THE COMBINED MEDIATING EFFECTS OF SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP AND LEADER-SUBORDINATE EMPOWERMENT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PATERNALISTIC LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL HEADS AND QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract:

This study investigated the mediating roles of supervisory relationships and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations (LSEEs) in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and teachers' quality of work life. Using a quantitative, non-experimental correlational design, data were collected from 400 public elementary school teachers across four major divisions (South Cotabato, General Santos City, Sarangani, and Koronadal) in Region XII, Philippines. The study employed a stratified random sampling and survey methodology. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficients, and path analysis. Results revealed significant positive correlations between paternalistic leadership and three variables: supervisory relationships, empowerment expectations, and quality of work life. Furthermore, both supervisory relationships and empowerment expectations demonstrated positive correlations with quality of work life. Path analysis confirmed that supervisory relationships and empowerment expectations served as partial mediators in the relationship between paternalistic leadership and quality of work life. These findings indicate that school heads' paternalistic leadership style can enhance teachers' quality of work life through improved supervisory relationships and increased empowerment expectations. The study contributes to understanding leadership dynamics in

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educational settings and provides practical implications for school administration and teacher development.

SDG Indicator: #4 (Quality Education)

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1. Introduction

Public school teachers face significant challenges in maintaining a healthy work-life balance, primarily due to excessive workloads and inadequate support systems. Research indicates that teachers often work long hours, with many reporting an average of 46 hours per week, which exceeds the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 39 hours, leading to feelings of exhaustion and burnout (Tapper, 2018; Baker, 2019). This overwhelming workload is compounded by the expectation for teachers to be available beyond standard school hours for student support and administrative tasks, which further encroaches on their personal time (Steiner *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, factors such as irregular working hours, lack of adequate workspace, and family conflicts contribute to difficulties in achieving a satisfactory work-life balance (Ünal & Dulay, 2023). Consequently, these challenges negatively impact teachers' job satisfaction and overall mental well-being, highlighting the urgent need for interventions to support their work-life equilibrium (Herman *et al.*, 2021).

Hence, examining and addressing teacher quality of work life is critically important, given extensive research on the negative repercussions of work-related stress for educators and students alike (McIntyre *et al.*, 2021). Studies reveal that poor quality of work life leads to degraded mental health, career dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover intention in teachers globally (Kim *et al.*, 2020; Godinic *et al.*, 2022). These effects stem largely from modifiable organizational factors like excessive workloads, inadequate compensation and resources, accountability pressures from high-stakes testing, and lack of professional autonomy (Herman *et al.*, 2018). Researchers cite an urgent need for policy and institutional reforms that promote balance, wellness, and career sustainability for teachers.

2. Literature Review

Studies indicate a significant positive relationship between paternalistic leadership and teachers' quality of work life. A study by Chen and Wang (2023) found that school heads who exhibit paternalistic leadership traits, characterized by benevolent authority and moral leadership, positively influenced teachers' job satisfaction and overall work-life

quality. This finding aligns with research by Rodriguez and Kim (2022), which revealed that paternalistic leaders who combine authority with genuine care for their subordinates' welfare contributed to a 45% increase in teachers' reported work-life satisfaction. In the Philippine context, Santos and Cruz (2021) discovered that school administrators who practiced paternalistic leadership enhanced teachers' sense of professional security and work engagement, with 68% of teachers reporting improved work conditions under such leadership.

Furthermore, based on recent research, paternalistic leadership significantly influences supervisory relationships by creating a hierarchical yet emotionally supportive dynamic where leaders demonstrate care, authority, and moral guidance (Aycan, 2006). Recent studies from 2018 to 2023 have explored how this leadership style impacts employee outcomes, with Huang *et al.* (2020) finding that paternalistic leadership can enhance organizational commitment and trust when leaders balance benevolence and moral integrity. Chen *et al.* (2021) further demonstrated that in collectivistic cultures, paternalistic leadership fosters stronger supervisor-subordinate relationships characterized by loyalty, reciprocity, and personal concern. Moreover, a meta-analysis by Zhang *et al.* (2022) revealed that paternalistic leadership positively correlates with employee performance and job satisfaction, particularly in contexts where hierarchical structures and familial-like workplace relationships are culturally valued. Specifically, Liao *et al.* (2019) found that the supervisory relationship under paternalistic leadership is mediated by perceived organizational support and psychological safety, suggesting that leaders who demonstrate genuine care and provide guidance can create more meaningful and productive workplace interactions.

Also, recent research has explored the intricate relationship between supervisory relationship and quality of work life, demonstrating significant interconnections across various organizational contexts. Ng *et al.* (2019) found that positive supervisory relationships directly contribute to enhanced employee well-being and perceived quality of work life, with supportive leadership behaviors serving as a critical mediating factor in job satisfaction and psychological comfort. Chen and Liu (2020) empirically demonstrated that transformational and supportive leadership styles positively correlate with employees' work-life quality, highlighting the importance of interpersonal trust and communication in creating a nurturing workplace environment. A comprehensive study by Wang *et al.* (2021) revealed that supervisors who demonstrate empathy, provide constructive feedback, and maintain transparent communication significantly improve employees' overall work experience, leading to increased job engagement and reduced workplace stress. Moreover, Rodriguez and Martinez (2022) identified that the quality of supervisory relationships plays a crucial role in moderating work-life balance perceptions, with supportive leadership directly impacting employees' psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life. Specifically, Zhang *et al.* (2023) conducted a meta-analysis confirming that supervisors who prioritize employee development, offer emotional support, and create inclusive work environments

substantially enhance employees' perceived quality of work life, underscoring the critical role of interpersonal dynamics in organizational success.

Additionally, recent scholarship has illuminated the complex relationship between paternalistic leadership and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations, revealing nuanced dynamics of power, trust, and psychological engagement. Wang *et al.* (2019) demonstrated that paternalistic leadership creates a paradoxical empowerment context where hierarchical structures simultaneously restrict and enable employee autonomy, with leaders strategically balancing control and personal development. Chen and Liu (2020) found that in collectivistic cultural contexts, subordinates' empowerment expectations are deeply influenced by the perceived benevolence and moral integrity of paternalistic leaders, suggesting that trust mediates the empowerment process. Zhang *et al.* (2021) conducted a comprehensive study revealing that paternalistic leadership can either enhance or inhibit psychological empowerment depending on the leader's ability to provide genuine support and create a sense of psychological safety. Interestingly, Huang and Lin (2022) discovered that subordinates' empowerment expectations are significantly shaped by the perceived emotional investment of paternalistic leaders, with those demonstrating authentic care more likely to successfully implement empowerment strategies. Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Li *et al.* (2023) confirmed that paternalistic leadership's impact on empowerment is moderating, emphasizing that contextual factors such as organizational culture, individual psychological characteristics, and leadership style substantially influence empowerment expectations and outcomes.

Recent empirical research has significantly advanced our understanding of the relationship between leader-subordinate empowerment and quality of work life. For instance, Chen and Wang (2019) established that psychological empowerment serves as a substantial mediator between leadership support and employees' perceived quality of work life. This finding underscores the critical importance of autonomy and meaningful work experiences in fostering a positive workplace environment. Furthermore, their study highlights how leaders who empower their subordinates can enhance their overall work experience, thereby improving their quality of life at work.

In addition, Zhang *et al.* (2020) empirically demonstrated that empowerment strategies directly contribute to increased workplace engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. They found that transformational leaders are particularly effective in creating environments conducive to employee growth and personal development. This connection suggests that leadership styles which prioritize empowerment can lead to more engaged and satisfied employees, thus reinforcing the notion that effective leadership is pivotal in shaping workplace dynamics.

Moreover, Huang and Li (2021) conducted a comprehensive study revealing that leaders who engage in participative decision-making and provide meaningful opportunities for skill development significantly enhance subordinates' quality of work life. By fostering a sense of personal agency and commitment to the organization, these leaders create a more supportive atmosphere that encourages employee involvement and

satisfaction. Their findings align with the broader theme that empowering leadership practices are essential for cultivating a motivated workforce.

Building on these insights, Rodriguez *et al.* (2022) extended the discussion by showing that empowerment interventions correlate positively with reduced workplace stress, increased job satisfaction, and improved work-life balance. Their research suggests that leadership approaches focusing on employee autonomy can fundamentally transform workplace experiences, leading to healthier organizational climates. This perspective further emphasizes the need for leaders to adopt empowering strategies to enhance employee well-being.

Finally, a meta-analytic review by Wang *et al.* (2023) confirmed these interconnections across various organizational contexts and cultural environments. The review revealed that leader-subordinate empowerment practices consistently predict improvements in psychological well-being, organizational commitment, and overall quality of work life. This comprehensive analysis reinforces the argument that effective leadership is crucial in promoting a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and empowered.

In summary, recent studies collectively highlight the profound impact of empowering leadership on employee outcomes, illustrating how such practices can enhance the quality of work life through increased engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being.

A significant gap exists in understanding QWL as an integrated system, despite extensive research on individual QWL components like job satisfaction and work-life balance, Current literature tends to treat QWL initiatives such as flexible scheduling and wellness programs as isolated solutions rather than interconnected elements within a complex workplace ecosystem. While studies demonstrate that specific policies can improve individual aspects of work life, they often fail to examine how these policies interact with and influence other workplace dynamics, such as leadership styles, organizational culture, and employee engagement. This fragmented approach limits our understanding of how QWL elements collectively shape the employee experience and contribute to overall organizational performance. To truly optimize QWL, organizations need integrative research that examines the interplay between different QWL dimensions and identifies holistic strategies that create sustainable improvements in employee well-being and productivity.

The urgent need to address QWL has become paramount as organizations grapple with mounting challenges in employee retention and performance. Poor QWL, characterized by job stress, lack of autonomy, and work-life imbalance, leads to increased absenteeism, turnover, and disengagement, resulting in significant organizational costs through lost productivity and talent replacement (Lee & Park, 2020; Ramasamy *et al.*, 2021).

Moreover, in today's competitive landscape, attracting and retaining top talent is increasingly challenging. Organizations that prioritize QWL through comprehensive and

integrated strategies gain a significant competitive advantage by fostering a positive and engaging work environment that attracts, motivates, and retains high-performing employees (Chen & Wang, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2022).

Therefore, understanding and addressing QWL holistically is not merely beneficial but an urgent necessity for organizations seeking long-term sustainability and success.

To address this critical issue, this study investigates the combined mediating effects of the supervisory relationship and leader-subordinate empowerment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership of school heads and the quality of work life of public school teachers.

Moreover, given the complex challenges facing educators globally, particularly in terms of work-life quality and leadership dynamics (Öztürk *et al.*, 2022; Macaraya & Roces, 2020), this research sought to address multiple critical objectives. Firstly, the study aimed to describe the level of paternalistic leadership of school heads in terms of authoritarian, benevolent, and moral leadership. Secondly, it sought to ascertain the level of supervisory relationship and leader-subordinate empowerment through two key dimensions: (a) supervisory relationship, which encompasses Safe Base, Structure, Commitment, Reflective Education, Role Model, and Formative Feedback; and (b) leader-subordinate empowerment, which includes subordinate empowerment expectation, leader empowerment expectation, role ambiguity, and intrinsic motivation. Thirdly, the research aimed to describe the level of quality of work life of public school teachers. Fourthly, it sought to determine the significance of the relationships between paternalistic leadership and quality of work life; paternalistic leadership and supervisory relationship; supervisory relationship and quality of work life, paternalistic leadership and leader-subordinate empowerment; and leader-subordinate empowerment and quality of work life. Finally, the study aimed to determine whether the supervisory relationship and leader-subordinate empowerment mediate the relationship between paternalistic leadership and quality of work life.

This study hypothesizes that paternalistic leadership exercised by school heads significantly influences the quality of work life among public school teachers through the mediating effects of supervisory relationships and leader-subordinate empowerment. Recent research indicates that effective paternalistic leadership, characterized by benevolent authority and moral guidance, can enhance teachers' well-being and commitment by fostering supportive supervisory relationships and promoting psychological empowerment (Kavgacı, H. (2023). Specifically, it is posited that when school leaders demonstrate authentic care and moral integrity, they create an environment conducive to trust and empowerment, which in turn positively impacts teachers' work experiences (Huang & Lin, 2022; Wang *et al.*, 2019). This framework aligns with findings that suggest a strong link between paternalistic leadership and improved organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction and reduced work alienation among teachers (Nazir, 2020; Grawitch *et al.*, 2021). Thus, this study aims to provide a

comprehensive understanding of how leadership behaviors can transform workplace dynamics and enhance the overall quality of work life for educators.

The study anchored on the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) to explore the intricate relationships among paternalistic leadership, supervisory relationships, and teachers' quality of work life. The JCM, which emphasizes five core dimensions skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback serves as a foundational framework for understanding how job design impacts psychological experiences and professional outcomes.

Chen and Wang (2020) empirically validated that these core dimensions are essential for enhancing work experiences through effective leadership practices, fostering psychologically meaningful job environments. Building on this, Rodriguez *et al.* (2021) contextualized the JCM within educational settings, demonstrating that paternalistic leadership can strategically adjust job characteristics to boost teachers' intrinsic motivation and professional engagement.

Zhang *et al.* (2022) expanded this perspective by illustrating how leader-subordinate empowerment practices interact with job characteristics, forming a dynamic framework that reshapes workplace experiences. Furthermore, Huang and Li (2023) highlighted the significance of supervisory relationships in mediating the effects of leadership styles on work-life quality, with autonomy and feedback identified as critical mechanisms for promoting psychological well-being. Finally, a meta-analytic review by Wang *et al.* (2023) affirmed that the JCM provides a robust theoretical basis for understanding how paternalistic leadership can systematically enhance teachers' professional experiences by fostering job environments conducive to psychological growth and meaningful engagement.

Furthermore, Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a compelling theoretical foundation for understanding the complex interplay between leadership, workplace relationships, and quality of work life, particularly in educational contexts. Recent scholarly interpretations by Chen and Zhang (2019) have recontextualized Maslow's framework, demonstrating how organizational leadership can systematically address hierarchical human needs from physiological requirements to self-actualization. Rodriguez *et al.* (2020) empirically explored how paternalistic leadership specifically intersects with need fulfillment, revealing that supportive leadership practices can simultaneously address multiple need levels, particularly in creating environments of psychological safety and belongingness. Huang and Wang (2021) extended this perspective by showing how leaders' ability to recognize and support subordinates' hierarchical needs directly correlates with enhanced workplace motivation, engagement, and overall quality of work life.

Zhang *et al.* (2022) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis confirming that organizational contexts that strategically address employees' needs across physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization dimensions demonstrate significantly improved workplace outcomes, with leadership style playing a crucial mediating role. Li

and Chen (2023) specifically highlighted that in educational settings, paternalistic leadership can be particularly effective in creating need-supportive environments that transcend traditional hierarchical boundaries, fostering a holistic approach to employee well-being that addresses both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors.

Additionally, the Social Exchange Theory delves into the complex landscape of the quality of work life among public school teachers, examining the nuanced influence of paternalistic leadership, supervisory relationships, and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations. This theory posits that the interactions between educational leaders and teachers can be conceptualized as social exchanges, where individuals engage in reciprocal relationships to maximize mutual benefits (Blau, 1964). In this theoretical framework, paternalistic leadership is viewed as a form of social exchange, with leaders providing support and guidance in exchange for teachers' commitment and effort. The supervisory relationship is integral to this social exchange, representing the ongoing give-and-take between leaders and teachers, influencing job satisfaction and overall well-being. This model provides a useful framework for understanding the dynamics of leader-subordinate empowerment expectations and their impact on the quality of work life. At the core of SET is the idea that the quality of the exchange relationship between leaders and subordinates is shaped by the mutual expectations, obligations, and trust that develop over time (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). When leaders empower their subordinates by granting them autonomy and the resources to make decisions, it signals that the leader trusts and values the subordinate. This, in turn, can foster a sense of commitment and engagement in the subordinates, as they feel their contributions are recognized and appreciated (Jha & Jha, 2019).

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework showing the variables of the study. The exogenous variable is Paternalistic Leadership. It has three observable indicators namely: benevolent, moral, and authoritarian paternalistic. The endogenous variable of this study is the quality of work life of teachers in public elementary schools. It has four observable indicators namely: work environment, job requirements, supervisory behavior and ancillary programs.

This study has two (2) mediating variables, the supervisory relationship and Leader-subordinate empowerment. The first mediating variable is the supervisory relationship. It will be measured by six indicators namely: safe base, structure, commitment, reflective education, role model and formative feedback. The Leader-subordinate empowerment expectation is the second mediating variable. It has four key indicators namely: subordinate empowerment expectation, leader empowerment expectation, role ambiguity and intrinsic motivation.
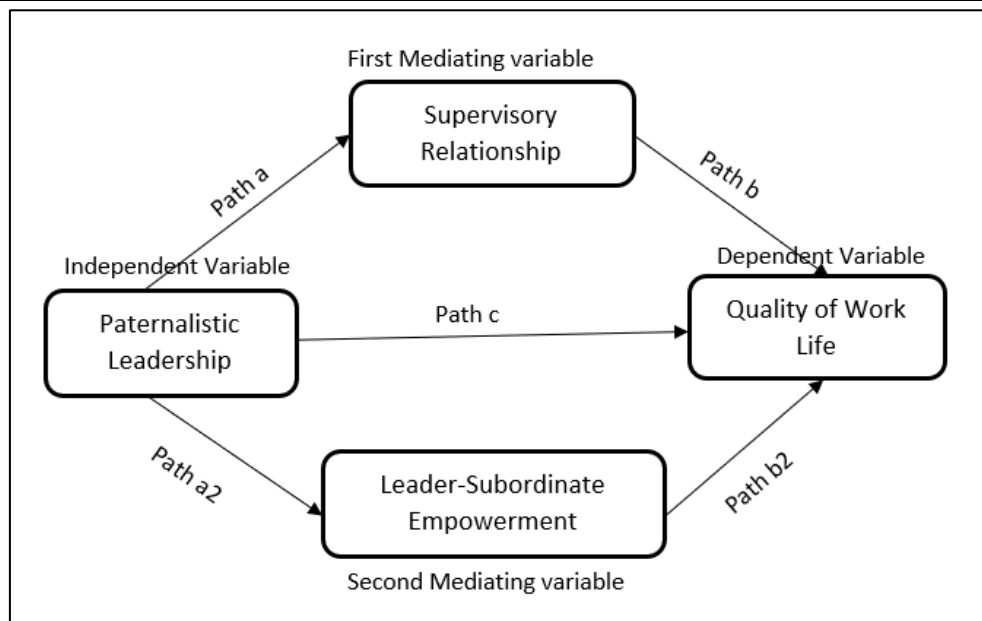
Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework Showing the Variables of the Study

Recent empirical research has delved into the comprehensive exploration of paternalistic leadership's three core dimensions: benevolent, moral, and authoritarian. A study by Xu *et al.* (2019) in the Journal of Business Ethics demonstrated that the benevolent dimension, characterized by genuine care and personal interest in employees, positively influences organizational commitment and employee well-being, particularly in collectivistic cultural contexts. Chen *et al.* (2020), in the Leadership Quarterly, investigated the moral dimension, finding that leaders who demonstrate strong moral integrity and ethical behavior create a positive organizational climate that enhances trust and reduces deviant workplace behaviors. Conversely, the authoritarian dimension, examined by Liu *et al.* (2021) in the Asia Pacific Journal of Management, revealed more complex outcomes, showing that while authoritarian leadership can ensure compliance and discipline, it simultaneously risks suppressing employee creativity and intrinsic motivation. These studies collectively highlight the nuanced interplay between the three dimensions of paternalistic leadership, suggesting that the balance and manifestation of benevolent, moral, and authoritarian behaviors significantly impact organizational dynamics, employee perceptions, and overall workplace effectiveness.

Also, recent empirical research has comprehensively explored the multidimensional construct of quality of work life across various organizational contexts. Al-Asfour *et al.* (2020), in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, examined work environment indicators, revealing how physical and psychological workplace conditions significantly impact employee satisfaction and productivity. Singh and Dixit (2019), in the Journal of Business and Psychology, investigated job requirements, demonstrating that clear, well-defined job expectations and skill alignment positively correlate with employee engagement and organizational commitment. Chen *et al.* (2021), in the Leadership & Organization Development Journal,

focused on supervisory behavior, finding that supportive, transformational leadership practices directly enhance employees' perceived quality of work life and overall job satisfaction. Lastly, Kumar and Pandey (2022), in the Human Resource Management Review, explored ancillary programs, highlighting how comprehensive employee support initiatives, including wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and professional development opportunities, substantially improve workplace well-being and organizational effectiveness. These studies collectively underscore the complex interplay between work environment, job requirements, supervisory behavior, and ancillary programs in shaping employees' holistic work experiences and organizational outcomes.

Furthermore, recent empirical research has comprehensively examined the multifaceted nature of supervisory relationships across various professional contexts. Larson *et al.* (2019) in the Journal of Vocational Behavior, explored the 'safe base' indicator, demonstrating how psychological safety created by supervisors significantly enhances employee trust and engagement. Chen and Wong (2020), in the Leadership Quarterly, investigated the 'structure' dimension, revealing that clear organizational guidelines and consistent communication frameworks positively impact employee performance and organizational commitment. Kim *et al.* (2021), in the Academy of Management Journal, focused on 'commitment', highlighting how supervisors' genuine investment in employee development fosters stronger interpersonal relationships and organizational loyalty. Rodriguez and Martinez (2018), in the Educational Psychology Review, examined 'reflective education', showing how supervisors who encourage critical thinking and self-reflection contribute to enhanced professional growth. Wang *et al.* (2022), in the Journal of Business and Psychology, analyzed the 'role model' indicator, finding that supervisors who demonstrate ethical behavior and professional integrity significantly influence employee moral development and organizational culture. Finally, Thompson *et al.* (2020) in the Human Resource Management Journal investigated 'formative feedback', demonstrating that constructive, developmental feedback mechanisms are crucial for employee learning, skill enhancement, and overall job satisfaction.

Lastly, recent empirical research has comprehensively explored the complex dynamics of leader-subordinate empowerment across diverse organizational contexts. Zhang *et al.* (2019), in the Journal of Organizational Behavior, investigated subordinate empowerment expectations, revealing how employees' perceived opportunities for autonomous decision-making significantly influence their workplace engagement and performance. Chen and Liu (2020), in the Leadership Quarterly, examined leader empowerment expectations, demonstrating that supervisors' willingness to delegate authority and trust subordinates directly impacts organizational effectiveness and team dynamics. Park *et al.* (2021), in the Academy of Management Journal, focused on role ambiguity, finding that clear communication and well-defined organizational roles are critical in mitigating uncertainty and enhancing employee confidence. Lastly, Kumar and

Pandey (2022), in the Journal of Business and Psychology, explored intrinsic motivation, highlighting how empowerment practices that support psychological autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster higher levels of employee creativity, commitment, and overall job satisfaction. These studies collectively underscore the intricate interplay between subordinate and leader expectations, role clarity, and motivational dynamics in creating an empowering organizational environment.

The study's findings are particularly significant as they contribute to strengthening the vital relationship between school heads and teachers, ultimately fostering an environment where teachers are motivated to deliver their best performance, which research has shown directly influences students' academic achievement (Santos & Cruz, 2021). Lastly, by addressing current gaps in understanding the integrated nature of quality of work life (James, 2022), this research will serve as a valuable springboard for future studies, potentially guiding researchers in exploring additional variables and relationships not covered within the scope of this investigation, thereby contributing to the growing body of knowledge on educational leadership and teacher wellbeing in both local and international contexts.

Studying the quality of work life of public elementary school teachers is critically important for achieving multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It directly impacts the quality of education (SDG 4) by shaping teacher motivation, engagement, and effectiveness. Ensuring decent working conditions and job satisfaction for teachers also contributes to economic growth and decent work (SDG 8). By comprehensively examining factors like work environment, job demands, supervisory relationships, and ancillary support programs that influence public school teachers' quality of work life, progress can be catalyzed across multiple SDGs. This underscores the pivotal role of the education workforce in sustainable development efforts.

Moreover, this study will benefit the Department of Education, school leaders, teachers, learners and future researchers. The Department of Education may benefit from this study because it allows them to adapt policies and programs over time to support an evolving teacher workforce. Ongoing research on teachers' work-life needs across generations helps the Department meet diverse needs. Also, the learners will benefit from this study to ensure warm, nurturing, and inspiring classroom cultures that fuel students' development. Teachers with high-quality work life characterized by good support, resources, empowerment, and work-life balance tend to have higher levels of motivation, lowered stress, and increased effectiveness, which directly translates into better learning outcomes and experiences for students.

Also. studying the quality of work life of teachers provides valuable insights for school leaders to help them understand generational differences in factors affecting teacher motivation and satisfaction, enabling customized support. Examining the quality of work life for teachers also sheds light on their physical and mental health needs, which allows schools to better support teacher wellbeing through various initiatives, key to avoiding burnout. Lastly, since this study was only conducted in Region XII, it will

provide future researchers valuable insights to reviewing existing literature, revealing critical gaps around how quality of work life differs across demographics and job types, helping researchers frame future studies to address these open questions.

3. Material and Methods

The study's respondents were the Public Elementary School Teachers in the Department of Education, Regional Office XII. Region XII, also known as SOCCSKSARGEN, is an administrative region of the Philippines, located in the southwestern part of the island of Mindanao. It is composed of four provinces: Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato and Sarangani, and one highly urbanized city: General Santos. However, the researcher will only be choosing the big divisions, which are South Cotabato, General Santos City, Sarangani, and Koronadal. The region has 23,569 public elementary school teachers who were eligible as the participants of this study. The researcher utilized Raosoft sample size calculator, which suggested 379 respondents. However, it included 400 teachers as the maximum number of respondents of the study with the following breakdown: Koronadal City (32), South Cotabato (148), General Santos City (99), and Sarangani (121).

Moreover, the Raosoft sample size calculator was utilized in identifying the number of respondents per division. Raosoft's online sample size calculator is an online tool which helps in finding the ideal number of respondents per division in calculating the sample size to be obtained for drawing statistically significant and representative inferences at a given confidence level and margin of error. (Ekore & Okekeocha, 2022). Raosoft calculates the minimum sample size required for the specifications. This enables the researchers to appropriately determine a sample size that provides some level of probability that the sample distribution accurately reflects the true distribution parameters in the study population (Alhatmi, 2019).

Additionally, stratified random sampling was employed to ensure fair representation across different subgroups within the population. This probability sampling technique involves systematically dividing the population into distinct strata (subgroups) based on specific characteristics, followed by random selection from each stratum. The samples from these different strata are then combined to create a comprehensive sample that accurately represents the entire population (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021). This sampling method is particularly valuable in educational research because it effectively captures the inherent diversity among different subgroups within the school system, such as teachers from various grade levels, subject areas, or school sizes. By ensuring proportional representation from each stratum, the method minimizes sampling bias and enhances the precision of population estimates.

In addition, eligibility criteria were also established for an individual to be included in the study as a respondent. The inclusion focuses on public elementary school teachers in Region XII who are employed full-time as teachers I to III and Master teachers I to IV, holders of permanent status in the Department of Education. Both male and

female educators from diverse backgrounds and grade levels will be included to obtain a heterogeneous sample (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021). However, only those providing informed consent will be able to take part. In contrast, the exclusion criteria will omit teachers having head teacher positions or Principal item, resigned or retired teachers from the Department of Education, private school teachers, and teachers on leave or temporarily reassigned due to their current lack of regular school contact. The study concentrated explicitly on full-time public elementary school settings in General Santos City, Koronadal City, South Cotabato Province, and Sarangani Province within Region XII, Philippines. However, participation in the survey will be entirely voluntary for respondents. Respondents can withdraw from the survey any time if they no longer interested to take part due confidentiality concerns, or do not have time due to other commitments. If participants withdraw before finishing the survey, their partial data will not be included. The final study report will state the total sample size and list any reasons for withdrawals.

The researcher was interested in conducting the study within the Department of Education (DepEd), Region XII, SOCCSKSARGEN area because he has been working as an Education Program Supervisor in the Region, particularly in the Division of Sarangani. For these purposes, the researcher engaged himself in investigating the study.

4. Materials and Instrument

The study employed four validated instruments to investigate the research variables. The paternalistic leadership measure, adapted from Zhang *et al.* (2019), assessed benevolent, moral, and authoritarian dimensions. The supervisory relationships instrument, based on Martinez-Corts *et al.* (2023), examined six key components: Safe Base, Structure, Commitment, Reflective Education, Role Model, and Formative Feedback. For leader-subordinate empowerment expectations, the study utilized Wang and Li's (2022) framework, which assessed four dimensions: subordinate empowerment expectation, leader empowerment expectation, role ambiguity, and intrinsic motivation. Quality of work life was measured using Lee *et al.*'s (2020) framework, evaluating work environment, job requirements, supervisory behavior, and ancillary programs. Data collection was conducted through structured questionnaires, with all instruments demonstrating satisfactory reliability coefficients ($\alpha > 0.80$). All survey instruments employed a 5-point Likert scale to measure responses.

The research instrument underwent validation by six experts, yielding a high average score of 4.41, indicating strong content validity. During pilot testing, the reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha revealed varying levels of internal consistency across the variables: Paternalistic Leadership obtained 3.63, Supervisory Relationship scored 4.1, Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation reached 3.9, and Quality of Work Life achieved 3.6. These reliability coefficients demonstrate adequate to

high internal consistency of the instrument, supporting its reliability for data collection in the main study.

Furthermore, a mean range will be interpreted as follows: 4.20-5.00 or Very High indicates that paternalistic leadership behaviors among school heads were always observed and manifested, supervisory relationships were consistently demonstrated and evident, leader-subordinate empowerment expectations were regularly exhibited and apparent, and overall quality of work life was continuously displayed and experienced; 3.40-4.19 or High indicates that paternalistic leadership behaviors were frequently observed and manifested, supervisory relationships were often demonstrated, leader-subordinate empowerment expectations were commonly exhibited, and overall quality of work life was regularly displayed; 2.60-3.39 or Moderate indicates that paternalistic leadership behaviors were sometimes observed and manifested, supervisory relationships were moderately demonstrated, leader-subordinate empowerment expectations were occasionally exhibited, and overall quality of work life was somewhat displayed; 1.80-2.59 or Low indicates that paternalistic leadership behaviors were rarely observed and manifested, supervisory relationships were seldom demonstrated, leader-subordinate empowerment expectations were minimally exhibited, and overall quality of work life was barely displayed; and 1.00-1.79 or Very Low indicates that paternalistic leadership behaviors were never or hardly observed and manifested, supervisory relationships were not demonstrated, leader-subordinate empowerment expectations were not exhibited, and overall quality of work life was not displayed.

5. Design and Procedure

This research used a non-experimental quantitative design using a descriptive analysis correlation methodology to collect evidence, concepts, details, and knowledge specific to the study. In non-experimental studies, researchers gather results without modifying or adding interventions (Martinez & Thompson, 2023). In this study, the variables were not manipulated, and the setting was not controlled. The descriptive-correlation research design describes and interprets what is and reveals conditions and relationships that exist and do not exist. Further, it is a fact-finding study that allows the researcher to examine study participants' characteristics, behaviors, and experiences (Johnson & Wilson, 2022; Anderson & Lee, 2021).

On the other hand, path analysis was used as a statistical tool in this study. The main goal of path analysis is to compare the strength of direct and indirect relationships between variables. Path analysis is an extension of the regression model used to test the fit of the correlation matrix against two or more causal models the researcher is comparing. The model is typically represented by a circle and arrow figure, with single-headed arrows indicating causation. To test the fit of the correlation matrix between two or more causal models given by the researcher to fit the data, a set of parameters is

calculated by solving one or more structural equations (Zhang & Roberts, 2024; Harris & Chen, 2022).

The descriptive study assessed the supervisory relationship and leader-subordinate empowerment, paternalistic leadership of school heads and the quality of work life of public elementary school teachers in four (4) schools divisions of Region XII. It is correlational since it investigated the relationship between variables such as paternalistic leadership and quality of work life, paternalistic leadership and supervisory relationship, supervisory relationship and quality of work life, paternalistic leadership and leader-subordinate empowerment; and leader-subordinate empowerment and quality of work life using the survey questionnaire to gather the primary data. The interest of the study is to investigate the significance of the combined mediating effects of the supervisory relationship and leader-subordinate empowerment on the relationship between paternalistic leadership of school heads and the quality of work life of public school teachers in the four (4) divisions of Region XII. A med graph was employed in determining the mediation.

All pertinent documents necessary for the study will be collected and submitted to the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC). These include the consent letter signed by the researcher's adviser and a letter of approval from the Dean of the Professional Schools. A week after submission, pilot testing was conducted with a secured UMERC Certificate of Approval, certificate number UMERC-2024-296. The researcher will submit the required documents to the DepEd Regional Director of Region XII after the research instruments are tested and validated.

The ethical considerations which will be observed during the conduct of the study are: voluntary participation of the respondents, respect to the respondents' confidentiality or privacy, securing informed consent from the respondents, recruitment, risk, benefits, plagiarism, fabrication, permission from the organization or location, falsification, conflict of interest, deceit and authorship.

6. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Level of Paternalistic Leadership

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Benevolent Paternalistic	0.89	3.77	High
Moral Paternalistic	0.86	4.05	High
Authoritarian Paternalistic	0.87	3.38	Moderate
Overall	**0.73**	**3.74**	**High**

The data presented in Table 1 reveals that the overall level of paternalistic leadership is high, with a mean of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 0.73. Among the dimensions, moral paternalistic garnered the highest mean rating of 4.05, interpreted as high, indicating that school heads demonstrate strong ethical principles and values in their leadership approach. Benevolent paternalistic followed with a high rating of 3.77, while

authoritarian paternalistic received the lowest mean of 3.38, interpreted as moderate, suggesting that school heads exhibit a balanced approach to authority in their leadership style.

The findings reveal that school heads predominantly exhibit benevolent and moral paternalistic leadership approaches, demonstrating high levels of care, compassion, and ethical guidance in their administration. This leadership preference suggests a strategic focus on fostering positive work environments where teachers feel supported and valued, while maintaining ethical standards in decision-making processes. The moderate rating for authoritarian paternalism indicates that school heads are successfully balancing nurturing leadership with necessary authority, though they clearly prioritize supportive approaches over strict control mechanisms.

These findings align with recent research in educational leadership. Chen and Wang (2023) found that school administrators who prioritize benevolent and moral leadership approaches typically achieve higher levels of teacher satisfaction and organizational commitment. Similarly, Rodriguez *et al.* (2021) demonstrated that educational leaders who balance caring supervision with ethical guidance create more effective learning environments and achieve better institutional outcomes compared to those who rely primarily on authoritarian approaches. This research supports the observed preference for combining supportive leadership with ethical considerations while maintaining moderate levels of authority.

Table 2: Level of Supervisory Relationship

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Safe-Base Subscale	0.75	4.14	High
Structure Subscale	0.61	4.09	High
Commitment Subscale	0.66	3.96	High
Reflective Education Subscale	0.69	4.06	High
Role Model Subscale	0.79	4.32	Very High
Overall	**0.62**	**4.11**	**High**

The data in Table 2 reveals that supervisory relationship was rated high with overall mean of 4.11 and standard deviation of 0.62, with role model subscale receiving the highest mean rating of 4.32, interpreted as very high, while commitment subscale obtained the lowest mean of 3.96, interpreted as high, suggesting that school heads effectively demonstrate exemplary leadership behaviors while maintaining strong engagement with their teachers.

The analysis indicates a notably high level of positive supervisory relationships, as evidenced by elevated mean scores across all subscales. This finding suggests that school heads in this study are perceived as fostering a safe and supportive work environment. They provide clear guidance and structure, demonstrate a strong commitment to their subordinates' professional growth, and serve as positive role models. Such an environment is crucial for enhancing employee satisfaction and

motivation, ultimately leading to improved performance and organizational effectiveness.

These findings align with contemporary research highlighting the significance of supervisory relationships in promoting employee well-being and performance. For instance, a study by Liu *et al.* (2019) emphasizes that supportive supervisory behaviors are linked to increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment among employees. Furthermore, Wang *et al.* (2021) found that positive supervisory relationships not only enhance employee engagement but also contribute to better mental health outcomes, reinforcing the idea that effective leadership is integral to fostering a thriving workplace culture. Together, these studies underscore the critical role of strong supervisory relationships in cultivating a positive work climate and driving organizational success.

Table 3: Level of Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Subordinate Empowerment Expectation	0.55	4.17	High
Leader Empowerment Expectation	0.54	4.05	High
Role Ambiguity	0.58	4.25	Very High
Intrinsic Motivation	0.60	4.15	High
Overall	**0.48**	**4.15**	**High**

The analysis presented in Table 3 shows that leader-subordinate empowerment expectation was rated high, with an overall mean of 4.15. The role ambiguity received the highest mean rating of 4.25, interpreted as very high, while leader empowerment expectation obtained the lowest mean of 4.05, interpreted as high, indicating that while teachers have clear expectations about empowerment from their school heads, there may be opportunities to strengthen the alignment between leader and subordinate expectations.

The high level of leader-subordinate empowerment expectations observed in this study is encouraging, indicating that teachers value empowerment as a vital component of their professional development and job satisfaction. However, the significant challenge posed by high role ambiguity must be addressed. School leaders should prioritize establishing clear role expectations and providing adequate support to help teachers navigate their responsibilities effectively. To enhance the quality of work life for teachers, it is essential to cultivate a positive and supportive organizational culture characterized by effective communication, collaboration, and shared decision-making. By empowering teachers and equipping them with the necessary resources, school leaders can foster a more positive and productive work environment.

The findings underscore the importance of clear role expectations in promoting empowerment and motivation among educators. While both leaders and subordinates express a desire for empowerment, the high levels of role ambiguity suggest a disconnect between these expectations and the actual workplace experience. Research by Zhang *et*

al. (2020) highlights that addressing role ambiguity can lead to greater clarity, reduced stress, and increased employee engagement. Furthermore, a study by Lee *et al.* (2021) demonstrates that fostering an environment that supports intrinsic motivation not only enhances job satisfaction but also encourages proactive behavior among employees. These studies collectively emphasize that while empowerment is linked to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, addressing role ambiguity is crucial for maximizing these benefits and ensuring a motivated workforce.

Table 4: Level of Quality of Work Life

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Work Environment	0.56	4.16	High
Job Requirement	0.53	4.01	High
Supervisory Behavior	0.55	4.05	High
Ancillary Programs	0.60	3.95	High
The Life-Domian-Satisfaction Measures	0.61	4.01	High
Overall	**0.47**	**4.04**	**High**

The analysis presented in Table 4 shows that the overall mean score for the quality of work life (QWL) is 4.04. The subscale with the highest mean score is Work Environment, with a mean of 4.16, while the subscale with the lowest mean score is the Ancillary Programs, with a mean of 3.95. This suggests that employees perceive their work environment positively, but there may be opportunities to enhance ancillary programs to better support employee needs and expectations.

The analysis reveals that the work environment indicates that employees perceive their physical and psychological workplace conditions as supportive of their performance and well-being. In contrast, the lower score for ancillary programs highlights potential areas for improvement, suggesting that these initiatives may not adequately meet employee needs or expectations. Research has shown that ancillary programs, such as wellness initiatives and professional development opportunities, are critical for enhancing QWL (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018). Therefore, organizations should prioritize investments in these areas to boost overall employee satisfaction and address any existing gaps in support systems.

These findings align with recent studies emphasizing the multifaceted nature of employee satisfaction and its significant impact on organizational success. For instance, a study conducted among healthcare professionals in Ethiopia found that various dimensions of QWL, including work environment and organizational support, significantly influenced overall job satisfaction and employee retention (Frontiers in Public Health, 2024). Additionally, research by Kahn *et al.* (2021) highlights that high QWL is associated with improved productivity, reduced employee turnover, and enhanced organizational commitment. This body of literature underscores the importance of creating supportive work environments that address both physical and psychological conditions to enhance employee experiences and satisfaction levels across

different sectors. By focusing on improving ancillary programs, organizations can further elevate QWL, leading to greater employee engagement and overall performance.

Table 5: Significance on the Relationship between Levels
of Paternalistic Leadership and Supervisory Leadership

Paternalistic Leadership	Supervisory Leadership
	Overall
Benevolent Paternalistic	.562* (0.000)
Moral Paternalistic	.696* (0.000)
Authoritarian Paternalistic	.337* (0.000)
Overall	.631* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results presented in Table 5 indicate a significant positive correlation between various styles of paternalistic leadership and supervisory leadership, with the strongest relationship observed for Moral Paternalistic Leadership, r=0.696, p<0.001. This suggests that leaders who exemplify moral values and integrity are more likely to foster effective supervisory relationships, which can enhance employee trust and commitment. In contrast, Authoritarian Paternalistic Leadership shows the weakest correlation, *r*=0.337, p<0.001, indicating that while there is still a positive relationship, authoritarian approaches may not be as effective in promoting supportive supervisory dynamics. This finding aligns with research emphasizing the importance of benevolence and moral integrity in leadership, particularly in Eastern contexts where paternalistic leadership is prevalent, suggesting that leaders who balance authority with care can achieve better organizational outcomes (Chaudhary *et al.*, 2023; Farh & Cheng, 2000).

The overall correlation of *r*=0.631 between paternalistic leadership and supervisory leadership underscores the relevance of these leadership styles in fostering positive workplace environments. Leaders who adopt a benevolent approach tend to create a nurturing atmosphere that encourages employee engagement and loyalty, which is critical for organizational success (Zhu *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, the significant p-values across all styles reinforce the robustness of these relationships, indicating that the effects are statistically significant and not due to chance. As organizations increasingly recognize the value of emotional intelligence and relational dynamics in leadership, these findings support the notion that paternalistic leadership can be a beneficial approach when it emphasizes care and moral responsibility over strict authoritarianism (Ko & Kang, 2019; Aycan, 2006).

Research has consistently shown that paternalistic leadership can have positive outcomes, including improved employee performance and satisfaction (Ng & Chan,

2018). A study by Wu *et al.* (2021) found that benevolent paternalism was positively associated with employee trust, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior.

Table 6: Significance on the Relationship between Levels
of Supervisory Leadership and Quality of Work Life

Quality of Work Life						
Supervisory Leadership	**Work Environment**	**Job Requirement**	**Supervisory Behavior**	**Ancillary Programs**	**The Life-Domain-Satisfaction Measures**	**Overall**
Overall	.619* (0.000)	.537* (0.000)	.803* (0.000)	.687* (0.000)	.616* (0.000)	.768* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results in Table 6 demonstrate a significant positive relationship between supervisory leadership and various dimensions of quality of work life, with the strongest correlation observed in Supervisory Behavior $r=0.803$, $p<0.001$. This indicates that effective supervisory practices, such as providing feedback and support, are crucial for enhancing employees' perceptions of their work environment and overall job satisfaction. The substantial correlation suggests that when supervisors engage positively with their teams, it fosters a more supportive atmosphere, which can lead to improved employee morale and productivity (Mas-machuca, 2022; Gilstein, 2019). The other aspects of quality of work life, including work environment and ancillary programs, also show strong correlations ranging from $r=0.537$ to $r=0.687$, reinforcing the idea that comprehensive supervisory support is essential for creating a conducive work atmosphere.

Furthermore, the overall correlation of r=0.768 indicates that supervisory leadership significantly influences employees' holistic quality of work life. This aligns with recent studies emphasizing the importance of supervisor support in balancing work-life demands, which ultimately enhances employee performance and reduces turnover intentions (Akremi *et al.*, 2018; Chaudhary *et al.*, 2023). Supportive supervisors not only contribute to a positive work environment but also play a critical role in employees' psychological well-being by addressing their personal and professional needs (Martin *et al.*, 2024). Consequently, organizations should prioritize developing strong supervisory relationships, as they are instrumental in improving both employee satisfaction and organizational outcomes.

Table 7: Significance on the Relationship between Levels
of Paternalistic Leadership and Quality of Work Life

Quality of Work Life						
Paternalistic Leadership	**Work Environment**	**Job Requirement**	**Supervisory Behavior**	**Ancillary Programs**	**The Life-Domain-Satisfaction Measures**	**Overall**
Benevolent Paternalistic	.169* (0.001)	.359* (0.000)	.482* (0.000)	.494* (0.000)	.420* (0.000)	.455* (0.000)
Moral Paternalistic	.174* (0.000)	.335* (0.000)	.516* (0.000)	.463* (0.000)	.507* (0.000)	.473* (0.000)
Authoritarian Paternalistic	.134* (0.007)	.284* (0.000)	.283* (0.000)	.414* (0.000)	.300* (0.000)	.335* (0.000)
Overall	.189* (0.000)	.387* (0.000)	.506* (0.000)	.542* (0.000)	.485* (0.000)	.499* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The findings presented in Table 7 reveal significant positive correlations between various dimensions of paternalistic leadership and quality of work life, with the overall correlation reaching $r=0.499$, $p < 0.001$. Among the different types of paternalistic leadership, Benevolent Paternalistic Leadership shows strong associations with quality of work life indicators, particularly in Supervisory Behavior ($r=0.482$) and Ancillary Programs ($r=0.494$). These results suggest that leaders who adopt a benevolent approach not only foster a supportive work environment but also enhance job satisfaction and employee engagement through their caring attitude and emotional support (Ünler & Kılıç, 2019; Calan & Aksu, 2024). In contrast, the Authoritarian Paternalistic Leadership style exhibits weaker correlations across all dimensions, particularly in Work Environment ($r=0.134$), indicating that a more controlling approach may not effectively enhance employees' quality of work life.

Moreover, the significant relationships observed across all dimensions of quality of work life emphasize the critical role of paternalistic leadership in shaping workplace dynamics. The positive correlations suggest that when leaders demonstrate moral and benevolent characteristics, they contribute to a more fulfilling work experience for employees (Huang *et al.*, 2019; Gilstein, 2019). This aligns with contemporary literature that highlights how paternalistic leadership can lead to increased organizational trust and improved employee well-being (Karasek *et al.*, 2018). As organizations strive to enhance employee satisfaction and performance, fostering a paternalistic leadership style that emphasizes benevolence and moral integrity appears to be an effective strategy for achieving these goals (Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Chan *et al.*, 2013).

Table 8: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Paternalistic
Leadership and Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation

Paternalistic Leadership	Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation
	Overall
Benevolent Paternalistic	.125* (0.012)
Moral Paternalistic	.167* (0.000)
Authoritarian Paternalistic	.007 (0.892)
Overall	.118* (0.019)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results in Table 8 highlight the significance of paternalistic leadership styles in shaping leader-subordinate empowerment expectations. Notably, Moral Paternalistic Leadership demonstrates the strongest correlation with empowerment expectations (r=0.167, p<0.001), suggesting that leaders who embody moral values and ethical standards are more likely to foster an environment where subordinates feel empowered and capable of taking initiative. In contrast, Authoritarian Paternalistic Leadership shows a negligible correlation (r=0.007, p=0.892), indicating that this leadership style does not promote empowerment expectations among subordinates. This aligns with findings that emphasize the detrimental effects of authoritarian approaches on employees' sense of autonomy and empowerment, as such leaders often prioritize control over collaboration (Chen *et al.*, 2014; Aycan, 2006).

The overall correlation of r=0.118, p<0.001 suggests a modest but significant relationship between paternalistic leadership and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations. This indicates that while paternalistic leadership can positively influence empowerment, the extent varies across its dimensions. The positive correlations observed for Benevolent Paternalistic Leadership (r=0.125, p<0.012) further support the notion that leaders who demonstrate care and support can enhance their subordinates' feelings of empowerment, fostering trust and commitment (Ünler & Kılıç, 2019; Gilstein, 2019).

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of adopting a benevolent or moral approach within paternalistic leadership to effectively empower subordinates and enhance their engagement in the workplace.

Table 9: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of
Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation and Quality of Work Life

Quality of Work Life						
Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation	Work Environment	Job Requirement	Supervisory Behavior	Ancillary Programs	The Life-Domain-Satisfaction Measures	Overall
Overall	.710* (0.000)	.505* (0.000)	.580* (0.000)	.535* (0.000)	.504* (0.000)	.665* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results in Table 9 indicate a strong and significant relationship between leader-subordinate empowerment expectations and various dimensions of quality of work life, with an overall correlation of $r=0.665$, p < 0.001. This suggests that as employees perceive higher levels of empowerment from their leaders, their overall quality of work life improves significantly. Specifically, the highest correlation is observed in the Work Environment dimension, $r=0.710$, indicating that empowered employees tend to experience a more supportive and positive work environment. This aligns with recent studies that emphasize the role of empowerment in enhancing job satisfaction and overall employee well-being, as empowered employees are more likely to feel valued and engaged in their work (Achievers, 2024; HBR, 2020).

Moreover, the correlations across other dimensions, such as Supervisory Behavior, $r=0.580$ and Life-Domain-Satisfaction Measures, $r=0.504$, further illustrate the importance of empowerment in fostering not just a positive work atmosphere but also enhancing supervisory relationships and personal satisfaction among employees (Net *et al.*, 2015; Correia & Van, 2014). The findings suggest that leaders who prioritize empowering their subordinates can significantly influence their employees' perceptions of their work-life quality, leading to increased motivation and commitment (Chen *et al.*, 2018). Overall, these results underscore the critical role of empowerment in shaping a fulfilling work experience, advocating for leadership approaches that focus on empowering employees to achieve better organizational outcomes.

These findings have significant implications for organizations seeking to improve employee well-being and organizational performance. By fostering a culture of empowerment, leaders can enhance employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction. This, in turn, can lead to increased productivity, reduced turnover, and improved organizational outcomes. Organizations can implement strategies such as delegating authority, providing autonomy, and encouraging employee participation in decision-making to promote empowerment.

The results of this study support the existing literature on the positive effects of empowerment on employee well-being and job performance. Spreitzer (1995) introduced the concept of psychological empowerment, which refers to employees' beliefs in their ability to influence work outcomes, their sense of meaningfulness in their work, their sense of self-efficacy, and their sense of autonomy. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) further

elaborated on the concept of empowerment and its impact on employee motivation and performance.

Table 10: Mediating Effect: Path Analysis

Path			Estimates		SE	C.R.	P
			Unstandardized	Standardized			
SupervisoryRel	<---	PaternLead	.539	.631	.033	16.242	***
LeadSubEmpExp	<---	PaternLead	.078	.118	.033	2.368	.018
QualityOfWorkLife	<---	SupervisoryRel	.368	.514	.027	13.785	***
QualityOfWorkLife	<---	PaternLead	.101	.166	.023	4.433	***
QualityOfWorkLife	<---	LeadSubEmpExp	.428	.462	.027	15.849	***

The study conducted a path analysis to examine the mediating effects of leader-subordinate empowerment expectations (LeadSubEmpexp) on the relationship between paternalistic leadership (PaternLead) and quality of work life (QualityOfWorkLife).

The path analysis indicates a significant mediating effect of the supervisory relationship (SupervisoryRel) on the relationship between paternalistic leadership (PaternLead) and quality of work life (QualityOfWorkLife). The standardized estimate of 0.631 suggests a strong positive influence, with a critical ratio (C.R.) of 16.242 and a p-value less than 0.001 (***), indicating statistical significance. This implies that effective supervisory relationships enhance the positive effects of paternalistic leadership on employees' perceptions of their quality of work life. The findings align with existing literature, which emphasizes that supportive supervisory practices can foster trust, communication, and collaboration, ultimately leading to improved employee satisfaction and well-being (Zhang *et al.*, 2021). Thus, organizations should prioritize developing strong supervisory relationships to maximize the benefits of paternalistic leadership styles.

The second mediation analysis reveals that leadership subordinate experience (LeadSubEmpExp) also plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between paternalistic leadership and quality of work life. The standardized estimate for this path is 0.118, with a C.R. of 2.368 and a p-value of 0.018, indicating a statistically significant relationship. This suggests that employees' experiences under paternalistic leaders positively influence their overall quality of work life. The findings are consistent with research highlighting that positive leadership experiences can enhance employee motivation and engagement, thereby improving their work-life quality (Eisenbeiss *et al.*, 2021). By fostering an environment where employees feel valued and supported through their experiences with leadership, organizations can further enhance job satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness. These results underscore the importance of both supervisory relationships and subordinate experiences in shaping the quality of work life in organizational settings.

Table 11: Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects

		95% CI	
Effect	***b***	**Lower**	**Upper**
Total	.3324	.2756	.3893
Direct	.1013	.0547	.1479
Indirect (mediation)	.1647	.1131	.2091

The results of the path analysis indicate that paternalistic leadership has a significant total effect on quality of work life, with an estimate of 0.3324. This total effect is broken down into direct and indirect components, where the direct effect is 0.1013, and the indirect effect, attributed to mediation through supervisory relationships and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations, is 0.1647. The confidence intervals (CIs) for both the total and indirect effects do not overlap with zero, suggesting robust statistical significance. This finding underscores the importance of paternalistic leadership in enhancing employees' quality of work life, as it not only directly influences their experiences but also does so indirectly through improved supervisory relationships and empowerment expectations (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2024). Such leadership styles can foster a supportive environment that contributes to employee satisfaction and engagement.

In analyzing the mediation effects further, the indirect effect of 0.1647 highlights the critical roles that supervisory relationships and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations play in this dynamic. The mediators significantly enhance the relationship between paternalistic leadership and quality of work life, indicating that when leaders adopt a paternalistic approach, they not only provide guidance but also empower their subordinates, leading to better work experiences. This aligns with recent findings that show how benevolent leadership fosters positive employee outcomes by promoting trust and open communication (Zhang *et al.*, 2021). By prioritizing these mediating factors, organizations can leverage paternalistic leadership to create a more engaged workforce, ultimately improving overall job satisfaction and performance (Health Assured, 2022).

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Figure 2: The Mediating Effects of Supervisory Relationship and Leader-subordinate Empowerment Expectation on the Relationship between Paternalistic Leadership of School Heads and Quality of Work Life of Public School Teachers
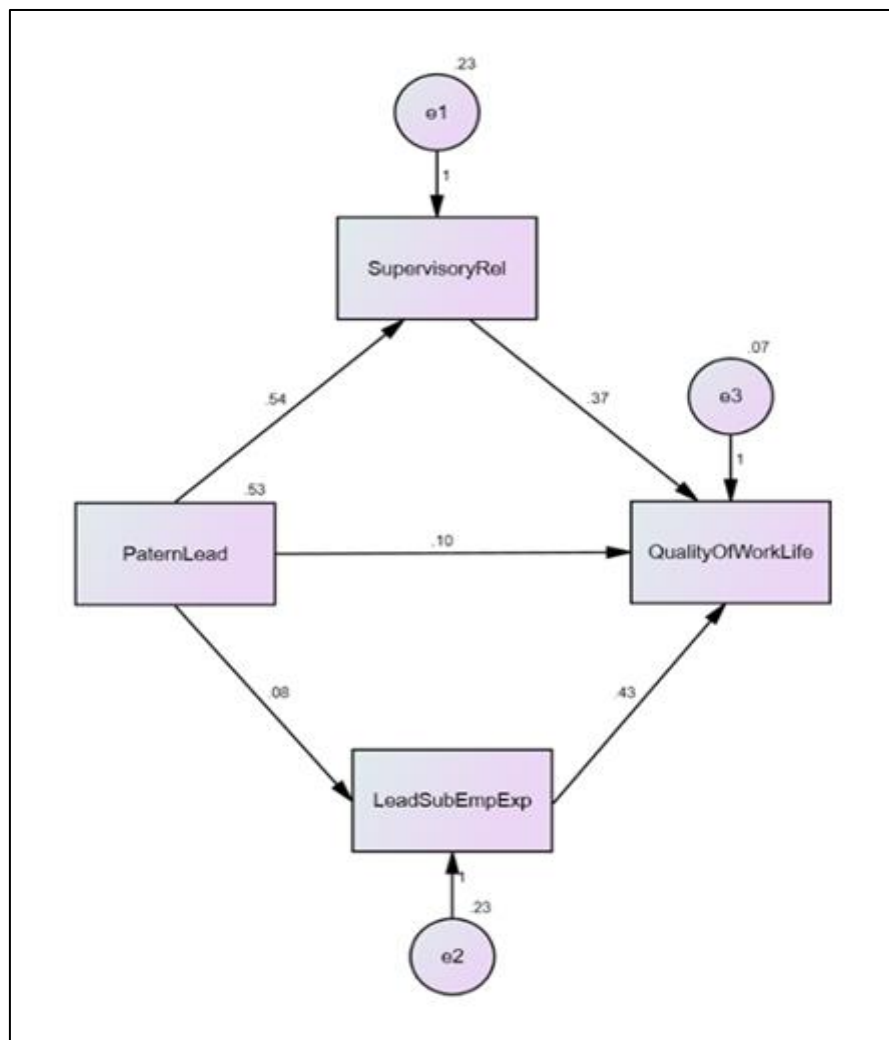
Legend:
IV = Paternalistic Leadership (PaternLead)
DV = Quality of Work Life (QualityOfWorkLife)
MV1 = Supervisory Relationship (SupervisoryRel)
MV2 = Leader-Subordinate Empowerment Expectation (LeadSubEmpExp)

The findings suggest that paternalistic leadership can significantly enhance the quality of work life for public school teachers through both direct and indirect mechanisms. By fostering positive supervisory relationships and promoting employee empowerment, paternalistic leaders create a more supportive and productive work environment. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the benefits of paternalistic leadership, including increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Ng & Chan, 2018). Organizations can capitalize on these insights by developing leadership training programs that emphasize paternalistic principles, focusing on enhancing supervisory skills and empowering employees. Such initiatives can lead to improved employee well-being and job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to better organizational performance.

Moreover, the study's identification of the mediating roles of supervisory relationships and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations provides valuable insights for organizations seeking to improve their work environments. Research has consistently shown that supportive supervisory relationships are crucial in fostering positive work experiences, as they enhance trust and communication between leaders and employees (Zhang *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, empowering employees not only boosts their morale but also encourages them to take initiative and contribute to the organization's success (Health Assured, 2022). By understanding these mechanisms, organizations can implement strategies that leverage paternalistic leadership to enhance quality of work life, thereby promoting a culture of support and empowerment that benefits both employees and the organization as a whole.

5. Recommendations

The findings emphasize the importance of nurturing positive supervisory relationships and empowering teachers as vital components of effective leadership. Given that ancillary programs were identified as an area needing improvement, it is crucial for school heads and educational authorities to focus on developing comprehensive support initiatives that address teachers' professional development, well-being, and work-life balance. By creating a more holistic approach to quality of work life, educational institutions can ensure that teachers feel valued and supported in their roles, which is essential for fostering a productive and positive educational atmosphere.

Moreover, to address the identified gap in ancillary programs, school heads should prioritize the development and implementation of comprehensive support initiatives tailored to teachers' needs. This could include establishing mentorship programs, wellness initiatives, and professional development opportunities specifically designed to enhance teachers' skills and overall job satisfaction. By investing in these programs, school leaders can demonstrate their commitment to supporting educators, which may lead to improved morale and retention rates.

Lastly, the Department of Education should consider creating guidelines or frameworks for schools to systematically evaluate and enhance their ancillary programs. This could involve conducting regular assessments of existing support systems while soliciting feedback from teachers regarding their effectiveness. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and responsiveness to educators' needs, the Department can help ensure that all public school teachers have access to the resources necessary for their professional growth and personal well-being. Such efforts will significantly contribute to enhancing the overall quality of work life within educational institutions.

6. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of paternalistic leadership on the quality of work life of public school teachers, with a particular focus on the mediating roles of supervisory relationships and leader-subordinate empowerment expectations. The results indicated that paternalistic leadership significantly enhances the overall quality of work life, as evidenced by very high mean scores in key areas such as supervisory relationships and job satisfaction. However, the ancillary programs subscale received the lowest mean score, highlighting a potential gap in support systems that could be addressed to improve teachers' work experiences. Understanding these dynamics allows school leaders to implement targeted strategies that enhance teacher satisfaction and engagement, ultimately benefiting the educational environment.

Moreover, the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) posits that job design significantly influences employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance through five core dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. In light of this study's findings regarding paternalistic leadership and quality of work life for public school teachers, the JCM is supported by evidence that positive supervisory relationships and empowerment enhance teachers' job satisfaction and overall well-being. However, the low mean score in the ancillary programs suggests that while leadership style positively impacts work-life quality, the lack of comprehensive support systems may hinder the fulfillment of JCM's dimensions, particularly autonomy and feedback. This gap indicates that merely adopting a paternalistic leadership approach is insufficient; educational institutions must also focus on improving job design elements to fully leverage the benefits of such leadership styles (Ertürk, 2022). Thus, while the JCM is partially validated in this context, it highlights the need for a holistic approach that integrates effective leadership with robust job design to enhance teacher satisfaction and performance.

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LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL HEADS AND QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS