathy, are usually willing to do whatever it takes to achieve their goals, causing them to show more tendencies towards antisocial behavior and less prosocial behavior.

According to the findings of this study, college advisors' humility may also hurt students' behavior. Therefore, to maximize management effectiveness, college advisors can demonstrate different management styles for students with different personalities, such as being humbler in the presence of low Machiavellian students and more strict in the presence of high Machiavellian students.

This study has several drawbacks as well. Firstly, the data came from a self-statement scale, and there may be a social approval effect; future research could consider including a laboratory experiment. Secondly, the measure of tutor humility in this study was derived from student ratings of tutors, and future research could consider including tutors' ratings of their humility. Third, the effect of tutors on student behavior may also be related to other personality traits of tutors and students and familiarity between tutors and students, which could be further explored in future studies.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the mediators and moderating influences between tutor humility and students' prosocial conduct were investigated. Three main findings emerged: (1) College advisor humility positively predicted student prosocial behavior; (2) The connection between the modesty of college advisors and students' prosocial conduct was partially mediated by self-efficacy; and (3) Machiavellianism moderated the role of college advisor humility and student prosocial behavior.

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