

## Driving Success in Fast-Fashion Retail: A Moderated Mediation Model

William Widjaja<sup>1\*</sup>, Sabil Sabil<sup>2</sup>, Michael Michael<sup>3</sup>, and Devi Rahnjen Wijayadne<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Manajemen Retail, Universitas Pradita

<sup>2</sup>Manajemen, Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika

<sup>3</sup>Akuntansi, Universitas Pradita

<sup>4</sup>International Business Management, Universitas Ciputra Surabaya

### Email Address:

*william.widjaja@pradita.ac.id\**, *sabil.sbl@bsi.ac.id*, *michael@pradita.ac.id*,

*devi.rahnjen@ciputra.ac.id*

\*Corresponding Author

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**Abstract:** This study explores how work stress and participative leadership impact employee motivation in the fast-fashion industry, focusing on 130 employees in the JABOTABEK region. The research employs route analysis and moderated mediation analysis using SMARTPLS, demonstrating that job stress substantially diminishes employee motivation. However, participatory leadership exerts a favourable effect on both motivation and performance. Motivation is a vital intermediary in the correlation between job stress, participatory leadership, and employee performance. Moreover, work satisfaction is a crucial moderator influencing the correlation between motivation and performance. These findings offer theoretical insights and practical consequences for enterprises in the fast-fashion industry. They underscore the need for effective stress management strategies and highlight the importance of participative leadership and job enjoyment in enhancing employee motivation and performance, thereby contributing to improved organisational outcomes.

**Keywords:** Employee Performance; Job stress; Participative Leadership; Motivation.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana stres kerja dan kepemimpinan partisipatif mempengaruhi motivasi karyawan di industri fast-fashion, dengan fokus pada 130 karyawan di wilayah JABOTABEK. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis jalur dan analisis mediasi yang dimoderasi dengan menggunakan SMARTPLS, yang menunjukkan bahwa stres kerja secara substansial mengurangi motivasi karyawan, tetapi kepemimpinan partisipatif memberikan efek yang baik pada motivasi dan kinerja. Motivasi diakui sebagai perantara penting dalam korelasi antara stres kerja, kepemimpinan partisipatif, dan kinerja karyawan. Selain itu, kepuasan kerja diidentifikasi sebagai moderator penting yang mempengaruhi korelasi antara motivasi dan kinerja. Temuan ini menawarkan wawasan teoritis dan konsekuensi praktis bagi perusahaan di industri mode cepat. Mereka menggarisbawahi perlunya strategi manajemen stres yang efektif dan menyoroti pentingnya kepemimpinan partisipatif dan kenikmatan kerja dalam meningkatkan motivasi dan kinerja karyawan, sehingga berkontribusi pada peningkatan hasil organisasi.

**Kata Kunci:** Kinerja Karyawan; Stress Kerja; Kepemimpinan Partisipatif; Motivasi.

## INTRODUCTION

The efficacy of retail sales personnel is crucial at the shop level since they represent the forefront of client engagement. Retail sales personnel engage directly with clients and deliver services to them. The calibre of service given by retail sales personnel might affect consumer purchasing choices and inclinations to repurchase (Chatzoglou et al., 2022). The efficacy of retail sales personnel can influence customer happiness, sales volume, and the overall success of the retail establishment. Amidst fierce rivalry in the retail sector,



organised retail establishments must guarantee that their sales personnel deliver superior services to retain clientele and enhance their market share (van der Laken et al., 2020).

Consequently, human resources (HR) is pivotal for a business to attain its objectives effectively and efficiently (Memon et al., 2023). Furthermore, human resources are essential for firms in establishing competitive advantages, enabling them to thrive in the current challenging globalisation landscape. Escalating organisational competitiveness necessitates a corresponding enhancement in personnel performance (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Organisational expectations for elevated employee performance might result in significant occupational stress for individuals confronting these demands. Moreover, high occupational stress might engender an unstable work environment and social life for an individual (Aruldoss et al., 2022).

Fast-fashion retail sector employees frequently encounter significant pressure and stress, characterised by stringent sales objectives, demanding work hours, and elevated expectations for rapid performance outcomes. Elevated occupational stress can adversely affect employee performance, resulting in diminished productivity, worse work quality, and physical and mental fatigue (Khan et al., 2022; Obianuju et al., 2022). Job stress adversely impacts employee performance by disrupting emotional and psychological equilibrium, diminishing overall performance and impairing workplace well-being (Rahman et al., 2020). Job stress can lead to diminished focus, lack of concentration, and sluggish job completion, affecting employee productivity and work efficiency (Wu et al., 2021).

Moreover, elevated job stress can lead to increased errors and less conscientiousness among employees, possibly detrimental to the organisation (Sucharitha, 2020). This unchecked degree of job stress may ultimately diminish workers' motivation to do their tasks effectively, fostering a sense of dissatisfaction with their work and precipitating an increase in the company's turnover rate (Khan et al., 2022). Consequently, organisations must mitigate employee job stress by offering a conducive and comfortable work environment, chances for respite, and psychological support (Foy et al., 2019). Furthermore, organisations may offer training programs to assist employees in stress management and skill development for coping with pressure (Aruldoss et al., 2022).

The fast-fashion business has grown, led by H&M, Forever 21, Zara, and Uniqlo. These stores attract a large customer base with attractive, affordable clothing. Fast-fashion companies must effectively manage and motivate their employees to stay competitive. Participative leadership may boost employee engagement in fast-fashion retail by including employees in decision-making and empowering them (J. Wang & Wang, 2022). There is a need for strategic planning among fast fashion firms such as Zara, Marks & Spencer, World Co., Mango, H&M, and Primark (Brydges, 2021; Sanmiguel et al., 2021). In order to enhance design and swiftly react to trends, this strategy entails increasing the number of short-lived articles and collections released annually (Backs et al., 2021).

Effective leadership may help, encourage, and instruct people to manage occupational stress. It may boost employee and business performance, motivation, and emotional bonding. Leadership affects employee performance favourably or adversely (Mazzetti & Schaufeli, 2022; Riyanto et al., 2021). A competent leader provides training and development to improve employees' abilities and performance (Kim et al., 2018). An effective leader can motivate, support, and explicitly guide employees to achieve organisational goals; communicate effectively with employees, provide constructive feedback, and provide essential direction; and develop employees by providing the necessary support and attention, nurturing positive relationships, and assisting them in



overcoming challenges related to their work. According to (Chan, 2019) and (Curado & Santos, 2022), these traits increase worker productivity, quality, and satisfaction.

Fast-fashion shop employees' motivation dramatically affects performance. Motivated employees are more dedicated and focused on corporate goals. Robust motivation may help workers manage work-related stress, accomplish sales goals, provide exceptional customer service, and help the firm succeed (Machova et al., 2022; Mardanov, 2020).

The correlation between employee motivation and performance is non-linear. Multiple determinants affecting employee performance discovered that motivation substantially influences performance, with work satisfaction identified as a contributing component (Erdogan & Bauer, 2020). Job pleasure denotes employees' happiness and fulfilment from their roles and associated responsibilities. Employees who experience workplace satisfaction and enjoyment are more inclined to exhibit motivation and enhanced performance (Tóth-Király et al., 2021). Fair treatment of employees enhances their motivation and performance (van Lill et al., 2020).

This research uniquely examines the impact of participatory leadership and employee motivation on managing work-related stress within the high-pressure environment of the fast fashion retail sector, characterised by stringent objectives. This research examines participatory leadership to enhance employee motivation and performance, noting that the link between motivation and performance is non-linear and affected by work satisfaction. Furthermore, it advocates for a comprehensive strategy to mitigate job-related stress by fostering a conducive work environment, providing training, and offering psychological support to enhance employee performance in the rapidly evolving and competitive fast fashion retail industry.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

Social Exchange Theory, originating from social psychology, posits that an organisation's interpersonal connections are founded on reciprocity. This theory posits that individuals are inclined to sustain connections or interactions that yield monetary and emotional advantages (Naidoo et al., 2019). This idea is crucial for comprehending how leader-employee interactions enhance performance and job satisfaction within participatory leadership and employee motivation frameworks.

Social Exchange Theory posits that workers who perceive themselves as valued and engaged in decision-making will likely respond with loyalty, dedication, and enhanced performance (Bibi et al., 2018). A leader employing a participatory leadership style, which includes engaging workers in decision-making and granting autonomy over their tasks, fosters a sense of worth, trust, and involvement in the organisation's success among employees (Akpoviroro et al., 2018).

This mutual exchange fosters the establishment of trust and commitment. When workers see equitable treatment and are allowed to participate, they often enhance their contributions to the firm via increased devotion and incentive to exert more significant effort. This reciprocal interaction establishes a social equilibrium inside the firm, eventually benefiting both parties: employees experience satisfaction while the corporation achieves enhanced performance (Engidaw, 2021).

This theory posits that participatory leadership may mitigate workplace stress by giving employees greater control over their work and a platform to articulate their thoughts and challenges. Consequently, employees exhibit intrinsic motivation and enhanced job



satisfaction, reinforcing the correlation between motivation and performance (Lee & Jo, 2023; G. Xu et al., 2022).

In the high-pressure environment of fast fashion retail, engaging employees in the decision-making process effectively alleviates psychological strain and enhances work-life balance. This maintains high performance and boosts organisational satisfaction and loyalty (Suresh et al., 2020).

**Job stress and motivation.** Workplace stress and climate dramatically affect retail worker performance. A healthy work environment promotes productivity, but stress can impair performance and trigger behavioural disorders. Workplace stress can demotivate employees (Lohela-Karlsson et al., 2022). Poor stress, motivation, and work satisfaction in some higher education professionals and the relationship between stress and health. Stress-reduction training, wellness displays, and management adjustments are advised (Mohammed et al., 2020).

Thai primary and secondary teachers' stress. Demographics and motivation impact teacher stress. Because of finances and work, secondary school instructors are more stressed than elementary school teachers. Stress motivates secondary school instructors (Kongcharoen et al., 2020).

Employee and organisational health improves with public service motivation and engagement. Job stress may harm personal health. HR policies must include these variables to promote employee well-being and organisational efficiency (Ndoen & Supartha, 2019). Stress and low intrinsic motivation might reduce productivity (Ghani et al., 2022). Fast-fashion retailers need worker participation to sustain productivity and quality.

Organisational intelligence, workplace life skills, and employee empowerment training improve occupational stress-related productivity and socialisation, according to (Giao et al., 2020). Even though the study focused on one industry, organisational features may minimise job stress and enhance employee engagement.

**H1:** Job stress has a negative significant impact on employee motivation.

**Participative Leadership and Motivation.** Participative leadership improves supply chain performance in retail SMEs, emphasising the importance of information sharing and cooperation for fast-fashion retail employee motivation (Ovunda & Mac-Kingsley, 2021). According to (Ishaque et al., 2022), employee perception of corporate social responsibility mediates the relationship between participative leadership and employee engagement through motivational and multidimensional frameworks. This shows how participative leadership affects employee motivation beyond the workplace to business values and social responsibility.

Participatory leadership affects motivation and numerous organisational outcomes in fast-fashion retail. It improves job happiness, work engagement, and supply chain performance (Chan, 2019; Ovunda & Mac-Kingsley, 2021). These findings show that participative leadership promotes positive staff attitudes and behaviours, critical in fast-fashion retail.

Leadership styles have significantly impacted employee motivation in other industries, such as the car industry (Chaman et al., 2021). The fast-fashion retail sector's unique qualities may alter how participative leadership affects employee attitudes and behaviours. Thus, it is important to include this when studying its effects on employee motivation.



According to (Kalaiganam et al., 2021), leadership is vital in inspiring employees, particularly in the fast-fashion retail industry, prioritising adaptability, inventiveness, and responsiveness to customers' expectations. This highlights how important it is to have a solid grasp of how participatory leadership can excite individuals working in fast-fashion retail and contribute to the success of firms.

Accordingly, the implementation of participatory leadership has resulted in an increase in motivation among workers in the fast-fashion retail industry, as well as an increase in job satisfaction, work engagement, and the effectiveness of supply chain operations. To enhance organisational performance in this dynamic market and motivate and engage individuals, it is impossible to stress the significance of having a thorough awareness of the implications of participative leadership in the fast-fashion retail industry.

**H2:** Participative leadership has a positive significant impact on employee motivation.

**Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Productivity.** Employee motivation influences performance since it is an intrinsic feature that propels individuals to attain objectives and enhance productivity. Employees will exhibit more enthusiasm for work and attain established objectives when motivated. It can also enhance task completion's quality, efficiency, and effectiveness (Rita et al., 2018).

Motivated employees have a positive attitude toward their work, have a heightened enthusiasm to carry out their responsibilities, and actively seek solutions to existing problems. According to (Çetin & Aşkun, 2018), motivation can provide employees with an increased sense of self-assurance and confidence, helping them feel more competent to accomplish complex tasks.

Organisations may enhance employee motivation by offering incentives or prizes for achieving objectives and providing training and career development opportunities to ensure employees feel appreciated and can advance. Furthermore, firms must provide a supportive work environment by supplying the necessary resources and assistance for their employees to perform well (Çetin & Aşkun, 2018).

Motivation influences performance since those with high motivation typically exhibit greater love for their work. It might enhance their work performance as they will exhibit greater attention and endeavour to attain their objectives. Furthermore, motivated individuals are often more innovative in executing their responsibilities and delivering excellent value to clients or organisations. Consequently, motivation is crucial for enhancing work performance (Riyanto et al., 2021).

Motivation influences performance as it catalyses individuals to pursue objectives and enhances their efforts toward attaining them. In the realm of sales, motivation may enhance salespeople's enthusiasm and drive to attain their sales objectives. Motivation may assist salespeople in concentrating on their objectives and surmounting challenges during the sales process. Consequently, motivation is essential for enhancing salesperson performance and achieving total corporate success. Firms' Common motivating tactics are financial incentives, public acknowledgement, staff training and development, and a conducive work atmosphere (Eroğlu & Kiray, 2020).

(Tian et al., 2021) study everyday job crafting, self-efficacy, and performance, making them relevant. According to this study, everyday job creation may be linked to daily performance through work satisfaction. Furthermore, increased employee work satisfaction might reduce external motivation due to internal advantages (Fishbach & Woolley, 2021).



This suggests that job satisfaction may contribute to converting desire into daily performance, underscoring the significance of everyday enjoyment in affecting performance outcomes.

In addition, the impact of transformational leadership and the connection between it and work satisfaction and the ability to provide excellent customer service in front-line service jobs (Sok et al., 2018). The findings imply that front-line service staff with genuine enthusiasm for their work and excellent customer service talents demonstrate reduced dependency on guidance and supervisory help. Work satisfaction has the potential to mitigate the impact of leadership and intrinsic qualities on employee performance in the setting of fast-fashion retail.

The literature and future references suggest that work satisfaction may attenuate the motivation-performance relationship in fast-fashion retail. Examining how job pleasure moderates daily performance, intrinsic incentives, and leadership interactions helps understand how job enjoyment affects motivation and employee performance.

**H3a:** Motivation significantly influences employee performance.

**H3b:** Job satisfaction significantly moderates the impact of motivation on employee performance.

**Occupational Stress, Motivation, and Employee Performance.** Job stressors such as excessive workloads and role conflicts can reduce employee job satisfaction, subsequently affecting motivation and productivity. Therefore, identifying and addressing workplace stressors influencing employee performance is essential for retail organisations to improve employee efficiency and productivity (Ghani et al., 2022).

Weariness, anxiety, depression, and decreased motivation can result from job-related stress, thereby reducing productivity and the quality of work (Foy et al., 2019). Job-related stress caused by workplace bullying and harassment can potentially lower employee performance (Obianuju et al., 2022). Fear, diminished enthusiasm, and lowered self-confidence are shared among employees experiencing bullying and harassment, which negatively impacts their productivity and work quality (Cullinan et al., 2019). Employee performance can be negatively affected by stress from excessive workloads (Ebhote et al., 2022). When job stress induces fatigue, anxiety, and decreased focus, productivity and work quality tend to decline (B. Chen et al., 2022).

According to (Arujunan et al., 2021), the association between job stress and job performance in police officers was considerably mediated by feelings of motivation in their jobs. This suggests that in high-pressure workplaces, such as the retail sector of the fast-fashion industry, motivation plays a significant role in minimising the harmful effects of job stress on performance. According to (Shin et al., 2020), motivation is an important intermediate role that determines how employees react to pressures in the workplace. This conclusion is especially pertinent in the fast-fashion retail business, where personnel are subjected to pressures from the expectations of customers, the management of inventory, and the achievement of sales goals.

According to a study, motivation substantially impacts job stress and employee performance. In the fast-fashion retail industry, where occupational stress is frequent, knowing how motivation affects employee performance is essential to improving employee well-being and productivity.



**H4:** Motivation significantly moderates the impact of job stress on employee performance.

**Participative Leadership, Motivation, and Employee Performance.** Participative leadership significantly boosts staff performance. Customer happiness and operational efficiency are crucial in fast-fashion retail, where participatory leadership may boost staff productivity (Kahpi et al., 2020). Since staff engagement, satisfaction, performance, and customer service quality are significantly connected, this leadership style is crucial in this industry (Chan, 2019).

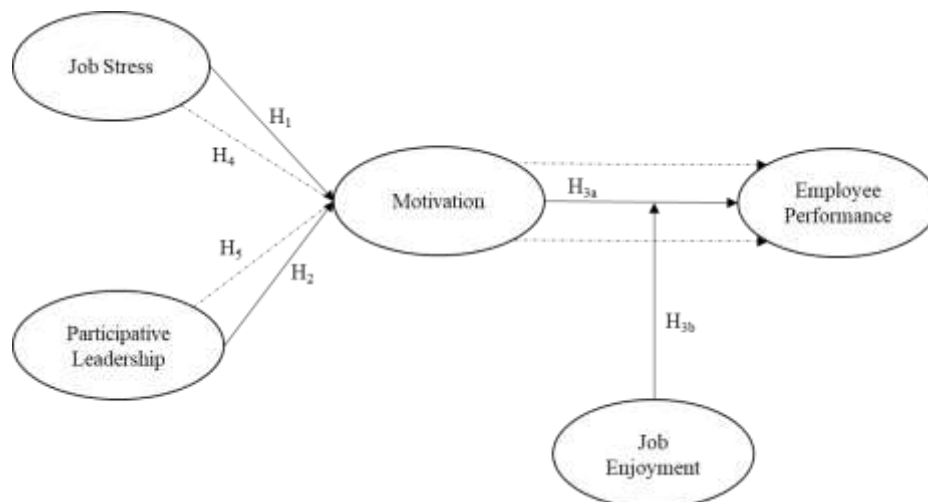
(Pahi et al., 2022) have shown that leaders encouraging participation among front-line employees improve employee motivation, job happiness, performance, the working environment, and customer service. According to (Ndoen & Supartha, 2019), participatory leadership affects employee performance by influencing its level of organisational commitment. These data imply that participatory leadership increases worker engagement and performance in fast-fashion retail.

Participative leadership improves employee outcomes in fast-fashion retail by increasing staff engagement (Nazari et al., 2022). Employee participation in performance measuring systems and its impact on work satisfaction and leadership are key. This study did not focus primarily on participatory leadership but stressed the relevance of leadership styles that engage employees (Jang et al., 2023).

Leaders who engage in participatory leadership can increase motivation and job satisfaction by giving employees responsibility and power (Chan, 2019). According to Suardika (2020), the relationship between ethical and emotional leadership and work performance is mediated by employee motivation. As demonstrated here, participatory leadership can increase performance and engage employees working in fast-fashion retail.

According to an ongoing study, the link between motivation and employee performance in fast-fashion retail may be modulated by participatory leadership, which can boost staff performance. Implementing participatory leadership can increase productivity and performance by mobilising staff in the fast-fashion retail industry.

**H5:** Motivation substantially influences the influence of participatory leadership on employee performance.



**Figure 1.** Research Model  
Source: data processed (2023)



## METHODS

The research for this survey is conducted using quantitative approaches. One hundred thirty employees at fast-fashion stores in Jakarta were asked to participate in the survey between September and November 2023. The data is gathered through the use of a questionnaire. Purposive sampling, which does not rely on probability, is used in the sample approach. Making use of SMARTPLS 3.0 to conduct an examination of hypotheses by employing route analysis and moderated mediation method. In order to conduct the research model analysis, there will be two phases: the exterior and the internal phases. The outer model's convergent, discriminant, and dependability will be evaluated to determine its performance.

The inner model test evaluates R2, SRMR, and Q2, checking whether the study's model is appropriate and may be used to conclude. Several prior research instruments are used to evaluate latent variables, as **Table 1** shows.

**Table 1.** Latent Variable Measurements

Variable	Indicator/Scale	Items	Source
Participative Leadership	1. Consultation 2. Joint decisions 3. Delegation	6	(Q. Wang et al., 2022)
Job stress	General Work Stress Scale (GWSS)	9	(Teleş, 2021)
Motivation	The Multidimensional Employee Motivation Scale (MWMS)	15	(Neves & Coimbra, 2018)
Job enjoyment	1. Feel Motivated 2. Pleasurable	11	(Laurence et al., 2020)
Employee Performance	1. Efficiency of the work 2. Planning the work 3. Creativity and Innovation 4. Making efforts	15	(Tabouli et al., 2016)

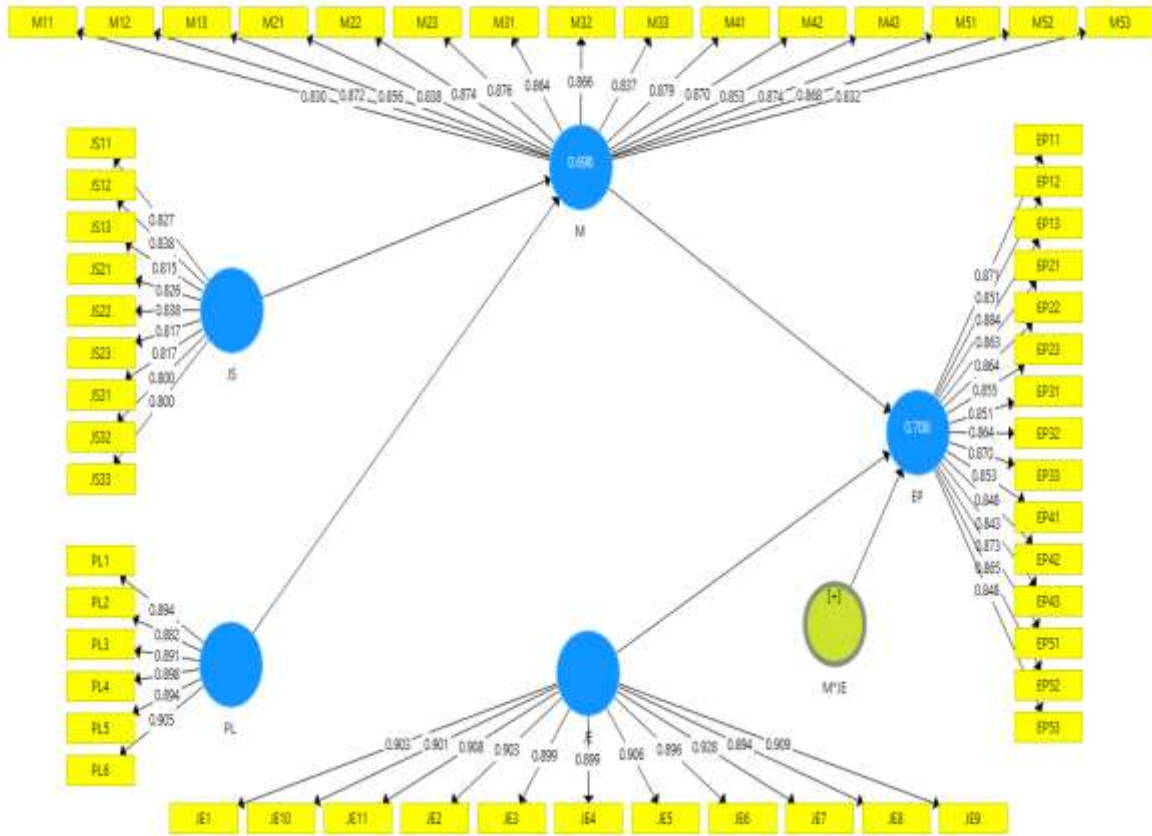
Source: Data processed (2023)

## RESULTS

Based on the results of statistical tests, the results of the convergent and discriminant validity tests are as follows:







**Figure 1.** Full model  
Source: Smartpls output (2023)

**Figure 1** shows that the initial convergent validity test investigates whether or not the loading factor value of each indication is more than 0.700. The data shown in **Figure 1** reveals that every sign that is a part of the variables of performance, motivation, leadership, and work stress has a loading factor value higher than 0.700. It can be deduced from this that all indicators satisfy the requirements and are qualified to proceed to the second convergent validity assessment, particularly examining the average variance extracted (AVE). According to (Hair et al., 2022), the minimum criterion for the AVE value of any acceptable variable is anything more significant than 0.500.

**Table 2.** Validity Test

Variables	AVE	Cross Loading	
		Min	Max
Job stress	0.672	0.843	0.884
Participative leadership	0.799	0.882	0.905
Motivation	0.739	0.832	0.879
Job enjoyment	0.818	0.894	0.928
Employee performance	0.740	0.843	0.884

Source: Data processed (2023)



**Table 2** indicates that the AVE for each variable exceeds 0.500, signifying compliance with the criteria for the convergent validity test, hence permitting progression to the discriminant validity test. The cross-loading values are compared to evaluate the discriminant validity test. Ensure that the value between a variable and its indicator is higher than that of other variables with the same indicator, which ensures that the value between the two variables is more significant.

**Table 2** demonstrates that the cross-loading values for performance, work stress, leadership, and motivation exceed those of other variables regarding their respective indicators. Consequently, the discriminant validity test may be satisfied, allowing for the continuation of the reliability test.

**Table 3.** Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Job stress	0.939	0.949
Participative leadership	0.950	0.960
Motivation	0.975	0.977
Job enjoyment	0.978	0.980
Employee performance	0.975	0.977

Source: Data processed (2023)

**Table 3** shows that it is true that the reliability test includes an examination of the instrument's consistency in measuring latent variables. This evaluation is carried out as part of the test. By the findings of (Hair et al., 2017), an instrument is deemed trustworthy if it satisfies two criteria: a Cronbach alpha value greater than 0.700 and a composite reliability greater than 0.700. Considering the information shown in **Table 3**, it is possible to conclude that the instrument is trustworthy. All variables have Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values over 0.700. The tests for the outside model have been finished, and it can now go on to the next step of the implementation process, which is the test for the internal model.

**Table 4.** Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Employee performance	0.708	0.701
Motivation	0.698	0.694

Source: Data processed (2023)

**Table 4** shows that the coefficient of determination test is the first evaluation performed on the inner model. Exogenous variables, such as job stress and participatory leadership, are responsible for 6.940 per cent and 7.010 per cent of the variation in endogenous variables, such as motivation and performance, respectively, according to **Table 4**. Given that the model has a coefficient of determination that is more than 0.500, which is equivalent to fifty per cent, this indicates that the model is considered strong. Variables that were not investigated in this study impact the remaining factors.



**Table 5. SRMR**

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.045	0.071

Source: Data processed (2023)

**Table 5** shows the second inner model evaluation; a standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) test is carried out. According to (Hair et al., 2017) findings, an efficient model has an SRMR score that is either lower than 0.100 or lower than 0.080. According to **Table 5**, the estimated value of the model, 0.071, is lower than 0.080, which shows that the model fulfils the goodness of fit requirements in the SEM-PLS framework.

**Table 6. Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ )**

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
EP	1950	949.303	0.513
JE	1430	1430	
JS	1170	1170	
M	1950	957.971	0.509
PL	780	780	

Source: Data processed (2023)

**Table 6** shows that as part of the final evaluation of the inner model, a predicted relevance test ( $Q^2$ ) is carried out. If the  $Q^2$  value of a research model is more significant than zero, then the model is regarded to be effective. By the data shown in **Table 6**, the  $Q^2$  value for motivation is 0.509. The performance variable has a  $Q^2$  value of 0.513, which indicates that the model has a significant amount of predictive significance that can be attributed to it. Consequently, it is possible to conclude that the inner model test has fulfilled the essential conditions, enabling the advancement of the hypothesis test.

**Table 7. Hypotheses test**

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values	Decision
JS -> M	-0.621	8.391	0.000	H <sub>1</sub> Accepted
PL -> M	0.293	3.941	0.000	H <sub>2</sub> Accepted
M -> EP	0.748	12.839	0.000	H <sub>3a</sub> Accepted
M*JE -> EP	-0.127	2.101	0.036	H <sub>3b</sub> Accepted
JS -> M -> EP	-0.293	4.655	0.000	H <sub>4</sub> Accepted
PL -> M -> EP	0.138	3.165	0.002	H <sub>5</sub> Accepted

Source: Data processed (2023)

## DISCUSSION

**Job Stress and Motivation.** The statistical analysis findings reveal that job stress negatively influences employees' motivation in the fast-fashion retail industry. The findings of research conducted by (Breugh, 2021) and (Widjaja et al., 2024) suggest that stress negatively influences employee motivation. This is because extreme stress may lead to



physical and mental exhaustion, reducing an individual's overall well-being. Employees may experience a decrease in motivation and engagement and an increase in the likelihood of experiencing emotional weariness and burnout. An individual's physical and emotional well-being can be negatively impacted by chronic stress, which can also increase the likelihood of acquiring heart disease, depression, and anxiety. This is because chronic stress can have a detrimental effect on both aspects of personal health. As a result, businesses are responsible for successfully managing occupational stress by providing employees with social support and sufficient resources while ensuring that the demands of their jobs do not exceed the capabilities of the human workforce.

Consistent with prior studies by (Sari et al., 2021), occupational stress might diminish employee motivation since extreme stress may deplete an individual's energy and morale. It may result in diminished performance, reduced productivity, and lower work satisfaction. Chronic stress may result in physical and emotional exhaustion, impacting an individual's overall health and well-being. Excessive workload, time constraints, and insufficient social support from colleagues or superiors impact employee motivation. Consequently, organisations must recognise these stressors and establish measures to mitigate or manage stress to maintain employee motivation.

The study's findings indicated that job stress adversely affects employee motivation within the retail sector. Consequently, retailers must monitor workers' workplace stress levels and furnish the requisite support and tools to assist them in managing stress and enhancing their motivation.

**Participative Leadership and Motivation.** Participative leadership boosts work happiness, engagement, and organisational commitment in fast-fashion retail stores, motivating employees. Participatory leadership empowers and engages people, increasing motivation and job satisfaction (Chan, 2019). Participatory leadership improves job satisfaction and engagement, which motivates workers (Chan, 2019). Participatory leadership increases business commitment, which boosts employee engagement and performance (Ndoen & Supartha, 2019).

Participative leadership increases organisational commitment, which boosts employee motivation and work satisfaction (Kahpi et al., 2020). It also promotes cooperation, consultation, support, growth, and recognition, which motivates employees (Usman et al., 2021). Thus, participatory leadership improves organisational performance by increasing employee happiness and motivation (Huang et al., 2021).

(Çetin & Aşkun, 2018) It was found that participative leadership impacts employee engagement, which is a crucial factor in determining the level of intrinsic motivation. This type of leadership increases the degree to which employees identify with the organisation, motivating them to work more effectively (Elsetouhi et al., 2022). Participative leadership generates a working environment that is both supportive and appreciative, therefore inspiring individuals to perform to the best of their abilities (Çetin & Aşkun, 2018).

Therefore, participative leadership significantly impacts employees' motivation in fast-fashion retail enterprises. It encourages employee involvement, increases job satisfaction, and strengthens organisational commitment.

**Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Productivity.** The data showed that motivation significantly affects employee performance. Motivated employees work more, perform better, and are more loyal. Retail managers should consider these factors to determine employee motivation and performance. They may improve employee communication, promote fair and transparent management decisions, and create a



welcoming workplace. Managers must also make sure workers feel valued and encouraged to boost motivation.

Communication, management decisions, leadership style, and a sense of belonging may impact retail employee work satisfaction (Machova et al., 2022). Employees also like job stability and work-life balance. However, most employees find the work tempo too fast, and the company fails to protect their mental health. Employee motivation and performance may suffer.

Motivated employees exhibit increased productivity, commitment, and engagement, enhancing job satisfaction and superior overall performance. Motivation may be affected by several aspects, including work design, leadership style, salary, recognition, and possibilities for growth and development. Consequently, firms must comprehend the factors that drive employee motivation and cultivate a work atmosphere that fosters motivation to enhance employee performance (Elbaz et al., 2018).

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are the two types that (Wijayadne & Widjaja, 2022) identified as being present in behaviour. Several factors influence the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of employees. These factors include the working environment, how superiors treat employees, relationships with co-workers, autonomy in decision-making, acknowledgement of tasks performed, and a sense of accomplishment. These elements can enhance employee engagement and performance (Mardanov, 2020). It is crucial to acknowledge that individuals possess varying motives. Consequently, managers must comprehend the specific motivations of each employee and cultivate a work atmosphere that fosters such drive.

Job satisfaction is crucial to nurse recruitment and retention. Job pleasure, connected to job satisfaction, increases employee retention and engagement (C. Chen et al., 2023). The study emphasises the relevance of mindfulness in increasing job satisfaction and working conditions and how employee well-being and contentment improve performance.

Low self-efficacy increases the likelihood of giving up and failing (Burnette et al., 2020). Work happiness and self-efficacy impact employee performance through job enjoyment. Job satisfaction may affect intrinsic motivation and performance (Miao et al., 2020; Riyanto et al., 2021). This study shows that work satisfaction is linked to intrinsic motivation and employee performance, a measure of employment pleasure.

According to (Miao et al., 2020) research, intrinsic motivation may also affect occupational autonomy and performance. From this, intrinsic motivation, closely associated with job satisfaction, can significantly impact job autonomy and employee performance.

The moderating impact of job happiness is significant in the fast-fashion retail industry, where employees' motivation and performance are paramount. Employees who enjoy their work are more likely to demonstrate motivation and engagement, ultimately leading to higher job satisfaction and, consequently, superior performance.

**Job Stress, Motivation, and Employee Performance.** The findings demonstrated that the level of motivation of workers has a significant impact on both job stress and performance. (Van den Broeck et al., 2021) Shows that employee motivation affects performance, particularly in the context of the workplace and disciplinary circumstances. (Bunjak et al., 2023) It was found that employee motivation is a mediator between workplace stress and performance in fast-fashion retail, characterised by high levels of job pressure and performance expectations. The findings of research by (Hamaloan et al., 2021) indicate that employee motivation significantly impacts work discipline and performance.



Elevated employee motivation can mitigate the adverse effects of occupational stress on performance (Elrehail et al., 2021). Employees experiencing job stress feel worried, irritated, and lacking in confidence. This will diminish their enthusiasm for work and lead them to evade obligations (Ghani et al., 2022). Employees in fast-fashion retail establishments typically operate in a rapid, dynamic setting and must exert considerable effort to achieve elevated sales objectives (Moorhouse, 2020). Consequently, elevated employee motivation can assist individuals in managing job-related stress and enhance their willingness to perform, even in high-pressure situations (X. Xu et al., 2021).

The research establishes that employee motivation is a vital mediator between job stress and employee performance within the fast-fashion retail industry. Motivation directly impacts employee performance and alleviates the adverse consequences of job stress. Motivation is crucial for sustaining performance in high-pressure settings, such as fast-fashion retail, where employees encounter substantial demands and stringent deadlines. High stress among employees frequently results in worry, irritation, and reduced confidence, thus diminishing their motivation to engage in their responsibilities.

Nonetheless, elevated motivation can mitigate these adverse consequences, resulting in enhanced work discipline and performance. This indicates that interventions designed to augment employee motivation, including supportive leadership, stress management initiatives, and a constructive work environment, are essential for sustaining elevated performance levels. By concentrating on these domains, firms may enhance employee support, mitigate the detrimental effects of workplace stress, and maintain sustained productivity and engagement in demanding work environments.

**Participative Leadership, Motivation, and Employee Performance.** The findings indicated that employee motivation substantially influences the correlation between participatory leadership and employee performance. Participative leadership cultivates employee empowerment and engagement, increasing motivation and job satisfaction (Chan, 2019). Furthermore, according to (Huang et al., 2021), participative leadership positively correlates with the level of work engagement and job satisfaction experienced by employees, which are crucial components of compelling motivation. Additionally, implementing participative leadership has increased company commitment, impacting staff engagement and performance (Usman et al., 2021). By increasing organisational commitment, which is directly connected with employee motivation and work satisfaction (Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020), participatory leadership has a beneficial impact on employee motivation due to its ability to promote organisational commitment.

Participatory leadership prioritises cooperation, consultation, support, growth, and recognition, essential for employee engagement (Huang et al., 2021; Silla et al., 2020). Fast-fashion store managers can improve staff performance, job stress, and productivity by using participatory leadership methods that engage employees (Usman et al., 2021). Democratic and transformative leadership improves employee happiness and performance (Abdullahi et al., 2020). Participative leadership promotes employee engagement, job happiness, and organisational commitment in fast-fashion retail stores, motivating employees.

## CONCLUSION

Several significant discoveries may be derived from the study data. Initially, it was found that stress brought on by one's job negatively impacts employees' motivation, indicating a direct association between stress and motivation levels. Management needs to



emphasise the well-being of their employees and use stress management strategies to maintain high levels of motivation in the dynamic and demanding fast-fashion retail industry.

Moreover, participatory leadership had a substantial beneficial impact on employee motivation. This leadership approach fosters employee involvement and accountability, enhancing motivation and work satisfaction. Motivation emerged as a fundamental aspect affecting employee performance. Motivated personnel are generally more productive, dedicated, and deeply involved, enhancing overall performance.

Job satisfaction moderated the motivation-performance connection. Job satisfaction motivates and energises workers, improving performance. Job stress and employee performance depend on motivation. Motivation helps employees manage stress and perform at their best. Motivation links participatory leadership to employee success. Participative leadership approaches that motivate people can boost performance.

This study, conducted within the context of the fast-fashion retail business, presents a theoretical addition to investigating the link between job stress, employee motivation, and performance. In addition to providing suggestions for businesses on reducing stress and improving employee performance, this study's findings offer insights into employee motivation and performance.

This research pertains to the retail sector. A further comprehensive study is required for the results to apply to a broader sector. Furthermore, this study has not examined indirect effects, providing a basis for hypothesis formulation in further research. Research variables may be broadened, for instance, by including psychological distress factors, which have been notably underrepresented in prior studies.

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