The role of information technology (IT) performance in the relationship between high-performance work systems and competitive advantage

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CHRONICLE	ABSTRACT
	Human resources that are of high quality create a competitive advantage for companies, thus Human Resource Management (HRM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) that are good become key success factors that need to be considered by every company. This study aims to investigate the influence of Human Resource Management (HRM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) on Information Technology (IT) Performance and Competitive Advantage of a company. The method used in this study is a quantitative approach with a questionnaire as the data collection method. The research sample consisted of 191 supervisors, managers, and executives of manufacturing companies located in Medan, Indonesia. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 software. The results showed that Human Resource Management significantly affects IT Performance but does not directly affect Competitive Advantage. Meanwhile, HPWS Capability does not affect IT Performance but significantly affects Competitive Advantage. IT Performance significantly affects Competitive Advantage. IT Performance also mediates the relationship between Human Resource Management and Competitive Advantage. However, it is not significant in mediating the relationship between HPWS Capability and Competitive Advantage. These findings underscore that Human Resource Management (HRM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) play pivotal roles in shaping Information Technology (IT) performance and competitive advantage within companies, thus impacting the overall success and sustainability of companies.

1. Introduction

The rapid and continuous development of technology has dramatically changed the business landscape in the era of globalization. Human Resource Management (HRM) must continuously adapt to changes in the era of globalization to ensure that the company remains competitive and relevant in an increasingly complex market. One of the main challenges for HRM is to ensure that organizations have employees with skills that align with evolving technology needs (Purwanti et al., 2022). In addition, HRM must also pay attention to the needs of employees in this era of globalization. Apart from competitive salaries, employees are also seeking a supportive, inclusive work environment that provides opportunities for professional and personal development. Factors such as work flexibility, work-life balance, as well as fairness and diversity in the workplace are becoming increasingly important for employees (L'Écuyer et al., 2019; Adnani et al., 2023). Therefore, to address these challenges, HRM needs to adopt a proactive and innovative approach. This includes the use of technology in recruitment and selection processes to find the right employees, as well as the implementation of performance management systems that enable continuous employee development. Additionally, it is important to build a company culture that supports innovation, collaboration, and continuous learning (Agarwal & Al Qouyatahi, 2018; Stofkova & Sukalova, 2020). Amidst increasing global competition, successful companies are those that can adapt to technological changes and employee needs,

while maintaining core values such as integrity, social responsibility, and sustainability. Therefore, the role of HRM becomes increasingly crucial in creating a work environment that enables companies to thrive and compete in the era of globalization (Mushkudiani et al., 2020; Adnani et al., 2023). Through the implementation of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), companies can create a rich work environment that meets the needs of employees, which in turn can result in greater strategic performance from the HR function. This includes increasing employee satisfaction and commitment, as well as reducing intentions to quit or resign, ultimately contributing to the long-term success of the company (Jamaludin, 2021). HPWS is an approach in human resource management aimed at creating a work environment that enables companies to achieve high strategic performance through employee engagement and development. This concept acknowledges that employees are valuable assets to the company. Investments in employee well-being and development can yield significant long-term benefits.

The emergence of Web 2.0-based technology has transformed the paradigm in human resource management (HRM) in the modern era. Companies must face the reality that HRM is no longer just about recruiting, retaining, and developing talent, but also about how technology can be strategically leveraged to enhance the performance of HR functions (Aust et al., 2020; Sosiadi et al., 2023). The implementation and use of Information Technology (IT) play a crucial role in strategically improving the performance of HR functions. Online platforms and technology-based recruitment tools enable companies to reach potential candidates more efficiently. From online job boards to professional social media platforms, technology facilitates more precise candidate searches and selections tailored to the company's needs. HRM systems supported by technology enable companies to manage employee information more efficiently, including personal data, job histories, performance, and attendance. This helps companies make better decisions regarding career development, performance evaluations, and talent management (Turulja & Bajgoric, 2018; Fenech, 2019). Therefore, considering the importance of quality Human Resources in creating competitive advantages for companies, effective Human Resource Management (HRM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) are key success factors that every company needs to consider (Adnani et al., 2023). However, with the continuous development of technology in the era of globalization, it is necessary to emphasize Information Technology (IT) as a component that needs to be utilized. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the extent to which Human Resource Management (HRM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) influence a company's Competitive Advantage. It also aims to analyze the strategic role of Information Technology (IT) performance in creating competitive advantages.

2. Literature review

In an increasingly open and competitive business environment, competitive advantage is key to survival and growth. Competitive advantage enables companies to dominate markets, expand market share, and maintain customer loyalty (Jamaludin et al., 2020). By having a distinctive advantage, companies can increase profit margins and create a strong foundation for long-term growth. Moreover, competitive advantage also allows companies to attract and retain top talent in the industry, which is a valuable asset for innovation and growth (Sunarya et al., 2023; Farida & Setiawan, 2022). In the era of globalization, where companies compete in vast and globally interconnected markets, competitive advantage becomes even more crucial. Companies must be able to quickly adapt to changes in the dynamic global business environment, including technological advancements, changes in trade policies, and market fluctuations. Companies with strong competitive advantages will be better prepared to face these challenges and even leverage them as opportunities for growth (Tallman et al., 2018; Avriyanti, 2020; Liñán et al., 2020). Human Resource Management (HRM) is a crucial foundation for the success of a company, involving a series of activities from recruitment to employee performance management. Its goal is to plan, develop, and optimize human resources potential to effectively contribute to the achievement of company goals (Agustian et al., 2023). In practice, HRM creates a good and productive organizational climate, fostering an environment where employees feel valued and supported. By designing effective work systems, HRM helps to govern the overall management of the company, enhancing efficiency and organizational performance. HRM also aims to improve the welfare of human resources, both financially and psychologically, by providing facilities, career development, and necessary support (Smith et al., 2018; Wahyudi et al., 2023). Additionally, HRM contributes to increasing employee productivity and performance, enhancing employee satisfaction, reducing operational costs through efficient management, maintaining employee stability by minimizing turnover, ensuring compliance with applicable regulations, and strengthening the company's reputation (Jamaludin et al., 2020). Furthermore, the High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) approach plays a crucial role in shaping a company's competitive advantage. HPWS is not just an HR management method, but also a long-term philosophy that views employees as key assets that need to be developed holistically (Kaushik & Mukherjee, 2022). One of the main aspects of HPWS is the promotion of a flexible organizational structure, where communication and collaboration between departments and hierarchical levels within the company are upheld. HPWS emphasizes the importance of having employees equipped with relevant skills and competencies (Úbeda-García et al., 2018; Siddique et al., 2019). This not only improves individual performance, but also optimizes overall team performance. Through active involvement in decision-making processes and continuous improvement, HPWS empowers employees to contribute more significantly to improvement and innovation in the organization (Conteh & Yuan, 2022).

In addition, HPWS creates a work environment that supports innovation and creativity, provides clear career development opportunities, and is mindful of employee well-being by addressing work-life balance (L'Écuyer et al., 2019). The use of performance achievement-based reward systems is also an integral part of HPWS, encouraging motivation and improving productivity. More than just an HR management strategy, HPWS also better prepares employees for change, adapting a work

culture based on values such as integrity, collaboration, innovation and responsibility. By doing so, HPWS can create an efficient work environment and build a solid foundation for the company's long-term growth and success (Tran Huy, 2023; Sosiadi et al., 2023). In the context of Human Resource Management (HRM) and High Performance Work System (HPWS) capabilities, Information Technology (IT) is the foundation that supports the implementation of these strategies to achieve competitive advantage for companies. IT facilitates various aspects of HRM operations, such as recruitment, career development, performance management, and compensation (Chapman et al., 2018). With advanced IT systems, these processes can be automated, allowing HR departments to focus more on employee development strategies and more timely decision-making. Furthermore, IT also supports HPWS implementation by providing the necessary infrastructure for communication and collaboration between departments and hierarchical levels in the company (Chadwick & Flinchbaugh, 2021; Agustian et al., 2023). In addition, IT also enables more accurate and timely measurement and analysis of HR performance.   sing the data generated by IT systems, companies can evaluate the effectiveness of HRM and HPWS strategies, and make necessary adjustments to improve company performance (L'Écuyer et al., 2019).
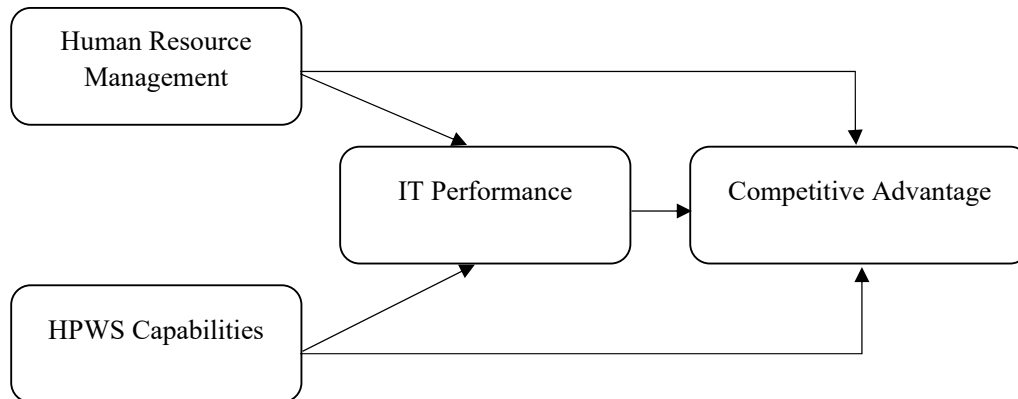

Fig. 1. Research Framework

H₁: *The effect of Human Resource Management on IT Performance.*
H₂: *The effect of Human Resource Management on Competitive Advantage.*
H₃: *The effect of HPWS Capabilities on IT Performance.*
H₄: *The effect of HPWS Capabilities on Competitive Advantage.*
H₅: *The effect of IT Performance on Competitive Advantage.*
H₆: *The mediating effect of IT Performance in Human Resource Management on Competitive Advantage.*
H₇: *The mediating effect of IT Performance in HPWS Capabilities on Competitive Advantage.*

3. Method

The method used in this research is a quantitative approach. In collecting data, the questionnaire distribution method is used through online media such as email. Questions in the questionnaire were rated using a Likert scale with a range of 1 to 7 points. Respondents taken as samples were supervisors, managers, and senior officers of manufacturing companies located in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. A purposive sampling technique was used for sampling. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed to respondents via email using Google Forms. However, only 204 questionnaires were collected, while 13 questionnaires could not be used due to incomplete data collected. Thus, the number of questionnaires used as samples in this study was 191. The independent variables examined in this study are Human Resource Management (HRM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Capabilities. The mediating variable considered is Information Technology (IT) Performance, while the dependent variable is Competitive Advantage. The model used in this study refers to L'Écuyer et al. (2019). The relationship between the research variables was tested using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method. Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4.0 software.

4. The Results

Factor analysis is a statistical method used to explore the relationship between a group of variables and identify the factors underlying the variation among latent variables. Before testing the relationship between latent variables, factor analysis is often performed to simplify the data structure and identify underlying patterns. In this study, the Human Resource Management (HRM) and HPWS Capabilities variables each consist of 5 indicators that reflect latent variables, while the IT Performance variable uses 4 indicators, and Competitive Advantage uses 3 indicators. The factor analysis process includes testing the standard loading factor, which measures how well each indicator represents its latent variable. Furthermore, the reliability test is used to ensure the internal consistency of each factor, a good reliability value indicates that the indicators

used consistently measure the same construct. In addition, the validity test is used to assess the extent to which each factor truly reflects the intended construct and is not influenced by other factors.
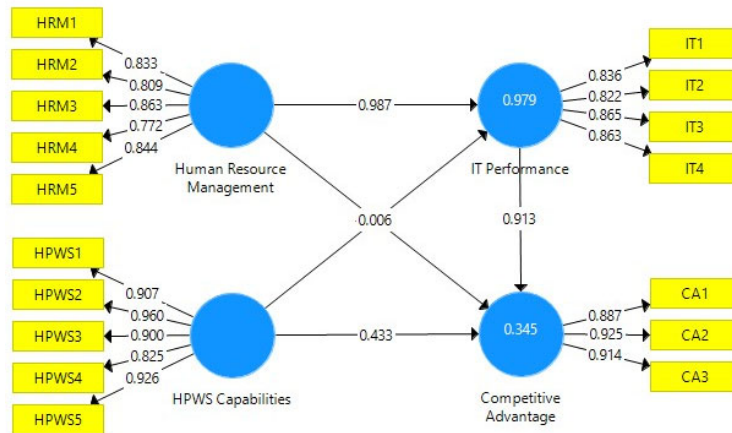

Fig. 2. Analysis Framework

Standardized loading factor is a statistical measure that describes how strong the relationship is between each measurement indicator and the latent variable being measured. A loading factor value that exceeds 0.7 is considered an ideal value, indicating that the indicator has a strong and significant relationship with the latent variable in question. In other words, the higher the loading factor value, the better the indicator is in accurately measuring the latent variable. A high loading factor value indicates that the indicator has high validity in representing the measured construct, so it can be relied upon in further statistical analysis. Furthermore, the reliability test is used to measure how consistent and reliable a questionnaire is in measuring the variable or construct being studied. Hair (2019) explains that the reliability value is considered good if the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values are greater than 0.7. Cronbach's Alpha measures the internal consistency of the questionnaire, while Composite Reliability measures how well the indicators in the questionnaire reflect the construct being measured. In addition, Ghozali & Latan (2015) emphasize the importance of the validity test in assessing whether a questionnaire actually measures the intended construct. A questionnaire is said to be valid if the questions in it are able to accurately express what you want to measure. This validity can be strengthened if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is greater than 0.6. AVE measures how much variance can be explained by the indicators in the questionnaire against the measured construct.

Table 1
Factor Analysis Results

Variable	Indicator	Std. Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Human Resource Management	HRM1	0.833	0.883	0.914	0.680
	HRM2	0.809			
	HRM3	0.863			
	HRM4	0.772			
	HRM5	0.844			
HPWS Capabilities	HPWS1	0.907	0.944	0.957	0.818
	HPWS2	0.960			
	HPWS3	0.900			
	HPWS4	0.825			
	HPWS5	0.926			
IT Performance	IT1	0.836	0.868	0.910	0.716
	IT2	0.822			
	IT3	0.865			
	IT4	0.863			
Competitive Advantage	CA1	0.887	0.894	0.934	0.826
	CA2	0.925			
	CA3	0.914			

The standardized loading factor test results in Table 1 show that all measurement indicators for each variable have significant loading factor values. For the Human Resource Management (HRM) variable, indicators HRM1 to HRM5 have a high standardized loading factor, each ranging from 0.772 to 0.863. This indicates that all of these indicators have a strong and significant relationship with the Human Resource Management latent variable. Meanwhile, for the High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Capabilities variable, all indicators (HPWS1 to HPWS5) also show a high standardized loading factor, with values ranging from 0.825 to 0.960. This indicates that each indicator has a strong correlation with the HPWS Capabilities variable, confirming its relevance in measuring the intended construct. Furthermore, for the Information Technology (IT) Performance variable, indicators IT1 to IT4 also show significant standardized loading factors, with values ranging from 0.822 to 0.865. This indicates that all IT Performance indicators effectively measure the intended construct. For the Competitive

Advantage (CA) variable, the CA1 to CA3 indicators also show a high standardized loading factor, with values ranging from 0.887 to 0.925. This illustrates the strong correlation between these indicators and the Competitive Advantage latent variable. The reliability test results also show that all observed variables have a high level of consistency in measuring the intended construct. The Human Resource Management (HRM) variable, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values are 0.883 and 0.914 respectively, exceeding the 0.7 threshold which indicates good reliability. However, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for HRM is 0.680, above the threshold of 0.6 which signifies an optimal validity value. Meanwhile, for the High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Capabilities variable, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values were 0.944 and 0.957, indicating a very high level of reliability. The AVE value for HPWS Capabilities is 0.818, exceeding the 0.6 threshold which indicates good validity. Information Technology (IT) Performance variable, the reliability value measured by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability is 0.868 and 0.91, indicating a good level of consistency in measurement. However, the AVE value for IT Performance is 0.716, slightly below the 0.6 threshold which indicates a suboptimal validity value. Competitive Advantage variable, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values are 0.894 and 0.934, indicating good reliability in measurement. The AVE value for Competitive Advantage is 0.826, exceeding the 0.6 threshold which indicates good validity.

Table 2
Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Variable	Human Resource Management	HPWS Capabilities	IT Performance	Competitive Advantage
Human Resource Management	0.825			
HPWS Capabilities	0.342	0.905		
IT Performance	0.990	0.344	0.846	
Competitive Advantage	0.397	0.523	0.414	0.909

Furthermore, discriminant validity is used to ensure that the correlation between the observed variable and its construct is higher than the correlation with other constructs. The Fornell-Larcker Criterion method, as described by Hilkenmeier et al. (2020), uses the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct and compares it with the correlation between the construct and other latent variables. AVE values higher than correlations with other constructs indicate that discriminant validity is considered good. The results of the discriminant validity test using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion show that the diagonal value in the table represents the AVE value of each construct, while the value outside the diagonal is the correlation between the construct concerned and other constructs. Table 2 shows that each diagonal value (AVE) is higher than the correlation value between the construct concerned and other constructs. In the Human Resource Management variable, the AVE value is 0.825, while the correlation with HPWS Capabilities is 0.342, the correlation with IT Performance is 0.990, and the correlation with Competitive Advantage is 0.397. This shows that discriminant validity is met, because the correlation between the observation variable and its construct is higher than the correlation with other constructs.

Table 3
R Square

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
IT Performance	0.979	0.979
Competitive Advantage	0.345	0.333

R square is a statistical measure that shows how large a proportion of the variation of a dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the regression model. The R square value ranges from 0 to 1, where a value of 1 indicates that all variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable, while a value of 0 indicates that no variation can be explained.
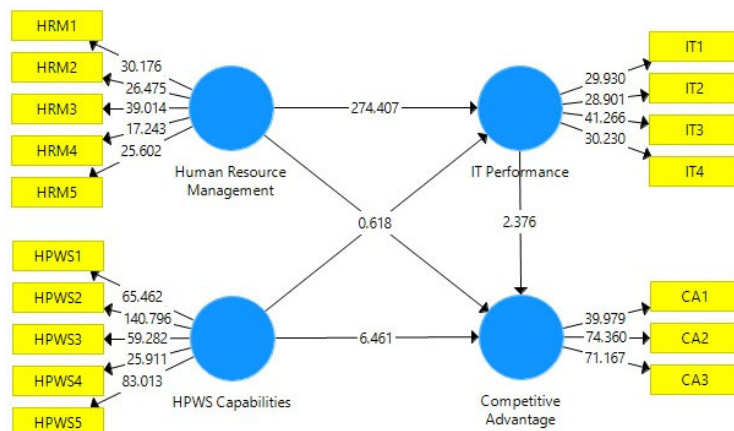

Fig. 3. Hypothesis Analysis

The higher the R square value, the better the regression model used in explaining the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Table 3 shows that the results of the R square value obtained for the IT Performance variable, the R square value obtained is 0.979, which indicates that approximately 97.9% of the variation in the IT Performance variable can be explained by the independent variables in the regression model. This value is very high which indicates that the regression model used is very effective in explaining variations in IT Performance. Meanwhile, for the Competitive Advantage variable, the R square value obtained is 0.345. This indicates that about 34.5% of the variation in the Competitive Advantage variable can be explained by the independent variables in the regression model. Although still significant, this value is relatively lower than the R square value for the IT Performance variable, indicating that the regression model is not as effective in explaining variations in Competitive Advantage.

In hypothesis testing, the relationship between variables is said to have a significant effect as evidenced by the T statistical value > 1.96 and P value < 0.05. A T statistic value greater than 1.96 indicates that the difference between the two groups or the relationship between the variables is statistically significant. This indicates that the difference does not occur by chance, but has a strong basis in the observed data. In addition, a P value that is less than 0.05 also signifies statistical significance.

Table 4
Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis		T Statistics	P Values	Information
Direct Effect				
H1	Human Resource Management → IT Performance	274.407	0.000	Significant
H2	Human Resource Management → Competitive Advantage	1.698	0.090	Not Significant
H3	HPWS Capabilities → IT Performance	0.618	0.537	Not Significant
H4	HPWS Capabilities → Competitive Advantage	6.461	0.000	Significant
H5	IT Performance → Competitive Advantage	2.376	0.018	Significant
Indirect Effect				
H6	Human Resource Management → IT Performance → Competitive Advantage	2.366	0.018	Significant
H7	HPWS Capabilities → IT Performance → Competitive Advantage	0.625	0.532	Not Significant

Table 4 shows that in the first hypothesis testing results, the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) and Information Technology (IT) Performance is statistically significant, with a very high T Statistics value of 274.407 (> 1.96) and a very low P value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This result is in line with the research of L'Écuyer et al. (2019) which emphasizes the importance of investment and development in Human Resource Management (HRM) to improve Information Technology (IT) Performance, because the relationship between the two is statistically significant. The results of testing the second hypothesis show that the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) and Competitive Advantage is not statistically significant, with a T Statistics value of 1.698 and a P value of 0.090. As for the third hypothesis, the test results show that the relationship between High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Capabilities and Information Technology (IT) Performance is not statistically significant, with a T Statistics value of 0.618 and a P value of 0.537. Whereas in the fourth hypothesis, the test results show that the relationship between High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Capabilities and Competitive Advantage is statistically significant, with a T Statistics value of 6.461 and a P value of 0.000. As for the fifth hypothesis, the test results show that the relationship between Information Technology (IT) Performance and Competitive Advantage is statistically significant, with a T Statistics value of 2.376 and a P value of 0.018. The focus on improving Information Technology (IT) Performance as a strategy to increase Competitive Advantage is in line with Liñán et al. (2020), as the relationship between IT Performance and Competitive Advantage is statistically significant.

The sixth and seventh hypotheses which are indirect effects by placing the IT Performance variable as a mediating variable show that in the sixth hypothesis the test results show that the indirect effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) on Competitive Advantage through Information Technology Performance (IT) is statistically significant, with a T Statistics value of 2.366 and a P value of 0.018. However, in the seventh hypothesis, the test results show that the indirect effect of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Capabilities on Competitive Advantage through Information Technology (IT) Performance is not statistically significant, with a T Statistics value of 0.625 and a P value of 0.532. These results emphasize the importance of companies to evaluate the implementation of HPWS Capabilities. However, this must also be in accordance with regulations or resource capabilities owned by the company.

5. Conclusion

From the results of the analysis conducted, there are several findings that have significant implications for manufacturing companies in Indonesia. First, it was found that Human Resource Management (HRM) has a significant influence on IT Performance. This confirms the importance of investment and development in human resources to support the effective use of information technology in the company. Nonetheless, the findings show that the effect of HRM on Competitive Advantage is not statistically significant. Therefore, companies need to revisit HRM strategy and implementation to ensure that the factors that influence competitive advantage are truly accommodated. Furthermore, the implementation of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) has no significant influence on IT Performance. This suggests the need for an in-depth evaluation of HPWS strategy and implementation to ensure that the system truly supports information technology performance within the company.

However, the findings show that HPWS has a significant influence on Competitive Advantage. Therefore, companies need to pay attention to the implementation of HPWS as a key factor in creating competitive advantage.

Furthermore, IT Performance is proven to have a significant influence on Competitive Advantage. This emphasizes the important role of information technology in improving the competitiveness of companies in an increasingly complex market. The findings show that IT Performance is also a significant mediator between Human Resource Management (HRM) and Competitive Advantage. However, IT Performance is not a significant mediator between HPWS Capabilities and Competitive Advantage, indicating the complexity of the relationship between these factors. The implication of these findings is the need for manufacturing companies in Indonesia to strengthen their strategy and implementation of human resource management and information technology as an integral part of their efforts to achieve competitive advantage. Continuous evaluation of HPWS implementation is also needed to ensure that the system truly supports the company's goal of creating competitive advantage in a dynamic and changing business environment.

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