Tab 1

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

IUBA6005 Leading and Developing People

ASSIGNMENT:

Group Task: A Comparative Case Study of The Leadership of People within Padini and Uniqlo

VIDEO PRESENTATION LINK:

https://canva.link/beokqrs328uqvug

No.	Group Members	Student ID
1.	Ahmad Zuhairy bin Mohamed	2321902
2.	Sheharyaar Ibadullah Khan bin Ahmad Kasyif Khan	2321906
3.	Ryan Parathan	2321930
4.	Muhammad Ammar Izzudin bin Azhar	2321923
5.	Kausyigan A/L Parusuraman	24020039

MODULE LECTURER:

Emma Roberts

TABLE OF CONTENT

1.0 Introduction and Key Concepts **3**
1.1 Introduction 3
1.2 Key Concepts 4
1.2.1 Trait Theory 4
1.2.2 People vs Task approach 5
1.2.3 Taylorism vs Human Relations 6
2.0 Case Study Overview: Why Padini and Uniqlo? **6**
2.1 Padini 6
2.2 Uniqlo 7
2.3 Selection rationale 7
3.0 People Strategies **8**
3.1 Recruitment and Talent Management 8
3.2 Training and Development 12
3.3 Equality and Diversity 12
3.4 Performance Management and Pay 14
4.0 Analysis & Conclusions **15**
4.1 Analysis 15
4.1.1 Padini Holdings Berhad 15
4.1.2 Uniqlo 16
4.1.3 Comparative Analysis 17
4.2 Conclusion 17
5.0 References **18**

1.0 Introduction and Key Concepts

1.1 Introduction

This report looks at and contrasts the strategies of two fashion retailers with contrasting ownership models and growth paths: Padini Holdings Bhd, a family owned retailer based in Malaysia, and Uniqlo, the Japanese brand of Fast Retailing Co. which has deliberately sought to globalise its managerial talent. In the same wider industry and under similar pressure (cost inflation. Labour availability, changing consumer spending, the two organisations have taken very different tack with people management and development. This report will look at congruence of each organisation's design and implementation of people strategies to the context of its business in relation to the distinction between best-fit and best-practise approaches; and the extent to which their people strategies are effective in addressing the needs of the organisation going forward as well as the needs of the organisation in the present. The report first explores the application of Padini's approach, then looks at Uniqlo, and finally compares the effectiveness and sustainability of both

Organisational Context and Competitive Environment

Padini Holdings Bhd

Padini is a Malaysian-based apparel and footwear conglomerate, which is listed on the Bursa Malaysia, with its biggest business operations in Malaysia. The sole shareholder does not change and remains Yong Pang Chuan Holdings Sdn Bhd, which is associated with the company. It has about 34.7% of the company as its founder (MIDF Research, 2024. The group employs more than 140 outlets across Malaysia, its biggest market, and a small number of stores in its other three markets. The overseas network includes six stores in Cambodia and 19 markets, such as Brunei, which are franchised. The Edge Malaysia (2024) reports that Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar are among the UAE countries. It is the core brand of its (Padini,Vincci, Seed). Kenanga Research (2026) identified the mid income segment of Malaysian consumers as the M40 group as the target group. In recent results the core net profit of the first half of FY2026 decreased by 18% compared to the previous year due to an increase in cost. Operating expenses like increased

service tax on rent charges and declining same-store sales. The growth came despite a lackluster consumer sentiment (Kenanga Research, 2026. The wider Malaysian retail post-pandemic labor shortages, which are also well documented in the sector and have been caused by the flight of the staff from the sector. Workers from overseas during the lockdowns and the lack of promotion opportunities in frontline sales positions. (Kumar, 2025)

1.2 Key Concepts

1.2.1 Trait Theory

According to Trait Theory, leadership and performance can be linked to enduring attributes (such as motivation, integrity, adaptability). In practice, companies tend to 'profile' its employees by picking and encouraging the desirable characteristics of the company's business model.

Uniqlo

It is also closely linked to a culture where execution discipline, continuous improvement and learning orientation are integral parts of the product philosophy "LifeWear" that is embodied in the staff. Uniqlo's approach to capability is to train, establish routines and set new targets for performance. Can be read as a reinforcement of self-motivation, of responsibility and of customer mindedness

They tend to have the same frontline behaviours when they operate which may indirectly support the Trait Theory Idea. employ and train individuals with the proper behavioural tendencies.

Padini

The context of the Malaysian/Southeast Asian apparel is different from the UK context, in terms of expectations from customers, store formats and competitive dynamics, where Padini is operating

The approach of the people at Padini is more retail-oriented than, say, the other two. Store performance, retail store leadership execution and local merchandising knowledge are all areas where retail is a big influence on Padini's approach. This can also relate to Trait Theory, focusing on any traits which are important to retail - such as service orientation, commercial awareness, and working in a fast-changing retail environment.

1.2.2 People vs Task approach

This concept differs from task approaches (organisations focus on roles, procedures and output controls; HR role is to achieve the task) and people approaches (organisations focus on development, motivation, empowerment and creating commitment; HR role is to build capability and engagement).

Uniqlo

This is the people approach, with Uniqlo investing in structured training, in getting its brand philosophy out to everyone (Lifewear), and in establishing a management system designed to build the capability and autonomy of the operational structure within the standards

Padini

The retail activities are often task-oriented, whereas the extent to which it operates and is localized means it needs to build store level capability (people orientation), particularly in terms of leadership development for store teams, which Padini seems to show some mixed messages on.

1.2.3 Taylorism vs Human Relations

Taylorism (Scientific Management): Standardisation, time and motion efficiency, control of the job by management, measurable output and Human Relations approach: employee satisfaction, social needs, participation, team working and leadership that enhances motivation

Uniqlo

Uniqlo has a focus on standardisation and process discipline (some form of Taylorism), but they also have a focus on people practises (training and developing their internal resources) which are elements that represent a balance between standardisation and human motivation.

Brand culture/human relations, training and service expectations of Uniqlo in store suggest some degree in Taylorism.

Padini

Retail is a process business (so there is Tayloristic Control: visual merchandising, store execution). Retail staffing is a very social job, and employee capability and engagement matter,

so Padini's people strategy is likely to involve Human Relations, such as leadership styles, performance management, and training for customer service (as demonstrated in his employment disclosures and corporate reporting).

2.0 Case Study Overview: Why Padini and Uniqlo?

2.1 Padini

Padini is a Malaysian retail brand with a regional retail presence. Padini Holdings Berhad is a Malaysian clothing and retail firm with a variety of brands and retail locations across the country. Its operating environment is characterized by high rivalry among midmarket apparel retailers, volatility in consumer purchasing, as well as the need for balancing brand differentiation and operational expense control. Midmarket apparel frequently competes based on price, quality perception, promotions, and store availability. Local clientele and customer base preferences as well as the rapid response to seasonal demand is often vital. As a result of this, Padini symbolizes a corporation in which retail execution, local market nuance, as well as labor/store management intersect strongly.

2.2 Uniqlo

Uniqlo is a Global "LifeWear" model with controlled processes because the company (owned by Fast Retailing) operates globally. Its competitive environment is distinguished by a greater emphasis on product fundamental categories, disciplined supply chain management, and rapid restock adaptability, strong brand consistency across markets, scalability via franchising/controlled retail formats, as well as robust store training systems. As a result, Uniqlo was chosen for this assignment as a comparison to Padini due to Uniqlo's personnel and operations that are commonly described as deeply integrated (in corporate materials and reliable publications)—training, retail standards, as well as operational processes that promote consistent customer experience worldwide.

2.3 Selection rationale

Padini offers a regional, brandportfolio retail case with local market complexity.

Uniqlo offers a globally standardized operational case with deep capability-building.

Comparing them shows how “people strategy” manifests under different competitive pressures, scale requirements, and corporate cultures. Furthermore, the two companies were also chosen for comparison because they give a useful contrast without being wholly unrelated situations. Both apparel companies, Padini, and Uniqlo, work in the same wide fashion-retail industry and rely largely on frontline personnel to provide products, customer service, and brand experiences. As a result, the comparison studied here might reveal both common people-management needs as well as disparities in strategy emphasis. For example, both firms demand employees who can provide excellent customer experiences and uphold operational standards, but the capabilities required to achieve these goals may differ according to their organizational structures, geographic reach, and corporate cultures.

3.0 People Strategies

3.1 Recruitment and Talent Management

Uniqlo

In terms of job advertisement, Uniqlo employs online platforms to advertise available job positions in their company. For jobs posted online, assumed to follow standard procedure of hiring. However, in acquiring special talents, they also offer some special programs in order to recognise talents with qualities that are distinguished from the others. Uniqlo offers special programs such as Internship program (coming soon), retail associate program, management program and global management program to attract talents across various levels of bureaucracy. These programs are available on their website. They also provide the processes of hiring for each program clearly, as well as the potential career paths that the selected candidates can pursue after completing the program with Uniqlo.

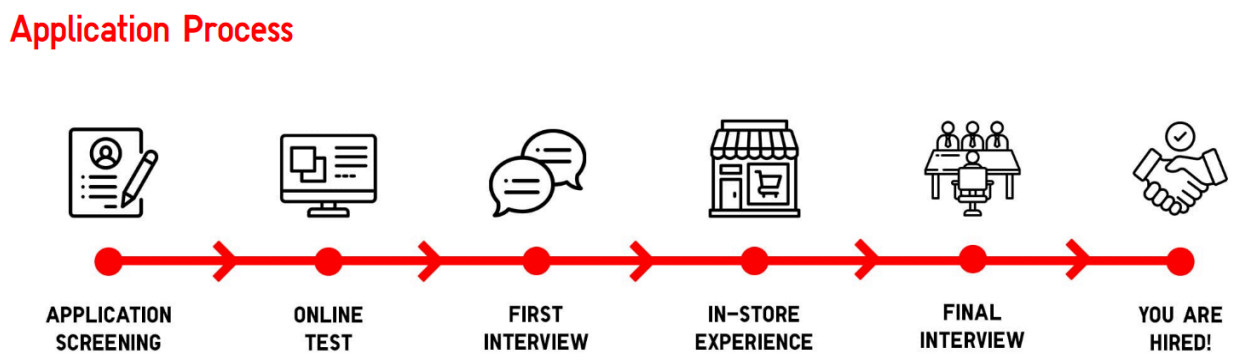

Diagram 3.1.1 shows an example Uniqlo's hiring process for Management Candidate Program.

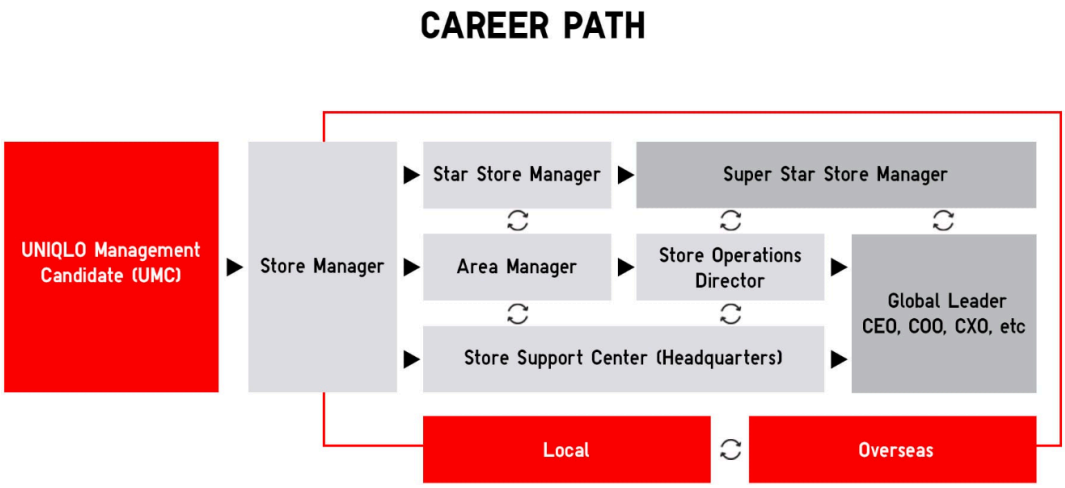

Diagram 3.1.2 shows potential career paths that the selected candidates can pursue in the future.

It is also evident that Uniqlo fosters growth for the employees of their company. Strong performers are challenged, evaluated holistically, then repositioned to bring out the best out of themselves. Dynamic global selection and rotation are used to attract talents and encourage career growth. Not to mention, the special programs that they offer usually have a high number of applicants from all around the world. Since Uniqlo is a global brand, they must ensure that their employee has what it takes to be part of them.

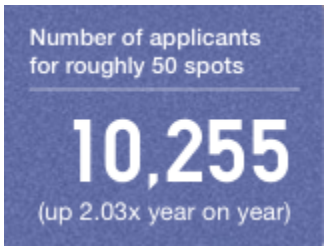

Diagram 3.1.3 shows the number of applicants competing for a very limited spot for their Global Management Associate Program.

From this, we can say that Uniqlo employs strategic and creative ways to attract talents globally by offering multiple programs across different levels. Uniqlo offers clear career paths

for talented employees, but the competition is intense since it is a global company. Therefore, their employment and talent acquisition is global-oriented recruitment, a very competitive environment for talent development.

Padini

Padini's recruitment depends on advertising job vacancies through online platforms such as JobStreet and LinkedIn. We assume that it follows the standard procedure of hiring such as online screenings and interviews, but might differ for designated positions such as senior management roles. This is because companies usually employ a specific strategy in hiring such as a tailored interview to hire such positions. From their annual report, it is also evident that 100% of their hires are from the locals as their effort to empower local talents. For promotions or transfers, they prioritise internal recruitment. This is done in order to reward their loyal employees that have served their company. Lastly, offer financial support in the form of sponsorship for studying and training purposes across various levels of management.

Sponsorships for work related study/ training

Management Level	Up to RM10,000 per annum without bond
Executive Level	Up to RM5,000 per annum without bond
Non-Executive Level	Up to RM2,500 per annum without bond

Diagram 3.1.4 shows the sponsorship provided by Padini to its employees.

Their support for internal career development is tremendous, but they lack the quality of attracting unique talents. This could be caused by their own identity, which is different from Uniqlo. While Uniqlo is a global company, Padini's primary focus is only in the Southeast Asia and Middle-Eastern markets. Therefore, there is less need for Padini to employ programs like Uniqlo does.

Diagram 3.1.5 shows Padini's market focus in the world.

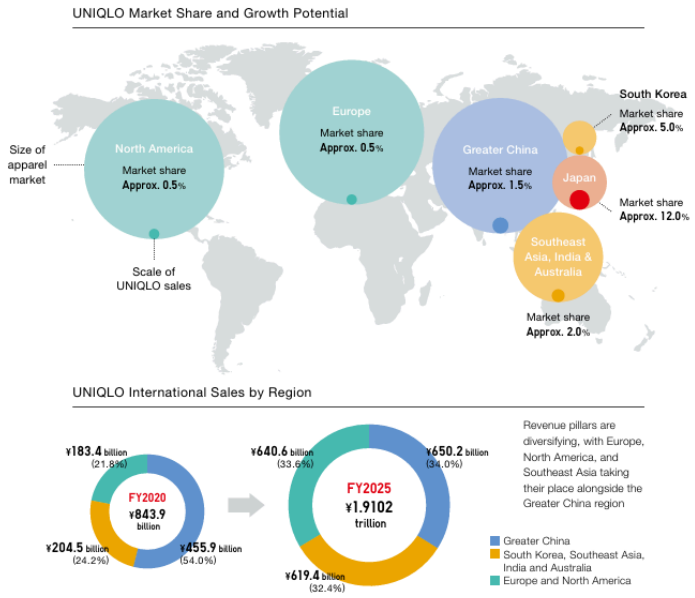

Diagram 3.1.6 shows the global market share of Uniqlo.

3.2 Training and Development

Uniqlo

Uniqlo adopts a more structured and development-oriented approach to employee training. Uniqlo's approach includes developing employees' capabilities in areas such as store management, leadership, customer service, operational management and continuous improvement.

Padini

Padini's training and development approach is primarily focused on developing the practical skills required for employees to perform effectively within the fashion retail environment. Training is particularly relevant to product knowledge, customer service, sales techniques, store operations and day-to-day retail activities. From a people-management perspective, Padini's approach can be viewed as relatively operational and performance-oriented. As of their 2025 Annual Report, they have allocated RM 383,000 for their training programs alone.

3.3 Equality and Diversity

Uniqlo

In terms of equality, women empowerment is an important part for Uniqlo. Majority hirings are female including 45.5% ratio in managers and 53.1% fresh graduate hirings are female. This shows that Uniqlo is committed to reducing the gap between genders in their hiring. They have also provided women with lots of protection in their policies which includes menstrual, maternity and pregnancy. Women that face severe menstrual symptoms are provided with leave if it disrupts their work. They also have abundant maternity benefits; pregnancy disorder leave, checkups, working hour reduction (while pregnant and within one year of giving birth), and maternity allowance during leave.They also provide provision for childcare in terms of working hours and subsidy for babysitting.

Diversity hiring is also part of Uniqlo’s concern. This is reflected through their recent hirings which includes hiring employees that are categorised as disabled. According to their 2025 Annual Report, they have hired 1700 employees that are categorised as disabled. This shows that Uniqlo is committed to reducing the prejudice of hiring the disabled as part of the workforce.

Lastly, they also have provision for the LGBTQ+ community in their policy. As a group that receives a lot of backlash for being who they are, the LGBTQ+ group is often disregarded from a lot of companies' policies. However, Uniqlo is different; Uniqlo allows same-sex partners to receive company benefits such as condolence leave, which is done by registration of their partnership in the company. As a global company, Uniqlo deems this policy as one of their priority policies since many countries today have recognised the importance of rectifying the LGBTQ+ community.

Padini

In terms of women empowerment, Majority Padini staff are women. Representation of women in the company's decision (30% Board representation) and strong female representation at management level (59.65% as of 2025). This shows Padini's commitment to reduce the gaps between the genders in all levels of employment including the senior management roles. In terms of women's rights, Padini's policies revolve around maternity in their policies. Padini provides a nursing room, flexible lactation breaks and maternity parking for new mums. This is done to ensure their female employees who have recently given birth to continue their work with ease.

In terms of inclusive hiring Padini has made several efforts. They have hired marginalized groups such as the disabled people (six last financial year). They also have worked with the Department for the Development of Persons with Disabilities ("DDPWDs") to work on the hiring program. This shows that they are also committed to ensuring that the marginalized group is not forgotten in the workforce.

3.4 Performance Management and Pay

Uniqlo

As mentioned above, their strong performers are challenged by taking up more difficult tasks, which includes greater responsibilities. Uniqlo highly encourages their employees to participate in meetings between the management and their staff. Uniqlo has held lots of management-staff discussions to bring out the best from their employees. This allows Uniqlo to identify individuals that stand out among the others and provide them with a better platform to develop their skills and reward them with better pay. Uniqlo's market competition landscape is global,

which means that they must always be competent no matter in which market. Because of this, they reward their employees that perform well and have the ability to contribute well to their company. This also indicates that the competition between the employees in their company is intense.

Diagram 3.4.1 shows the number of management-staff discussions held and the number of employees involved in 2025.

<u>Padini</u>

Padini's business landscape is only concerned with certain regions and has not yet reached the global audience. Because of this, their system of performance management and pay is not as elaborated as Uniqlo, hence making it less competitive. According to their annual report, their remuneration is paid through salary increment, bonuses and benefits. However, the structure is unclear. What is evident is that they consider individual performance and contribution when giving out the remuneration. However, unlike Uniqlo, they do not have a specific platform to identify who are the strong performers among their employees. We can only assume that Padini uses a traditional system where the supervisor will determine who is performing well and who is not.

4.0 Analysis & Conclusions

4.1 Analysis

The effectiveness of people strategies at Padini Holdings Berhad and Uniqlo can be analysed by considering how well each organization's approach fits its business context, operating environment and current and future organizational needs. Although both organisations operate in the retail industry, their difference in scales, market and organisational approaches mean that their people strategies are not expected to be identical. This supports the best-fit approach, where human resources practices are aligned with the specific requirements of an organization rather than applying the same practices to every organization (Shuler and Jackson,202). The comparison below focuses on the design, implementation and effectiveness of the people strategies discussed in the case study.

4.1.1 Padini Holdings Berhad

Padini's people strategy is closely connected to its Malaysian and regional retail environment. As a Malaysian apparel and footwear retailer, Padini operates in an environment affected by changing consumer spending, competition, labour availability and customer preferences. Therefore, having employees who understand the local market and customers is important to its retail operations. The case study identifies that Padini mainly recruits local employees and also uses internal recruitment for promotions and transfer. It provides financial support and sponsorship for employees who undertake further study or training.

The recruitment an internal and promotions approach can be viewed as a suitable approach for Padini due to the employees who have better understanding familiarity to the organisations systems can progress into higher responsibilities. Moreover, this particular approach is relevant to retail companies due to the necessity of the employees to have practical knowledge of the customer services , sales and daily store activities. Therefore, this approach may have set some limitations for Padini where the internal promotion may result in any external ideas and the employees will be dependent on the sufficient training and development from Padini alone. So, it is very crucial for Padini to provide training and development to help employees improve their services and knowledge throughout the organisations. The training may improvise in certain

ways such as product knowledge, customer services, sales technique and store operations. Those training will help the employees provide their service more effectively. It will demonstrate a practical and task oriented approach.

The case study combines elements of Taylorism and Human relations. Store operations require employees to follow procedure and maintain consistency standards, reflecting Taylorist principles of standardisation and performance control. However, the importance of customer services, communications and employee development reflects the Human Relations Principle (Hafiz,2021). This combination is relevant due to retails requiring both operational consistency and effective employee interactions with customers.

4.1.2 Uniqlo

Uniqlo adopts a more structured and development -oriented people strategy. Its recruitment and talent programmes provide opportunities for employees to enter through retail, internship and management pathways, while high performing employees can receive further challenges , evaluation and career opportunities. Training covers store management, leadership, customer services and operational management, supporting the organisation's emphasis on continuous improvement.

Uniqlo approach combines people oriented development with strong task standardisation. Standardised routines and operational discipline support consistency across stores, while training and career development encourage employees to build capabilities and take greater responsibilities. Therefore, Uniqlo does not rely solely on Taylorist control, instead , standardized is combined with employee development and learning orientation. This fits its global business model, where maintaining consistency while developing managerial talent is important.

Uniqlo's diversity and employee- support initiatives further strengthen its people strategy. Its focus on female representation, maternity support, childcare measures and flexible arrangement demonstrates attention to employee needs alongside business performance.

4.1.3 Comparative Analysis

Overall , Padini ‘s approach is more closely shaped by local market knowledge and practical retail requirements , whereas Uniqlo places greater emphasis on structured capability development, standardisation and global talent management. Both approaches demonstrate elements of best human resource management because their strategies reflect different organisationals contexts. Padini’s approach supports local responsiveness and operational executions while Unqlo’s approach supports consistency, employee development and international scalability. The effectiveness of each strategy depends on how successfully it balances operational performance with employee development and future organisational needs.

4.2 Conclusion

Finally, there are differences between these two companies when we look at how they manage their human resources such as recruitment, career development and employee training.

Padini’s approach seems to be based more on a local approach with its focus on employing local people, providing opportunities for internal career progression, and providing practical training that enables them to carry out their duties.

Uniqlo appears to take a much more structured and globalised approach through the provision of opportunity for career development, talent programmes and continuous training.

In summary, although these two organisations’ strategies are diverse, they possess similar objectives of attracting, developing, motivating and retaining their employees.

Padini adopts an approach which is localised and business oriented, whereas Uniqlo has a focus on global standards, developments and retention. This comparative study reveals the importance of efficient human resources management amongst these businesses as the workforce plays a significant role towards attaining organisational successes and remaining competitive within the clothing retail sector.

5.0 References

1. Fast Retailing / Uniqlo (Corporate Website). (n.d.). CSR & sustainability / human capital related pages. https://www.fastretailing.com/eng/
2. Fast Retailing. (2024). Integrated Report / Annual Report (latest available year). https://www.fastretailing.com/eng/ir/library/
3. Uniqlo Malaysia / Uniqlo Country Sites. (n.d.). Uniqlo Malaysia official website. https://www.uniqlo.com/my/
4. Padini Holdings Berhad. (n.d.). Investor relations / annual reports. https://www.padini.com/ (navigate to Investor Relations → Annual Reports)
5. Padini Holdings Berhad. (2024). Annual Report (latest available year). (Exact year/filename varies by IR portal—use the "Annual Report" link on Padini IR site.) https://www.padini.com/
6. Aguinis, H., & BurgiTian, J. (2022). HR analytics: Opportunities and challenges for people strategy. Journal of Management. https://journals.sagepub.com/home/jom
7. Combs, J., Liu, Y., Hall, A., & Ketchen, D. (2021). How high-performance work systems influence firm outcomes. Academy of Management Journal. https://journals.aom.org/
8. Delery, J. E., & Roumpi, D. (2020). Strategic human resource management (SHRM) and performance: a review. Human Resource Management Review. https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/humanresourcemanagementreview
9. Guest, D. E. (2021). HRM and employee wellbeing: empirical evidence and implications. Journal of Organizational Behavior. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10991379
10. Schuler, R. S., & Jackson, S. E. (2020–2023). Work on HRM/strategy alignment across contexts in top HR/management journals. https://www.tandfonline.com/
11. Boxall, P., & Steeneveld, M. (2021). Employee engagement and HR systems. International Journal of Human Resource Management. https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rijh
12. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2023). Job DemandsResources and engagement frameworks relevant to retail HR. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology.

https://psycnet.apa.org/journals/ocp

13. Taylorism vs human relations / management control relevance in modern workplaces (2020–2026 literature). https://journals.sagepub.com/home/asm

14. Kiasutrader. (2026, September 3). Padini Holdings Berhad - Consumers out to replenish wardrobes. I3investor. https://klse.i3investor.com/web/blog/detail/kenangaresearch/2022-08-29-story-h1628789994-Padini_Holdings_Berhad_Consumers_Out_to_Replenish_Wardrobes

15. Kumar, A. (2025). A Study on Aviation Industry and Impact on HR after COVID. INTERANTIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT, 09(06), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.55041/ijsrem50848

16. Padini proposes one-for-two bonus issue as 4Q profit more than halves. (2024, August 27). The Edge Malaysia. https://theedgemalaysia.com/node/724507