

Analysis of Human Resources (HR) Development Strategy and Mitra Asri Insurance Products in Increasing Competitive Advantage (Case Study at PT. Asuransi AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan Branch)

M. Yusuf^{1*}, Zainarti², Budi Harianto³

^{1*, 2, 3} Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Medan Estate, District. Percut Sei Tuan, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra 20371

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Correspondence Email:
muhammaducup2002@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the strategic analysis of resource development for human capital (SDM) and the insurance product, Mitra Asri, in enhancing competitive advantage. The case study centers on PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance, specifically its Medan branch. The research investigates the strategies implemented by the company to develop its human resources and promote the Mitra Asri insurance product. Through comprehensive analysis and evaluation, this study aims to uncover the correlation between the development of human resources and the market success of the Mitra Asri insurance product within the competitive landscape. The findings aim to provide insights into effective strategies for enhancing competitive advantage through human resource development and product promotion in the insurance industry. The problem that will be discussed in this research is the strategy for developing human resources and developing Mitra Asri insurance products at PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan Branch. The purpose of this research is to determine the HR development strategy and Mitra Asri insurance products used by PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance in increasing competitive advantage.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas analisis strategis pengembangan sumber daya manusia (SDM) dan produk asuransi Mitra Asri dalam meningkatkan keunggulan bersaing. Studi kasus difokuskan pada PT. Asuransi AJB Bumiputera 1912, khususnya cabang Medan. Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi yang diterapkan perusahaan untuk mengembangkan sumber daya manusia dan mempromosikan produk asuransi Mitra Asri. Melalui analisis dan evaluasi yang komprehensif, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap korelasi antara pengembangan sumber daya manusia dan keberhasilan pasar produk asuransi Mitra Asri dalam lanskap persaingan. Temuan penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan wawasan tentang strategi yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keunggulan bersaing melalui pengembangan sumber daya manusia dan promosi produk di industri asuransi. Masalah yang akan dibahas dalam penelitian ini adalah strategi pengembangan sumber daya manusia dan pengembangan produk asuransi Mitra Asri di PT. Asuransi AJB Bumiputera 1912 Cabang Medan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui strategi pengembangan SDM dan produk asuransi Mitra Asri yang digunakan oleh PT. Asuransi AJB Bumiputera 1912 dalam meningkatkan keunggulan bersaing.



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INTRODUCTION

The development of quality human resources is a key element that is essential for various companies, especially in the insurance industry, to create and maintain competitive advantages. This is undeniable considering the current era of globalization which is filled with intense competition. As stated by Kasmawati, the greatest innovation in the era of globalization is not only related to technological progress, but also expands the concept of human nature itself. Human resources have the capacity to provide sustainable competitive advantage, which can provide benefits to the company in the long term. Developing the quality of human resources is

not an easy thing to do because it requires a deep understanding of the human essence as well as careful planning in forming the basic structure of institutions and financial management. In addition, the competitive advantage possessed by HR is difficult for competitors to imitate, because it is special and useful.

A sharia insurance institution is an institution whose activities are to bear risks between people so that each other becomes the guarantor of another's risks. This mutual exchange of risks is carried out by mutually assisting each other in good deeds by means of each other generating tabarru' funds, worship funds, donations, donations designated to cover the risks.

The definition of a sharia insurance institution in this case is in accordance with the Al-Qur'an surah Al-Maidah: 2, namely:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ

Meaning: "And help you in (doing) virtue and piety, and do not help in committing sins and transgressions. and fear Allah, surely Allah is Severe in punishment." (Al-Maidah:2)

In Indonesia, insurance institutions have two main areas, namely non-life insurance and life insurance. Loss insurance is related to providing services to overcome the risk of loss or loss. Meanwhile, benefits and legal obligations to other parties arise from unpredictable events. Meanwhile, life insurance is an insurance service offered by companies to manage risks related to the life or death of someone who is insured.

The rapid growth in the insurance industry has had a major impact on the Indonesian economy. The need for insurance services is very important for society considering the risks that may occur in the future. One of them is life insurance which provides financial protection from unexpected events and the risk of death.

Rapid growth of insurance institutions, especially life insurance in Indonesia in vain, has created increasingly fierce competition among companies. Today, competition is not only centered on superiority in technology, business processes, having a protected and regulated market share, or capital levels. Quality human resources are also considered an asset that is difficult to compete with or imitate, because they are rare, suitable, and can provide a sustainable competitive advantage for the company.

Because of their role as subjects of implementing company policies and operational activities, human resources are the company's most important assets. Company resources such as capital, methods and machines cannot achieve the best results without being supported by human resources with the best performance. Hartatik (2014) stated that recruits and old and new workers often carry out training and development to improve employee performance.

To achieve this, employees must be empowered with training, education, and development. According to Marwansyah (2010), human resources can be defined as the utilization of human resources in an organization. This is achieved through the functions of human resource planning, recruitment and selection, human resource development, career planning and development, compensation and welfare, occupational safety and health, and industrial relations

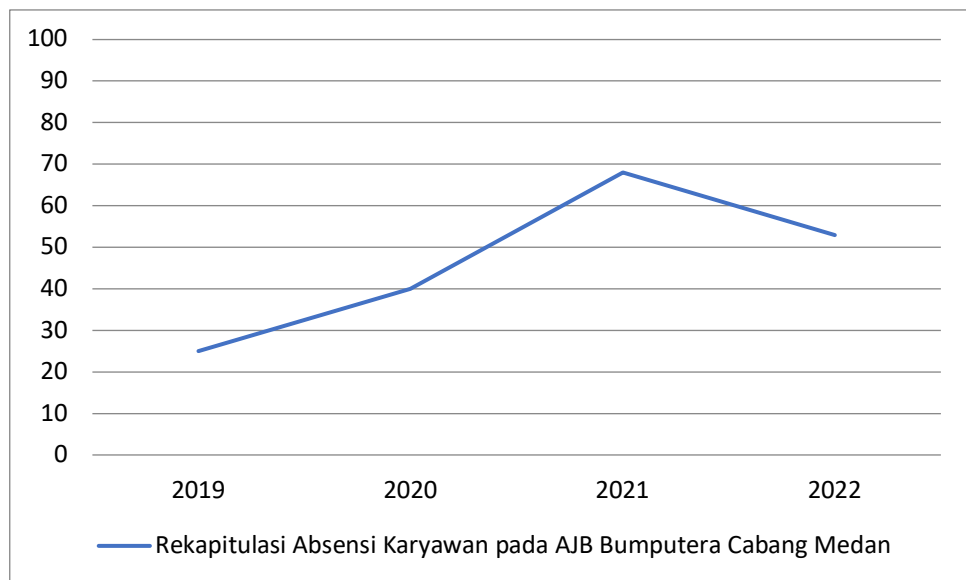


Figure 1. Graph of Number of Effective Working Days at PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan Branch 2019-2022

Source: PT AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan branch

Based on Figure 1, it is known that the level of employee work attendance at AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan Branch in 2019 was 25%, while in 2020 it increased to 40%. In 2021 the number increased to 68% and in 2022 the number of effective working days decreased by 53%.

on improving the quality of employees through increasing thinking abilities, which is achieved, among other things, through increasing the ability to evaluate situations. Through basic material on arithmetic, making comparisons, writing ideas, making decisions in certain situations, etc., formal education is expected to make the biggest contribution in improve thinking ability. Developing attitudes of punctuality, neatness and discipline, as well as job satisfaction, are all part of this formal education.

Strategic according to Pearce II and Robinson, Jr (2008:5) is a set of decisions and actions which are the result of formulas and implementation of plans that have been designed to achieve company goals. And according to Kuncoro (2006:7), strategic management consists of analysis, decisions and actions taken by an organization to create and maintain competitive advantages. Meanwhile, according to David (2013:13) Strategy is a means by which long-term objectives will be achieved. Business strategies also include Geographic Expansion, Divertification, Acquisition, Product Development, Market Penetration, Retrenchment, Divestiture, Liquidation, and Joint Ventures. Strategy is the potential for an action that requires a top manager's decision and requires large resources. Strategy also influences an organization's success. Usually it only lasts up to five years and the company is future-oriented. Strategy has multidivisional consequences that require consideration of external and internal factors.

From this definition, it can be concluded that the definition of strategic management is a series or set of decisions and actions to create competitive advantage and determine company performance in achieving long-term goals.

The definition of human resource development according to (Silalahi, 2000), human resource development is a continuous effort to improve the quality of human resources in the broadest sense, through education, training and coaching. Meanwhile, according to Price (2011:455), HR Development is a strategic approach to investing in human resources. Human

resource development provides a framework for personal development, training programs and career advancement tailored to future skills needs within the organization

Human resources are the mental and physical abilities possessed by individuals, their behavior and characteristics are inherited from heredity and the environment. Meanwhile, his work presentation is motivated by the desire to fulfill his satisfaction. Human resources or what is usually abbreviated as HR are the potential contained within humans to realize their role as adaptive and transformative social living beings who are able to manage themselves and all the potential contained within them. Regarding the development of human resources in organizations, Greer (1995), stated that currently, the latest developments view HR not as mere resources, but rather as capital and assets for organizations or companies.

According to Danang Sunyoto (2013) product development is the activities of goods manufacturers and intermediaries who intend to make adjustments to goods made or offered for sale at the request of buyers. Product development includes determining quality, shape, attractiveness, labeling, and so on to create a competitive advantage.

Product development and innovation are important things needed by companies. Companies run a business without competitors outside the company. Therefore, this process is important so that companies have products that are different from competitors and have prominent advantages, so that people are interested in their products. Innovation is the transformation of existing knowledge or new knowledge into new products or changing products, processes and services with the aim of creating new value for customers and providing financial improvements to the innovator.

Product development in the business concept is continuous, meaning that a product produced by a company must have shortcomings, therefore the company tries to continue to perfect it. With continuous improvements, the company will be able to maintain consumer loyalty to this product.

Michael Porter (1985) in Awwad (2013) states that competitive advantage is the ability obtained through the characteristics and resources of a company to have higher performance than other companies in the same industry or market. The issue of competitive advantage became very popular after Porter developed the concept. Competitive advantage comes from a company's ability to utilize its internal strengths to respond to external environmental opportunities while avoiding external threats and internal weaknesses (Mooney, 2017). Competitive advantage is a dynamic process, not just seen as an end result. This is because competitive advantage comes from the many different activities carried out by a company in designing, producing, marketing, delivering and supporting its products. From the definitions above, it can be concluded that competitive advantage is a condition that a company has where it exceeds its competitors.

Many people believe that the need for Sharia-based human resources is a necessity. The need for reliable human resources is the foundation for the development of sharia economics in financial institutions, and sharia insurance is a challenge that should also be used as an opportunity. The existence of human resources, both in terms of quality and quantity, really determines the performance, productivity and success of an institution. For sharia insurance as a business institution based on sharia values and principles, the qualifications and quality of human resources clearly require an integration of "knowledge, skills and abilities" (KSA) with moral commitment and personal integrity.

The development of sharia-based products is increasingly widespread in Indonesia. Insurance companies issue sharia-based products called sharia insurance. Basically, sharia-

based products have characteristics such as not charging interest in various forms due to usury, establishing money as a medium of exchange rather than as a traded commodity, and conducting business to obtain compensation for services and/or profit sharing.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research method is descriptive qualitative, a method based on phenomena that occur, phenomena can come from the real world (practice) or gaps in the research gap theory. The type of research is field research. This research is located at PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan Branch. This research used as subjects several employees from PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan Branch. This method is to find out specifically and realistically what is happening in a situation in the midst of people's lives. Data sources are primary data, secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly at the research location from core information (Employees and Staff at PT. Asuransi AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan Branch). Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through documents, journals and the results of previous research which were used as comparisons or references. The data collection method used by the author to collect data and information obtained in this research used interview, documentation and observation methods.

For research data analysis techniques, narrative analysis is used, where narrative analysis is used to make interpretations or explanations about performance or employee assessments at PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan Branch. Apart from that, it also uses discourse analysis, which focuses more on the social context in which communication occurs between research and respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human Resource Development Strategy in Increasing Competitive Advantage

Human resource development is a process carried out to develop workers' knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as competencies that are developed through training and development, organizational learning, leadership management. The challenge of building and preserving competitive advantage is not a short-term challenge, but it is a long-term challenge that continues. Therefore, management must consider that development and training programs are programs that are as long-term and sustainable as these challenges. Because of this, the philosophy and paradigm of development and training need to immediately adapt to these challenges, namely long and strategic challenges.

Human resource development is an action carried out by an institution or corporate entity with the aim of improving the abilities or competencies of working individuals in order to achieve optimal work results in accordance with expectations. Human resources are considered assets that are not easily exchanged or copied that are able to provide competitive advantages to companies on an ongoing basis. Human resources (HR) are people in an organization who contribute ideas and carry out various types of work to achieve organizational goals.

HR has actually been explained in the word of Allah Swt QS, Al-Baqarah: 30 which describes humans as caliphs on earth and then confirmed in the word of Allah Swt QS, Shaad: 26, as follows:

يُذَادُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ *Previous* لَكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ *above* سَابِ

Meaning: O David, indeed We have made you caliph (ruler) on the face of the earth, so judge (cases) between people fairly and do not follow your desires, because they will lead you astray from the path of Allah. Indeed, those who stray from the path of Allah will suffer a severe punishment, because they forgot the day of reckoning.

Talking about intense competition in business is something that cannot be avoided. So a businessman must be required to be clever in planning, choosing and implementing long-term strategies in order to survive and compete in the competitive business world. There are several things that insurance companies must understand in facing the threat of old and new competitors, one of the most important things is that massive human resource development activities should be implemented.

Based on interviews conducted by researchers with Mr. Muhammad Juandi as an employee of the insurance company AJB Bumiputera 1912 regarding what is meant by human resource development, he stated: In my opinion, human resource development is a series of ways with certain methods to improve employee skills. The aim of human resource development here is carried out routinely to create quality human resources to improve performance capabilities and especially for those who have just joined, they still find many mistakes and adapt to the new environment.

Every company must always innovate to improve product quality so that it can be accepted by customers and has its own superior value. Therefore, business people must pay attention to various aspects to determine an effective and efficient human resource development strategy. All training programs that will be carried out by the insurance company AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan branch must be planned by carefully analyzing the gap in the need for unskilled employees and employee competencies that must be developed comprehensively on an ongoing basis. The process of identifying program needs is closely related to targeting competitive demands for competence with improving performance more specifically and evenly to improve performance management. Based on this analysis, it is decided that important training needs must first be carried out to prepare employees to manage changes in job skill demands in the future. Mr. Muhammad Juandi, an employee of the insurance company AJB Bumiputera 1912, Medan branch, said that before holding a training and human resource development program, one must first carry out an analysis of very important needs regarding performance to find out employee weaknesses that must be quickly responded to by being developed. Mr Muhammad Juandi said:

Apart from that, Mr. Muhammad Juandi also conveyed about the development and training of effective human resources in facing the tight business competition carried out at the Medan branch of the AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance Company:

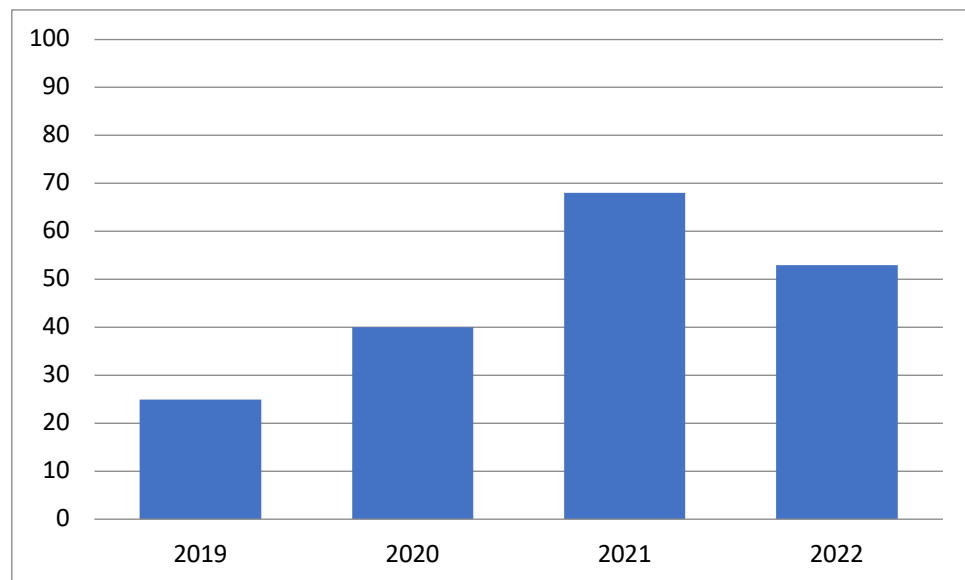


Figure 2. Graph of Number of Employee Performance at PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan Branch 2019-2022

Source: PT AJB Bumiputera 1912 Medan branch

From the graph above, it can be seen that the growth in the number of employee performance experiences a significant increase or decrease every year. This increase or decrease is due to improvements in education and training of human resources or employees from the previous year.

The human resource development strategy is directed at the target of improving the quality of human resources, as an input to influence employee performance in the form of accumulated work productivity and increased employee work productivity which will reflect good company performance. In the case of human resource strategy, the organization will implement a human resource development strategy that must adapt to various internal organizational variables and the needs and expectations of its employees.

Competency Development for Employees Regarding Mastery of Company Owned Products.

The company seeks to improve employee competency by providing a deeper understanding of its core products, so that employees have a deep understanding of these products and the related legal aspects. One of the products owned by PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance is a product of my Asri partner. According to Mr. Muhammad Juandi, this product is one of the company's new products, associated with natural partners, so the company has established partnerships with banking institutions. This strategy also aims to form human resources that are based on sharia principles as a reference standard. This step is in line with the results of research on "Competency-based HR development strategies in improving employee performance. This research shows that sharia-based human resource development can be carried out through providing competence, motivation to employees to increase knowledge and abilities related to sharia financial institutions, especially in the banking sector.

Mitra Asri Insurance Product Development Strategy to Increase Competitive Advantage

Since various sharia financial institutions began to emerge in Indonesia, especially sharia insurance institutions which experience rapid growth every year, it emphasizes the need for

every sharia insurance company to continue to develop and innovate. This is necessary in order to continue to compete and maintain its superior position among other institutions.

The same thing also applies to PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance which does not want to be left behind by other financial institutions. This fact has been proven by a number of awards that the company has achieved since its founding in 1912. Therefore, in order to continue to compete and maintain its competitive advantage, PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance is willing to continue to develop and innovate. This includes improving human resources as well as offering better products on the market.

PT. AsuransiAJB Bumiputera 1912 is driven by several reasons that require continuous innovation in product development. As stated by Mr. Muhammad Juandi, as branch head, one of the causes is the increasingly stringent level of competition due to the emergence of new insurance institutions. This requires companies to continue to improve the quality of their products. Apart from that, people's need for insurance products offered by companies is also increasing. Apart from that, the ideal of branch independence that does not only depend on the head office is also a driving factor for PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance Medan branch to continue to innovate its products. Responding to these conditions, the company is trying to create fresh innovations in existing products so that they can still be accepted by society and the surrounding area.

Profit is the total income obtained from the sale of a natural partner product in the company, after deducting all operational expenses. In this case the profits obtained by the company PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance Medan branch showed an increase or increase in product sales since October 2023. However, in the previous month it showed a decline. This can be seen in the table below as follows.

Table 1. Premium Income Performance Report (Mitra Asri Products) Sumbagut Regional Marketing Office – I Medan Period: 31 October 2023

SERVICE UNITS ADMINISTRATION	BUDGET 2023					ASRI PARTNERS	
	SP	PP	PLTP	PL	TOTAL	SP	PP
KC. NEW FIELD	285	217,078	200	208,385	425,663	20	1,750

Source: Financial Report PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan branch

From the data above it is clear that there has been a significant increase in the number of sales of Mitra Asri Insurance products obtained by PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan branch. On the other hand, this is also caused by a large marketing area, but with insufficient marketing offices for areas that are far away to reach. Therefore, with this increase, it can be said that the company needs to make further improvements in terms of human resources and the products it owns in order to increase its competitive advantage.

PT. Product development strategy. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance Medan branch started by assessing market conditions and identifying community needs along with advances in technology. Once a company understands the steps required to produce output, it will maximize its efforts in product development to ensure widespread acceptance and superiority over products offered by other institutions.

To plan insurance product development strategies for PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance Medan branch, several steps can help in increasing competitive advantage:

- 1) Market and Competition Analysis: Evaluation of insurance market trends in Medan. Pay attention to products that have been successful from competitors and what potential customers want.
- 2) Product Research and Development: Form a team for more in-depth market research. Find gaps in the market, identify customer needs, and create more relevant and attractive insurance products.
- 3) Product Innovation: Based on research results, create new or additional products that meet unmet needs. For example, insurance products with wider coverage, additional protection, or more attractive benefits.
- 4) Personalization and Customization: Learn about personalization trends in insurance. Provide customers with customizable options to meet their individual needs.
- 5) Effective Marketing: Once the product is developed, determine the appropriate marketing strategy. Focus on the advantages of your product, its added value, and the benefits it offers compared to competitors.
- 6) Customer Education: Carry out educational activities to the public about the importance of insurance protection. Socialize the benefits of the products you offer.
- 7) Technology and Digitalization: Take advantage of technology to simplify the claims, purchasing and customer service processes. An efficient digital platform can be a big plus.
- 8) Collaboration and Partnerships: Consider collaborating with financial institutions or other partners to provide more comprehensive or attractive insurance packages.
- 9) Continuous Evaluation: Monitor product performance periodically. Take feedback from customers and employees, make necessary changes or adjustments.
- 10) Compliance and Business Ethics: Ensure that the products offered comply with regulations and business ethics standards. Compliance is very important in the insurance industry.

Type of Insurance

1. The name of this insurance product is Mitra ASRI life insurance.
2. This type of insurance is death insurance (Term Insurance)
3. This product is a life insurance product that can be marketed by all agents, both marketing individual life insurance and group life insurance.
4. This life insurance product is marketed in Rupiah.
5. This product is recorded in the individual life insurance or group life insurance business lines.

Benefits of Mitra Asri Insurance Products

1. If the Insured dies during the insurance period, the insurance money is paid to the Policy holder or heir or designee.
2. If the Insured lives until the end of the insurance period, there will be no payment

Insurance product development must be responsive to changing market needs. Focusing on innovation, effective marketing, and good customer service can help PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance Medan branch maintains and increases its competitive advantage.

To achieve the planned goals and targets, PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance implements an effective product development strategy. The strategy implemented by the company in developing sharia insurance products is in accordance with the principles developed by Kotler, namely through product modification and innovation developed from existing products, relying on internal research and development. In this development process, the company seeks to update existing products by considering market needs and current technological advances. This effort was carried out by PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance so that its products remain relevant to ongoing developments in time and technology, and can continue to be accepted by the public and the market. The results of this research are in line with the findings of research conducted regarding product development strategies in Islamic financial institutions. In this

research, it was found that one of the approaches used to develop products is to update existing products, both entrusted products and funds distribution products.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis Data

No	Variable	Mean	Katerogy
1	Service quality	3.53	Agree
2	Price	3.50	Agree
3	Promotion	3.43	Agree
4	Product quality	3.45	Agree
5	Competitive advantage	3.55	Agree

Source: Processed Data 2023 PT. AJB Bumiputera Medan Branch

From Table 2 Above the descriptive analysis data which has the highest average is the service quality variable with a value of 3.53 in the agree category, while the lowest average value is the promotion variable with a value of 3.43 in the agree category.

Partial Test Results (t Test)

A hypothesis based on the t test is proposed. It is suspected that service quality, price, promotion and product quality have a significant effect on competitive advantage at PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan Branch". Partial test results (t test) can be seen in table 1.5 below.

Table 3. Partial Test Results (t Test)

Variable	t count	Significance Value	(a) alpha	Conclusion
Service quality	5,441	0.045	0.05	Significant
Price	2,922	0.017	0.05	Significant
Promotion	2,088	0,000	0.05	Significant
Product quality	2,469	0.020	0.05	Significant

Source: Processed Data 2023, PT. AJB Bumiputera Insurance 1912 Medan branch

With the following decision rules from the data results above:

- 1) If the calculated t value > t table, then service quality, price, promotion and product quality have a significant effect.
- 2) If the calculated t value < t table, then service quality, price, promotion and product quality have no significant effect.

Factors That Influence Competitive Advantage

The Influence of Service Quality on Competitive Advantage

The results of this research show that Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage among PT customers. AJB Bumiputera Medan Branch.(Peter & Olson, 2000) explain that service can be defined as an activity carried out by a seller intended for buyers with the aim of creating satisfaction with the product created. In this way, consumers get rewards after getting the products they buy. (Rangkuti, 2006) explains that one of the many ways to create sales of products, both goods and services that have value and superiority over competitors, is to create good or excellent service quality and high selling value. Nowadays, creating services Prime n can be considered as 51 a very important strategy to realize the company's success in the future, so that it can maintain its existence well for a long time.

Implementing quality management in service companies is a necessity in order to be able to compete both in the domestic and international arena.

The Effect of Promotion on Competitive Advantage

The research results show that Promotion has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage among customers. Promotion is an activity that functions to introduce, inform and remind a product in order to encourage consumers to buy the product being promoted. Promotion is one of the variables in the marketing mix that is very important for companies to implement in marketing service products. To be able to hold promotions, every company must be able to determine exactly which promotional tools to use in order to achieve success in sales. These promotional activities can change consumer behavior and opinions. Consumers who feel, see or hear promotions can be influenced to purchase products or services offered by the company. Thus, the better the promotions carried out by the company, the more competitive advantages the products or services offered to consumers can achieve

CONCLUSION

This article generally highlights the importance of product development strategies and human resource development in the insurance industry to face intense competition. They emphasize the need for long-term strategic planning to survive and compete in a competitive business environment. The importance of human resource development in this context is explained as a process that involves improving employee skills and abilities. Analysis of training needs and understanding competency gaps are key in planning effective and sustainable training programs. Improving employee quality is considered important in increasing company productivity.

Next, there is a focus on the product development strategy carried out by PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance to maintain its competitive advantage. This includes strategies such as market analysis, product innovation, effective marketing, good customer service, implementation of technology, and continuous evaluation of product performance. In essence, the conclusion of the text is that the insurance industry, such as PT. AJB Bumiputera 1912 Insurance must pay attention to massive human resource development and sustainable product development to remain competitive and maintain its position in a competitive market.

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