Paternalistic Leadership, Teamwork, And Work-Family Conflict Among Public Sector Auditors

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between paternalistic leadership, teamwork, and work-family conflict (WFC), and their influence on job satisfaction and performance among public sector auditors. Paternalistic leadership comprising authoritarian, benevolent, and moral dimensions has varying impacts on employee outcomes. While benevolent and moral leadership consistently enhance performance and satisfaction, the authoritarian dimension often increases role conflict and emotional exhaustion. Teamwork fosters organizational effectiveness but can exacerbate WFC if high job demands are not balanced with adequate organizational support. WFC emerges as a central mediator linking leadership and teamwork to employee outcomes. Synthesizing empirical and meta-analytic findings, the study identifies psychosocial support as the primary mechanism by which paternalistic leadership reduces WFC. In public sector contexts, especially audit institutions like Indonesia's Supreme Audit Board, work pressure and social expectations amplify the need for ethical and supportive leadership. This article also highlights a research gap in Southeast Asian settings and calls for multilevel research approaches. The findings offer practical implications for human resource policies aiming to improve work-life balance and for organizational designs that promote collaboration and employee **well**-being. Understanding the interaction between leadership style, team dynamics, and role conflict is essential to enhancing performance in high-demand public service environments.

 Keywords: Auditor, Job Satisfaction, Leadership, Teamwork, Work-Family Conflict.

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND: THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS TOPIC

Paternalistic leadership is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of modern organizations, especially in industries that demand high performance and close team interaction. This leadership style, which combines authority, benevolence, and concern for employee welfare, has been shown to have a significant impact on team effectiveness and individual performance (Bedi, 2019; Lin & Huang, 2020; Suherman, 2025)

Team effectiveness is crucial in the knowledge economy era, where collaboration and interaction among team members are key to organizational success. Leadership style and team member interaction patterns are the primary factors influencing team effectiveness (Ping & Sen, 2020)

Work-Family Conflict (WFC) is a central issue in today's workplace, where the boundaries between work and family life are becoming increasingly blurred. This conflict can reduce performance, life satisfaction, and organizational commitment, making it important to understand the factors that can minimize its negative impact (Almeida et al., 2016; Alshaib et al., 2023; Göncü-Köse & Tokat, 2022; Suherman, 2025).

Research shows that paternalistic leadership can reduce work-family conflict through psychosocial and career support, but it can also increase conflict if it leads to emotional dependency or excessive work demands. (Göncü-Köse & Tokat, 2022; Sarfraz et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2021)

In the context of the service industry, such as Islamic hotels, employee performance is crucial to service quality and customer satisfaction. Therefore, understanding the relationship between leadership style, team effectiveness, and work-family conflict is crucial for improving overall organizational performance (Suherman, 2025).

This topic is important because it provides a deep understanding of how leadership styles based on Confucian values can enhance team effectiveness and employee performance while managing work-family conflict, which is a major challenge in modern work environments.

B. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Paternalistic Leadership (Confucian-Based)

Paternalistic leadership is a leadership style deeply rooted in Confucian values, characterized by a combination of authoritarianism, benevolence, and morality. This leadership approach is especially prevalent in Asian cultures and is defined by leaders who exercise authority while also demonstrating genuine care and moral integrity toward their subordinates. The three dimensions-authoritarianism, benevolence, and morality—have distinct effects on employee outcomes. Benevolent and moral leadership are consistently linked to positive outcomes such as increased organizational commitment, innovative work behavior, and life satisfaction, while authoritarian leadership often has negative effects, including increased work-family conflict and reduced team effectiveness (Bedi, 2019; Nazir et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2015; Zhu et al., 2021).

Meta-analytic evidence shows that paternalistic leadership offers unique contributions beyond other leadership styles, such as transformational leadership and leader-member exchange (LMX), in predicting follower outcomes. LMX itself partially mediates the relationship between paternalistic leadership and follower outcomes, highlighting the importance of high-quality leader-follower relationships in this context (Bedi, 2019; Nazir et al., 2020). In addition, paternalistic leadership is positively associated with psychosocial and career support, which can reduce work-family and family-work conflict, although increased affective and job dependence may paradoxically heighten these conflicts.

Team Effectiveness

Team effectiveness is a critical construct in organizational research, especially in knowledge-intensive and service-oriented industries. Effective teams are characterized by high levels of cohesion, constructive conflict resolution, and strong team identification. Leadership style, particularly paternalistic leadership, plays a significant role in shaping these team dynamics. Benevolent and moral leadership enhance team effectiveness by fostering team cohesion, facilitating conflict resolution, and strengthening team identification (Bo & Hou-Ming, 2011; Lin & Huang, 2020; Yang et al., 2015). For example, in top management teams (TMTs), benevolent and moral leadership positively affect decision effectiveness, while authoritarian leadership has detrimental effects. Team conflict, both cognitive and affective, mediates the relationship between leadership style and decision effectiveness, underscoring the importance of managing conflict constructively (Yang et al., 2015).

Furthermore, collective efficacy a team's shared belief in its capability to achieve goals serves as a mediator between paternalistic leadership and organizational commitment. Team cohesion moderates this relationship, suggesting that cohesive teams are better able to translate leadership behaviors into positive

outcomes(Chen et al., 2018). Conflict resolution approaches, such as cooperative and competitive strategies, also mediate the relationship between paternalistic leadership and team cohesiveness, further emphasizing the multifaceted impact of leadership on team functioning (Bo & Hou-Ming, 2011; Lin & Huang, 2020)9.

Work-Family Conflict Theory

Work-family conflict (WFC) theory addresses the tension that arises when demands from work and family roles are incompatible, leading to stress and reduced well-being. Paternalistic leadership can influence WFC in complex ways. Benevolent and moral leadership, as job resources, are associated with lower levels of WFC, while authoritarian leadership, as a job demand, increases WFC236. WFC mediates the relationship between leadership style and key outcomes such as work engagement, life satisfaction, and employee performance1236. For instance, in the hospitality industry, paternalistic leadership and teamwork demands can both increase WFC, which in turn affects employee performance. However, supportive policies and a balanced work environment can mitigate these negative effects (Suherman, 2025).

Cross-cultural adaptability also plays a moderating role, buffering the negative impact of WFC on work engagement, particularly for expatriate employees in diverse cultural settings2. The psychological mechanisms underlying these relationships include psychosocial support, career support, and affective dependence, with psychosocial support being the most significant mediator in reducing WFC and family-work conflict (FWC)(Sarfraz et al., 2022).

Integrative Perspective

The interplay between paternalistic leadership, team effectiveness, and work-family conflict is complex and context-dependent. Paternalistic leadership, especially its benevolent and moral dimensions, generally enhances team effectiveness and reduces work-family conflict, leading to improved organizational outcomes such as higher performance, commitment, and life satisfaction. However, the authoritarian dimension can have adverse effects, increasing conflict and emotional exhaustion. The effectiveness of paternalistic leadership is further shaped by mediating factors like team cohesion, conflict resolution strategies, collective efficacy, and personal resources such as cross-cultural adaptability (Bedi, 2019; Bo & Hou-Ming, 2011; Chen et al., 2018; Göncü-Köse & Tokat, 2022; Nazir et al., 2020; Sarfraz et al., 2022; Suherman, 2025; Zhu et al., 2021).

Understanding these theoretical foundations is essential for organizations aiming to foster effective teams, support employee well-being, and achieve sustainable performance, particularly in culturally diverse and high-demand environments.

Tabel. 1 Theoretical Integration

Main Theory		Main Focus		Relevance to Topic
Paternalistic Leadership	Authority	benevolence	morality	Influences team effectiveness & WFC
Team Effectiveness	Cohesion	conflict resolution	team identification	Influenced by leadership style

Data Resourched : Author 2025

The main theoretical basis for this topic highlights how paternalistic leadership (based on Confucian values) affects team effectiveness and work-family conflict. Integrating these theories is important for understanding the psychological and social mechanisms underlying the relationship between leadership, team performance, and work-family balance in organizations.

C. REVIEW OF VARIABLES

Paternalistic leadership, teamwork, work-family conflict, and job satisfaction are interconnected variables that significantly shape employee and organizational outcomes, especially in public and service-oriented sectors. Recent research provides nuanced insights into how these variables interact and influence performance, satisfaction, and well-being.

1) Paternalistic Leadership and Its Impact

Multidimensional Effects: Paternalistic leadership, characterized by authoritarianism, benevolence, and morality, has distinct impacts on employees. Benevolent and moral leadership consistently enhance job satisfaction, organizational commitment, innovative behavior, and performance. In contrast, authoritarian leadership is linked to negative outcomes, such as increased work-family conflict and reduced innovation (Bedi, 2019; Chen et al., 2018; Kee et al., 2023; Kılıç & Ünler, 2019).

Unique Predictive Value: Meta-analytic evidence shows paternalistic leadership predicts follower outcomes beyond transformational leadership and LMX. Leader-member exchange (LMX) partially mediates these effects, highlighting the importance of high-quality leader-follower relationships (Bedi, 2019; Nazir et al., 2020).

Mechanisms: Paternalistic leadership increases psychosocial and career support, which can reduce work-family conflict. However, it may also foster affective and job dependence, potentially increasing work-family conflict if not managed carefully (Göncü-Köse & Tokat, 2022).

Creativity and Safety: Paternalistic leadership also boosts employee creativity, with psychological safety acting as a key mediator (Fahri et al., 2021).

2) The Role of Teamwork in Public Organizations

Performance and Effectiveness: Teamwork is crucial for employee performance and organizational effectiveness, particularly in public and service sectors. Effective teamwork fosters collaboration, service quality, and goal achievement (Chen et al., 2018).

Mediating and Moderating Effects: Team cohesion and collective efficacy mediate the relationship paternalistic leadership and organizational commitment. High team cohesion strengthens the positive effects of leadership on commitment and performance (Lin et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2023).

Teamwork Demands: While teamwork generally enhances performance, high teamwork demands can increase work-family conflict, especially if not balanced with supportive policies (Abendroth & Reimann, 2018; Suherman, 2025; ten Brummelhuis et al., 2012).

3) Work-Family Conflict as a Mediator

Central Mediator: Work-family conflict (WFC) is a key mediator linking leadership and teamwork to employee outcomes. Both paternalistic leadership and teamwork demands can increase WFC, which in turn reduces performance and engagement (Göncü-Köse & Tokat, 2022; Suherman, 2025).

Leadership Styles: Benevolent and moral leadership reduce WFC by providing support and resources, while authoritarian leadership increases WFC by adding job demands (Kee et al., 2023).

Psychosocial Support: The main mechanism by which paternalistic leadership reduces WFC is through psychosocial support, rather than career support or affective dependence (Ababora et al., 2024; Baysak & Bilgetürk, 2021).

4) Job Satisfaction and Performance in the Public Sector

Leadership and Satisfaction: Paternalistic leadership is positively associated with job satisfaction and affective commitment among public sector employees, including auditors. Positive affectivity mediates this relationship, while perceived organizational politics can fully mediate and moderate the effect of leadership on satisfaction (Kılıç & Ünler, 2019).

Organizational Politics: A supportive and transparent environment is essential, as organizational politics can undermine the positive effects of leadership on job satisfaction (Fahri et al., 2021).

Creativity and Engagement: Psychological safety and supportive leadership further enhance job satisfaction, creativity, and engagement, contributing to better performance in public organizations (Fahri et al., 2021).

Paternalistic leadership especially its benevolent and moral dimensions consistently improves job satisfaction, commitment, creativity, and performance, while reducing work-family conflict when paired with strong psychosocial support. Teamwork is vital for organizational effectiveness but can increase work-family conflict if demands are high and support is lacking. Work-family conflict acts as a central mediator, shaping how leadership and teamwork translate into performance and satisfaction. In public sector settings, job satisfaction and performance are maximized when supportive leadership, effective teamwork, and a positive organizational climate are present.

Table2. Summary

Variable	Key Findings
Paternalistic Leadership Impact	Improves performance, job satisfaction, and innovation; authoritarianism can increase WFC
Teamwork in Public Organizations	Enhances performance and commitment; mediates leadership effects; can increase WFC
Work-Family Conflict as Mediator	Mediates leadership/teamwork effects on performance; reduced by benevolence/morality
Job Satisfaction & Performance	Boosted by paternalistic leadership and teamwork; affected by organizational politics

Data Resourched : Author 2025

D. INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

Patterns Emerging from the Literature
1) Patterns Emerging from the Literature

Paternalistic Leadership Has a Positive Impact When Based on Morality and Virtue

The benevolent and moral dimensions of paternalistic leadership have been shown to increase job satisfaction, organizational commitment, innovation, and employee performance. Conversely, the authoritarian dimension can trigger work-family conflict and emotional exhaustion (Bedi, 2019; Nazir et al., 2020; Olan et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2021).

2) Team Effectiveness Mediated by Team Cohesion and Conflict Resolution Strategies

Team cohesion, collective efficacy, and conflict resolution approaches (cooperative vs. competitive) have been shown to be important mediators in the relationship between leadership style and team effectiveness (Autoridad Nacional del Servicio Civil, 2021; Bo & Hou-Ming, 2011; Lin & Huang, 2020). Work-Family Conflict (WFC) as a Critical Mechanism

WFC serves as the primary mediator linking paternalistic leadership and teamwork to work performance, commitment, and life satisfaction. Psychosocial support from leaders plays a significant role in reducing WFC, while high work demands exacerbate this conflict (Sarfraz et al., 2022; Göncü-Köse & Tokat, 2022; Suherman, 2025).

3) Leadership Support and the Public Work Environment

In the public sector, supportive leadership styles can enhance job satisfaction and auditor performance. However, this is highly dependent on organizational political conditions and perceptions of fairness, which can weaken these positive effects (Fahri et al., 2021; Kılıç & Ünler, 2019).

Research Gaps That Have Not Been Explored

1) Lack of Studies in the Southeast Asian Context and Public Audit Institutions (such as BPK RI)

Most research is still focused on East Asian countries (China, Taiwan) and South Asian countries (Pakistan). Empirical studies in the context of public sector audit institutions in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, are very limited and present an important opportunity for new scientific contributions.

2) Lack of Integration of Variables in Comprehensive SEM Models

Most studies only examine the relationships between two or three variables. Very few integrate paternalistic leadership, teamwork, work-family conflict, job satisfaction, and performance into a comprehensive structural model.

3) Limited Multilevel Studies

The influence of leadership at the team level on individual outcomes in the public sector has not been extensively studied using a multilevel approach.

4) Lack of Examination of Contextual Moderator Factors

Variables such as gender, family status, cross-cultural adaptability, and organizational culture have not been sufficiently considered as moderators in the influence of paternalistic leadership on work-family conflict and performance in the public sector workplace.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on a review of the literature, paternalistic leadership—particularly the benevolent and moral dimensions—has been shown to consistently increase employee job satisfaction, commitment, and performance, while reducing work-family conflict through psychosocial support. On the other hand, the authoritarian dimension is often associated with increased stress and conflict, especially in hierarchical public sector organizations. Teamwork has been shown to play a crucial role in mediating the impact of leadership on performance, but it can also exacerbate work-family conflict if not balanced by supportive policies. Work-

family conflict emerges as a central mediator in the relationship between these variables. Overall, the integration of humanistic leadership and organizational support is key to team effectiveness and employee well-being.

F. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future research is recommended to test this conceptual model in the Southeast Asian context, particularly in public sector financial audit institutions such as the Indonesian Audit Board (BPK RI), which face high work pressure and organizational ethical dynamics. Quantitative studies with a multilevel approach (individual and team) will enrich understanding of cross-level relationships between leadership and performance. Additionally, the role of moderator variables such as family status, organizational culture, or cross-cultural adaptability needs further examination. It is also recommended to integrate a qualitative approach to understand employees' perceptions of leadership and work-family conflict within the context of local values And The Structural Bureaucracy Of The Indonesian Public Sector.

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