

# IDENTITY BRANDING USING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC FORUMS

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to look at the implementation model of knowledge management (knowledge management) through the provision of scientific forums in private universities in West Java and its relationship with identity branding activities. Quantitative research using the meta-analysis method is used in this study. A total of 40 private universities in West Java were selected as samples. The results show that 40% of universities have national and international scientific forums, and 60% have national scientific conferences that have not been actively managed. Universities that have scientific forums and are actively managed so that the general public can access them as part of knowledge sharing are only around 20%. The absence of an ideal model that can be used as a reference in implementing knowledge management, and there are still some obstacles to implementing knowledge management at private universities in West Java. There is a direct relationship between implementing knowledge management through the provision of scientific forums and identity branding activities carried out by some private universities in West Java.

**Keywords:** branding; knowledge management; scientific forums; models; universities in West Java

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, we are in an era where the quality of knowledge dominates the world of work, so knowledge management has become important in the institutions where we work. The ability to master high knowledge will determine the future of the educational institutions that we manage. As stated by Burton (2002), the main factor of production

in the new economic era is knowledge. Moreover, the world of higher education, recognized as a center of excellence in science, must remain a pioneer in the mastery and management of knowledge.

There are several characteristics concerning knowledge itself, namely: 1) knowledge will be easily and quickly obtained; 2) human beings are faced with increasingly complex

problems; 3) rapid changes occur in the political field (Tjakraatmadja & Lantu, 2006). Therefore, people capable of managing knowledge in higher education institutions are needed because higher education institutions will be used as models by the community in determining trends. In other words, the higher education communities will be the trendsetters.

Accordingly, currently, there is a shift in the view that technological progress has been used as the main reference for assessing the quality of life. Knowledge management is now much more important because it is through knowledge as evidence of one's capacity that high technology will be born. Furthermore, primary knowledge requires measurement to know the truth and select appropriate management methods and techniques (CZerniej, 2015). That is why our role in managing knowledge is much more important than the institutional organization in which we are located because we are the ones who know, not the organization.

In West Java, many private universities offer higher education services. Sixty-five private universities operate in this West Java area (Kalderanews, 2021). Have any of these universities implemented effective knowledge management that they use to brand the identity of their respective institutions? From this background, in this study, the author wants to find out how many percent of these universities use knowledge management as a means of identity branding to make their institutions gain a competitive advantage in the increasingly tight competitive atmosphere of higher education service offerings in West Java.

Higher education institutions in Indonesia are currently required to improve themselves as much as possible with the new provisions in the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia number 62 of 2016 concerning the Higher Education Quality Assurance System. Previously, it was also stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia number 44 of 2015 concerning National Standards for Higher

Education. Related to this, one of the factors that can determine the quality of higher education today is professional knowledge management in supporting daily operations. Inevitably, nowadays, higher education institutions cannot only survive as non-profit-oriented institutions. To finance their operational activities, universities require high costs. In other words, economic factors will be the primary support for the progress and sustainability of a higher education institution in the long term.

The ability of higher education institutions to produce and consume information and knowledge products will place the field of knowledge management in an economic cycle. From an economic point of view, information and knowledge are commodities that have monetary value, whether they are distributed free of charge or sold to consumers, in this case, prospective students (Lessig, 2001). This implies that through the mastery of information and knowledge, higher education institutions will be able to obtain economic benefits that positively impact the financing of daily operations.

Moreover, what is knowledge management? One definition of knowledge management is a collaborative and integrative approach to creating, retrieving, managing, accessing, and using various forms of intellectual property (Dalkir, 2005). Another definition says knowledge management is the ability to control knowledge, which includes people, culture, processes, and technology, that requires the implementation of academic personnel to provide benefits for the university in general and for students in particular (White, 2008). That is why knowledge management greatly contributes to developing the required individual competencies and implementing research and development strategies that ultimately improve the performance of the higher education institution concerned.

Implementation of knowledge management requires the right strategy. This strategy requires careful planning and action to achieve the best results using the least possible effort and cost at the level of human resources, equipment, time, and money (Rees et al., 2009). In carrying out the strategy, it is important to note that no single specific

model can be applied to all higher education institutions without exception. The model is only a way to effectively organize ideas, plans, and actions in managing knowledge. In other words, one particular model can only be applied to certain higher education institutions but cannot be used in other institutions respectively.

Branding has an understanding as an act of providing a certain design or symbol to promote the products or services offered (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2008). Furthermore, branding also concerns the issue of building equity for a particular product/service (Clifton, 2020). Branding in higher education institutions is defined as a way to increase the added value of higher education and its educational services with the values possessed by the organization of the institution concerned and present these values to the external environment (Chapleo, 2007). In other words, branding the identity of higher education institutions is an act of sharing their knowledge with parties outside the institution to obtain brand equity of the institution concerned.

One of the reasons why higher education institutions must carry out identity branding is because of increasingly stringent market pressures in offering higher education services. Meanwhile, consumers, in this case prospective students, are based on their knowledge that not all higher education institutions have high quality in accordance with their expectations. That is why higher education institutions need to brand identity appropriately so as to create a competitive advantage that is seen by consumers as a high-quality institution. (Mampey & Husiman, 2016).

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Object

In this study, the author uses a quantitative approach, a systematic secondary data search method, and meta-analysis. A meta-analysis method to review the same study material, where in each study describes the error criteria (Umi Narimawati et al, 2020). Another definition of meta-analysis is research with a quantitative approach accompanied by numbers which are then analyzed using statistical procedures. The data comes from

the results of previous studies which are then used to obtain information in order to obtain the same objectives with the research being conducted. The main requirement for using meta-analysis is reviewing the results of studies on the same topic of study (Glass, 1981). In this research, 40 private universities in West Java were selected as samples, which were taken based on stratified random sampling.

## RESULTS

Based on the sample studied, it resulted in the implementation of knowledge management which is used as ownership that is not in the form of concrete or goods such as campus buildings and other supporting physical facilities, including the following:

- University organizational structure
- Vision, mission, and goals of the university
- Human Resources, which includes permanent lecturers and administrative staff
- Publications in the form of journals, research results, and books, as well as results of community service
- Technology and information facilities as well as Internet network
- University website
- Social media used
- Digital library and electronic reference
- E-Learning Portal

The studied higher education institutions are highly committed to implementing knowledge management. This can be confirmed because of government financially supports research activities and community service, as well as scientific publications carried out by their lecturers, developing information and communication technology infrastructure and facilities, infrastructure and facilities in the teaching and learning process, funding further studies of academic staff at institutions (Alam, H.N., 2011).

On the one hand, certain higher education institutions already have professional knowledge management. They set up knowledge centers such as a) regional cultural study institutes, b) computer centers, c) foreign language teaching institutes, d) quality assurance institutions, e) study

institutes for the particularities of the university concerned, and f) research institutes and community service.

On the other hand, besides these advances, the institutions under study still have weaknesses, including a) the low level of research publications, such as the publication of scientific journals and books as well as the publication of research results; b) inadequate information and communication technology facilities and infrastructure; c) the number of library books is not sufficient; d) E-Learning capacity is not yet proportional to the number of students accessing it; e) poor quality Internet network resulting in unstable Internet connection; f) inadequate human resources development; g) low knowledge sharing culture; h) the absence of an integrated plan between knowledge management and the university's vision, mission, and goals; i) there is no adequate knowledge creation and transfer process; j) low support for the implementation of knowledge management; k) there is no knowledge management strategy and researches that examine knowledge management issues.

The benefits of knowledge management based on the results of this research are: a) supporting research activities for lecturers; b) help provide enlightenment for community service activities; c) assisting in providing ideas for developing local content curricula that can be used as a means of developing the uniqueness of institutions and regional culture; d) help improve alumni services; e) improve services to students; f) higher quality administrative and academic services; g) assist university administrators in making institutional strategic plans (Kidwell, 2000). The results of research conducted by Umi Narimawati, Eddy and Dadang (2020) show that the learning management system, which is a form of knowledge management, significantly strengthens university branding by increasing student satisfaction and performance. Furthermore, it is also stated that the system is part of the digital university branding as a source of competitive advantages.

From these benefits, it can be concluded that knowledge management in general can assist private higher education institutions in

managing universities effectively and maximally to achieve the goals and objectives set out in the university statutes. Another benefit of implementing knowledge management is strengthening organizational culture and improving university performance (Masduki, 2019). The sequence of knowledge management cycles found in Yuniarsih and Amartiwi's (2019) research are: first, the use of knowledge management; second, knowledge storage; third, knowledge acquisition and fourth, knowledge distribution

From the research results, it is known that involvement in scientific forum activities is as follows:

- 40% of private universities (16 universities) have national and international scientific forums;
- Of the 40% that already have these scientific forums, there are as many as 50% (8 universities) whose international and national scientific conferences are actively managed and accessible to the general public;
- Of the 40% who have had scientific forums, 75% (12) have scientific forums at a national level, and 37.5% have scientific forums at an international level;
- As many as 44% of these universities' scientific management in the form of scientific forums is used as a means of branding identity
- As many as 56% of universities stated that scientific forums were useful for branding identity.

Not all private universities have scientific forums, which can be understood because involvement in organizing scientific conferences requires no small amount of funding. Based on the 2020 version of the Ministry of Education and Culture in West Java, there are only five best private universities in West Java (detik.com/edu, 2020) with the following criteria: Input with a weight of 20%; the output of 20% and the result/product (outcome) of 30%. From these results, it can be understood that most private universities in West Java are still focused on internal improvements to meet the national education standards that the government has set.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a matter of fact, there is no uniformity in knowledge management from university to university. Each university creates and focuses knowledge management in certain areas where their institution requires it. There is no fixed management model for implementing knowledge management in private universities in West Java. From the above research results, management is treated as an intangible asset for the university.

Besides finding the advantages and benefits of knowledge management among private universities in West Java; from the empirical results in the field, universities still face many obstacles in implementing knowledge management. The major constraint includes: a) there is no full support from university management for the implementation of knowledge management; b) the absence of an appropriate, effective and uniform strategy in implementing knowledge management; c) the absence of a model for implementing knowledge management among private higher education institutions; d) the distribution of knowledge in the external environment is still inadequate; e) the culture of knowledge exchange between fellow academic staff has not been maximized to the maximum.

Knowledge management in private universities in West Java can be concluded into three groups as follows: 1) focuses on process management; 2) content management; and 3) resource management (Choirunyah F.A and Heryanto, H, 2019). Regarding identity branding activities as a means of marketing higher education services in West Java, no model has been found. The implementation of knowledge management is applied based on the fulfillment of needs in serving students in the teaching and learning process. Explicitly the implementation of management is used as a means of branding identity carried out by some universities. Even so, what has been done related to the implementation of knowledge management can implicitly be concluded that it has become a branding activity for the identity of universities in an effort to get a large number of new students. For example, the International Women's University, Bandung, carries out identity branding to recruit prospective new

students (Umi Narimawati and Bunga Gracia, 2020)

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The implementation of knowledge management in private universities in West Java is diverse. Each university has its own model depending on the needs of each. Thus there is no single model that can be used as a reference.
- Only a small number of private universities in West Java have implemented knowledge management through the provision of scientific forums to support the operational organization of their institutions in relation to improving university performance.
- Implementation of knowledge management in private universities in West Java has not used an adequate strategy, so it has not provided optimal results.
- Implementation of knowledge management in private universities in West Java generally includes organizational structure, teaching and learning processes, publications, research and community service, and improving human resources.
- There are still obstacles that hinder the implementation of knowledge management through the provision of scientific forums in private universities in West Java due to the lack of support from the main university management.
- The implementation of knowledge management through the provision of scientific forums in private universities in West Java is explicitly used as an identity branding medium to increase competitive advantage, which only a small number of private universities in West Java have carried out.
- Implementation of knowledge management through the provision of scientific forums in private universities in West Java is still limited to adjustments to the conditions and situations of each institution related to the fulfillment of national education standards.

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