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Fragile Indonesia, Resilient Indonesia: Understanding Indonesia's Position in The Global War for Talent

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Abstract. This paper examines the strategic meaning of Indonesia's position in the phenomenon commonly referred to as the "global war for talent". By reassessing Indonesia's position measured by Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) in year of 2020-2023, this study discusses the strategic significance of Indonesia's position in a broader view. Indonesia's position in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index reflects a strategic paradox. On the one hand, Indonesia possesses significant demographic potential and abundant human resources; on the other hand, the country continues to face structural vulnerabilities in global talent competitiveness. The findings therefore indicate that Indonesia's relatively modest position in global talent competitiveness is not merely an educational issue but also reflects broader structural challenges. In this context, global talent competitiveness should be understood as an integral dimension of national resilience, since the capacity to develop, attract, and retain talent increasingly determines a nation's ability to survive and compete in the global arena. This study argues that strengthening Indonesia's talent competitiveness requires an integrated national talent management in a long-term national resilience framework. Therefore, the discourse on global talent competitiveness and talent development should not be viewed solely as a sectoral educational agenda, but as a strategic geopolitical and national resilience issue in midst of an increasingly volatile and uncertain global environment.

Keywords: talent; global talent; competitiveness index; global war for talent; international political economy; national resilience

INTRODUCTION

Today, economic power will no longer be centered in countries that have natural resources, manufacturing superiority, military dominance, or even scientific and technological prowess. As the global economy increasingly relies on knowledge, technology and human creativity, especially since the era of 1990s, global competition is heavily influenced by what is known as the phenomenon commonly referred to as the global war for talent. This competition phenomenon is even believed to fundamentally reshape the world in the next few decades.Today, the determinants of competition are centered around the axis: a nation's ability to mobilize, attract, and retain creative talent. Every key dimension of world economic leadership, from manufacturing excellence to advances in science and technology, will depend heavily on this capability. (Florida, 2005).

It is very interesting to observe the phenomenon of the trend of Indonesia's position in the global war for talent as presented in the Global Talent Competitivenes Index (GTCI), a leading global index reference published by INSEAD (Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires). An overview of how countries, including Indonesia, involved in the global battle for talent, compete in developing and retaining talent globally, can be viewed through GTCI. Since more than decade, this mapping index of GTCI provides a relatively comprehensive overview of the complexity of the global talent competition phenomenon as well as a credible reference beside more macro global competitiveness indices such as the Human Capital Index (HCI), Human Development Index (HDI), Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), Global Innovation Index (GII), Fragile State Index (FSI).

This interest arises not merely from the view that Indonesia, given its substantial potential, should rank among the world's most competitive nations a position frequently emphasized by President Prabowo but also from broader analytical considerations and more nuanced observations. From a wider perspective, Indonesia's standing in the GTCI may hold significant strategic relevance. Beyond serving as a measure of national competitiveness in talent development, attraction, and retention, the country's position in the GTCI may provide valuable insights into the structural strengths and challenges that shape Indonesia's long-term capacity to compete within an increasingly knowledge-driven and talent-intensive global economy.

What is, then, the strategic significance of Indonesia's position in the Global War for Talent as reflected by the GCTI findings presented above? What strategic implications can be drawn from? What does Indonesia's position reveal about its strategic strengths, vulnerabilities, and prospects in the midst of an increasingly volatile and uncertain global environment?

METHODS

Methodologically, this study employs an explanatory qualitative approach that combines index-based policy analysis with theory-driven interpretation. The GTCI is treated not merely as a measurement tool but as an empirical lens through which Indonesia's preparedness for a knowledge-based future and its structural vulnerabilities within the global competition for talent can be critically examined.

This study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach to examine Indonesia's position in global talent competitiveness and its implications for the realization of the Indonesia Emas 2045 vision. Rather than testing causal relationships statistically, the study seeks to interpret Indonesia's performance in the GTCI within broader theoretical and strategic contexts, including human capital development, national resilience, and the international political economy. The study adopts a critical interpretive perspective, recognizing that talent competitiveness is not merely an outcome of domestic educational or labor market performance, but is also influenced by structural dynamics embedded within the international political-economy environment.

The study relies primarily on secondary data obtained from the GTCI reports published by INSEAD. Particular attention is given to Indonesia's overall ranking and performance across key dimensions of talent competitiveness, especially the Global Knowledge Skills (GKS) pillar, which reflects the capacity of a country to generate, attract, and utilize advanced knowledge and innovation. To contextualize the findings, additional secondary sources are drawn from international reports, academic literature, research and mapping results, multimedia documentation. This study is also sharpened by comparing GTCI with other global indexes to obtain a more dynamic picture of Indonesia's position in global competition. For a better understanding, at first, the phenomenon will be described by presenting a conceptual framework about talent, talent management, global war for talent, and of GTCI Model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since year of 2013, INSEAD-GTCI has developed methodologies and indicator pillars that provide an understanding of how to evaluate the competitiveness of global talent. A comprehensive and structured methodology ensures that the resulting rankings are an accurate representation of countries' ability to attract, develop, and retain talent.

In the context of the GTCI, talent competitiveness refers to the set of policies and practices that enable a country to develop, attract, and empower the human capital that contributes to productivity and prosperity. Decision-making in the area of talent development, attraction, and empowerment is remarkably complex and multi-layered, covering many different issues in the fields of economics, education, human resource management and organisational behaviour, entrepreneurship, innovation, and strategy, and requiring multi-disciplinary effort. This, hence, contains and shows its own complexities.

The GTCI has been designed to help address the challenge by providing a composite view of talent competitiveness that is applicable to a large number of countries (134 in year of 2023). Although several composite indices concerning skills, talent, and human capital have been developed in recent years, both private and public players in the field see the need for a neutral, global, and respected index that will enable them to: assess the effectiveness of talent-related policies and practices; identify priorities for action in relevant areas; and inform international and local debate in this arena.

The Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) is a highly useful tool for governments and the private sector to understand the dynamics of global talent competition through a comprehensive composite approach known as the Input–Output model. This model combines an assessment of the efforts undertaken by a country to generate and acquire talent (Input) with the types of skills available as a result of those efforts (Output). The Input component consists of four main pillars: Enable, which reflects the extent to which regulatory and business environments, management practices, competition, and labor markets create conditions that support talent development; Attract, which indicates a country's ability to attract talent from both international and domestic sources; Grow, which represents a country's capacity to develop talent through education and access to various learning

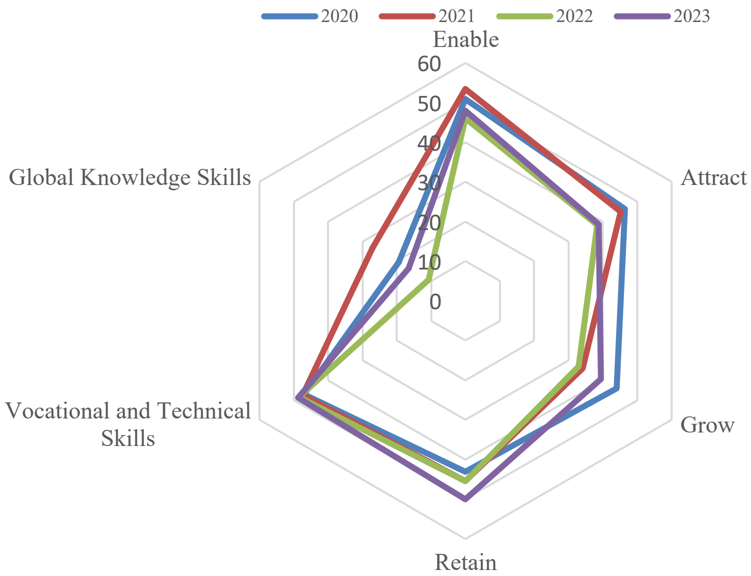

Figure 1. The Dynamic of Indonesia's Performance in GTCI (2020-2023)

opportunities; and Retain, which reflects the ability to retain talent by providing a high quality of life. Meanwhile, the Output component consists of two pillars: Vocational and Technical Skills, which describe the technical and vocational competencies of the workforce, and Global Knowledge Skills, which reflect higher-level skills related to global knowledge, innovation, and the ability to contribute effectively to a knowledge-based economy.

The GTCI relies on various data sources that incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data. It utilizes 69 metrics indicators, grouped into 14 sub-pillars that reflect key aspects influencing talent competitiveness, such as education, business environment, and quality of life.

Data is collected from reliable sources, including international organizations, educational institutions, and global surveys. Quantitative data is obtained from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, while qualitative data is derived from surveys to capture the perceptions of business leaders and professionals. Annually, GTCI surveys approximately 130 countries in a fairly comprehensive spectrum.

In a more comprehensive sense, talent is a special ability that allows someone or group of people to do something well.(Britannica Dictionary, 2024). In a more operational-contextual definition, talent is defined as a short description for individuals with high skills (high skilled-individual), well-educated, growth-oriented, and experienced. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines talent is individual with the criteria of workers at the masters/Ph.D level, international students, foreign entrepreneurs including startups and investors. (NSW Innovation and Productivity Council, 2022).

Talented individuals are strategic in their existence to support the high productivity and innovation of an organization/company. A recent study of McKinsey & Company of more than 600,000 researchers, entertainers, politicians, and athletes found that high performers are 400 percent more productive than average ones. Studies of businesses not only show similar results but also reveal that the gap rises with a job's complexity. In highly complex occupations—the information- and interaction-intensive work of managers, software developers, and the like high performers are an astounding 800 percent more productive. (Keller and Meaney, 2017).

In an era where economies and businesses increasingly rely on knowledge-based innovation capacity, creativity and high-level skills, talent is the new oil and just like oil, demand far outstrips supply. (Heidrick and Struggles, 2007). As talented worker is like a scarce fuel, then, the issue of talent

Table 1. The Dynamic of Indonesia's Performance In GTCI (2020-2023)

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
Global Rank	65	80	82	80
Enable	50.92	53.45	46.08	47.99
Attract	46.39	45.16	38.33	38.78
Grow	44.03	34.05	32.98	39.41
Retain	43.04	45.39	45.41	49.98
Vocational and Technical Skills	47.01	47.41	48.51	48.74
Global Knowledge Skills	19.47	27.05	10.7	16.62

scarcity and how to fulfill it is an issue of talent management as well as an issue of competition to obtain and compete for the best talent. This condition is described as a war for talent.

The term "war for talent" was coined by McKinsey's Steven Hankin in 1997 and popularized by the book of that name in 2001. It refers to the increasingly fierce competition to attract and retain employees at a time when too few workers are available to replace the baby boomers now departing the workforce in advanced economies.(Keller and Meaney, 2017).

The Global War for Talent triggered by the demand to acquire the best talent to support innovation and more knowledge-based economic growth (Reich, 1991). The global war for talent is also considered to represent a new phase in neoliberalism, where the liberalization of the global economy is not only related to capital and commodities, but also human resources who have high-level skills and expertise. (Tannock, 2009).

The rhetoric of the Global War for Talent as coined by McKinsey disseminates the view that those who want to win on the battlefield are those who realize the competitive advantage supported by the greatest talents they have. Thus, the global war for talent is also part of the competition for scarce economic resources (superior human resources) both at the corporate and state levels and its interaction at the international political-economy level. The Global War for Talent has given rise to a new global meritocracy related to literature on human resource management to discourses on the policies and strategies of countries in managing and reforming immigration, then also related to the expansion of higher education, education and linearity between skills and productivity to the relationship between 'learning' and 'earning' in the era of knowledge-driven economy.

The GTCI mapping from 2020 to 2023 reveal a fluctuating performance for Indonesia. In 2020, Indonesia ranked 65th, dropped to 80th in 2021, declined further to 82nd in 2022, but saw a slight improvement in 2023, returning to 80th. Indonesia's performance showing weak scores across all pillars, particularly in attracting and retaining talent (INPUT) and in the global knowledge skills pillar (OUTPUT) as presented on Table 1.

The dynamics of Indonesia's talent competitiveness are more clearly illustrated in figure 1 below. The global knowledge skills pillar represents Indonesia's lowest score, despite its crucial role in fostering innovation within a knowledge-based economy. Consequently, this shortfall in the global knowledge skills pillar contributes to Indonesia's overall low innovation competitiveness. While Indonesia has demonstrated strong performance in several education and skills development indicators, significant weaknesses remain in the "attract and retain" pillar.

Let us examine by relating to other strategic development indicators. Indonesia's relatively modest position in global talent competitiveness appears to be consistent with its performance in Global Innovation Index (GII) 2023, the Fragile States Index (FSI), the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, as showed in Tabel 2.

Table 2. Indonesia Between GTCI, GII, FSI, and PISA

Year	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
Global Rank of GTCI	65	80	82	80	
Global Rank of GII	85	87	75	61	
PISA OECD Assessment			68		
FSI				102	98

Table 3. GTCI TOP-25 and Ranking of Asian Countries

Rank	Country	Skor	Rank	Country	Skor
1	Switzerland	78.96	17	Austria	69.05
2	Singapore	77.11	18	New Zealand	67.26
3	USA	76.6	19	France	66.91
4	Denmark	76.54	20	Estonia	64.29
5	Netherland	74.76	21	Malta	62.66
6	Finland	74.35	22	United Arab Emirates	62.56
7	Norway	73.96	23	Czech Republic	62.43
8	Australia	73.93	24	South Korea	62.21
9	Sweden	73.86	25	Israel	62.20
10	United Kingdom	73.75	26	Japan	61.65
11	Luxemburg	72.88	40	China	52.57
12	Ireland	70.45	42	Malaysia	51.35
13	Canada	70.13	75	Vietnam	41.5
14	Germany	69.88	79	Thailand	40.77
15	Iceland	69.38	**80**	**Indonesia**	**40.25**
16	Belgium	69.12	103	India	30.37

In 2023, Indonesia is positioned 61st out of 132 countries assessed by the GII. Furthermore, the country ranks lowest in several key pillars: human capital and research (85th), business sophistication (77th), and institution (70th). Within the context of middle-income economies, Indonesia holds the 5th position among 37 countries. (GII, 2023). Similarly, data from the Fragile States Index (FSI) 2024 places Indonesia in the "Warning" category, ranking 102nd globally, At a more fundamental level, the country's talent competitiveness is closely associated with the quality of its education system. This is reflected in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, where Indonesia ranked 68th worldwide in mathematics, science, and reading literacy.

Furthermore, it is interesting to have a look at the dynamics of the Indonesian position in global war talent at the Asian (Southeast) level to provide a analytical background for Indonesia's position in the closest strategic environment. There are Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, as well as South Korea and Japan. (see Table 3).

This result of GTCI indicates that the global war for talent continues to be dominated by high-income developed countries, with a notable correlation between a country's GTCI score and its GDP per capita. European countries account for 17 of the top 25 positions. Switzerland remains in first place in 2023, followed by Singapore and the United States, a configuration that has remained consistent in the top three over the past decade. Other non-European countries in the top 25 include Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, and Israel. The most notable change in the top 25 in 2023 is the displacement of Japan's position by South Korea.

GTCI also showed, over the past decade, the Top 15 rankings occupy a relatively stable position and the top 12 best have formed their own ranking configuration.(INSEAD, 2023, p.18). Switzerland has always been the champion with the most talented and competitive talent in the world above Singapore which is also consistently ranked 2nd. In 2023, the United States moved up one place and returned to the top three, displacing Denmark who dropped to 4th place despite the very narrow score difference.

Singapore remains the sole country in Southeast Asia to consistently rank at the top of global talent competitiveness over the last decade. At the mid-tier level, intense competition has emerged between South Korea and Japan, with China increasingly becoming a significant player in the region. Meanwhile, the United Arab Emirates stands out as the only representative of West Asia, maintaining its spot within the global top 25.

The competition between Japan and South Korea is also evident. South Korea's achievements in the talent field mirrors its global dominance in industries such as IT, electronics, automotives, food, as well as the creative and tourism sectors. Samsung, for instance, was recently crowned the global leader in the gadget industry, surpassing Apple. (CNBC Indonesia, 2024). Moreover, the widespread influence of K-Pop and Korean dramas, both domestically and internationally, is undeniable. This success is closely linked to South Korea's creative talent management and its robust talent acquisition ecosystem developed over the past few decades.

Against the backdrop of Indonesia's current standing in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI), several critical and strategic questions merit further examination regarding the broader implications of the country's talent competitiveness within the contexts of international political economy and national resilience.

The Strategic Significance of Indonesia's Position In Global War Talent : Indonesia's Unique Paradox

To understand the strategic significance of Indonesia's position in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI), this study employs both external and internal analytical perspectives. Externally, the phenomenon is examined through the lens of International Political Economy, which views talent as a strategic resource in the contemporary global war for talent. Internally, the analysis is framed within the sense of national resilience in demographic context as well as national development vision of Golden Indonesia 2045 or *Indonesia Emas 2045.*

This dual perspective is essential because global talent competitiveness is not merely a reflection of educational performance or human resource capacity. Rather, it represents a strategic indicator of a nation's ability to generate innovation, sustain economic development, enhance state capacity, and strengthen resilience amid intensifying global competition for talent. It reflects the country's capacity to respond to structural challenges in an increasingly interconnected and competitive world.

Externally, Indonesia's position reflects the structural inequalities embedded within the contemporary international political economy. Indonesia's relatively low position in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index should not be interpreted solely as a reflection of domestic institutional weaknesses. Rather, it also reflects the unequal structure of the global knowledge economy, in which high-income countries possess disproportionate advantages in attracting, retaining, and valorizing talent, thereby reproducing existing hierarchies of global competitiveness.

Lets have a look Table-1, 2, and 3, and Figure above. It indicates that the global war for talent continues to be dominated by high-income developed countries. GTCI also showed, over the past decade, the Top 15 rankings occupy a relatively stable position and the top 12 best have formed their own ranking configuration. They, who dominated, are those who are developed countries, or core countries that dominate the system and as well as influence developing countries or peripheral countries. In this sense, GTCI 2023 also presents a reflection on the 10-year period of global competitiveness dynamics and expectations for the next 10 years. Most notably, GTCI shows that over the past 10 years, the dynamics of the war for talent reflect a situation that confirms criticism and concern for neoliberalism, free markets and globalization. The 2013-2023 GTCI report shows the unequal talent landscape between developed economies compared to developing countries.

To take this situation into a World-Systems perspective (Wallerstein, 1974; 2004), Indonesia's position may be interpreted as reflecting its location within a hierarchical global system characterized by unequal distributions of knowledge, technology, innovation, and talent-attraction capacities. In this context, talent competitiveness is not merely the outcome of domestic policies, but also a manifestation of the country's position within the core–semi-periphery–periphery structure of the global knowledge economy. Indonesia, then, is clearly in a peripheral situation of such an unequal system. In a more broadly sense, what does this mean? Brown and Tannock (2009) argues that the global war for talent represents a new phase of neoliberalism in which the liberalization of global markets extends beyond capital and commodities to encompass highly skilled labour. Within this framework, states increasingly compete to attract, retain, and mobilize talented individuals as strategic economic assets.

The Global War for Talent also triggered by the demand to acquire the best talent to support innovation and more knowledge-based economic growth. (Reich, 1991). The global war for talent is also considered to represent a new phase in neoliberalism, where the liberalization of the global economy is not only related to capital and commodities, but also human resources who have high-level skills and expertise. (Brown & Tannock, 2009)

Therefore, Indonesia's position is situated within a global configuration characterized by the persistent dominance of advanced economies over developing and less-developed countries**.** This pattern may suggest that Indonesia operates within a globalized environment that remains fundamentally unequal. As Stiglitz (2015) argues, *"we are living in a knowledge economy, but knowledge is unequally distributed."* From this perspective, disparities in talent competitiveness reflect not only differences in domestic policy performance but also deeper structural asymmetries embedded within the international political economy. This is confirmed by the Indonesia's GTCI output-pillar of global knowledge skill which is still remind fragile.

This study argues that fragile condition is very likely to occur because of an unfair global system, deeper structural asymmetries embedded within the international political economy. Developing countries often face structural constraints that limit their ability to accumulate, retain, and benefit from knowledge-based assets (Stiglitz, 2002, 2012). These constraints are manifested in phenomena such as *brain drain*, whereby highly skilled individuals migrate toward advanced economies offering superior opportunities and resources (Docquier & Rapoport, 2011). Consequently, Indonesia's relatively modest position in global talent competitiveness may be interpreted not only as a developmental challenge but also as a reflection of what may be termed Indonesia's structural vulnerability within the global knowledge economy a condition in which the country's capacity to generate talent is constrained by asymmetrical global structures that favor the concentration of knowledge, innovation, and talent in advanced economies.

Thus, structural vulnerability refers to Indonesia's disadvantaged position within the global competition for talent, where the concentration of knowledge-producing institutions, innovation capital, and talent-attraction mechanisms in advanced economies systematically constrains the country's ability to convert human capital into sustainable national competitiveness.

Internally, Indonesia faces a paradoxical situation in the global competition for talent. On the one hand, the country possesses one of the world's largest demographic assets. Indonesia is the 4th most populous country in the world. By mid-2024, Indonesia's population reached 281 million peoples. (BPS, 2024). Actually, since 2015, Indonesia has entered a demographic transition period, when demographic structure provides Indonesia with a unique window of opportunity in the form of a demographic dividend that is expected to continue until approximately 2045, coinciding with the national vision of *Golden Indonesia 2045* (*Indonesia Emas 2045*). The explosion of productive age is expected to peak in the 2020-2035 period. (BPS, 2023). No many countries have such great opportunities. Indonesia is one of the countries that are experiencing similar things such as China, South Korea, India and Brazil. In theory, such demographic conditions should provide a strong foundation for economic transformation, innovation, productivity growth, and enhanced national competitiveness.

On the other hand, Indonesia's relatively modest position in global talent competitiveness rankings suggests that the country has not yet fully converted its demographic advantage into a strategic advantage within the global knowledge economy. The existence of a large productive-age population does not automatically translate into competitiveness unless accompanied by the capacity to develop, retain, and effectively utilize talent in knowledge-intensive sectors. In this regard, Indonesia's challenge is not merely demographic, but fundamentally structural.

Thus, the paradox lies in the fact that as peripheral country, while Indonesia possesses an abundance of potential human resources, its performance indicators related to innovation capacity, global knowledge skills, research productivity, and talent retention remains considerably lower than that of many advanced (core) and emerging economies.

To obtain a deeper and more comprehensive meaning, let us place this argument of paradoxical situation on an analytical table that immediately combines the perspectives of international political economy and national resilience in the context of the demographic bonus rhetoric and the framework of the Golden Indonesia 2045 vision.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is unavoidable to borrow the basic theory of resilience developped by C. S. Holling (1973), who defined resilience as the capacity of a system to absorb disturbances while maintaining its core functions. And also, the concept was subsequently expanded to social and economic systems by scholars such as Brian Walker and colleagues (2004), who emphasized adaptability and transformation in response to external shocks. Applied to the national level, resilience refers to the ability of a country to withstand crises, recover from disruptions, and continue pursuing developmental objectives despite changing internal and external conditions. Meanwhile, national resilience itself, in terminology, refers to how a country is able to survive, adapt, recover and become more resilient in facing various shocks such as economic, social, political or globalization shocks (Hanita, 2023).

From this perspective, Indonesia's demographic dividend represents a strategic reservoir of adaptive capacity. A large productive-age population provides labor resources, entrepreneurial potential, technological adaptability, and social dynamism that can strengthen economic performance and societal resilience. Countries with strong demographic structures are generally better positioned to respond to economic transitions, technological change, and geopolitical uncertainty because they possess greater human-resource flexibility and a larger domestic market.(Becker, 1993; Bloom et al., 2003; Porter, 1990; OECD, 2021).

So then, within the framework of Indonesia Emas 2045, demographic dividend should therefore be viewed as a strategic asset for strengthening national resilience as well as a guarantee for Indonesia's ability to transform demographic abundance into talent advantage within an increasingly competitive and unequal global knowledge economy. Accordingly, this study argues that demographic dividend constitutes a latent source of resilience, while talent competitiveness represents the institutional mechanism through which that resilience is realized. The stronger Indonesia's capacity to develop, retain, and utilize talent, the greater its ability to achieve sustainable development, maintain competitiveness, and adapt to future uncertainties while simultaneously breaking free from the unequal global system.

In this sense, we are better discussing on strategic value or capability expansion and developmental resilience as argued by Amarta Sen (1999). Sen argues that development should be understood as the expansion of human capabilities and freedoms rather than merely increases in income or output. From this perspective, demographic advantage creates opportunities for development only when individuals possess the capabilities necessary to participate effectively in economic, social, and political life. Accordingly, national resilience depends not only on population size but also on the quality of capabilities embedded within the population. Investments in education, digital literacy, innovation, and talent development therefore become essential mechanisms through which demographic resources can strengthen resilience.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggest that Indonesia's position in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) reflects a fundamental national paradox: while the country possesses substantial strategic assets, including one of the world's largest populations, a demographic dividend projected to continue until 2045, and the ambitious vision of Indonesia Emas 2045, its relatively modest performance in global talent competitiveness—particularly in Global Knowledge Skills—indicates persistent challenges in transforming demographic abundance into a sustainable talent advantage. This condition reveals vulnerabilities in Indonesia's capacity to generate, develop, attract, retain, and effectively utilize talent as a strategic resource for national development, while also reflecting the influence of structural pressures within the global knowledge economy, where knowledge, technology, innovation capacity, and talent-attraction mechanisms remain unevenly distributed. Consequently, Indonesia simultaneously embodies significant potential for resilience and substantial risk of vulnerability, as its demographic and developmental resources provide a strong foundation for becoming a major knowledge-based economy, yet this potential remains constrained by domestic capacity limitations and inequalities within the international political economy. The success of Indonesia Emas 2045 will therefore depend on the country's ability to transform demographic abundance into talent competitiveness, talent competitiveness into knowledge-based development, and knowledge-based development into sustainable national resilience. Failure to address these challenges may turn Indonesia's demographic strength into a source of vulnerability, whereas success could convert it into a strategic advantage capable of strengthening national competitiveness, supporting sustainable development, and improving Indonesia's capacity to adapt to future uncertainties while reducing dependence on an unequal global system. The fundamental challenge, therefore, is to formulate and implement an effective national talent management strategy that strengthens the development, retention, and utilization of human capital as a pathway toward development that expands human freedoms, promotes social justice, and generates shared prosperity.

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