



Human Resource Management at Filantropi School: Paternalistic Leadership in Mitigating Burnout and Maintaining Teacher Commitment

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine human resource management strategies for maintaining teacher commitment and reducing the risk of burnout in a philanthropic educational institution. This study focuses on a free elementary school (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) that experienced a significant increase in student numbers despite its still uncompetitive financial compensation. This study used a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design. Data were collected through interviews with five informants, consisting of the Foundation Chairperson, the Principal, and three teachers with more than ten years of service. Data validity was validated using source triangulation. This study applied the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model with a paternalistic leadership framework. The findings indicate that the primary source of teacher commitment is emotional bonding. This bond is built when teachers internalize transcendental values and work together. Despite increasing job demands such as larger class sizes and administrative workloads, the risk of burnout is mitigated by a family-like work environment supported by social support and paternalistic leadership as the primary job resource. The principal's paternalistic leadership provided emotional support and psychological security. The integration of transcendental values and paternalistic leadership is crucial as emotional support for teachers in schools with low financial compensation. This study was limited to one school, therefore cannot be generalized. Future research is recommended to involve more schools and use a mixed-methods approach to provide additional insights.



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INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental to improving human resources, yet it is often hampered by economic constraints. In Indonesia, there is a gap in the quality of education between public and private schools, despite the government allocating 20% of its national budget to education (Apriliansyah et al., 2025). There are also free, philanthropic-based elementary schools managed by the community. Instead of following the commercialization of education, these schools offer free services while attempting to maintain high-quality standards. Interestingly, some free schools have actually shown very rapid growth in student enrollment, indicating a strong level of public trust in the management model being implemented (Mulyono, 2017). This public trust is built through effective communication and consistent transparency in service delivery, thereby strengthening the school's legitimacy in the public eye (Kusumaningrum et al., 2019). One of the cases highlighted in this study is a free private Madrasah Ibtidaiyah located in Babelan Subdistrict, Bekasi Regency, which was established with a social mission to provide educational access for children from economically disadvantaged families and has experienced a substantial increase in student enrollment over recent years.

The success of free schools in attracting public interest has complex managerial implications, particularly in the area of human resource management. A unique case was identified in this study, where the number of applicants increased by up to 40% annually. However, this surge in participation carries the risk of burnout for educators due to the imbalance between work demands and available financial resources. A larger student population inevitably increases teachers' workloads, including teaching responsibilities, administrative duties, and emotional demands associated with student supervision. Teachers with excessive workloads are more likely to experience work-related stress and emotional exhaustion (Ervidiana, 2024). Burnout itself is understood as a psychological condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment resulting from

prolonged work pressure (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Meta-analytic evidence further confirms that teacher burnout is strongly influenced by workload imbalance and resource limitations (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). To maintain organizational performance in resource-limited schools, human resource management must properly manage teacher workloads. This requires smart planning in staffing, task distribution, and practical well-being strategies (Priansa, 2018).

To understand this phenomenon, the present study adopts the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) framework proposed by (Demerouti & Bakker, 2016). Updated extensions of the JD-R model emphasize that job resources such as social support and leadership play a critical role in buffering stress (Bakker et al., 2023). In this study context, teachers in free schools face high demands due to large class sizes and limited facilities, but social relationships and leadership support may function as protective resources.

This situation creates a paradox in educational management. On one hand, schools must maintain low operational costs to ensure inclusivity; on the other hand, schools require highly committed teachers who are resilient to pressure. The complexity of managing educational organizations in this context can also be understood through the evolution of management thought, which highlights how modern organizations have shifted from traditional efficiency-based models to more human-centered approaches that emphasize motivation, commitment, and organizational culture (Wren & Bedeian, 2020). Meyer et al. (2020) state that organizational commitment is a psychological bond that keeps individuals in an organization despite opportunities elsewhere. In educational institutions with limited financial capacity, organizational commitment may not primarily emerge from financial incentives but rather from emotional attachment, shared values, and the meaningfulness of work. Robbins and Judge (2018) further explain that individuals with strong affective commitment tend to identify emotionally with organizational goals and experience a sense of pride in belonging to the organization. Furthermore, Nurhidayah & Rohmadi (2024) emphasizes that strategic management is crucial for private schools to survive in the competitive educational climate.

Organizational commitment is commonly conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Out of these dimensions, affective commitment plays the most vital role in keeping employees loyal, relying on emotional bonds rather than economic rewards. In educational settings with limited financial resources, teacher commitment is often sustained by non-financial factors such as shared values, moral purpose, and perceived meaning of work (Suryadi & Efendi, 2022). The understanding of leadership practices in educational institutions is also strongly supported by established theoretical perspectives in educational leadership and management, which emphasize how leadership styles influence school effectiveness, organizational culture, and teacher performance (Bush, 2020).

The role of the Foundation Chair as the top leader of a philanthropic organization is crucial in navigating this paradox. Leadership styles in nonprofit organizations tend to adopt a paternalistic approach, where leaders fulfill their roles like an authoritative father, demonstrating affection and concern for the well-being of the members under their care (Wulandari & Mulyanto, 2024). Paternalistic leadership is theoretically grounded in benevolence, moral authority, and authoritarianism (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Liang, 2024). Prior studies show that paternalistic leadership positively influences teacher performance and emotional stability (Halawa et al., 2025). However, most studies have not examined its role as a psychological resource in high-demand free schools.

Several previous studies have examined teacher burnout, organizational commitment, and educational leadership separately. Demerouti & Bakker (2016) explored the relationship between job demands and burnout through the JDR perspective, while Meyer et al. (2020) focused on organizational commitment as a form of psychological attachment within organizations. In addition, Halawa et al., (2025) investigated the influence of paternalistic leadership on teacher performance. However, most previous studies were conducted in educational institutions with relatively stable financial autonomy and did not specifically examine human resource management dynamics in “totally free” schools experiencing high student demand. Moreover, limited research has explored how paternalistic leadership functions as a psychological resource capable of mitigating burnout and sustaining teacher commitment in philanthropy-based educational institutions. More importantly, there is a clear lack of research on how paternalistic leadership acts as a psychological resource to prevent burnout and keep teachers loyal under severe financial constraints.

Based on these issues, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How does the Foundation Chairperson foster teachers' organizational commitment amidst financial limitations?
2. What operational challenges and burnout risks emerge as student enrollment continues to increase?
3. How does the Foundation Chairperson's paternalistic leadership style function as a key instrument in mitigating burnout and maintaining teacher loyalty in a philanthropy-based elementary school?

This study aims to provide a clearer picture of human resource practices in philanthropy-based schools, focusing on how paternalistic leadership protects teachers' emotional stability and maintains commitment under high operational pressure.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using an intrinsic case study design. This design was chosen because the researcher sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the specific and unique human resource management phenomena at a free private Madrasah Ibtidaiyah school experiencing rapid student growth (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The primary focus of the study is to explore strategies for mitigating teacher burnout and strengthening teacher commitment through the lens of paternalistic leadership within the constraints of limited financial resources.

Research Subjects and Location

The study was conducted at a free private Madrasah Ibtidaiyah school in Babelan Subdistrict, Bekasi Regency. The research location was selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) the school provides completely free education; (2) it has a large student population; and (3) it is led by a male foundation chairman with a stable tenure. Participants were also selected purposively to ensure relevance to the research focus. Informants consisted of: the Foundation Chairperson as the policy maker, the Principal as the operational manager, and three teachers with more than ten years of teaching experience. This selection was intended to capture perspectives from actors directly involved in long-term organizational dynamics and commitment formation.

Table 1. Informants’ Code

Code	Informant	Gender	Work Experience
KY	Chairperson of the Foundation	Male	> 10 years
KS	Principal	Male	> 10 years
G1	Teacher 1	Female	> 10 years
G2	Teacher 2	Female	> 10 years
G3	Teacher 3	Male	> 10 years

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews as the primary method. This approach allowed participants to describe their experiences, perceptions, and interpretations related to workload, organizational practices, and leadership interactions in a flexible and open manner. To strengthen methodological triangulation, this study also employed document analysis. The documents reviewed included school policy documents, workload records, internal reports, and institutional program documentation. These materials were used to provide contextual support and to cross-check information obtained from interviews. The interview process continued until data saturation was reached. The researchers monitored data saturation throughout our iterative analysis. It became clear that we reached saturation when final teacher interviews and document checks kept throwing up the same conceptual codes, without showing any new themes or insights on burnout and leadership (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Table 2. Research Main Themes and their Questions

Themes	Questions	Informant
Foundation Chairperson’s Strategy	1. Given that this school is completely free, how do you engage teachers with the long-term vision of the institution?	Foundation Chairperson
	2. What forms of appreciation or non-financial incentives do you provide to keep teachers loyal and foster a sense of belonging to the foundation?	Foundation Chairperson
	3. How do you translate the foundation’s vision into daily work culture to keep teachers motivated despite limited school facilities?	Principal
	4. What is the strongest factor that has kept you at this free school for over 10 years? To what extent does the Foundation play a role in making you feel “at home”?	Teachers
	5. How do you navigate the balance between the non-material purpose of your work and personal financial expectations?	Teachers
Operational Challenges and Burnout Risks	1. With the rapid surge in student numbers, how do you view teachers’ current workload? Do you have specific standards in place to prevent them from becoming exhausted?	Foundation Chairperson
	2. From a technical standpoint, how do you manage the surging teacher-to-student ratio to ensure that the teaching and learning process continues without causing teachers to experience severe work-related stress?	Principal

Themes	Questions	Informant
The Role of the Foundation Chairperson's Paternalistic Leadership Style	3. What common behavioral or performance signs of work-related stress, if any, do you notice among the senior staff?	Principal
	4. With such a large number of students, which part of your job most often leaves you feeling overwhelmed or emotionally drained?	Teachers
	5. How do you cope with limited funding or teaching aids in the classroom without losing your motivation to teach?	Teachers
	1. How would you describe your standard interaction and communication approach when managing the school staff?	Foundation Chairperson
	2. How do you handle teachers' complaints or personal issues that are beginning to affect their performance in the classroom?	Foundation Chairperson
	3. How does the Foundation Chairperson typically interact with the school staff during daily operations, and how do the staff members feel about his presence?	Principal
	4. Can you describe the working atmosphere here, especially when the team has to resolve internal disagreements or conflicts?	Principal
	5. What usually happens or how does the Foundation Chairperson respond when you face heavy difficulties in your daily work?	Teachers
	6. Can you describe a story or event involving the school leadership that made a deep impression on you and affected your decision to stay at this school?	Teachers

Research Ethics and Trustworthiness

To comply with standard human subject research requirements, strict ethical procedures were enforced. All participants were provided with a written informed consent form detailing their voluntary participation, the right to withdraw at any stage without consequence, and explicit guarantees of anonymity through the use of pseudonyms (KY, KS, G1, G2, G3). To ensure qualitative trustworthiness, member checking (respondent validation) was conducted after transcribing the data. The completed transcripts and extracted themes were returned to the five informants to confirm that the texts accurately represented their actual experiences and views, minimizing researcher bias and enhancing structural credibility.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted in a cyclical manner following the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which includes: (1) Data Collection: Collecting data from interviews and document analysis; (2) Data Condensation: Identifying and focusing the data from interview transcripts into key themes; (3) Data Display: Organizing the data into a narrative matrix; and (4) Drawing Conclusions: Interpreting the field findings to address the research questions.

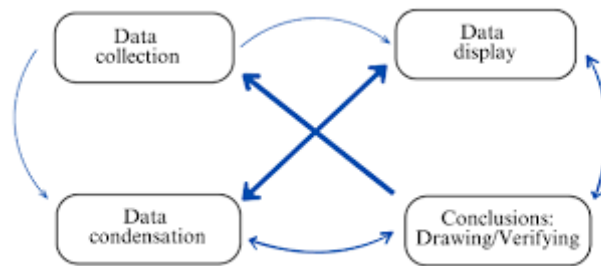


Figure 1. Data analysis process (Source: Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014)

Data Validity (Source and Methodological Triangulation)

This study employs both source triangulation and methodological triangulation to ensure data validity. As explained by Patton (2015), source triangulation involves comparing the reliability of information obtained from various parties in different roles. The researcher cross-referenced information from the Foundation Chairperson, the Principal, and the teachers to assess the consistency between human resource management policies and on-the-ground realities (Denzin, 2017). At the same time, the researchers achieved methodological triangulation by cross-checking interview responses with internal school reports, workload logs, and official policies to verify if the narrative matched institutional realities.

Additionally, credibility testing was conducted through in-depth and systematic descriptions to ensure the accuracy of the collected data (Sugiyono, 2019; Yin, 2018).

Researcher Reflexivity and Limitations

The researchers acknowledge a specific boundary within the sampling strategy, all participating classroom teachers are senior staff members with over ten years of tenure. While this deliberate choice serves the research focus by providing deep insights into long-term commitment and sustained loyalty, it introduces a perspective limitation. The experiences of newly recruited teachers, or those who may have left the institution due to operational strain, are not represented in this data. This boundary was monitored throughout the analysis to ensure that conclusions specifically explain the mechanisms of high-retention survival cultures rather than representing a universal, friction-free environment.

RESULTS

Findings of this study were categorized by the researcher into three themes: Foundation Chairperson’s Strategy, Operational Challenges and Burnout Risks, and The Role of the Foundation Chairperson’s Paternalistic Leadership Style. These themes are derived from a close analysis of the data and depict the issues that contribute to paternalistic leadership in mitigating burnout and maintaining teacher commitment. According to the thematic analysis table below:

Table 3. The Thematic Analysis Table

Main Theme		
Paternalistic Leadership in Mitigating Burnout and Maintaining Teacher Commitment		
Sub Themes		Main Ideas
Sub Theme 1	Foundation Chairperson’s Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of the school’s vision by foundation chairperson. 2. Internalization of the school’s vision. 3. Supporting teachers. 4. Motivating teachers.
Sub Theme 2	Operational Challenges and Burnout Risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing open communication. 2. Ensuring time for teacher breaks. 3. Increasing workload, leading to physical exhaustion. 4. Increasing workload, causing burnout and emotional exhaustion. 5. Student administrations trigger burnout or severe exhaustion. 6. Students’ personalities, academic abilities, family backgrounds, and emotional states vary greatly. 7. Students conflict at school
Sub Theme 3	The Role of the Foundation Chairperson’s Paternalistic Leadership Style	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nurturing and protective leadership style. 2. Family-oriented approach. 3. Fostering a sense of security among teachers. 4. Providing comfort and well-being. 5. Providing emotional support. 6. Providing sincere support.

1. Dynamics of Teachers’ Organizational Commitment Amid Financial Constraints

Based on the results of in-depth interviews, it was found that the Foundation Chairperson’s strategy for building teacher loyalty centered on the internalization of the school’s vision. Although financial compensation was below the school average, teachers demonstrated a high level of persistence. The Chairperson of Foundation explained several efforts undertaken in the process of internalizing the vision among teachers:

“The greatest challenge lies not only in operational aspects but also in how to build teachers’ commitment and conviction. We foster conviction through several approaches. First, we reinforce the understanding of the vision and mission from the very beginning—that every piece of knowledge imparted to students becomes a charitable deed whose value far exceeds material gain. Second, we create a supportive and family-like work environment, so that teachers feel valued, heard, and not alone in this endeavor.” (KY)

KY also explained that when teachers share the school’s core values, they gain a sense of inner satisfaction that helps them overlook the low financial compensation:

“We know that financial needs are important, but we believe that when people work with the same heart and vision, inner satisfaction grows—a satisfaction that cannot always be measured in material terms. And thank God, many teachers have stayed because they have found that meaning.” (KY)

The teachers in the field shared a similar view. For instance, Teacher G1 noted that the way the foundation leadership communicates the school's mission makes their daily teaching feel like a noble duty rather than just heavy work:

“So far, the foundation chairperson has been able to communicate the vision clearly, so that teachers feel their efforts are part of a noble, grand mission, not just drudgery.” (G1)

G1 also mentioned that being appreciated and given the freedom to manage their own classrooms are powerful reasons to stay, often mattering more than financial rewards:

“The supportive foundation listens to teachers’ concerns in the field. Even though facilities are limited, feeling valued and morally supported by the foundation is often more effective in retaining someone than a pay raise elsewhere. The foundation gives us the freedom to innovate” (G1)

Furthermore, Teacher G2 explained that retention is structurally supported by the immediate intrinsic rewards experienced when assisting socio-economically marginalized students:

“I have been at this free school for over ten years because of my desire to serve and see the students’ progress over time. When students who were initially lacking in confidence become braver, more independent, and high-achieving, that brings me joy.” (G2)

This sentiment of shared social responsibility was supported by Teacher G3, who views the professional role not as an economic transaction, but as a collective communal service.

“From day one, I have not only been regarded as a teacher but also as part of a larger group of people with a shared goal: providing the best education for children who need it. The sense that my work has a strong social component keeps me grounded, even when facing many difficulties.” (G3)

2. Analysis of Workload and Burnout Risks Due to a Surge in Student Enrollment

Documentary analysis of student registration logs confirmed a compounding 40% average growth in annual student enrollment over the past decade. This rapid expansion has generated severe pressure on the school's operational capacity and physical infrastructure. To manage these operational demands, the Principal (KS) implemented structural mitigations, focusing on task allocation and designated rest spaces:

“Technically, when there are a large number of students, we organize classes proportionally, taking into account teachers’ workloads to ensure they remain within standard limits. We also create a balanced class schedule and ensure that every teacher has sufficient break time.” (KS)

Furthermore, KS emphasized that keeping communication open and direct helps the management spot and resolve problems quickly before they get out of hand.

“We also provide a channel for communication if any teacher feels overwhelmed, so that adjustments to their workload can be made immediately. Essentially, planned management, solid teamwork, and open communication are key to ensuring that the teaching and learning process remains effective without overburdening teachers.” (KS)

Despite these administrative interventions, the raw data indicates that the sheer volume of the student population causes prominent physical and emotional strain. Teacher G1 identified clerical and administrative tasks as primary triggers of emotional fatigue:

“Sometimes, what most frequently triggers burnout or severe exhaustion is the sense of tedium when dealing with student administration such as grading exams, entering grades, and preparing report cards—due to the large number of students.” (G1)

Teacher G2 added that the core driver of emotional exhaustion stems from the pressure to distribute individualized cognitive and emotional attention across a highly diverse student body within overcrowded classrooms.

“The part of the job that most often leaves me feeling burned out and emotionally exhausted is having to divide my attention and energy equally among all the students. Meanwhile, students’ personalities, academic abilities, family backgrounds, and emotional states vary greatly within a single class.” (G2)

Teacher G3 further revealed that conflict mediation among students from distressed socio-economically backgrounds significantly compounds the psychological demands placed on the staff.

“Another factor that can cause emotional strain is when an individual student or a group of students faces a problem. As a teacher, I not only teach the subject matter but must also act as a mediator and problem-solver.” (G3)

To cope with these stressors, teachers systematically rely on cognitive reframing based on the school's original transcendental mission rather than external structural solutions.

“However, I try to overcome feelings of burnout by recalling my original purpose for teaching. I try to see the small progress students make as a way to acknowledge the efforts that have been made.” (G2)

Teacher G3 added that effective communication and good working relationships can help alleviate teacher burnout in the performance of their duties.

As long as there is effective communication, good working relationships between mentors and students, and teamwork among teachers, this issue can be managed and will not lead to severe burnout. (G3)

3. Paternalistic Leadership as a Tool for Mitigating Burnout

The data demonstrates that the leadership configuration of the school operates through a highly protective, relational, yet centralized authority model. The Foundation Chairperson (KY) explained his choice of a paternalistic management model to cultivate a unified organizational identity.

"I chose a family-oriented approach because we operate in an educational environment rooted in values and dedication. Teachers need not only work guidance but also emotional support, a sense of security, and trust. In this way, what is built is not merely a working relationship but a shared sense of unity in a common vision and shared struggle." (KY)

Teacher G1 expressed the view that although the workload is quite high, teachers choose to stay and teach at this school because the Foundation Chairperson's leadership style provides comfort and well-being.

"My Foundation Chairperson is able to provide comfort, security, and even well-being through various programs offered by the foundation to both teachers and students." (G1)

Teacher G2 shared a similar view, noting that the Foundation Chairperson provided emotional support, particularly when G2 felt exhausted and their work motivation was waning.

"Various challenges at work left me exhausted and nearly demoralized. The leader offered emotional support to me at that time. He took the time to listen, encourage, and remind me of the school's original purpose." (G2)

As additional information, Teacher G3 also stated that the foundation chairperson supports all teachers, including when they face work-related stress. Teachers are given sincere support, enabling them to get through such stressful periods.

"There was a time when I felt very depressed due to work-related stress and faced several tense situations in the classroom; I was then given the opportunity to explain my situation. Afterward, I received sincere support until I felt comfortable again." (G3)

DISCUSSION

1. The Interplay of Transcendental Value Internalization and Organizational Commitment

The empirical findings in the Results section demonstrate that teachers' organizational commitment within this philanthropic school is heavily dominated by affective and normative commitment dimensions (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer et al., 2020). In typical corporate management frameworks, retention is sustained through transactional reward systems and financial incentives (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Robbins & Judge, 2018). However, under severe fiscal constraints where competitive salaries are entirely absent, the internalization of transcendental values serves as a powerful substitute job resource.

The data confirms that the Foundation Chairperson successfully leverages the "meaning of work" as a core administrative strategy. By structurally framing teaching tasks as a form of non-material social and religious contribution, the leadership alters the teachers' cognitive evaluation of their workplace costs and benefits. This aligns with modern educational management literature which indicates that value-driven, nonprofit organizations can establish robust retention cultures by substituting material compensation with profound ideological fulfillment (Bush, 2020; Mulyono, 2017). The high level of persistence exhibited by senior teachers (G1, G2, G3) for over ten years validates the argument that affective attachment to an organization's social vision can effectively insulate employees from continuance commitment failure.

2. Evaluating Workload Dynamics through the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Framework

The operational stress caused by the 40% annual increase in student enrollment can be systematically mapped using the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) framework (Demerouti & Bakker, 2016; Schaufeli, 2017). According to the JD-R model, structural strain and emotional exhaustion occur when the operational demands of a role significantly outpace the available organizational and structural resources (Bakker et al., 2023).

The empirical accounts of G1, G2, and G3 clearly outline the multi-dimensional nature of job demands in a rapidly expanding philanthropic school: quantitative demands (clerical burdens), qualitative demands (overcrowded classrooms), and emotional demands (student conflict mediation). The grievances voiced by G1 regarding administrative tedium and by G2 and G3 regarding emotional depletion perfectly validate contemporary educational studies, which demonstrate that a school context heavily weighed down by excessive administration and quantitative workloads directly induces severe teacher emotional exhaustion (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Theoretically, the

continuous exposure to these demands without proportional financial compensation or infrastructural relief would typically trigger severe depersonalization and a rapid drop in performance (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). However, the data highlights a unique structural phenomenon: these intense job demands are buffered by a combination of social resources (open communication, peer teamwork) and localized psychological resources. The teachers utilize cognitive reframing rooted in their internalized transcendental values to process stress. This dynamic offers an interesting extension to the JD-R theory, proving that in underfunded educational settings, non-material psychological resources can stop the usual health-impairment process and lower burnout before teachers decide to leave.

3. The Dual Nature of Paternalistic Leadership: Benevolence vs. Organizational Dependency

The empirical results demonstrate that the Foundation Chairperson's leadership configuration strongly reflects the core dimensions of paternalistic leadership, specifically the pillar of benevolence (individualized, holistic care) and moral authority (leading by personal example) (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Liang, 2024). The individualized emotional support and psychological safety provided by the chairperson during periods of crisis (as experienced by G2 and G3) function as primary organizational resources that effectively reduce work stress (Northouse, 2021). This familial management climate effectively transforms a materials-scarce environment into a highly supportive workspace (Eisenberger et al., 2020).

However, to avoid a unidirectional, overly positive bias (Social Desirability Bias), this management configuration must be evaluated critically. While paternalistic benevolence successfully maintains high immediate teacher commitment and buffers burnout, it introduces severe long-term institutional vulnerabilities: First, the high-commitment survival culture of this school is not built upon institutionalized, standardized HR systems, but rather upon the individual charisma, moral stature, and personal emotional availability of the current Foundation Chairperson. The organization is highly vulnerable to single-point-of-failure risks. If the leader were to step down, the entire non-material incentive framework could instantly collapse. Second, paternalistic management naturally blurs the lines between formal professional obligations and personal familial ties. This dynamic can create a subtle, oppressive culture of compliance where teachers feel socially or morally "sungkan" (discomforted or guilty) to express professional dissatisfaction, demand better working conditions, or report genuine operational strain, out of respect for the leader's sacrifices. Third, replicating this high-retention model is highly problematic for future leadership successions. Because the recruitment and retention metrics rely entirely on a shared ideological bond and emotional compliance rather than competitive institutional contracts, the school faces structural challenges in attracting or integrating newer generations of professional educators who require standardized economic stability. In conclusion, while paternalistic benevolence serves as an invaluable emergency job resource in resource-limited, philanthropic educational sectors, it remains a fragile structural solution that requires careful balancing with formalized organizational processes to ensure long-term institutional sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, this study concludes that the success of free elementary schools in retaining human resource loyalty amid a surge in student enrolment depends heavily on the integration of transcendental values and paternalistic leadership.

First, organizational commitment is mainly driven by affective attachment rather than financial incentives, where teachers internalize a shared sense of mission and service. This finding extends organizational commitment theory by showing that value-based meaning can function as a substitute for material rewards in non-profit educational settings. Second, although increasing student numbers raise workload demands, burnout risks are reduced through a supportive and family-like work environment. In line with the Job Demands-Resources framework (Demerouti & Bakker, 2016), social and emotional support act as key resources that buffer job stress. Third, paternalistic leadership contributes significantly to teacher stability by providing psychological safety and emotional support, highlighting its role as a non-material support system in resource-limited schools.

Practically, these findings suggest that foundation-based schools should strengthen value-driven culture and emotionally supportive leadership to sustain teacher well-being. However, this study is limited to a single site and long-tenured teachers, and does not fully capture dissenting perspectives. Future research should use multi-site and mixed-method designs to further examine burnout dynamics and leadership effects in similar contexts.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The Author Contributions Statement can be up to several sentences long and should briefly describe the tasks of individual authors. Please list only 2 initials for each author, without full stops, but separated by commas (e.g. JC, JS). In the case of two authors with the same initials, please use their middle initial to differentiate between them (e.g. REW, RSW). The Author Contributions Statement should be included at the end of the manuscript before the References.

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The author used [TOOL/SERVICE NAME] during the preparation of this work for [REASON]. After using the tool/service, the author thoroughly reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication. The authors declare that this research was prepared, researched, written, and edited without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques.

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