IMPACT OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, IT, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND UNIVERSITY BRANDING ON EDUCATION QUALITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate and comprehend the effects of knowledge management adoption, information technology utilization, and community service programs on university branding and their subsequent impact on the overall quality of education in private tertiary institutions (PTS) in the West Java and Banten region. The research design was quantitative, using a survey approach and a simple random sampling method to gather data from 226 lecturers from private tertiary institutions in West Java and Banten. PLS software version 3.0, based on the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach, was used to analyze the data. The results showed that knowledge management implementation had no discernible impact on university branding, as shown by a t-statistic value of 1.594 and a P-value of 0.112.

Keywords*:* implementation of knowledge management; utilization of information technology; community service program; university branding; quality of education

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INTRODUCTION

The Association of Indonesian Private Higher Education Institutions (APTISI) in West Java has conducted a data collection of accredited higher education institutions. According to the information, just 54 of

Indonesia's 4,593 higher education institutions have received good certification from the National Certification Agency for Higher Education (BAN-PT). In West Java and Banten, there are 453 private higher education institutions, but only seven have obtained excellent accreditation. Accreditation is crucial for higher education institutions as it serves as evidence of quality and ensures its reputation among the community. One way to enhance the quality of higher education institutions is by implementing a digital-based system that integrates all their needs. Digital systems, technological utilization,

Private higher education institutions acknowledge the importance of marketing and branding. Several private institutions have actively promoted their academic programs on various social media platforms. Through branding, institutions can encourage each institution to be more innovative in reaching a wider range of target markets, ultimately attracting more students. In addition, community engagement activities carried out by lecturers in high schools and vocational schools are vital for promoting their institutions. Strengthening promotion and introducing the institution to the community, especially the intended target audience, is the lecturers' responsibility in portraying a positive image of their respective institutions.

Higher education establishments are responsible for delivering education, conducting research, and offering community services, as specified in Article 20 of the National Education Law No. 20 of 2003. The research conducted within these institutions aims to advance knowledge and technology while also enhancing social well-being and the nation's competitive edge, as outlined in Articles 45 and 46 of the Higher Education Law No. 12 of 2012.

Effectively implementing knowledge management is essential to prevent the mishandling of knowledge, as it can lead to substantial losses in organizational activities. To become competent individuals, it is necessary to manage and centralize knowledge through knowledge management, which captures and organizes the knowledge possessed by each individual within an organization or academia. Subsequently, the knowledge acquired through research and education can be shared with others in need, facilitating the effective functioning of academic programs. However, some individuals believe that employing technology or systems might be mentally or physically effortless, as mentioned by Davis, as cited in (Borirakcharoenkit et al., 2022).

Given the previously mentioned context, the researcher is motivated to conduct a study titled "Examining the Impact of Knowledge Management, Information Technology Utilization, and Community Engagement Programs on University Branding and their Effect on the Quality of Education in All Private Higher Education Institutions in West Java and Banten.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Implementation of Knowledge Management

According to Setia et al, (2022), Knowledge management is a structured and systematic approach that organizations adopt to manage their existing knowledge and create new knowledge. This enables the utilization and sharing of knowledge across all aspects of the business. This process aims to assist the company in achieving its vision and goals while outperforming its competitors. By efficiently managing and utilizing the combined knowledge, the organization can enhance its decision-making, boost performance, and nurture innovation, ultimately leading to sustained success and expansion.

Knowledge management enables knowledge to be converted into an asset whose value increases with the accumulation of skills, creative talents of the people, educational qualifications, and experience (Polyanska & Malynka, 2014). According to Robbins and Judge (2015), Knowledge management is the ability to work with an understanding of and motivate others, both individuals and groups.

The indicators of knowledge management, according to Budihardjo (2017), are as follows:

a. Technology: Technology's pivotal role in knowledge management lies in its capacity to facilitate business processes focused on knowledge creation, storage, maintenance, and dissemination. Technology allows employees to record knowledge in text, writing, images, etc. To facilitate easy

accessibility and transfer of knowledge among employees, organizations need to utilize technology such as video conferencing, internet and intranet networks, telephones, and fax machines. Many organizations have libraries that provide easy access to the latest knowledge through books, journals, and printed media.

b. Work Procedures: Work procedures in knowledge management require more than just absorbing information to implement them. They require skills. Organizations also facilitate access to individuals and other organizational members with knowledge through rules and procedures. For example, document management is increasingly needed to complete tasks with more complex procedures and an increasing amount of written work.

c. Personal Knowledge: Personal knowledge pertains to the unique experiences and intangible aspects like personal beliefs, perspectives, and value systems within an individual. Expressing personal knowledge in formal language can be challenging. It encompasses individual comprehension, intuition, and instincts. To convey personal knowledge effectively, it must first be translated into words, models, or numerical representations that others can grasp and comprehend.

Utilization of Information Technology

The utilization of information technology pertains to the behavior or approach of employing technology to accomplish tasks and enhance performance. Both students and educators must harness technological advancements and stay mindful of the career prospects and entrepreneurial possibilities that arise from the evolution of information technology during the fourth industrial revolution. By embracing and leveraging these innovations, individuals can better prepare themselves for the changing job landscape, seize opportunities to create new ventures, and make significant contributions to the digital era's transformative landscape (Adha et al., 2022).

As noted by Wijana (2007), the utilization of information technology involves the anticipated behaviors and expectations of information system users when utilizing technology to perform their tasks or work-related activities. As referenced by Ariesta (2013), the utilization of information technology pertains to the conduct of technology employees while carrying out their tasks. As per Wijana (2007), the indicators for the utilization of information technology include 1) Intensity of use, 2) Frequency of use, and 3) Diversity of software packages employed.

Community Engagement Programs

Academic communities use knowledge and technology to advance community welfare and educate the nation (Higher Education Law No. 12, 2012). The target audience of community engagement programs includes the general public, educational institutions/schools, groups, and urban and rural business units. Community engagement development utilizes several strategies, such as (1) implementing community engagement based on institutional, scientific, ethical, cooperation, community benefits, and sustainability principles; (2) increasing counseling, technical services, and consultations in various fields; (3) developing partnership collaborations with various parties; (4) optimizing strategic assets, including human resources, facilities, and locations.

The indicators of community engagement programs, as described in the Guidebook for Research and Community Engagement (2022), include 1) Publication in scientific journals, 2) Presenters at scientific meetings, 3) Guest lecturers, 4) Keynote speakers, 5) Intellectuals Property Rights (IPR), 6) Appropriate technology, 7) Social engineering models/designs, 8) Textbooks, 9) Amount of research collaboration funding, 10) Lecturers' participation in research.

University Branding

Branding provides a design or symbol to promote the products or services offered (Narimawati et al, 2023). According to Devi Puspita and Audita Nuvriasari (2018), the brand image refers to how consumers perceive a specific brand, formed through their evaluations and comparisons with other brands within the same product category.

Establishing a robust brand image is crucial to familiarize consumers with the product, imprint the brand's identity in their minds, and ultimately shape their decision-making behavior regarding choices and purchases. A positive brand image can create a sense of trust, loyalty, and preference among consumers, leading to long-term success and competitive advantage for the brand.

According to Kusumah, a brand is a distinctive identifier that includes any name, word, design, symbol, or other representation used to distinguish and characterize a product, encompassing both commodities and services (Kusumah et al., as cited in Tawani et al., 2022). The indicators of branding (brand image), as mentioned by Widyaningsih (as cited in Labibah & Andayani, 2019), include: 1) Brand identity, 2) Brand personality, 3) Brand associations, 4) Brand attitude and behavior, and 5) Brand benefits and competencies.

Quality of Education

According to Sudrajat (2005) Quality education refers to an educational system that nurtures graduates with academic and vocational competencies, complemented by personal and social skills and noble values, collectively known as life skills. Such education aims to produce well-rounded individuals who integrate faith, knowledge, and virtuous actions. By equipping students with a diverse skill set and a strong moral foundation, quality education fosters the development of integrated individuals who are academically adept, socially responsible, and morally conscious, contributing positively to society and leading fulfilling lives.

According to Rusman & Pd (2009), there is an interconnectedness between the process and the outcome of quality education. However, to ensure that the good process is correctly directed, the school must formulate the quality of outcomes (outputs) first, with clear targets to be achieved annually or within other timeframes. Based on the various opinions on the quality of education, quality education is one pillar for developing human resources (HR).

As outlined in Government Regulation No. 32 of 2013 on National Education Standards (SNP), the indicators of education quality encompass eight standards, which are: 1) Management Standards, 2) Graduate Competency Standards, 3) Content Standards, 4) Process Standards, 5) Teacher and Education Personnel Standards, 6) Facilities and Infrastructure Standards, 7) Financing Standards, and 8) Assessment Standards.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to measure the effects of knowledge management implementation, utilization of information technology, and community engagement programs on university branding and education quality in private higher education institutions in West Java and Banten. A survey research approach is used to collect data from 226 lecturers through a questionnaire. Structural Equation Modeling (Smart-PLS) is employed for data analysis. Data sources include primary data, collected directly from respondents, and secondary data, obtained indirectly, to support the primary data. PLS 3.0 is the data analysis method, allowing researchers to comprehensively analyze measurement models (outer model) and structural models (inner model).

For validity assessment, researchers use convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity examines the correlation between item and construct scores, with a correlation greater than 0.70 considered strong. For the initial research phase, outer loadings of 0.5 to 0.6 are deemed satisfactory. Discriminant validity is assessed using the average extracted variance's square root, with an AVE > 0.5 considered acceptable.

The structural model quantifies the variation explained in the dependent variables (R2 value) and predicts causal links among latent variables. The Stone-Geisser Q-Square Test and an R2 value greater than 0.2 are used to evaluate the strength and significance of associations among latent variables. By employing these methods, the researchers aim to ensure their research findings' accuracy, robustness, and meaningfulness. The following is a diagram of the research's structural model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis Testing

The resampling bootstrap method

developed by Geisser & Stone tests the path coefficient hypothesis (β, γ, and λ) (Ghozali, 2015). The significant level of the hypothesis testing is established by contrasting the computed t-value with the critical t-value and considering the p-values as follows: (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015).

a. The alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. The null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected when the computed t-value exceeds the critical t-value and the p-value is less than the chosen significance level (e.g., 0.05). This suggests a meaningful connection between the variables being studied.

b. The alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected, and the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted if the computed t-value is larger than or equal to the crucial t-value and the p-value is greater than or equal to the selected significance level (e.g., 0.05). This suggests that there is no meaningful connection between the variables under investigation.

By applying the resampling bootstrap method and evaluating the significance of t-values and p-values, researchers can ascertain the support for the proposed hypotheses based on the data. This rigorous statistical approach plays a crucial role in drawing reliable conclusions regarding the relationships between the latent variables in the research model. These criteria are used to decide whether to accept or reject the hypotheses.

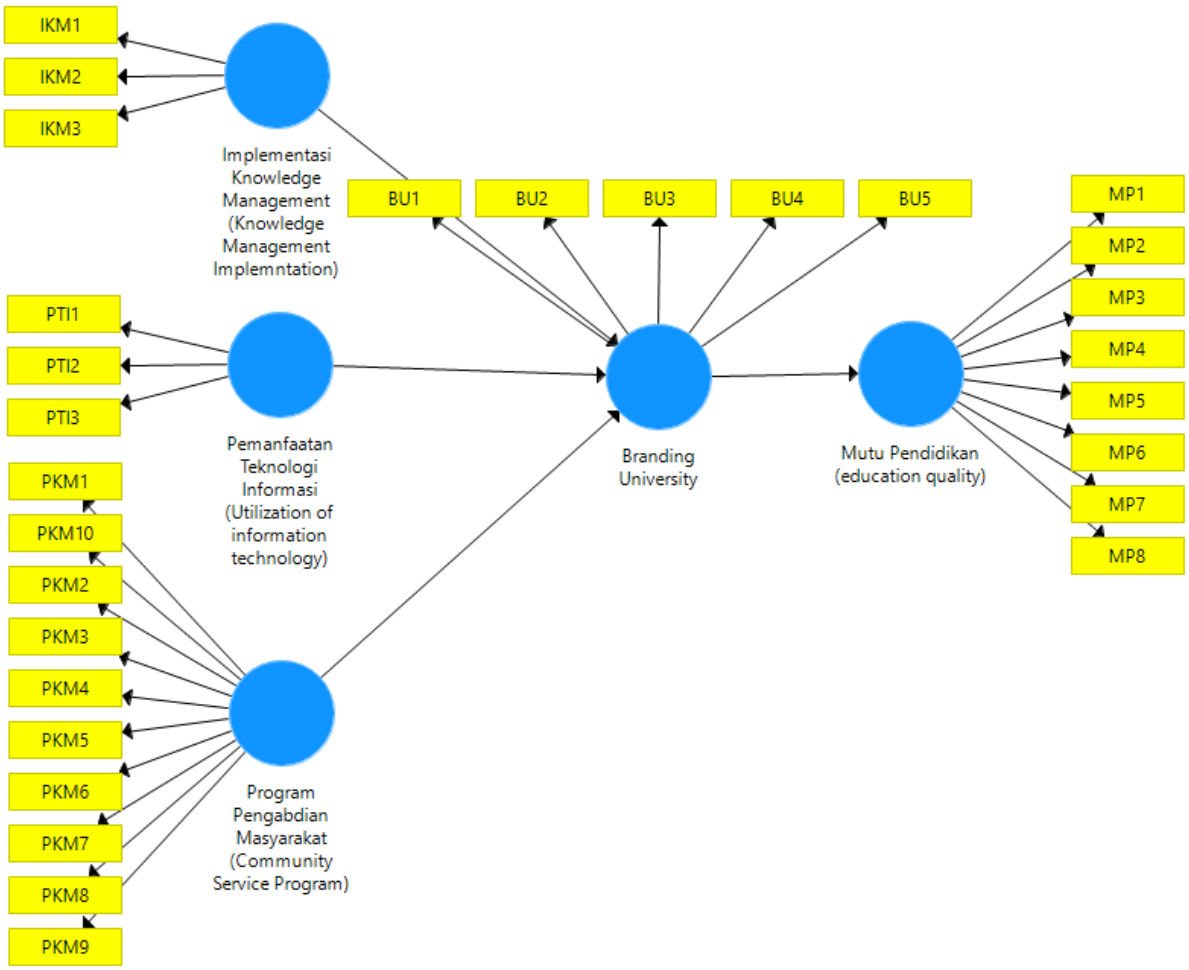

Figure 1. Research Model

Analysis of the Outer Model

Establishing the connection between latent variables and their observable indicators is the goal of the study of the outer model. Convergent validity, discriminant validity,

and reliability are the three key facets of this examination.

a. Convergent Validity: A correlation is deemed to have convergent validity if its loading factor is more than 0.7, according to Ghozali and Latan (2015). The study's findings show that the loading factors of the employed indicators are higher than the suggested cutoff point of 0.7, strongly supporting convergent validity. Furthermore, it is important to remember that during the preliminary stages of a scale development study, even a loading factor of 0.6 is considered appropriate. Therefore, the indicators used in this investigation exhibit satisfactory convergent validity, validating the accuracy and consistency of the measurement model based on the results. The structural model in this study is displayed in the following diagram:

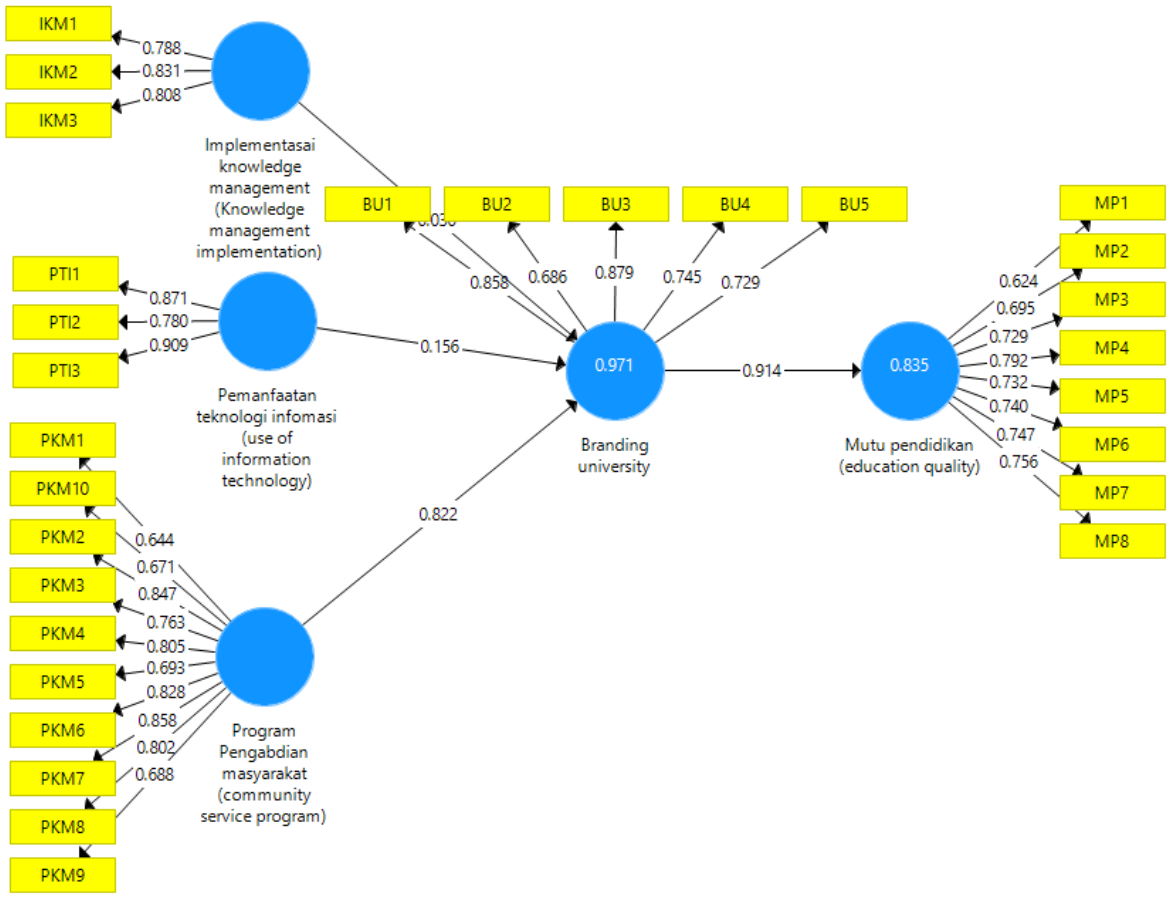

Figure 2: Outer Model, Algorithm Testing.

Table 1. Outer Loading

	Implementation of knowledge management (Knowledge management implementation)	Utilization of information technology (use of information technology)_	Community service program_	Brandinguniversity	Quality of education (education quality)_
BU1				0.858	
BU2				0.686	
BU3				0.879	
BU4				0.745	
BU5				0.729	
IKM1	0.788				
IKM2	0.831				
IKM3	0.808				
MP1					0.624
MP2					0.695
MP3					0.729
MP4					0.792
MP5					0.732
MP6					0.740
MP7					0.747
MP8					0.756
PKM1			0.644		
PKM10			0.671		
PKM2			0.847		
PKM3			0.763		
PKM4			0.805		
PKM5			0.693		
PKM6			0.828		
PKM7			0.858		
PKM8			0.802		
PKM9			0.688		
PTI1		0.871			
PTI2		0.780			
PTI3		0.909			

Source: Output from SmartPLS 3.0 software, 2023.

Table 1 shows that the MP1 indicator, corresponding to the lowest outer loading value in this study's outer model assessment, is 0.624. The model satisfies the requirements for convergent validity when comparing this result to the specified threshold of 0.7 for outer loading. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that even the lowest outer loading value obtained (0.624) surpasses the acceptable threshold of 0.6, considered adequate during the scale development phase.

b. Construct Validity and Reliability

The variable "quality of education" has the lowest AVE value among the five factors, with a value of 0.531, as seen from the data in Table 2. This finding shows that all five study variables satisfy the criteria for discriminant validity because the lowest AVE value (0.531) found is over the 0.5 cutoff.

Table 2. Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Implementation of knowledge management (Knowledge management implementation)	0.738	0.747	0.850	0.655
Utilization of information technology (use of information technology)_	0.816	0.836	0.890	0.731
Community service program_	0.919	0.924	0.933	0.583
Brandinguniversity	0.839	0.847	0.887	0.613
Quality of education (education quality)_	0.877	0.884	0.900	0.531

Source: Output from SmartPLS 3.0 software, 2023.

According to the composite reliability analysis and Cronbach's alpha results, the variable "knowledge management implementation" has the lowest value, or 0.850. These findings also demonstrate that all variables satisfy the construct reliability criterion, as the lowest Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values (0.850) are higher than the advised cutoff point of 0.7.

In conclusion, it is evident from Table 2 analysis that the research variables exhibit both discriminant validity and construct reliability, providing strong support for the accuracy and consistency of the measurement model used in this work.

c. Inner Model Testing

After the outer model testing is complete, the inner model, also known as the final structural equation model, is evaluated. The evaluation of the path coefficients and R-square values in this study's inner model testing is shown in the table below:

Table 3: R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brandinguniversity	0.971	0.971
Quality of education (education quality)_	0.835	0.834

Source: Smart PLS Program Output, Version 3.0, data processed by the author, 2023.

According to Table 3, the variable "university branding" has an R-square value of 0.971. This value implies that approximately 97.1% of the variation in university branding can be accounted for by the three predictor variables: knowledge management implementation, use of information technology, and community service programs. The remaining 2.9% of the variation is attributable to other variables not considered in the model.

Similarly, the "education quality" variable's R-square value is 0.835. This suggests that the

"university branding" variable accounts for around 83.5% of the variation in educational quality. However, other variables not accounted for in the model contribute to the remaining 16.5% of the variation in education quality.

Table 4: Results of Inner Model Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Means (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Implementation of knowledge management (Knowledge management implementation) -> Branding university	0.030	0.031	0.019	1,594	0.112
Utilization of information technology (use of information technology)_ -> Branding university	0.156	0.153	0.034	4,518	0.000
Community service program_ -> Branding university	0.822	0.823	0.040	20,338	0.000
Branding university -> Education quality_	0.914	0.915	0.009	98,482	0.000

Source: Smart PLS Program Output. 3.0, data processed by the author in 2023

The evaluation of the structural equation model, based on the data in Table 4, demonstrates the partial relationships between the variables, as shown by the path coefficients. The route coefficients have the following meanings:

1. The path coefficient for hypothesis 1, which represents the influence of knowledge management implementation on university branding, is obtained as 0.030. This value indicates a 3% (0.030 x 100%) influence. The result suggests that an increase in knowledge management implementation will lead to an increase in university branding.
2. The path coefficient for hypothesis 2, which represents the influence of information technology on university branding, is obtained as 0.156. This value indicates a 15.6% (0.156 x 100%) influence. The result implies that higher utilization of information technology will lead to higher university branding.
3. The path coefficient for hypothesis 3, which represents the influence of the community service program on university branding, is obtained as 0.822. This value indicates an 82.2% (0.822 x 100%) influence. The result suggests a higher community service program will lead to higher university branding.
4. The path coefficient for hypothesis 4, which represents the influence of university branding on education quality, is obtained as 0.914. This value indicates a 91.4% (0.914 x 100%) influence. The result implies that higher university branding will lead to higher education quality.
5. Hypothesis Testing: Four hypotheses in this study need to be verified. The t-test is the hypothesis testing technique used in this investigation. At a significance level of 5% (0.05), or 1.6525, the computed t statistic obtained by bootstrapping is compared with the crucial value from the t-table. The results of this study's hypothesis testing are shown in the Table 5.

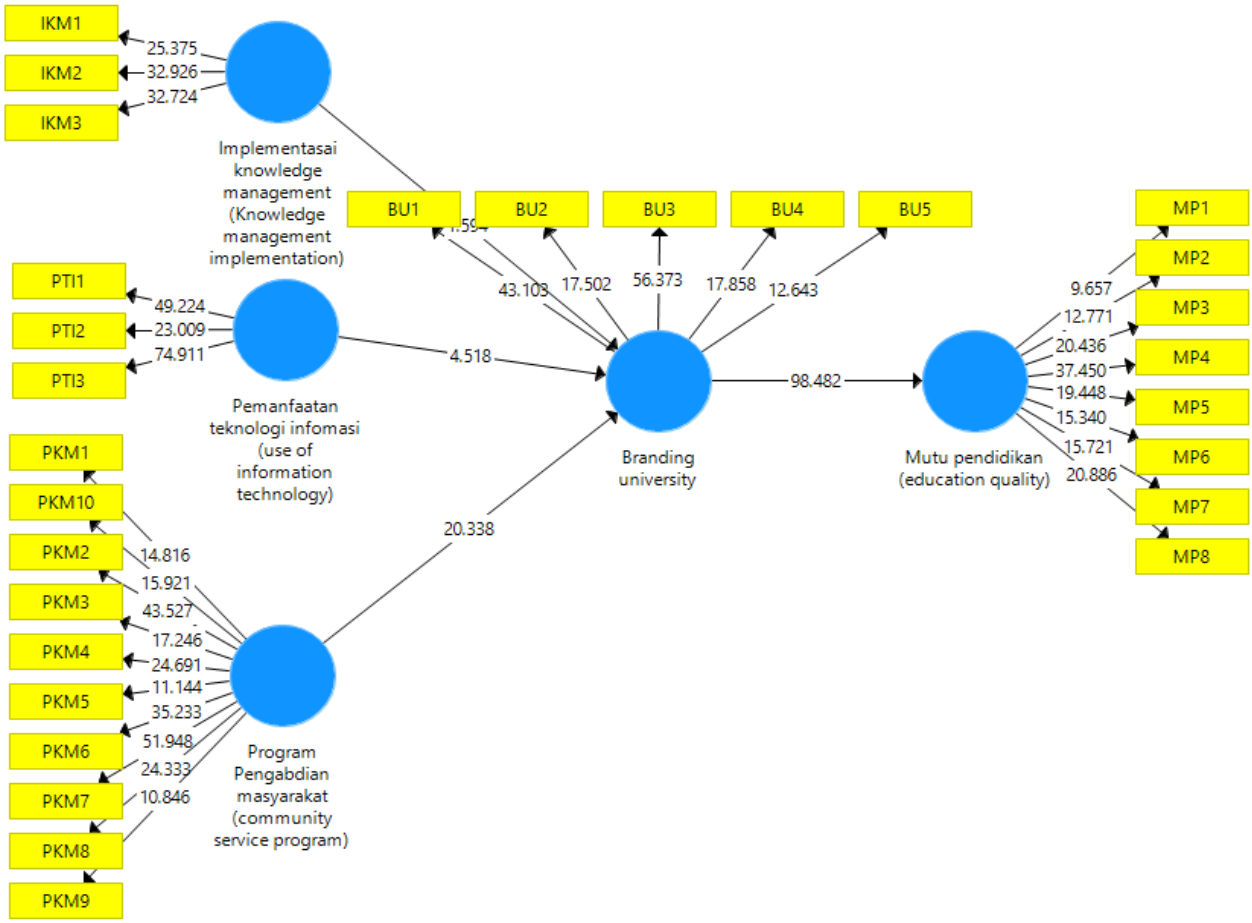

Figure 3: Inner Model, Bootstrapping Test
Source: Data processed by the author, 2023

Table 5. Results of Direct Effects Test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Means (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Description
Implementation of knowledge management (Knowledge management implementation) -> Branding university	0.030	0.031	0.019	1,594	0.112	Rejected
Utilization of information technology (use of information technology)_ -> Branding university	0.156	0.153	0.034	4,518	0.000	Accepted

Table 5. Continued

Community service program_ -> Branding university	0.822	0.823	0.040	20,338	0.000	Accepted
Branding university -> Education quality_	0.914	0.915	0.009	98,482	0.000	Accepted

Source: Output of Smart PLS Program, Version 3.0, data processed by the author, 2023.

The following explanation is based on the PLS output (bootstrapping test) shown in Table 5:

1. Hypothesis 1: The study's findings make it clear that the deployment of knowledge management has no statistically meaningful impact on university branding. Only 3% (0.030 x 100%) of the relationship value between these variables has been calculated. Additionally, the p-value of 0.112 is greater than the significance level of 0.05, while the t-statistic value of 1.594 is below the critical t-table value of 1.6525. As a result, the evidence refutes Hypothesis 1, showing that adopting knowledge management has no statistically meaningful impact on university branding.
2. Hypothesis 2: With a t-statistic of 4.518 and a p-value of 0.000, the sample's initial value for information technology adoption is 0.156. With a connection value of 15.6% (0.156 x 100%), these findings show that information technology adoption positively and considerably impacts institution branding. In this study, Hypothesis 2 is supported and accepted because the computed t-statistic value (4.518) is above the crucial t-table value of 1.6525, and the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level of 0.05.
3. Hypothesis 3: A sample value of 0.822 was achieved for community service programs, with a t-statistic of 20.338 and a p-value of 0.000. With a connection value of 82.2% (0.822 x 100%), these findings suggest that community service initiatives have a favorable and considerable impact on institution branding. In this study, Hypothesis 3 is supported and accepted because the computed t-statistic value of 20.338 is above the crucial t-table value of 1.6525, and the p-value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05.
4. Hypothesis 4: According to the data, the initial sample value for educational quality is 0.914, the t-statistic is 98.482, and the p-value is 0.000. With a connection value of 91.4% (0.914 x 100%), these findings highlight the considerable and favorable impact of institution branding on educational quality. Additionally, the p-value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05, and the t-statistic of 98.482 is significantly above the essential t-table value of 1.6525. As a result, the study's fourth hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings and data analysis within the context of private universities in West Java and Banten, notable conclusions emerge. Firstly, the impact of knowledge management implementation on university branding is not significant. Despite the emphasis in previous studies on knowledge management's role in improving educational quality, these results indicate that other factors dominate a university's image. On the other hand, information technology has been proven to influence university branding positively and significantly. This underscores the importance of effectively leveraging technology to strengthen a university's image in the eyes of the public. Information technology is crucial in building reputation and enhancing universities' competitiveness in today's digital age. Furthermore, community service programs also demonstrate a positive and significant influence on university branding. Active engagement in community service activities enables universities to foster strong relationships with the local community and enhance their image as

caring and relevant institutions. Lastly, university branding positively and significantly impacts education quality. By bolstering a university's image and reputation, it is more likely to attract high-quality prospective students, garner greater support, and drive overall improvements in education quality. These findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that affect university branding and its connection to education quality. In managing higher education institutions, universities must prioritize strategies that effectively utilize information technology, implement community service programs, and focus on building a strong brand to enhance their reputation and ultimately elevate education quality.

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