

## CAN SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT ENHANCE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE THROUGH SATISFACTION?

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### ABSTRAK

Kinerja karyawan merupakan faktor penting dalam menjaga daya saing perusahaan, namun banyak organisasi belum memahami mekanisme psikologis yang menghubungkan kepemimpinan dan pemberdayaan terhadap kinerja. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan spiritual dan pemberdayaan karyawan terhadap kinerja melalui kepuasan kerja sebagai variabel mediasi dengan menggunakan pendekatan *Job Demands–Resources* (JD-R) *Theory*. Kedua variabel utama diposisikan sebagai job resources yang mendorong proses motivasional melalui kepuasan kerja. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan penyebaran kuesioner tertutup kepada 119 responden dari total 703 karyawan PT X, perusahaan manufaktur di Kabupaten Bandung. Pengambilan sampel dilakukan secara *proportionate stratified random sampling* dan data dianalisis menggunakan *Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) melalui SmartPLS 4. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan spiritual dan pemberdayaan karyawan berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja, namun tidak berpengaruh langsung terhadap kinerja. Kepuasan kerja berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap kinerja karyawan dan memediasi secara penuh hubungan antara kepemimpinan spiritual serta pemberdayaan dengan kinerja. Temuan ini memperluas penerapan *JD-R Theory* dengan menempatkan kepemimpinan spiritual dan pemberdayaan sebagai value-based job resources yang membangun kepuasan kerja sebagai jalur motivasional menuju kinerja optimal. Secara operasional, hasil penelitian menegaskan pentingnya penguatan budaya kepemimpinan berbasis nilai dan sistem pemberdayaan yang berorientasi pada kesejahteraan psikologis karyawan dalam sektor manufaktur.

**Kata Kunci:** Kepemimpinan Spiritual; Pemberdayaan Karyawan; Kepuasan Kerja; Kinerja Karyawan; Teori JD-R.

### ABSTRACT

*Employee performance constitutes a critical determinant of organizational competitiveness; nonetheless, many firms continue to overlook the underlying psychological mechanisms that connect leadership and empowerment to performance outcomes. This study investigates the effects of spiritual leadership and employee empowerment on employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating construct, within the theoretical framework of the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory. Both spiritual leadership and empowerment are conceptualized as value-based job resources that activate motivational processes through enhanced job satisfaction. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected via a structured, closed-ended questionnaire administered to 119 respondents drawn from a population of 703 employees at PT X, a manufacturing enterprise located in Bandung Regency. Sampling was executed using a proportionate stratified random approach, and data were analyzed through Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS–SEM) using SmartPLS 4. The results demonstrate that spiritual leadership and employee empowerment exert significant positive influences on job satisfaction, though their direct effects on performance are not statistically significant. Job satisfaction, however, positively and significantly impacts performance and functions as a full mediator between leadership, empowerment, and performance. The findings advance the JD–R Theory by framing spiritual leadership and empowerment as value-infused resources that foster motivational pathways culminating in optimal performance. Practically, the study underscores the necessity of cultivating a values-driven leadership ethos and empowerment systems designed to enhance employees' psychological well-being and sustainable performance in the manufacturing context.*

**Keywords:** *Spiritual Leadership; Employee Empowerment; Job Satisfaction; Employee Performance; JD-R Theory.*

### INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a company's main asset because employee performance contributes directly to the achievement of organizational goals. In Indonesia, the manufacturing sector plays an important role in driving economic growth, but its performance showed fluctuations in early 2025 (Bank Indonesia, 2025; Kemenperin, 2025; S&P Global, 2025). Similarly, West Java and Bandung Regency experienced a decline in the manufacturing sector's GRDP since the end of 2024 (BPS, 2025). This means that the manufacturing sector's performance still faces stability challenges, making it important to take a closer look at the garment sub-sector as one of the main drivers of the regional economy.

The garment sub-sector contributes significantly to national employment and exports (Kemenperin, 2025; UGM, 2024). Bandung Regency is one of the garment industry bases with large companies, one of which is PT X, which has a major share (DISPEDAGRIN, 2025). As a cut & sew company, PT X relies on the consistency

and skills of its employees to achieve optimal performance through production targets, attendance, and turnover indicators. However, at PT X, although attendance and turnover rates are relatively good, production targets have not been consistently met (Adekiya, 2023; Arif & Sarwoto, 2023; Kocakulâh et al., 2018). This condition confirms that even though attendance and turnover are maintained, the overall performance of employees at PT X is still not optimal, so it is necessary to review the individual, psychological, and organizational factors that can influence it (Gibson et al., 2012), such as leadership, empowerment, and job satisfaction.

Previous studies have shown mixed results. Some studies found that spiritual leadership and employee empowerment directly affect performance (Alfain et al., 2025; Hidayah et al., 2025), while other studies confirm that this effect is not significant without the presence of mediating variables (Dealisa & Widodo, 2024; Norianggono et al., 2023). The inconsistency of these findings indicates a research gap that needs to be clarified, especially in the context of labor-intensive industries such as garment manufacturing. Job satisfaction is seen as a potential mediating variable because it can increase employee loyalty, motivation, and productivity (Robbins & Judge, 2023; Wazdi et al., 2024). In line with the JD-R theory perspective, work flexibility and work-life balance are forms of job resources that support employees' psychological well-being and strengthen the motivational process in increasing job satisfaction (Sidik et al., 2024). However, research on the role of job satisfaction in mediating spiritual leadership and empowerment on employee performance in the garment industry is still limited.

Although various studies have examined the influence of spiritual leadership and employee empowerment on performance, empirical results still show inconsistencies, especially regarding the role of psychological factors that bridge this relationship. Most previous studies have focused on the service and education sectors, while studies on labor-intensive industries such as garment manufacturing are still very limited. This gap highlights the need for research that integrates the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory perspective with a value-based approach in the context of manufacturing. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of spiritual leadership and employee empowerment on performance through job satisfaction as a mediating variable at PT X in Bandung Regency. Theoretically, this study contributes to expanding the application of JD-R Theory by positioning spiritual leadership and empowerment as value-based job resources that activate motivational processes through job satisfaction. Meanwhile, in practical terms, the results of this study are expected to form the basis for the development of human resource management policies that emphasize the importance of a value-based leadership culture and an empowerment system oriented towards the psychological well-being of employees in order to improve sustainable performance in the manufacturing sector.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a quantitative method with a causality design (Sugiyono, 2019) to examine the effect of spiritual leadership, employee empowerment, and job satisfaction on employee performance. The research subjects were employees of PT X, a manufacturing company in Bandung Regency. From a population of 703 employees, 119 respondents were obtained as samples using G\*Power 3.1.9.7 software with probability sampling techniques, namely proportionate stratified random sampling so that each department was represented (Azwar, 2012).

Data was collected through a closed questionnaire (Google Forms) with instruments including: spiritual leadership adapted from Fry (2008) 7 items; employee empowerment from Robbins et al. (2021) 10 items; job satisfaction using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) from Weiss et al. (1967) 20 items; and employee performance from Koopmans (2014) 14 items, all using a five-point Likert scale. The data obtained were analyzed through descriptive analysis and Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) statistical analysis using SmartPLS 4 software because it can handle complex models, data with different scales, and does not require normality (Hair et al., 2021).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Respondent Characteristics***

There were 119 respondents in this study, all of whom were employees of PT X. Most of the respondents were male and aged between 31 and 40 years old. The majority of respondents had a high school education or equivalent, with 1 to 15 years of work experience. Most respondents held operator positions in the production department, reflecting the typical workforce conditions in the labor-intensive garment industry.

### ***Descriptive Analysis***

**Table 1. Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis for Each Variable**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Employee Performance	119	11	55	44	6
Spiritual Leadership	119	6	30	26	4
Employee Empowerment	119	8	40	32	5
Job Satisfaction	119	15	75	57	10

Source: Results of the 2025 Research Questionnaire

Table 1 shows that the average scores for all research variables are in the moderate category and indicate that respondents rate spiritual leadership, employee empowerment, job satisfaction, and employee performance at PT X as generally quite good, although there are variations in perception among respondents as seen from the standard deviation values for each variable.

**PLS-SEM Analysis**

**Validity and Reliability Test**

**Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test Results**

Variable	Loading Factor (≥0.7)	AVE (≥0.5)	CR (≥0.7)	Cronbach's Alpha (≥0.7)
Employee Empowerment	0.70–0.82	0.55	0.87	0.85
Employee Performance	0.73–0.85	0.62	0.91	0.89
Job Satisfaction	0.71–0.83	0.60	0.90	0.88
Spiritual Leadership	0.72–0.84	0.58	0.88	0.86

Source: Researcher's data analysis using SmartPLS 4

Based on Table 2, all indicators have a loading factor above 0.7, AVE above 0.5, and composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7. This shows that the research instrument meets the requirements for convergent validity and reliability.

**Model Fit Evaluation**

**Table 3. Model Fit Test Results**

	Estimated Model	Note
GoF	0.552	Fit
Q <sup>2</sup> Predictive Relevance	Q <sup>2</sup> Employee Performance = 0.281 > 0 Q <sup>2</sup> Job Satisfaction = 0.617 > 0	Fit

Source: Researcher's data analysis using SmartPLS 4

The model fit evaluation results show that the Goodness of Fit (GoF) value is in the large category, indicating that this research model has strong suitability. In addition, the Q<sup>2</sup> value of 0.281 for the employee performance variable indicates moderate predictive ability, while the Q<sup>2</sup> value of 0.617 for the job satisfaction variable indicates strong predictive ability. Thus, this research model can be considered valid because it is able to explain the relationship between latent variables and has relevant predictive power.

**Structural Model Evaluation**

**Multicollinearity and R-Square Tests (R<sup>2</sup>)**

The multicollinearity test results show that all variables have a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of < 5. Thus, this research model is free from multicollinearity issues and is feasible for use in further testing. Meanwhile, the measurement of the R-Square shows that the job satisfaction variable has a value of 0.636, which is classified as moderate, while the employee performance variable has a value of 0.481, which is classified as weak to moderate. These results indicate that the research model is quite capable of explaining the variation in job satisfaction, while employee performance is still influenced by other factors outside the model.

**Effect Size Test (f<sup>2</sup>)**

**Table 4. Effect Size Test Results (f<sup>2</sup>)**

Variable	Employee Empowerment	Employee Performance	Job Satisfaction	Spiritual Leadership
Employee Empowerment		0.024	0.614	
Employee Performance				
Job Satisfaction		0.296		
Spiritual Leadership		0.023	0.312	

Source: Results of researcher data processing with SmartPLS 4

The f<sup>2</sup> test shows that the influence of spiritual leadership and employee empowerment on job satisfaction is in the moderate to large category, while the direct influence of both on employee performance is relatively small. Meanwhile, job satisfaction has a large influence on employee performance, thus reinforcing its role as the most dominant variable in the research model.

**Hypothesis Testing**

Based on the hypothesis testing results in Table 5, it is known that spiritual leadership and employee empowerment do not have a significant direct effect on employee performance. However, both have a significant

positive effect on job satisfaction, which in turn has a significant positive effect on employee performance. In addition, the analysis results show that job satisfaction is able to fully mediate the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee empowerment with employee performance.

**Table 5. Path Coefficient Bootstrapping Direct & Indirect Effect Results**

<b>Path</b>	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample Mean (M)</b>	<b>Std. Deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T Statistics ( O/STDEV)</b>	<b>P Values</b>	<b>Note</b>
EE -> EP	0.163	0.163	0.107	1.522	0.128	Not Proven
EE -> JS	0.539	0.541	0.066	8.170	0.000	Proven
JS -> EP	0.651	0.655	0.096	6.797	0.000	Proven
SL -> EP	-0.144	-0.146	0.117	1.226	0.220	Not Proven
SL -> JS	0.384	0.386	0.068	5.607	0.000	Proven
SL -> JS -> EP	0.250	0.252	0.055	4.577	0.000	Proven
EE -> JS -> EP	0.351	0.355	0.071	4.917	0.000	Proven

*Source: Researcher's data processing results with SmartPLS 4*

### **Discussion**

The results of this study indicate that spiritual leadership and employee empowerment do not directly affect performance. This condition confirms that the presence of leaders with spiritual values and empowerment through delegation of authority is not sufficient to encourage performance improvement if it is not accompanied by job satisfaction. This is in line with the Job Demands-Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) which explains that job resources can only improve performance when they generate intrinsic motivation in employees. In the context of this study, job satisfaction acts as a motivational mechanism that bridges the influence of leadership and empowerment on performance.

These results are in line with the research of Rahayu et al. (2020), Norianggono et al. (2023), Alawiyah et al. (2024), and Budiaman et al. (2025) which emphasize the role of spiritual value-based leadership and participatory empowerment in creating job satisfaction. Leadership that presents a meaningful vision, trust, and compassion, as well as empowerment through autonomy and employee involvement, has been proven to increase job satisfaction, which ultimately drives performance. However, the results of this study differ from the findings of Hidayah et al. (2025) and Rizki et al. (2024) regarding the direct influence of spiritual leadership on performance.

This difference is likely influenced by the labor-intensive nature of the garment industry, where job satisfaction is a key differentiating factor in driving employee performance. In addition, the effectiveness of leadership and empowerment can also be influenced by the prevailing organizational culture. In this regard, Hanifah et al. (2021) emphasizes that organizational culture plays a role in strengthening the relationship between leadership, empowerment, and performance through the creation of a supportive and valuable work environment.

Overall, this study supports the hypothesis that spiritual leadership and employee empowerment influence employee performance through job satisfaction. Thus, corporate strategies to improve performance should emphasize the creation of a work climate that enhances employee satisfaction, such as the development of spiritual value-based leadership and participatory empowerment practices.

### **CONCLUSION**

In this study, spiritual leadership and employee empowerment did not have a direct effect on performance, but both had a significant effect on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was then found to have a significant effect on performance and to be a full mediator in this relationship. Thus, job satisfaction is a key factor that bridges the influence of spiritual leadership and empowerment on employee performance. These findings confirm that PT X management needs to focus its efforts on improving performance by creating more satisfying working conditions. This can be achieved through leadership that emphasizes spiritual values such as meaningful vision, trust, and compassion, as well as through empowerment practices such as involving employees in decision-making, granting autonomy, and entrusting them with job responsibilities. With these steps, employee motivation and productivity can increase, enabling the company to consistently achieve its production targets.

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