

STRATEGIES OF FORMING THE IMAGE OF THE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: SOCIO-CULTURAL DIMENSION

Purpose of Research. The purpose of the article is to analyse the strategies of forming an image of the institution of higher education in their socio-cultural dimension. **Methodology.** The methodology of the article is based on the multidisciplinary approach, which is the synthesis such studies as imagology, management, aesthetics and cultural one. The author's uses the comparative method to analyse different definitions of the image, culturological one to show the value of the image in the development of the cultural level of educational institutions, the structural method to consider the main elements of forming the image in the Ukrainian education. **Scientific Novelty.** The scientific novelty is the analysis of the image's strategies of the institutions of higher education in their promotion in the society. **Conclusions.** The work on creating and maintaining an image of the educational institution requires a rather multidimensional and regular activity not only image-makers, but also teams of professionals of public relations. The effective implementation of the university's image strategies provides the strengthening of the higher education positions in the market of educational services. The image strategy allows the university to introduce its activity to the wide spectrum of people, to make presentations of its achievements and to broadcast of its values and culture.

Key word: education, image, strategies of forming of images, public relations, socio-cultural activity of institute.

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Стратегії формування іміджу закладу вищої освіти: соціокультурний вимір

Метою статті є аналіз стратегії формування іміджу закладу вищої освіти у соціокультурному вимірі. **Методологія** дослідження ґрунтується на міждисциплінарному підході, тобто звертається надбав естетики, іміджології, менеджменту та культурології. Порівняльний метод застосований для аналізу основних підходів до визначення поняття імідж. Культурологічний метод розкриває імідж закладу вищої освіти як ретранслятора культурних цінностей та традицій установи. **Наукова новизна** полягає в аналізі стратегій формування іміджу закладу вищої освіти у соціокультурному вимірі. **Висновки.** Створення іміджу навчального закладу вимагає досить багатопланової діяльності в якій задіяні не лише іміджмейкери, а й керівництво та професорсько-викладацький склад. Ефективне впровадження іміджевих стратегій університету сприяє зміцненню позицій на ринку освітніх послуг та дозволяє презентувати свою діяльність та культуру в суспільстві.

Ключові слова: освіта, імідж, стратегії формування іміджу, суспільні відносини, соціокультурна діяльність інституту.

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Стратегии формирования имиджа высшего учебного заведения: социокультурное измерение

Целью статьи является анализ стратегии формирования имиджа учреждения высшего образования в социокультурном измерении. **Методология** исследования основана на междисциплинарном подходе, то есть обращается к достижениям эстетики, имиджологии, менеджмента и культурологии. Сравнительный метод применен для анализа основных подходов к определению понятия имидж. Культурологический метод раскрывает имидж учреждения высшего образования как ретранслятора культурных ценностей и традиций учреждения. **Научная новизна** заключается в анализе стратегий формирования имиджа учреждения высшего образования в социокультурном измерении. **Выводы.** Создание имиджа учебного заведения требует достаточно многоплановой деятельности, в которой задействованы не только имиджмейкеры, но и руководство вместе с профессорско-преподавательский составом. Эффективное внедрение стратегий создания имиджа университета способствует укреплению позиций на рынке образовательных услуг и позволяет представить свою деятельность и культуру в обществе.

Ключевые слова: образование, имидж, стратегии формирования имиджа, общественные отношения, социокультурная деятельность института.

Actuality of Research. Today, the image has become an integral part of the post-industrial culture where information is the most important value as well as commodity. The "image" is a widespread category, which is used by the public and non-public figures, small market players and powerful corporations, politicians and sports teams, cities and states. The image can influence on the global status and the international brand of a nation, company or educational institutions. For example, we can see it in historical facts. In 1920 the Queen of the Netherlands wrote a letter to Alexander Koshits, a great Ukrainian conductor and politician, after his concert tour in the country. The letter has the following words: "The only means to make people know and love each other is to send the best representatives of art from one country to another. Earlier, I has been completely indifferent to Ukraine, but now I will fight for this country ... If in Ukraine all things were in such harmony as its art, it would be the leading state in the world ...".

The modern reforms in the education of Ukraine make an attempt to build the effective professional system of education. They make the institutes look for new ways to attract students and to get some advantages in the educational market. An image is one of the most effective means in this policy. So, such situation determines the actuality of the analysis of the image's strategies in the institutions of higher education.

The image is the subject of the scientific works of the foreign and Ukrainian researchers such as D.-J. Boorstin, V. Korolko, O. Kholod, G. Pocheptsov [3], O. Pyatina [7], F. Rudich [10], V. Shepel, S. Skyba [12], N. Furmankevich [22]. The importance of the image of the university are analysed by Karyi, T. Khomulenko, O. Kopyyevska [27], Yu. Padapeth, O. Rayevneva [8], A. Rodionova [9], S. Subina [17], O. Trach [19], V. Trubnikov [20]. However, the rapid reforms in the education of Ukraine and new laws, concerned it make us to consider the strategies of the forming of the image of the institutions of the higher education more properly.

The purpose of the article is to analyse the strategies of forming an image of educational institutions in their socio-cultural dimension.

Main part. The most part of our knowledge about the world is knowledge at the level of the image, which can be defined as a relatively stable idea of any object. The category "image" is one of the most universal and widespread in social as well as individual communications. Using it, a man perceives oneself and others, evaluating and improving his own strategies of his interaction with the society both in the personal and professional spheres. The person creates his/her socio-cultural dimension.

V. Korolko writes that the image is a thoughtful idea of a person, a product or an institution that is deliberately formed in the mass consciousness by publicity, advertising or propaganda [3, 156].

V. Shepel gives his interpretation of the image as a face part of the image where manners (gestures) and mimics are the most expressive architectural elements [9, 47].

The spontaneous events require a hero, who is well-known by his/her activity, whereas the organized ones need celebrities, who are known for his image. The hero creates himself/herself, representing certain ideals, whereas the media for pragmatic goals – such as election, sale, performance or service, create the celebrity. If the image is "wearied out", it can be replaced by another. "The language of the images dominates everywhere. It has replaced the language of ideals everywhere" – D.-J. Boorstin emphasizes [13, 15].

The scientists distinguish three types of the image. They are corporate, commodity and personal.

Corporate image. The main carriers of the corporate image are organizational and activity's means. The corporation needs it to make people aware and appreciate its role in the economic and socio-political life of the regions. The corporation should get popularity due to its products or services as well as its "ego", which is formed in the mass consciousness as a social object.

Commodity image. Its representatives are the following material and production means – materials, goods, groups of products, etc.

Personal image. According to E. Sampson, everyone has the image. "Whether you want it or not, people see what you have chosen to show them ... The way you go, sit or stand is the result of your learning, temperament whereas the style of your clothes is the result of your personal choice". So, the personal image is determined by a complex synthesis of internal and external factors.

G. Pocheptsov, a Ukrainian political scientist, offers his own types of the image, namely: mirror, current, desirable, corporate and multifunctional [7, 187]. The mirror image is our perception of ourselves. The current image is a view from other point of view. The corporate one concerns the organization. The multifunctional image is a set of features that characterize and symbolize a single entity.

In G. Pocheptsov's opinion, we can rule the image. The specific feature of the image management is the synchronous functioning of the following components:

- Opportunities of the object of the image,
- Demands for image building tasks,
- Requirements for the channel of the image,
- Requirements of the audiences for the image object.

G. Pocheptsov thinks that the process of creating the firm's image consists of the following factors – marketing, communicative, sociological and situational ones. So, the marketing factor helps to determine the task of allocating differences in the object. The sociological one analyses the benefits of the audience. The communicative factor makes an announcement. The situational factor determines the impact of the context. For example, we can characterize the image of a firm for state institutions: "The master and all staff are the faithful sons of the Homeland". The means of the interaction with state authorities should show them the loyalty and readiness for constant cooperation. We can describe the image of the company for consumer products by such phrase "Our firm is your loyal friend". "Our goal is to produce goods of high quality!". The company's image for the sphere of trade can express by such slogan – "Our firm will live according to the law: You do it for me – I do it for you". At the international relations, the company's image may be indicated in such a way: "Our firm is open to everyone. We will do our best to ease your life in any country" [1, 46].

In addition, there are many other types of the image. They are an image of a politician, an image of a businessman, an image of civil society, an image of the production company, a trademark image, a teacher's image, an image of the creative personality and image of the nation, etc.

The term "factor of the image" is the pattern where the personal image and operational style can affect the internal "promotion" and external perception of the identified object. The image is mainly determined by the activity of a social institution or even a man. Thus, we can correct and modify the image. The imagemakers are people, who create images. They are professionals. We can meet another term "image building", which means the destructive image. O. Kholod proposes to call it "trashing image"[11, 261].

Thus, the image is widespread in the different spheres of the social life. In our research, we want to pay attention to its role in the promoting the institutions of higher education in the conditions of competitiveness in modern Ukraine.

In the Soviet period, the educational institutions were monopolized by the state system and did not take much care of their strong reputation. Today, our education is aimed at the marketing strategy. Its goals are to attract as many as possible consumers by the high quality of the educational services, which allow surviving in the process of the rapid reduction of the number of universities. In such situation the PR of the institute and its promotion play the crucial roles. The managers uses different means to support and develop the university's image. They are promotion – (the creation of the necessary level of popularity and sublimation of the object); publicity (the popularity in the mass media); a brand (a trademark, which denotes a range of operations and activities, aimed at the skilful creation of a myth about the object); hypertrophic image (the focus on small insignificant positive details); accentuation (focusing on the right information); visualization; metaphorized clipping (poetry, rhetoric, and ornament character); a presentation, triangle of image (a perfect image – a real image – a created image) etc.

The PR of the institution of higher education is based on the following principles: transparency, openness, publicity. They ensure its popularity as well as its competitiveness.

The effective image of the institutions of higher education is to attract the potential consumers of educational services and people with a high level of motivation for higher education. In addition, a university is a keeper of its values, which are interesting for students. Therefore, the positive image includes the moral aspect of the university's life, which is mainly broadcast by the leadership and the staff of the educational institution [8, 109].

Today, we can see the dynamic competitiveness among the institutions of the higher education in Ukraine. It make them use different means of positioning to find effective tools in the fight against competitors.

In the conditions of market transformations, the selection of the main aspects of the image of the institution of higher educational helps to find ways to enhance the positive positioning of higher education.

Firstly, the strengthening of the aspects, related to higher education as an employer. They are the motivation of the staff, stimulating of their scientific development and wide spectrum of the self-realization.

Secondly, it is the articulation of a university as an effective subject of the regional development. So it includes the solutions of the actual socio-economic, legal, cultural problems of citizens of the region.

Finally, the PR of the institutions of higher education should be considered at the following levels: universities – potential students and their parents; universities – lecturers; universities – students; universities – region; universities – graduates; universities – citizens, etc.

The positioning of the PR of the universities by students is particularly interesting. It can be considered as one of the main elements (activators) of the educational institute's image. Indeed, the students extrapolate both the positive and the negative aspects of their university's life. Students are the target audience, which is the so-called internal community. They determine the existence of the university.

Such image constructions of universities as infrastructure and communication play the important role in the development of the institution of higher education. The concept of infrastructure has a wide range of meanings. In our case, it includes the high-class modern training buildings and classrooms, the compactness of their location, clean and equipped rooms, modern lighting, hostels of hospitality type, canteens. An important factor is the territory where universities are located (clean territory, lawns and trees, comfortable and equipped places for rest, parking, security, etc.).

Nowadays, the skilful establishment of communication is the most significant factor in building of the effective image of the institutions of higher education. The Internet access is the necessary element of the students' needs. The Internet capabilities become the effective means of promoting the subject of higher education into the world of educational services users.

Universities can use the widest range of services, provided by the World Wide Web. The latter gives an opportunity to establish communication with the public, to get the necessary information, to provide feedback to the target groups and to conduct sociological, socio-psychological and other researches. The Internet allows universities to present themselves on different sides and to emphasize their advantages. Thus, using of the Internet resources we build sustainable and long-term relations with publicity and give the information about the university. Moreover, these resources allow us to analyse the current user's interests and the interests of target groups.

Thus, an effective PR university includes the following measures to enhance the image of the university:

- The presentation of the conception of the universities development;
- The information about available opportunities for the potential consumer;

- The segmentation of the market of educational services;
- The focus on the needs of potential clients;
- The analysis of the target groups of consumers;
- The development of a trademark of the university;
- The development of a slogan that most accurately expresses the goals of the university;
- The establishment of the corporate staff culture of the educational institution (style of linguistic and non-verbal communication, the quality of conferences, business meetings, appearance of employees, style of clothes, ability to solve conflicts and crisis situations);
- The development of the means to inform consumers about the advantages of the educational institution;
- The creating of the good reputation and the accumulation of positive information about the past university's activity as well as the informing potential clients about the future plans for the development of an educational institution, publicly significant proposals and views of the head and top managers;
- The presentation of self-financed events (conferences, symposiums, charity to help the disabled people, orphans who have suffered from accidents or natural disasters, preferential education for children from large families, children of employees, payment for studying on credit);
- The close cooperation with the media (presentation on Ukrainian, local TV and radio channels with detailed interviews or essays organization of the conferences, participation in TV and radio reviews, participation in press-monitoring, support for informal contacts with journalists, etc.);
- The marketing researches of efficiency of advertising in newspapers, magazines, radio and television and other measures [17, 48].

Conclusions. The work on creating and maintaining an image of the educational institution requires a rather multidimensional and regular activity not only image-makers, but also teams of professionals of public relations. The effective implementation of the university's image strategies provides the strengthening of the higher education positions in the market of educational services and gives it the opportunity to be a competitive subject of education both in the region and in the country as a whole. The right choice of the image strategy allows the university to introduce its activity to the wide spectrum of people, to make presentations of its achievements and the level of professionalism. Moreover, the image of the educational institution is a broadcast of its values and culture.

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