

RESEARCH

Open Access



Gaining competitive advantage through integrated talent development and engagement practices in the telecommunication sector; the mediating role of corporate image

Kwame Owusu Boakye¹, Isaac Nyarko Adu¹, Michael Kyei-Frimpong^{2*} and Evelyn Twumasi¹

Abstract

The aim of the study is to investigate the influence of training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance on competitive advantage while assessing the mediating role of corporate image. A cross-sectional survey design was used in this study. Three hundred and one permanent employees working in different organizations in the Ghanaian telecommunication service sector were sampled for this study. The respondents' responses were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (structural equation modeling partial least squares) with the aid of IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0) and Smart PLS (Version 4.0). The results revealed that training in multiple functions, communication of strategies, and feedback on performance does not significantly relate to competitive advantage. Further, the results established that corporate image mediated the relationship between both communication of strategy and training in multiple functions and competitive advantage. However, corporate image did not mediate the link between feedback on performance and competitive advantage. These results imply that human resource managers should devise strategies to rapidly respond to situations in this current, competitive and ever-changing business environment. To the best of our knowledge, studies that have explored the mediating role of corporate image in the relationship between training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance and competitive advantage in the telecommunication service sector are rare.

Keywords Competitive advantage, Corporate image, Telecommunication service sector, Ghana

Introduction

The emergence of information technology in the global context and its integration has made the telecommunication service sector significant in every facet of a country's economy. The current data from the National Communications Authority (NCA) in 2020 on Mobile

Network Operators (MNOs) show that MTN has the highest average voice subscriber market share of 57.07%, and Vodafone has 20.94% indicating a marginal difference over Airtel-Tigo's 20.25%, while Glo trails at 1.74%. While MTN still maintains the highest average data subscriber market value share of 67.78%, Airtel-Tigo has a slightly higher data subscriber market share (15.81%) than Vodafone (15.49%) with Glo having a marginal proportion of 0.92% of the market share value [2]. The situation indicates an imbalance and an apparent creation of a monopoly in the telecommunication industry that would hinder effective competition and investment in

*Correspondence:

Michael Kyei-Frimpong
k.michael90@yahoo.com

¹ University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

² University of Ghana Business School, Accra, Ghana



© The Author(s) 2024. **Open Access** This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

the sector making the country vulnerable to likely control by the dominant operator. As a result, in line with the mandate of the NCA of Ghana under "Test of hypotheses" section of the National Telecommunication Policy, 2005, and concerning Section 20 (10) of the Electronic Communications Act, 2008 (Act775), the Authority has declared MTN a significant Market Power as MTN controls at least 40% of the market segment [2]. This requires and has compelled the NCA to institute measures to engender competition in the sector. These measures will include a 30% asymmetrical interconnection rates for two (2) years subject to market response to benefit disadvantaged operators per the law, the setting of floor and ceiling prices on telecom services, and a review and approval of all pricing as required by law to ensure MTN's rivals are not subject to exclusionary pricing or behavior and to ensure that the non-SMP operators are not disadvantaged by MTN's access to information [2]. Meanwhile, an analysis of the subscriber base indicates a consistent loss and gains of subscribers. Such imminent competition in the telecommunication sector compels service providers to search for innovative strategies to survive the competition [57]. While there is a critical need for HRM to show its utility in improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness requiring the function to develop a strategic role [43], an organization's ultimate existence may well rest on mounting and maintaining a favorable reputation as well as a recognizable image and in this sensitive business milieu [33].

The idea that HR can be developed as the basis for the achievement of an organization's competitive advantage is not new [36, 53]. Previous theoretical and empirical research has established that integrated talent development and engagement practices have the potential to boost the performance of an organization [33, 52]. Drawing on the resource-based theory, Srivastava et al. [72] argue that having a reliable human resource is a step forward in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Nonetheless, Cooke et al. [31], for instance, demonstrated the mechanisms through the authors' belief that integrated talent development and engagement practices can serve as a tool for achieving competitive advantage by providing practice-oriented ideas. A review of the extant literature has also revealed that competitive edge can be obtained through the interaction among integrated talent development and engagement practices and human capital, which downplays the essence of quality HR at the expense of HRM [73, 74]. This claim also explains the reasons why most organizations emphasize the essence of HR with the dearth of organizations succeeding in achieving competitive advantage through managing their human resource. Consequently, research on integrated talent development and engagement practices in the

telecommunication sector has gained significant interest as stakeholders are demanding more accountability for the organization's performance. Stakeholders including employees stress the benefit of an integrated talent development and engagement practices which eventually compels organizations to adopt strategies and systems that have the potential to achieve positive HR outcomes such as competencies, motivation, morale, and improved performance [22]. Undoubtedly, an organization can create a competitive advantage from the human resource at their disposal through effective integrated talent development and engagement practices as organizations that deploy effective integrated talent development and engagement practices can recruit and retain employees who are experienced and well-motivated to perform well.

In spite of the above, an extant review of studies on integrated talent development and engagement practices reveals that the existing literature appears to lack the prevailing view on which practices are best embraced [24, 37]. In addition, effective integrated talent development and engagement practices as a tool for competitive advantage have been studied in the telecommunication industry and other industries [4, 6, 11, 59, 61, 64]. However, dearth of studies have comprehensively examined the best integrated talent development and engagement practices in the telecommunication sector in Ghana. Also, most of the prior studies on integrated talent development and engagement practices and competitive advantage were carried out in Western countries, which tend to encourage individualistic behaviors [10, 15, 36, 41, 61, 74]. More so, to the best of our knowledge, while prior studies have discussed integrated talent development and engagement practices in broad terms, the individual and collective impacts of training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance have not been widely explored in prior studies. Hence, the first objective of this study is to assess the extent to which training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance relate to competitive advantage telecommunications sector.

Also, beyond examining the extent to which training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance contribute to competitive advantage, it is imperative to theoretically and empirically examine the mechanism through which integrated talent development and engagement practices facilitate the achievement of competitive advantage. Even though an extensive review of the extant literature shows that intermediate variables used in previous studies involves a person-organization fit [4], organizational commitment [10], and employee satisfaction [34]. However, studies examining the role of corporate image as a mediator in the association between integrated talent development

and engagement practices and competitive advantage are rare. Therefore, the study's second objective proposes corporate image as a mediator in the relationship between integrated talent development and engagement practices and competitive advantage. This is a significant extension in the literature, given Alserhan and Al Shbail [10] claim that despite repeated recommendations to study how integrated talent development and engagement practices affect competitive advantage, there has been minimal research done in the area. Corporate image serves as a bridge, translating the internal benefits of effective HRM (like employee satisfaction and commitment) into external advantages (such as customer loyalty and stakeholder trust), thus amplifying competitive positioning in the marketplace.

This current study's findings can help deepen the appreciative relationship between integrated talent development and engagement practices and competitive advantage in the Ghanaian Telecommunication sector. Furthermore, this research contributes to the existing body of information on the problems under discussion because earlier studies focused on integrated talent development and engagement practices and competitive advantage without considering a mediating component. Consequently, due to the fact that earlier research lacked some level of comprehensiveness in that area, this work adds to the body of information on the subject that is currently available.

Literature review and hypotheses development

Resource-based view theory

The resource-based perspective examines why firms succeed or fail in the market from the inside [54]. According to Barney [18, 19], the resource-based perspective idea, the success of any organization is heavily reliant on not just any resources, but resources tend to possess certain special characteristics. Thus, resources are valuable, uncommon, unmatched, and non-substitutable [18, 19]. These resources can be human, physical, or organizational [65, 70]. According to Barney [18, 19], valuable resources are critical for every organization's efficiency and effectiveness. Uncommon resources are those resources (organizational, physical, and human) that are dearth in supply; hence, there is an imbalance in their distribution among organizations. Unmatched and non-substitutable resources are also those that are difficult to be replicated or easily replaced by other organizations. Despite widespread acceptance of the RBV theory, it is not without criticism. Accordingly, Priem and Butler [67] posit that RBV theory is not made up of a true theory. They first argue that the RBV theory is primarily tautological; thus, its basic assertion is not empirically verifiable but

is true by definition. Secondly, they criticized the theory with respect to its predictive ability (thus, applicability, context, and static nature). More so, they argue that RBV primarily focuses on internal resources as the main drivers for competitive advantage, as it largely overlooks the significance of external factors, such as market dynamics, competition, technological shifts, and more, which can be equally crucial. In addition, the RBV theory tends to focus on leveraging existing resources, often sidelining the process of developing new resources. However, this current study contributes to addressing of the limitations of the RBV theory such as delving into how organizations adapt their integrated talent development and engagement practices in response to shifting competitive landscapes, thereby addressing the criticism of RBV being too static; by focusing on integrated talent development and engagement practices, the study provides clarity on human resources as valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable assets, adding depth to the understanding of resource valuation in RBV theory. While the RBV has been foundational in strategic management literature, its limitations warrant nuanced studies that bridge the gaps. The current study, by focusing on specific Integrated talent development and engagement practices and their interplay with competitive advantage through corporate image aims to expand upon the RBV theory, offering a more comprehensive, dynamic, and practical understanding of how resources drive competitiveness.

RBV indicates that the human resource of an organization can be recognized not only for its position in achieving corporate objectives but also for creating a smarter and more flexible competitive advantage over organizations with higher levels of cooperation and operations [12]. In applying the RBV theory to human resource management, the human resource at the disposal of an organization can be considered crucial resources that are similar to the resources of other organizations [55]. As such, human resources can be likened to internal resources that satisfy the RBV criteria for developing and rendering support for superior performance and competitive advantage. This is due to the fact that human resources are typically entrenched in a company's multi-dimensional social systems, which ensure that employees adopt special aspects of an organization that is valuable enough to obtain a competitive advantage [32]. Thus, deploying various practices to ensure that employees as resources adds value and gives the organization a competitive edge over its competitors. These practices may include recruiting exceptionally talented humans and designing appropriate and effective training programs that can give the organization a competitive advantage.

Baum [21] postulates that the resources of an organization cannot be discussed without a major focus on its human resources. This is because human resource is the most scarce and fundamental resource available to an organization in terms of a high level of knowledge and competency. According to Chakraborty and Biswas [27], the human resources of an organization play the most pivotal and prospective role in its ultimate success. Therefore, in an attempt to achieve a competitive advantage, human resources must be managed extensively and strategically. Organizations should be inward looking by taking advantage of their internal resources, both intellectual and human capital as a source of competitive advantage. This is because extremely valuable talent among employees, including versatility, creativity, enhanced efficiency, high performance, and private customer support, is a way for employees to provide a key ingredient in the growth of an organization's competitive positioning [9].

Integrated talent development and engagement practices

An integrated talent development and engagement practices is viewed as a collection of effective in-house strategies and procedures created and executed to ensure that a company's human capital contributes to its business objectives [35, 51, 60]. Despite the fact that there are other human resource management-related functions that might be implemented as practices, this study concentrates on three practices: training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance. This is because these practices are considered to have the potential to motivate employees in addition to providing them with a certain level of security and self-esteem that leads to a competitive advantage [25]. Communication of strategy encompasses the way an organization disseminates its strategy among its employees to toughen the phases of decision-making [63]. This human resource management function can be implemented by conducting regular workshops where top management discusses strategic objectives with middle management and key staff, creating strategy documents or manuals that are made accessible to all employees; using communication tools like newsletters, intranet portals, or town hall meetings to update employees on strategic shifts or focal points, setting up platforms where employees can clarify doubts, offer suggestions, or discuss the strategic direction; and ensuring that performance reviews, trainings, and even recruitment align with the communicated strategy. This approach ensures that a strategy is in place to attain the long-term goals for which the organization that was established and is communicated to the employees.

Training in multiple functions on the other hand refers to the practice of training employees in various roles or responsibilities beyond their primary job function, as this approach broadens employees' skill sets, making them more versatile, adaptable, and better equipped to understand the broader operations of the organization [58]. In this study, the concept training in multiple functions is conceptualized as designing structured programs where employees from one department are trained in the tasks of another department, periodically moving employees between different roles or departments, as this exposes them to various facets of the organization and helps them understand the interconnectedness of functions; encouraging employees to participate in projects that require collaboration across multiple departments, as this provides hands-on experience and exposure to different functions; pairing employees with mentors from different functions, as this allows employees to gain insights and learnings from diverse areas within the organization. This HRM practice does not only strengthens organizational resilience but also fosters a culture of continuous learning and adaptability among employees. Feedback on performance is the systematic process where employees receive information about their work outputs, behaviors, or processes [30]. In this current study, feedback on performance is operationalized as holding regular (e.g., annual, semi-annual, or quarterly) performance discussions between managers and their direct reports, gathering feedback from an employee's subordinates, peers, and superiors for a holistic view of performance; utilizing platforms or software that allow for real-time feedback from peers and managers, encouraging employees to self-reflect and evaluate their performance against set benchmarks or objectives; and providing feedback not just to evaluate, but also to guide employees on potential areas for growth and learning. The goal is to reinforce positive behaviors and rectify or improve areas of concern, ensuring alignment with organizational objectives.

An integrated talent development and engagement practices and competitive advantage

The primary significance of the integrated talent development and engagement practices in achieving competitive advantage for organizational efficiency and effectiveness has become a key research agenda [50]. As a result, numerous studies have been conducted to determine the extent of their relatedness. For instance, Ahmed and Siddiqui [3] observed that, integrated talent development and engagement practices of an organization can be a key source of competitive advantage through cost leadership and product differentiation. More so, Alajmi et al. [4] demonstrated that human resource management strategies have a strong positive impact on competitive

advantage. Similarly, scholars have considered the practice of HRM essential to achieving a competitive advantage, as allows many firms to prioritize their most valuable human capital [28, 50] (López-Gamero et al. 2023). Moreover, Elrehail et al. [34] point out that the competitive advantage earned through integrated talent development and engagement practices is more reliable than that gained through other human resource management practices. Likewise, Bailey et al. [17] contend that there is a link between HR practices and competitive advantage, as they require a flexible staff that can swiftly settle client complaints on the spot without too much conversation and discussion with their superiors.

Drawing on the RBV theory, competitive advantage comes from implementing strategies that leverage internal powers, adapting to environmental opportunities, combating external challenges, and avoiding internal vulnerabilities. The resource-based vision of the company makes it clear that key human capital is a source of competitive advantage. This makes HR practices relevant because they enable organizations to think more clearly about the quality of the skills of their workforce at various levels and the quality of the motivational environment to be developed and sustained to keep the workforce satisfied. Thus, improving the adoption of effective integrated talent development and engagement practices is the greatest method to acquire a competitive advantage. Given this, we hypothesize that:

- *H1a* Communication of strategy positively and significantly relate to competitive advantage.
- *H1b* Feedback on performance positively and significantly relate to competitive advantage.
- *H1c* Training in multiple functions positively and significantly relate to competitive advantage.

Mediating role of corporate image

According to prior investigations into corporate image, scholars do not share a common understanding of the construct's meaning or how it should be operationalized [5, 7]. Despite this, corporate image can be defined in a variety of ways, and these definitions change based on the field in which the research is going to be applied [23]. In light of this, the goal of this study was to evaluate the corporate image of various telecommunications businesses using the definition of service industries provided by Walters and Paul [75], who emphasized the importance of the customer perspective. According to the author, the image of an organization is comprised of three different aspects, the image of the institution, which relates to consumers' overall view of an organization's participation in social undertakings; the functional image, which also

refers to the general consumer view of an organization's services, tactics, effectiveness and commodities, which encompass the overall insight of consumers of the integrity, quality, or usefulness of an organization's products or services. Moreover, scholars posit that a positive organizational image can help attract investors, boost consumer trust, lower the risk of volatility, and raise customer satisfaction, loyalty, and purchasing intentions, ultimately leading to an increase in earnings and sales [20, 45].

The need to examine potential mechanisms through which integrated talent development and engagement practices can lead to competitive advantage is noted in the literature [48]. Although dearth of studies have explored the relationship between integrated talent development and engagement practices and corporate image, available pieces of evidence in the literature suggest that this relationship exists. For instance, Al Kerday [8] revealed that integrated talent development and engagement practices have a significant impact on corporate image. Likewise, Younis and Hammad [78] contend that effective integrated talent development and engagement practices could be helpful not only in attracting and retaining employees but also in predicting corporate image. Generally, firms that have a good corporate image tend to influence organizational identification and other individual outcomes [14, 71]. Thus, when organizations develop a good corporate image, they can establish trust, confidence, loyalty, and superb client relationships as well as provide a strong sense of security to employees, customers, and other stakeholders. Moreover, scholars on the other hand postulate that organizations can project an effective corporate image by establishing sturdy and reassuring relationships with their stakeholders such as employees as well as apprehending the various needs of the employees [29, 76, 79]. Moreover, Okoisama et al. [62] found that there is a substantial association between a company's corporate image and its competitive advantage.

Drawing on the RBV theory and the pieces of evidence espoused in the extant literature, the researchers posit that when these integrated talent development and engagement practices are effectively implemented can aid in developing a company's human capital. This, in turn, can shape and enhance the corporate image, a valuable intangible resource that can provide differentiation and competitive advantage. Also, within the context of the RBV theory, corporate image emerges as an invaluable and intangible resource, as this resource, which is promulgated by effective integrated talent development and engagement practices, offers firms a distinctive edge that can't be easily replicated by competitors. This suggests that corporate image may serve as a link for improving a company's competitive advantage through an integrated

talent development and engagement practices. Given this, we hypothesize that;

- *H2a* Corporate image mediates the relationship between communication of strategy and competitive advantage.
- *H2b* Corporate image mediates the relationship between feedback on performance and competitive advantage.
- *H2c* Corporate image mediates the relationship between training in multiple functions and competitive advantage.

Conceptual framework

See Fig. 1.

Methods

Research design, sample, and procedure

The underpinning research design for this study was a cross-sectional survey approach. This study gathered information from workers in Ghana’s telecommunication sector, which is one of the most advanced in Africa when compared to other regions. Also, the sector contains a wide-range population of mobile phone users with varied socioeconomic backgrounds and therefore attention would be centered on employees who are familiar with the HRM practice in the sector and how it tends to create competitive advantage. The study specifically targeted employees operating in this telecommunication service provider in Ghana. In total, 305 surveys were personally handed to employees, with 301 valid

questionnaires (98.7%) recovered and examined. The purpose of collecting data from these main service providers was to get perspectives from various employees in the sector on how an integrated talent development and engagement practice might assist generate a competitive advantage and also to permit generalization of the results.

In addressing the issue of ethical consideration, all the participants in the study, especially those who participated as responders were scrupulously protected. Furthermore, the consent of respondents was sought albeit verbally before enrolling them in the study. The participants were also told that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could leave at any time. We also took the ethical standards of anonymity and confidentiality into account.

Measures

Integrated talent development and engagement practices were measured using a scale adapted from Şendoğdu et al. [69]. The scale was measured on three dimensions, namely communication of strategy (four items), feedback on performance (four items), and training in multiple functions (five items). *Corporate image*. Numerous researchers have considered corporate image as a single dimension, while others see it as a multidimensional construct comprised of various characteristics such as social, credibility, responsibility, and reputation [46, 56]. However, in our study corporate image was measured as a single construct [1, 26]. *Competitive advantage* was measured using scales adapted from Attiany [13], Porter and Miller [66], and Schuler and Jackson [68]. A

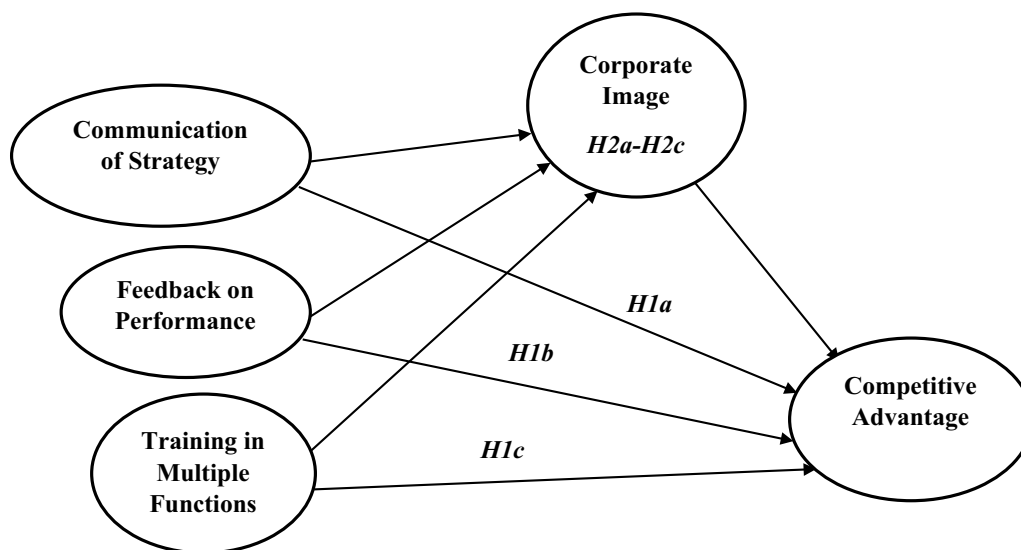


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework. Source(s): Authors’ Construct (2023)

five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "Strongly Disagree" to 5 "Strongly Agree" was employed to anchor the responses of the respondents.

Data analysis

The data retrieved from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (structural equation modeling partial least squares) with the aid of IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0) and Smart PLS 4.0. The IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0) aided in analyzing demographic characteristics of the respondents, mean standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. The two-step modeling approach, which entails performing a confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate the distinctiveness of the constructs [44], and the structural model was used to test the hypothesized relationship between the construct with the aid of Smart PLS (Version 4.0) (Table 1).

Results

The results in Table 2 revealed that the values for Cronbach alpha and composite reliability were above the acceptable threshold of 0.70 [39]. Also, the average variance extracted values were above 0.50 [39]. More so, the results revealed that the factor loadings were more than 0.70 [40]. The discriminant validity of the latent variables in this study was assessed using Fornell–Larcker and heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio criteria. According to Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria, the

inter-correlations of the variables should be less than the square root of the average variance extract (AVE). This claim is thus supported by the results revealed in Table 3. Following Henseler et al.'s [42] $HTMT_{0.85}$ criterion that values that are less than 0.85 are acceptable, discriminant validity was further confirmed. This is because the values as reported in Table 3 are less than the recommended threshold.

Correlations among study constructs

The results in Table 4 show that training in many functions positively and significantly correlates with competitive image ($r=0.459, p<0.01$) and competitive advantage ($r=0.474$). Also, the results revealed that communication of strategy positively and significantly relates with corporate image ($r=0.682, p<0.01$) and ($r=0.597, p<0.01$). More so, the results revealed that feedback on performance positively and significantly relates with corporate image ($r=0.461, p<0.01$) and competitive advantage ($r=0.359$). Similarly, the results revealed that corporate image positively and significantly correlates with competitive advantage ($r=0.861, p<0.01$).

Structural model results

The evaluation of the adequacy of our study model involved the estimation of NFI and SRMR. The values presented in Table 6 demonstrate that the study model exhibits a satisfactory level of fit, as indicated by the fit

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Category	Items	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	172	57.29
	Female	129	42.71
Age	Below 30 years	125	41.67
	30–39 years	110	36.46
	40–49 years	38	12.50
	50–59 years	19	6.25
	Above 60 years	6	2.08
Marital status	Single	132	43.75
	Married	129	42.71
	Divorced	41	13.54
Academic qualification	Diploma	53	17.71
	HND	72	23.96
	Bachelor's degree	91	30.21
Working experience	Master's degree	85	28.13
	Less than 5 years	78	26.04
	5–10 years	125	41.67
	11–15 years	47	15.63
	16–20 years	34	11.46
	More than 20 years	16	5.21

Source: Field Study (2023)

Table 2 Reliability and validity of study constructs

Variable	Indicators	SFL	CA	CR	AVE
Training in multiple functions			0.834	0.888	0.664
	TMF1	0.881			
	TMF2	0.816			
	TMF3	0.750			
	TMF4	0.808			
Communication of strategy			0.722	0.793	0.562
	CoS1	0.710			
	CoS2	0.727			
	CoS3	0.808			
Feedback on performance			0.793	0.906	0.828
	FoP1	0.901			
	FoP2	0.919			
Corporate image			0.837	0.885	0.607
	CI1	0.701			
	CI2	0.820			
	CI3	0.794			
	CI4	0.739			
	CI5	0.834			
Competitive advantage			0.907	0.924	0.575
	CA1	0.780			
	CA2	0.778			
	CA3	0.758			
	CA4	0.802			
	CA5	0.767			
	CA6	0.767			
	CA7	0.737			
	CA8	0.718			
CA9	0.716				

Source: Field Study (2023)

index values falling within the acceptable threshold recommended by Bagozzi and Yi [16]. The evaluation of our research model's prediction effectiveness was also conducted using Stone-Q Geisser's square (Q^2) values. Values that are less than zero indicate a deficiency in the predictive significance of the study model. Scores above zero in Q^2 , though, demonstrate the predictive utility of the study model. The statistics shown in Table 6 indicate that all of the Q^2 values are above zero, suggesting that the study model had predictive ability.

Training in multiple functions, feedback on performance, and communication of strategy accounted for 41.7% of the variance in corporate image (see Fig. 2). Also, training in multiple functions, feedback on performance, and communication of strategy together with corporate image accounted for 75.3% of the variance in competitive advantage (see Fig. 2).

Also, effect size was examined to evaluate the strength of the correlations between latent variables [77]. Effect size (f^2) values of 0.02, >0.15, and >0.35 imply small, moderate, and large effect sizes (f^2), respectively [38]. The results in Table 5 depict the f^2 values are moderate and large.

Test of hypotheses

Contrary to our expectation training in multiple functions (TMF → CA: $\beta=0.117$, $t=1.420$, $p>0.05$), communication of strategy (CoS → CA: $\beta=-0.041$, $t=0.543$, $p>0.05$), and feedback on performance (FoP → CA: $\beta=0.134$, $t=1.523$, $p<0.05$) were found not to significantly predict competitive advantage lending no support to *H1a*, *H1b*, and *H1c* of this study.

However, the primary focus of this study was to examine the mediating effects of corporate image in the relationship between integrated talent development and engagement practices (training in multiple functions,

Table 3 Discriminant validity among study constructs

		1	2	3	4	5
<i>Fornell-Larcker criterion</i>						
1	Competitive advantage	0.758				
2	Corporate image	0.454	0.779			
3	Communication of strategy	0.480	0.509	0.749		
4	Feedback on performance	0.605	0.590	0.559	0.910	
5	Training in multiple function	0.524	0.494	0.596	0.501	0.815
<i>Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion</i>						
1	Competitive advantage					
2	Corporate image	0.773				
3	Communication of strategy	0.592	0.682			
4	Feedback on performance	0.711	0.721	0.777		
5	Training in multiple function	0.577	0.563	0.726	0.604	

Source: Field Study (2023)

Table 4 Correlation among study construct

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Gender	1.43	.497	–	–	–					
2 Age	31.44	8.659	–	–	.083	–				
3 TMF	3.64	.738	–.088	.076	.029	–.188	–			
4 CoS	3.77	.717	–.021	.054	.052	.009	.554**	–		
5 FoP	3.57	.731	–.645	–.630	.051	–.020	.553**	.503**	–	
6 CI	28.37	4.968	–.329	.894	.122	.058	.459**	.682**	.461**	–
7 CA	32.27	5.535	–.099	.910	.068	.106	.474**	.597**	.359**	.861**

n=301. **p<0.01

CA competitive advantage, CI corporate image, CoS communication of strategy, FoP feedback on performance, TMF training in multiple functions

Source: Field Study (2023)

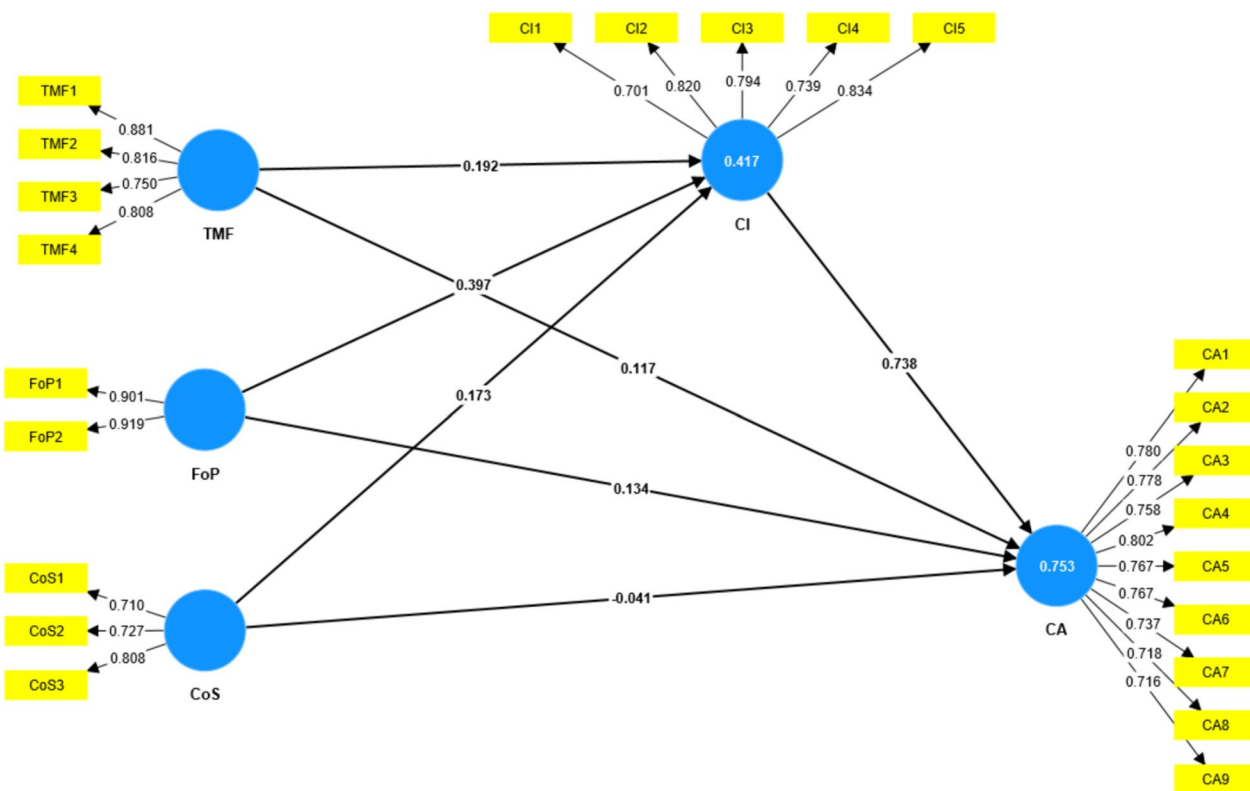


Fig. 2 Final standardized loadings (CFA). Source: Author’s Own Construct (2023)

Table 5 Effect size

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Competitive advantage					
2 Corporate image	0.283				
3 Communication of strategy	0.050	0.028			
4 Feedback on performance	0.040	0.174			
5 Training in multiple function	0.032	0.038			

Source: Field study (2023)

Table 6 Structural model results

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Decision
CI → CA	0.738	0.734	0.075	9.777	0.000	Supported
CoS → CA	-0.041	-0.035	0.075	0.543	0.587	Not supported
CoS → CI	0.173	0.173	0.102	1.689	0.091	Not supported
FoP → CA	0.134	0.136	0.088	1.523	0.128	Not supported
FoP → CI	0.397	0.389	0.108	3.685	0.000	Supported
TMF → CA	0.117	0.113	0.082	1.420	0.156	Not supported
TMF → CI	0.192	0.208	0.090	2.137	0.033	Supported
<i>Specific indirect effect through corporate image</i>						
CoS → CI → CA	0.127	0.129	0.079	1.614	0.107	Not supported
TMF → CI → CA	0.141	0.153	0.070	2.026	0.043	Supported
FoP → CI → CA	0.293	0.282	0.075	3.934	0.000	Supported
<i>Model fit index</i>		<i>Accepted value</i>		<i>Research model</i>		
Normed fit index (NFI)		≥ 0.90		0.93		
Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)		≤ 0.05		0.038		
<i>Stoner–Geisser Q²</i>						
CI	0.186					
CA	0.065					
SRMR	0.045					

n = 301

CA competitive advantage, CI corporate image, CoS communication of strategy, FoP feedback on performance, TMF training in multiple functions

Source: Field Study (2023)

communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) and competitive advantage. Therefore, Mackinnon et al.'s [49] criteria for testing mediating was followed using Smart PLS 4.0. Results of the direct effects of training in multiple functions (TMF → CI: $\beta=0.192$, $t=2.137$, $p<0.05$) and feedback on performance (FoP → CI: $\beta=0.397$, $t=3.685$, $p<0.001$) on corporate image were all significant. However, the effect of communication of strategy (CoS → CI: $\beta=0.173$, $t=1.689$, $p>0.05$) on corporate image was not significant. Equally significant is the fact that the nexus between corporate image and competitive advantage (CI → CA: $\beta=0.738$, $t=9.777$, $p<0.001$) was significant. Hence, the second condition of testing mediation was supported. Furthermore, to estimate the indirect effect of integrated talent development and engagement practices (training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) on competitive advantage through the mediating variable, we conducted a bias-corrected bootstrapping analysis at 95% CI as reiterated above. As shown in Table 6, the bootstrap results confirm the existence of positive and significant mediating effects of corporate image between training in multiple functions and competitive advantage (TMF → CI → CA: $\beta=0.141$, $t=2.026$, $p<0.05$) and feedback on performance and

competitive advantage (FoP → CI → CA: $\beta=0.293$, $t=3.934$, $p<0.001$), indicating support for *H1b* and *H1c*. However, we found no support for the indirect effect of corporate image in the nexus between communication of strategy and competitive advantage (CoS → CI → CA: $\beta=0.127$, $t=1.614$, $p>0.05$), indicating no support for *H1a*. Finally, the direct effect of training in multiple functions, feedback on performance, and communication of strategy on competitive advantage as shown in Table 6 reveals that corporate image partially mediated the nexus between both training in multiple functions and feedback on performance and competitive advantage.

Discussion

Our study focused on examining the influence of integrated talent development and engagement practices (training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) on competitive advantage while assessing the mediating role of corporate image. Organizations in the telecommunication sector, which is not different from any other business organization, face tremendous challenges in this current volatile, uncertain and ambiguous business environment. These challenges range from mergers and acquisitions of firms to persistent changes in the labor market, both local and

international, and international competition. The Ghanaian telecommunication sector is, however, not exempted from these challenges. Moreover, the nature of the business environment in Ghana makes this present study significant.

Our study's results showed that training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance did not significantly relate with competitive advantage, indicating no support for *H1a*, *H1b*, and *H1c*. This could mean that these integrated talent development and engagement practices were not effectively aligned with the specific needs and challenges of the Ghanaian telecommunication industry, hence not aiding in the achievement of competitive advantage. It could also be explained that the actual implementation of the integrated talent development and engagement practices may have been flawed. For instance, training programs might not have been effectively designed and executed, communication of strategy might have been unclear or inconsistent, or feedback on performance might not have been constructive or timely. More so, competitive advantage in the telecommunication industry can be influenced by a multitude of external factors, such as regulatory changes, technological advancements, and market dynamics. These external factors could have had a more significant impact on competitive advantage than the integrated talent development and engagement practices under study. In furtherance, these findings support earlier studies that claimed there was no consensus in the literature regarding how an integrated talent development and engagement practices would give an organization a competitive edge [47]. However, earlier studies have demonstrated that HRM practice can be utilized as a tool to gain a competitive edge [4, 24, 28, 50]. This means that firms in the Ghanaian telecommunication sector can explore other integrated talent development and engagement practices that will allow them to gain a competitive edge.

The prediction that corporate image mediates the relationship between both training in multiple functions and feedback on performance and corporate image was met, hence indicating support for *H2b* and *H2c*. However, the prediction that corporate image mediates the relationship between communication of strategy and corporate image was not met, hence indicating non-support for *H2a* of this study. These results suggest that training in multiple functions and feedback on performance might have an indirect influence on the competitive image through corporate image. One possible reason for not finding mediation in the case of communication of strategy is measurement-related. It is possible that the measures used to assess communication of strategy and corporate image were not sensitive enough to capture the potential mediating effect. These findings support the

findings of Al Kerdayy [8], Azam and Qureshi [14] and Sriviboon [71] assertion that an integrated talent development and engagement practices could be helpful not only in attracting and retaining employees but also help in achieving competitive advantage through corporate image. Generally, organizations that tend to have a good corporate image influence organizational identification and other individual outcomes. Thus, when these organizations develop a good corporate image, they can establish trust, confidence, and loyalty which then can serve as a means through which organizations can achieve competitive advantage through an integrated talent development and engagement practices [29, 76, 79].

Implications for practice

The contribution of an integrated talent development and engagement practices for gaining a competitive advantage through the corporate image in the telecommunication sector in Ghana cannot be underestimated. The study's conclusions have a wide range of practical ramifications. It emphasizes the important roles played by human resource management practices in achieving the many advantages of corporate image and competitive advantage. The extant literature indicates that telecommunication firms that tend to undertake effective human resource management practices can enhance the core competencies of their employees and perform better to achieve competitive advantage [4, 24]. This means human resource managers should undertake human resource management practices that are effective and motivating enough to boost the morale of the employees to facilitate the tendency of an organization to enhance its corporate image and achieve a competitive advantage. Furthermore, human resource management practices in the sector should be developed based on the mission, vision, and core values of the organization so that the interaction and behaviors of employees can make them work extra harder to respond to immediate customer problems. Moreover, consistent assessment and audit of the integrated talent development and engagement practices are essential among institutions within the sector. This can be attained through periodical human resource audits to identify deficiencies in practices to ensure that timely corrective actions are taken to curtail the problems that may be associated with the problems identified. Therefore, to achieve a competitive advantage, human resource managers and practitioners should design and possibly redesign human resource management practices to offer employees empowerment and autonomy. It is also crucial to remember that direct managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring the successful application of HRM procedures. Adopting human resource management practices that promote job autonomy and

employee empowerment helps to achieve competitive advantage and also has the potential for business success and efficacy.

Limitations and directions for future studies

Despite the fact that the study increases the understanding of the relationship between human resource management practice (training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance), corporate image, and competitive advantage in the telecommunication sector in Ghana, the results of the study should be taken as tentative given the cross-sectional nature of the data used. Also, the study focused on the Ghanaian telecommunication sector, thus making this study a one-sector study. To respond to this limitation, a comparative and multi-sector could be done to further provide nuances on the relationship between human resource management practice (training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) and competitive advantage through corporate image. Also, authors of future studies could adopt experimental and longitudinal research to confirm the underlying path examined in this study. Finally, corporate image was used in this study as the only mediating variable, further studies can examine other mechanisms through which human resource management practice (training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) affect competitive advantage to confirm the results of this current study.

Conclusion

To conclude, an integrated talent development and engagement practices, competitive advantage, and corporate image are assumed as important constructs in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. The findings of this study demonstrated that an integrated talent development and engagement practices (i.e., training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) have no impact on firms' ability to compete in the Ghanaian telecommunications sector. In addition, the study also investigated the mechanism through which the integrated talent development and engagement practices (training in multiple functions, communication of strategy, and feedback on performance) lead to competitive advantage. Contrary to our expectation, the results revealed that corporate image does not mediate the relationship between communication of strategy as a human resource practice and competitive advantage. However, the results also revealed that feedback on performance and training in multiple functions as practices in human resource management have a profoundly favorable impact on competitive advantage through corporate image in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. Generally, this study has delivered significant

insight into the understanding of the effects of integrated talent development and engagement practices on competitive advantage through corporate image. It is, however, the expectation of the authors that the findings of this study can bring numerous benefits to HRM professionals, especially in the Ghanaian telecommunication sector. In addition, the findings of this study call for a pragmatic approach to adopting integrated talent development and engagement practices that help to achieve competitive advantage in the Ghanaian telecommunication sector as well as sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

Abbreviations

HRM	Human resource management
HR	Human resource
CoS	Communication of strategy
CA	Competitive advantage
TMF	Training in multiple functions
FoP	Feedback on performance
CI	Corporate image
CR	Composite reliability
AVE	Average variance extracted
NFI	Normed fit index
SRMR	Standardized root mean square residual

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the support of the respondents who devoted time to fill and return the questionnaires sent to them.

Author contributions

KOB wrote the introduction as well as read and approved the final manuscript. INA analyzed and interpreted the results as well as read and approved the final manuscript. MKF was in charge of the methods and discussion aspect of the manuscript as well as read and approved the final manuscript. ET was in charge of the conclusion aspect of the manuscript as well as arranging and thoroughly proof-reading the manuscript for final approval of the manuscript.

Funding

Not applicable.

Availability of data and materials

All data generated or analyzed during this study are included in this published article.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Received: 29 October 2023 Accepted: 13 May 2024

Published online: 14 June 2024

References

- Anderson E, Robertson TS (1995) Inducing multiline salespeople to adopt house brands. *J Market* 59(2):16–31

2. Afriyie BS (2022) Exploring Methods Cybersecurity Managers Need to Implement to Minimize Cyber-Frauds in Mobile Money Services in Ghana. Doctoral dissertation, Colorado Technical University
3. Ahmed SW, Siddiqui DA (2020) Human resource management, total quality management and competitive advantages: evidence from Pakistani banking industry. In: Total quality management and competitive advantages: evidence from Pakistani banking industry
4. Alajmi AS, Alenezi MA (2016) Study entitled: Human resource management practices and competitive advantage: the mediator role of person-company fit. *Glob J Hum Resour Manag* 4(1):65–82
5. Alam MMD, Noor NAM (2020) The relationship between service quality, corporate image, and customer loyalty of Generation Y: an application of SOR paradigm in the context of superstores in Bangladesh. *SAGE Open* 10(2):2158244020924405
6. Albrecht SL, Bakker AB, Gruman JA, Macey WH, Saks AM (2015) Employee engagement, human resource management practices and competitive advantage. *J Organ Eff People Perform*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-08-2014-0042>
7. Ali HY, Danish RQ, Asrar-ul-Haq M (2020) How corporate social responsibility boosts firm financial performance: the mediating role of corporate image and customer satisfaction. *Corp Soc Responsib Environ Manag* 27(1):166–177
8. Al Kerdawy MMA (2019) The role of corporate support for employee volunteering in strengthening the impact of green human resource management practices on corporate social responsibility in the Egyptian firms. *Eur Manag Rev* 16(4):1079–1095
9. Al Mehrzi N, Singh SK (2016) Competing through employee engagement: a proposed framework. *Int J Product Perform Manag* 65(6):831–843
10. Alserhan H, Shbail M (2020) The role of organizational commitment in the relationship between human resource management practices and competitive advantage in Jordanian private universities. *Manag Sci Lett* 10(16):3757–3766. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2020.7.036>
11. Amarakoon U, Weerawardena J, Verreyne ML (2018) Learning capabilities, human resource management innovation and competitive advantage. *Int J Hum Resour Manag* 29(10):1736–1766. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1209228>
12. Assensoh-Kodua A (2019) The resource-based view: a tool of key competency for competitive advantage. *Probl Perspect Manag* 17(3):143
13. Attiany MS (2014) Competitive advantage through benchmarking: field study of industrial companies listed in Amman stock exchange. *J Bus Stud Q* 5(4):41
14. Azam M, Qureshi JA (2021) Building employer brand image for accumulating intellectual capital: exploring employees' perspective in higher educational institutes. *Estudios De Economia Aplicada* 39(2):1–15
15. Azungah T, Hutchings K, Michailova S (2020) Ethnocentric integrated talent development and engagement practices: evidence from Western MNEs in Ghana. *Int J Emerg Mark* 15:829–848
16. Bagozzi RP, Yi Y (2012) Specification, evaluation, and interpretation of structural equation models. *J Acad Market Sci* 40:8–34
17. Bailey C, Mankin D, Kelliher C, Garavan T (2018) Strategic human resource management. Oxford University Press
18. Barney J (1991) Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *J Manag* 17(1):99–120
19. Barney J (1991) Special theory forum the resource-based model of the firm: origins, implications, and prospects. *J Manag* 17(1):97–98. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700107>
20. Bataineh AQ (2015) The impact of perceived e-WOM on purchase intention: the mediating role of corporate image. *Int J Mark Stud* 7(1):126
21. Baum T (2015) Human resources in tourism: still waiting for change?—a 2015 reprise. *Tour Manag* 50:204–212
22. Benyamin B, Drummonds K, Farag D, Tum C (2016) Foreign corrupt practices act. *Am Crim L Rev* 53:1333
23. Bilgin Y (2018) The effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. *Bus Manag Stud Int J* 6(1):128–148
24. Boon C, Eckardt R, Lepak DP, Boselie P (2018) Integrating strategic human capital and strategic human resource management. *Int J Hum Resour Manag* 29(1):34–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1380063>
25. Bratton J, Gold J (2017) Human resource management: theory and practice. Palgrave
26. Caruana A, Chircop S (2000) Measuring corporate reputation: a case example. *Corp Reput Rev* 3(1):43–57. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1540098>
27. Chakraborty D, Biswas W (2019) Evaluating the impact of human resource planning programs in addressing the strategic goal of the firm: an organizational perspective. *J Adv Manag Res* 16(5):659–682
28. Chapman EF, Sisk FA, Schatten J, Miles EW (2018) Human resource development and human resource management levers for sustained competitive advantage: combining isomorphism and differentiation. *J Manag Organ* 24(4):533–550. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2016.37>
29. Clare G, Uddin S (2019) Corporate image and competitive advantage for apparel companies. *Trends Text Eng Fash Technol* 5(4)
30. Crane A, Matten D, Glozer S, Spence L (2019) Business ethics: managing corporate citizenship and sustainability in the age of globalization. Oxford University Press, Oxford
31. Cooke FL, Xiao M, Chen Y (2021) Still in search of strategic human resource management? A review and suggestions for future research with China as an example. *Hum Resour Manag* 60(1):89–118
32. Davidescu AA, Apostu SA, Paul A, Casuneanu I (2020) Work flexibility, job satisfaction, and job performance among Romanian employees—implications for sustainable human resource management. *Sustainability* 12(15):6086
33. Delery JE, Roumpi D (2017) Strategic human resource management, human capital and competitive advantage: is the field going in circles? *Hum Resour Manag J* 27(1):1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12137>
34. Elrehail H, Harazneh I, Abuhjeeleh M, Alzghoul A, Alnajdawi S, Ibrahim HMH (2019) Employee satisfaction, human resource management practices and competitive advantage. *Eur J Manag Bus Econ*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJMBE-01-2019-0001>
35. Frangieh CG, Yaacoub HK (2018) Socially responsible human resource practices: disclosures of the world's best multinational workplaces. *Soc Responsib J* 15(3):277–295
36. Goldratt EM, Cox J (2016) The goal: a process of ongoing improvement. Routledge
37. Gbadamosi G, Adisa TA (2022) Human resource management in Nigeria: a review and conceptual model. HRM in the Global South, pp 17–52
38. Hair Jr JF, Sarstedt M, Matthews LM, Ringle CM (2016) Identifying and treating unobserved heterogeneity with FIMIX-PLS: part I—method. *Eur Bus Rev* 28(1):63–76
39. Hair Jr JF, Matthews LM, Matthews RL, Sarstedt M (2017) PLS-SEM or CB-SEM: updated guidelines on which method to use. *Inter J Multivar Data Anal* 1(2):107–123
40. Hair JF, Astrachan CB, Moisescu OI, Radomir L, Sarstedt M, Vaithilingam S, Ringle CM (2021) Executing and interpreting applications of PLS-SEM: Updates for family business researchers. *J Family Bus Strat* 12(3):100392
41. Hamadamin HH, Atan T (2019) The impact of strategic human resource management practices on competitive advantage sustainability: the mediation of human capital development and employee commitment. *Sustainability* 11(20):5782
42. Henseler J, Ringle CM, Sarstedt M (2015) A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *J Acad Market Sci* 43:115–135
43. Huselid MA (2018) The science and practice of workforce analytics: introduction to the HRM special issue. *Hum Resour Manag* 57(3):679–684
44. Jöreskog KG, Sörbom D, Wallentin FY (2006) Latent variable scores and observational residuals. Retrieved June 7 2009
45. Jung J, Kim SJ, Kim KH (2020) Sustainable marketing activities of traditional fashion market and brand loyalty. *J Bus Res* 120:294–301
46. Kim SW (2006) Effects of supply chain management practices, integration and competition capability on performance. *Supply Chain Manag Int J*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13598540610662149>
47. Kooij DT, Guest DE, Clinton M, Knight T, Jansen PG, Dikkers JS (2013) How the impact of HR practices on employee well-being and performance changes with age. *Hum Resour Manag J* 23(1):18–35. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12000>
48. Lee J, Kim S, Lee J, Moon S (2019) Enhancing employee creativity for a sustainable competitive advantage through perceived human resource management practices and trust in management. *Sustainability* 11(8):2305

49. MacKinnon DP, Lockwood CM, Williams J (2004) Confidence limits for the indirect effect: distribution of the product and resampling methods. *Multivar Behav Res* 39:99–128. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327906mbr3901_4
50. Madani M, Wajeetongratana P (2019) The effects of culture and human resource management policies on supply chain management strategy. *Pol J Manag Stud*. <https://doi.org/10.17512/pjms.2019.19.1.18>
51. Madanat HG, Khasawneh AS (2018) Level of effectiveness of human resource management practices and its impact on employees' satisfaction in the banking sector of Jordan. *J Organ Cult Commun Conflict* 22(1):1–19
52. Manzoor F, Wei L, Bányai T, Nurunnabi M, Subhan QA (2019) An examination of sustainable Integrated talent development and engagement practices on job performance: an application of training as a moderator. *Sustainability* 11(8):2263. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11082263>
53. Malik A (2019) Creating competitive advantage through source basic capital strategic humanity in the industrial age 4.0. *Int Res J Adv Eng Sci* 4(1):209–215
54. McGahan AM (2021) Integrating insights from the resource-based view of the firm into the new stakeholder theory. *J Manag* 47(7):1734–1756
55. Melton EK, Meier KJ (2017) For the want of a nail: the interaction of managerial capacity and human resource management on organizational performance. *Public Adm Rev* 77(1):118–130
56. Minkiewicz J, Evans J, Bridson K, Mavondo F (2011) Corporate image in the leisure services sector. *J Serv Mark*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/08876041111129173>
57. Mugo P (2020) Porter's five forces influence on competitive advantage in telecommunication industry in Kenya. *Eur J Bus Strateg Manag* 5(2):30–49
58. Noe RA, Kodwani AD (2018) *Employee training and development*. McGraw Hill Education
59. Narang GS, Sharma A (2015) Use of statistical analysis program (SPSS) in ascertaining relevance of best HR practices. *Int J Manag IT Eng* 5(12):19–40
60. Njine GW, Nzulwa J, Kamaara M, Ombui K (2017) Influence of employee training on innovation performance of DTS in Kenya. *J Hum Resour Leadersh* 2(7):1–16
61. Obeidat B, Tawalbeh HF, Akour MA (2019) Reviewing the literature among human resource management (HRM) practices, total quality management (TQM) practices and competitive advantages. *J Soc Sci (COES&RJSS)* 8(2):327–358
62. Okoisama TC, Best EC, Anyanwu SA (2017) Corporate image management and firm's competitive advantage: A study of the telecommunication industry in port harcourt. *Inter J Adv Acad Res Soc Manag Sci* 3(6):16–31
63. Ozgan H (2011) The relationships between organizational justice, confidence, commitment, and evaluating the manager and the perceptions of conflict management at the context of organizational behavior. *Educational Sciences: Theory Pract* 11(1):241–247
64. Pham H (2020) Impact of human resource management practices on enterprises' competitive advantages and business performance: evidence from telecommunication industry. *Manag Sci Lett* 10(4):721–732
65. Ployhart RE (2021) Resources for what? Understanding performance in the resource-based view and strategic human capital resource literatures. *J Manag* 47(7):1771–1786
66. Porter ME, Millar VE (1985) How information gives you competitive advantage
67. Priem RL, Butler JE (2001) Is the resource-based "view" a useful perspective for strategic management research?. *Acad Manag Rev* 26(1):22–40
68. Schuler RS, Jackson SE (1987) Linking competitive strategies with human resource management practices. *Acad Manag Perspect* 1(3):207–219. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1987.4275740>
69. Şendoğdu AA, Kocabacak A, Güven Ş (2013) The relationship between human resource management practices and organizational commitment: a field study. *Procedia Soc Behav Sci* 99:818–827
70. Sony M, Aithal PS (2020) A resource-based view and institutional theory-based analysis of industry 4.0 implementation in the Indian engineering industry. *Int J Manag Technol Soc Sci (IJMTS)* 5(2):154–166
71. Sriviboon C (2022) The effect of service innovation, corporate image, human capital strategy and customer loyalty on performance: evidence from rice industry. *Uncertain Supply Chain Manag* 10(3):867–876
72. Srivastava RK, Fahey L, Christensen HK (2001) The resource-based view and marketing: the role of market-based assets in gaining competitive advantage. *J Manag* 27(6):777–802. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630102700610>
73. Taamneh A, Alsaad AK, Elrehail H (2018) Integrated talent development and engagement practices and the multifaceted nature of organization performance. *EuroMed J Bus*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-022018-0010>
74. Tian AW, Cordery J, Gamble J (2016) Staying and performing: How human resource management practices increase job embeddedness and performance. *Pers Rev* 45(5):947–968
75. Walters CG, Paul GW (1970) *Consumer behavior: an integrated framework*. RD Irwin
76. Widyastuti S (2019) Developing a green corporate image: an achievement for competitive advantage through organizational culture and green marketing strategy. *Revista San Gregorio* (36)
77. Wong KKK (2013) Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) techniques using SmartPLS. *Mark Bull* 24(1):1–32
78. Younis RAA, Hammad R (2020) Employer image, corporate image and organizational attractiveness: the moderating role of social identity consciousness. *Pers Rev* 50(1):244–263
79. Zameer H, Wang Y, Yasmeen H (2020) Reinforcing green competitive advantage through green production, creativity and green brand image: implications for cleaner production in China. *J Clean Prod* 247:119119

Publisher's note

Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Kwame Owusu Boakye is a senior lecturer at the Department of Management Sciences, School of Business, University of Education, Winneba. He is a licensed industrial and organizational psychologist who holds a bachelor of arts in psychology and a master of philosophy in industrial and organizational psychology and currently a final year PhD candidate in I/O psychology at the University of Ghana, Legon. He is a life coach, motivational speaker, and the programme coordinator of human resource management at the College of Distance and E-learning, University of Education, Winneba. He is passionate about youth development and mentoring. His research interest spans across organizational behavior, personnel psychology, and occupational health and safety. He can be reached at koboakye@uew.edu.gh.

Isaac Nyarko Adu is a senior lecturer and the Ag Head of the Department of Management Sciences, School of Business, University of Education, Winneba. He holds a bachelor of arts (B.A.) degree in information studies with philosophy and a master of philosophy (M.Phil.) degree in human resource management all from the University of Ghana. Additionally, he holds a postgraduate diploma in teaching and learning in higher education from the University of Education, Winneba. He is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Human Resource Management, Ghana. Currently, he teaches on a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the field of management. He has over 20 publications in the area of human resource management, change management and organizational behavior in high impact journals. He can be reached at inadu@uew.edu.gh.

Michael Kyei-Frimpong holds a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.BA) degree in human resource management and a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) degree in human resource management from the University of Education, Winneba and the University of Ghana Business School, Accra, Ghana respectively. He is an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Human Resource Management, Ghana. His research interest lies within work–family interface, sustainable leadership, human resource management, and organizational behavior. He has publications in recognized journals like *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality*

and Tourism, Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration, Work-Applied Management and FIB Business Review with others under review. He can be reached at k.michael90@yahoo.com.

Evelyn Twumasi is a senior lecturer at the Department of Management Sciences of the University of Education Winneba. Her research interest is in employee well-being, occupational health and safety management, and work outcomes. She has publications in recognized journals such as Cogent Business and Management, International Journal of Workplace Health Management with others under review. She has served as a reviewer for Management Research Review. Evelyn holds an MPhil degree in business administration (human resource management option) and is a PhD candidate at the University of Ghana, Legon. She can be reached at etwumasi@uew.edu.gh.