

TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICE, SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND ENGAGEMENT AS A MEDIATOR

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research aims to examined the impact of talent management practice on achieving sustainable competitive advantage as well as the mediating effect of engagement. **Methods:** This paper used quantitative approaches, while a questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population. A simple random and purposive sampling approach was used in this study, while the research sample consisted of 73 respondents. **Data analysis:** Partial least squares–structural equation modeling was used to evaluate the study hypotheses through a bootstrapping approach the research unit of analysis consists of strewwerry generation. **Result and discussion:** Results show a significant direct impact of TMP on SCA. Likewise, the results also show a substantial impact of all three dimensions of TMP (attraction, development and retention) on SCA. Results confirm that engagement positively mediates between TMP and SCA. **Conclusion:** This study enhances the understanding of Talent Management Practice's role in improving the Sustainable Competitive Advantage. The findings imply that an engagement also elevates the SCA.

Keywords: Talent Management Practice, Sustainable Competitive Advantage, Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Today's modern organizations face more difficult challenges, characterized by novelty, broad reach, and extreme volatility due to business and the natural environment (Beliaeva et al, 2019). This complex challenge highlights the importance and synergy of economic, social and environmental processes (Farias et al, 2020) that underlies an organization's strategic efforts to gain competitive advantage (Eller et al, 2020). It is very important to examine the mechanisms of corporate strategy, which must consider the impact of the natural environment, especially when gaining competitive advantage is a choice between stable (sustainable) and unstable (temporary) strategies.

The importance of sustainable competitive advantage continues to be a major issue at the global level. The company's goals are no longer limited to traditional approaches that look at financial results, but these goals are also aligned with social and ecological aspects (Mujtaba, 2022). The term sustainability is defined in many ways by institutions, forums and practitioners. However, the most acceptable definition of sustainability is defined and included in the sustainable development goals-2030 by the United Nations, which are lumped together into three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. (United Nations, 2015).

Leaders, social forums and companies around the world recognize that sustainability is a crucial 21st century issue, which can be tackled with the help of talented employees(Singh, et al., 2019). Many researchers have outlined the important challenges for business firms to remain competitive in an uncertain business environment. First, how to attract, develop and retain talent? Second, how to integrate HRM to achieve sustainability goals? Furthermore, they

argue that organizations need to develop new HR strategies that support the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainability(Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005).

Today many companies put a lot of effort into talent management practices that encourage employees to be proud while working for their company (Agarwal, 2018). However, there are large variations in how an organization describes talent, the specific activities included in talent management or how much emphasis is given to each talent management practice (Bolander et al., 2017). In particular, there is still a paucity of research that pays attention to actual organizational practices and develops in-depth understanding of how organizations define and implement talent management activities, even though a thorough understanding of talent management in practice is needed to inform and guide the nature of talent management (Meyers et al., 2013).

Strawberry generation is a term that refers to the younger generation who are creative and have lots of ideas and ideas, but give up easily and get hurt easily. So many creative ideas were born by young people, but many found anxiety and depictions of the mood they felt through their social media (Kasali, 2018). The birth of Strawberry Generation was influenced by several factors, including parents who spoil their children, less time together between the two, the tendency to label children with negative narratives, overprotective, and tendencies to force or demand children (Hapsari, 2022).

Based on the description and problems above, this study intends to determine the effect of talent management practice on sustainable competitive advantage, as well as the role of engagement in mediating the relationship between talent management practice and sustainable competitive advantage.

THEORETICAL BASE

Talent Management Practice

Talent management present it has developed and has become the concern of many companies because it is one of the keys to business activities (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). The three main areas in the discussion of talent management include definitions, results and impacts, activities and practices (Thunnisen et al., 2013). The core of the talent management practice is aimed at existing employees. Practices related to internal talent management such as manpower plans for direction planning, sophisticated recruitment and selection techniques to recruit high level candidates, potential assessment, ability and personality tests, etc (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). According to Gallardo-gallardo et al. (2013) talent management practice is about 'how' a talent management process runs in an organization,

The main objective of talent management practice within an organization is to improve the skills and abilities of people who occupy important positions, recognize and appreciate those who have contributed to building the organization's competitive advantage (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Despite its importance, many organizations struggle to develop and implement effective talent management programs or practices (Vaiman et al., 2012).

Talent management practice is generally categorized into three: talent attraction practice, talent development practice and talent retention practice (Tarique & Schuler, 2010; Anlesinya et al., 2019). Talent management practices identify those with potential and ensure they have a range of experiences complemented by training and learning programs that can ultimately retain them in the organization (Armstrong, 2006). Momtazian (2016) wrote down several benefits of talent management practice, including: (1) Attract top talent and increase employee performance; (2) Continuous coverage of critical roles; (3) Improve business performance; and (4) Higher client satisfaction.

Engagement

Many organizational leaders and managers are concerned about engagement because it is recognized as an important element in determining the level of innovation, effectiveness, and organizational competitiveness (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2013). According to Cook (2012) engagement is how employees think positively about the organization, their feelings about the organization and being proactive in achieving organizational goals.

According to Men (2015) engagement can be characterized by energy, absorption, involvement, dedication, strength, efficacy, enthusiasm, and a positive state which is described as a catalyst for employee performance. Engagement is also indicated by high levels of energy, strong involvement and concentration at work and attachments that make you happy at work (Yulianti, 2016).

Buckingham and Coffman (1999) comment on engagement by stating that the right person in the right role with the right manager will be able to encourage employee engagement. Employee engagement will increase depending on the extent to which employees feel they can express their ideas and managers listen to these ideas, the extent to which employees are involved in decision making, and how much managers value employee contributions (Robinson et al., 2004).

The engagement dimension proposed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) consists of three dimensions and is used as an indicator in this study, namely: 1) Vigor. Vigor is an aspect characterized by a high level of strength and mentality at work. This aspect can be seen from persistence in facing difficulties and a strong desire to try really hard at work. 2) Dedication. This aspect is characterized by a meaningful feeling of the work being done. Employees who have high dedication, will consciously consider work as inspiration, valuable experience and challenge their abilities. Besides that, a sense of pride and enthusiasm for work is also an aspect of high dedication. 3) Absorption Employees in this aspect are characterized by focused attention,

Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Currently, businesses are trying to achieve a competitive advantage that can be maintained from time to time by utilizing resources that are strategically built (Latukha, 2018). In resource-based reasoning, a firm gains and maintains a competitive advantage through the creation of resources that are valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate or replace. Competitive advantage that lasts a long time is one indicator that a company can have a sustainable competitive advantage (Porter, 1998).

The construct used to measure Sustainable Competitive Advantage in companies refers to Jibril and Yesiltas research with 6 indicators which include the superiority of product and service variations, uniqueness in benefits obtained by customers, product and service quality, R&D capabilities, managerial capabilities and competitors' difficulties in imitating products. and services owned (Jibril & Yesiltas, 2022)

HYPOTHESES

Talent Management Practice and Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Globally, many leading companies have established and are continuously reviewing talent management practices to attract and retain the best talent to achieve further sustainability goals. The same trend is increasing in developing countries where the majority of leading companies use talent management as an important strategy for the company's sustainable performance.(Tarique&Schuler, 2010).

Reputable entrepreneurs from business circles have recognized that TMP is an important factor behind their continued success(Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). Furthermore, it was found in research studies that there is a high correlation between effective TMP and sustainable performance(Latukha, 2018;Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010). Talented people make a significant contribution to organizational performance and their effective management has a direct influence on sustainability(Behera & Mohapatra, 2020). For that we propose the following hypotheses for examination

H1: There is a significant positive effect of talent management practice on sustainable competitive advantage.

Talent Management Practice and Engagement

Bhatnagar (2007) revealed that employee engagement can be supported by talent management practices. Strategies in talent management that are implemented effectively will be able to increase employee engagement (Dhanalakshmi, 2014). This is corroborated by Sweem (2009) that increased results in winning over talented employees only come to organizations that learn to master talent management practices.

Pandita and Ray (2018) have proven in their research that talent management can be one of the most effective tools in ensuring that employees stay engaged, committed to their work and stay with the organization in the long term. Previous studies have also found a relationship between talent management practice and employee engagement.

The results of the research by Ramli et al. (2018) proved the relationship between talent management practices and employee engagement. This is supported by Karuri's research (2015) which revealed that employee outcomes, including engagement, are significantly influenced by talent management practice. Sadeli's (2012) research also found a positive impact of talent management practice on employee engagement. Therefore the second hypothesis in this study is:

H2: There is a significant positive effect of talent management practice on engagement

Engagement and Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Employee engagement has become a very important topic in HR functions (Kahn, 1990), and is considered as one of the determining factors in organizational success as well as being a driver of business success (Lockwood, 2007). Endang Rusdianti, et al (2011) also stated that organizations can achieve the expected performance and have a competitive advantage when the people in it do what they do best, what they like and the strong factor of psychological ownership in carrying out and delivering results at work. Therefore the third hypothesis in this study is:

H3: There is a significant positive effect of engagement on Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Talent Management Practice, Sustainable Competitive Advantage and Engagement mediation

Engagement was chosen as a mediator in the relationship between Talent Management Practice and Sustainable Competitive Advantage for two reasons. First, engagement tends to be a powerful motivating force for successful outcomes (Karatepe, 2014). Second, workers with higher levels of engagement will be more likely to be in a trustworthy and reliable relationship with their employer and thus will be more willing to give their employer an optimistic attitude (Saks, 2006), and whenever an employer will introduce effective talent management, workers will become more interested in their work, and this will lead to better and more sustainable results (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

H4: Engagement mediates the influence of talent management practice on sustainable competitive advantage

METHODS

Population and Sample

The population in this study amounted to 73 respondents who were employees in accordance with the specified qualifications. The entire population was sampled using a purposive sampling technique to suit the purpose of this study. Employees who are used as the population in this study refer to the strawberry generation with a maximum age of 25 years and

have worked in a company for at least 2 years. The criteria used are companies that have been operating for at least 10 years.

Data collection

The data collection method used in this study was by distributing questionnaires online using the Google form, and only respondents who met the criteria could fill them in. Each answer choice from the respondent will be scored using a Likert scale of 1-5.

Data analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study uses the Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis method. The choice of using the PLS method with SmartPLS version 3.0 software is based on the consideration of the small number of samples (less than 100) and the anticipation of missing data and multicollinearity. Measurement using PLS has 2 models, namely the measurement model fit test and the structural model fit test as follows:

Outer Model Testing

The measurement model is used to test the construct validity and reliability of all constructs. Conformity test on the outer model by looking at convergent validity. Convergent validity is measured by looking at the correlation between the indicator scores and the variable scores in the research model (Rule of Thumb > 0.7). Reflective indicators will be removed from the measurement model if they have an outer loading value below 0.4, but if the loading score obtained is between 0.5 – 0.7 the indicator does not need to be removed as long as it has an AVE score > 5 (Abdillah & Jogiyanto, 2015).

Inner Model Testing

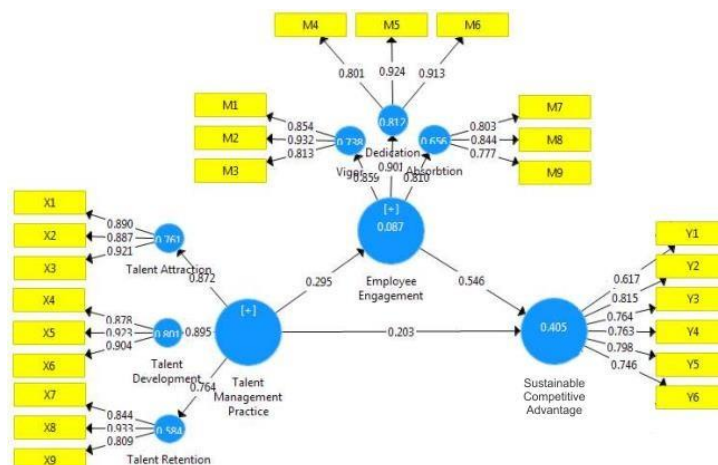
Structural model (inner model) is performed to predict the causality relationship between latent variables. The structural model is evaluated with the Path Coefficient value to see the magnitude of the structural path coefficient, and also to see the percentage of variance explained by the R^2 value for the dependent variable. Through the bootstrapping process, hypothesis testing is carried out by looking at the T-statistic test parameters obtained to predict the existence of a causal relationship and the p-value to see significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model Test Results (Validity and Reliability)

Test the suitability of the outer model by looking at convergent validity and reliability. The following is the schematic model of the PLS program that was tested:

Figure 1: Outer Model



The convergent validity test parameters are known by looking at the output results of the SmartPLS algorithm in the form of outer loading and Average Variant Extracted (AVE).

Table 1. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Information
<i>Talent Management Practice (X)</i>	<i>TMP - Talent Attraction1</i>	0.890	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Attraction2</i>	0.887	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Attraction3</i>	0.921	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Development1</i>	0.878	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Development2</i>	0.923	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Development3</i>	0.904	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Retention1</i>	0.844	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Retention2</i>	0.933	Valid
	<i>TMP - Talent Retention3</i>	0.809	Valid
<i>Employee Engagement (M)</i>	<i>Engagement - Vigor1</i>	0.854	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Vigor2</i>	0.932	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Vigor3</i>	0.813	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Dedication1</i>	0.801	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Dedication2</i>	0.924	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Dedication3</i>	0.913	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Absorption1</i>	0.803	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Absorption2</i>	0.844	Valid
	<i>Engagement - Absorption3</i>	0.777	Valid
<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage (Y)</i>	<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage1</i>	0.617	Valid
	<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage2</i>	0.815	Valid
	<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage3</i>	0.764	Valid
	<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage4</i>	0.763	Valid
	<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage5</i>	0.798	Valid
	<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage6</i>	0.746	Valid

The table above shows that all constructs have met the convergent validity test because the outer loading value is > 0.5 . Then look at the Average Variant Extracted (AVE) value and the following results are obtained:

Table 2. AVE values

Dimensions & Variables	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Information
<i>Talent Management Practice (X)</i>	0.567	Valid
<i>Employee Engagement (M)</i>	0.537	Valid
<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage (Y)</i>	0.539	Valid

The table above shows that all constructs have met the convergent validity test because the AVE value is > 0.5 . Furthermore, to determine reliability by looking at Cronbach's alpha value and Composite reliability value. The parameter to see a reliable construct is to see that the Cronbach's alpha value is greater than 0.7 and the Composite reliability value must be > 0.7 .

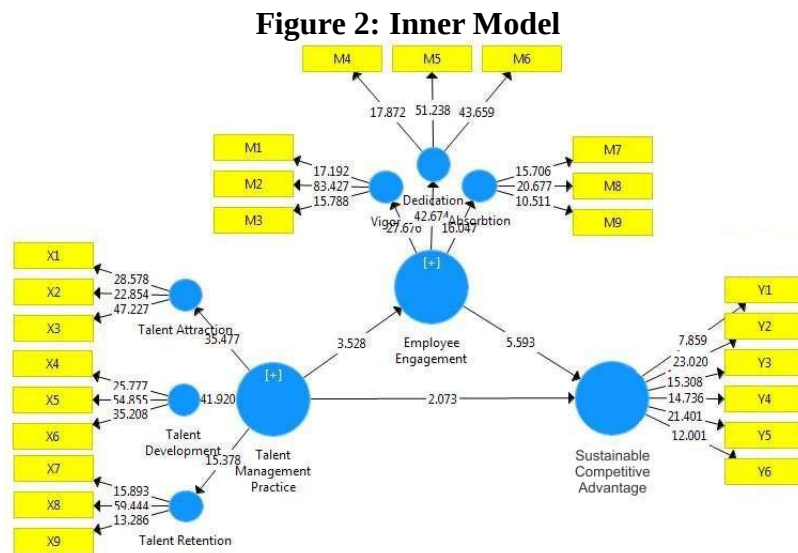
Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha Value

Dimensions & Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
<i>Talent Management Practice (X)</i>	0.903	Reliable
<i>Employee Engagement (M)</i>	0.890	Reliable
<i>Sustainable Competitive Advantage (Y)</i>	0.892	Reliable

The Cronbach's alpha value of the dimensions and research variables shown in the table above is > 0.7 , so it can be interpreted that the variables used in this study passed the reliable test.

Inner Model Test Results (Hypothesis Test)

Testing the inner model or structural model is evaluated using path coefficients (Mean, STDEV, T-values) to test the significance between constructs in the model. The following is the output (bootstrapping) for the inner model:



Source: Smartpls output results, 2022

From the bootstrapping results it is known that the path coefficient values are as follows:

Table 4 Path Coefficient Values

hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Means (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
<i>Talent Management Practice - > Sustainable Competitive Advantage</i>	0.203	0.193	0.098	2,073	0.039
<i>Talent Management Practice - > Engagement</i>	0.295	0.307	0.084	3,528	0.000
<i>Engagement -> Sustainable Competitive Advantage</i>	0.546	0.557	0.098	5,593	0.000

Based on the table above, some information can be obtained, including:

1. The significance value for the Talent Management Practice -> Sustainable Competitive Advantage variable is 0.039, which means it is smaller than the 0.05 significance level ($0.039 < 0.05$). Furthermore, the value of the T-statistic is $2.073 > 1.96$. This shows that there is a positive and significant influence of talent management practice on employee performance, so the first hypothesis is accepted.
2. The significance value for the Talent Management Practice -> Engagement variable is 0.00, which is less than the 0.05 significance level ($0.000 < 0.05$). Furthermore, the value of the T-statistic is $3.528 > 1.96$. This shows that there is a positive and significant influence of talent management practice on employee engagement, so the second hypothesis is accepted.
3. The significance value for the Engagement -> Sustainable Competitive Advantage variable is 0.00 which means a significant 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$) and the T-statistic value is $5.593 > 1.96$. This shows that there is a positive and significant effect of employee engagement on employee performance, so the third hypothesis is accepted.

Next is to test mediation by looking at indirect effect on SmartPLS bootstrapping data obtained as follows:

Table 5 Indirect Effect Value

	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample Means (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>Q Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P Values</i>
<i>Talent Management Practice - Engagement -> Sustainable Competitive Advantage</i>	0.161	0.167	0.057	2,814	0.005

The test results above show that engagement mediates the relationship between talent management practice and sustainable competitive advantage as shown by the significance value for Talent Management Practice -> Engagement -> Sustainable Competitive Advantage of 0.005, which is less than the 0.05 significance level ($0.005 < 0.05$) and the T-statistic value is $2.814 > 1.96$. The effect of the relationship between talent management practice and engagement, the relationship between talent management practice and sustainable competitive advantage, and the relationship between employee engagement and sustainable competitive advantage shows a mediating effect called partial mediation. Thus the fourth hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Corporate talent development is about investigating and cultivating employee human resources so that their professional skills and quality of life improve (Fang, et al, 2020). Talent development has a significant effect on organizational results (Savov, 2020). According to enterprise theory based on talent management, talent is the only corporate resource that can create competitive advantage; thus, organizations must focus on the talents and abilities derived from talent (Rabi, et al, 2015).

If a company wants to be in business for a long time, it has to pay for the development of its tangible goods, but more importantly, for its employees. Employees serve as the backbone for any organization, as they help increase its value. In addition, investing in human resources

is the first step in a sustainable plan where talents are used as an important component in human resource development (Rudito, 2015).

CONCLUSION

The findings show that TMP as a whole has a positive impact on SCA and outstanding performance of talented people is a company's main resource for achieving sustainability goals. Thus, companies need to develop effective TM practices to meet sustainability goals and gain competitive advantage. This finding is in line with Behera and Mohapatra (2020) which states that talented people have a significant contribution in organizational performance and their management has a direct influence on sustainability.

The results and previous discussions outline that companies need to develop a set of TM practices to meet sustainability goals because it is time for talented people who lead the business competition with their differentiated skills and support companies to achieve sustainable competitive advantages. Talented people need special attention and appreciation, but most companies around the world have not realized the importance of TM strategy in organizational performance and still apply traditional HRM strategies to handle talent.

The HRM strategy is based on providing the same service to all employees according to their position level (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005). Implementation of Talent Management Practices will be able to encourage employees to think outside the box and work better than before.

This study enhances the understanding of Talent Management Practice's role in improving the Sustainable Competitive Advantage. The findings imply that an engagement also elevates the SCA.

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