Journal of History Culture and Art Research (ISSN: 2147-0626)

Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi Revue des Recherches en Histoire Culture et Art مجلة البحوث التاريخية و الثقافية و الفنية Vol. 6, No. 4, September 2017 Copyright © Karabuk University http://kutaksam.karabuk.edu.tr

DOI: 10.7596/taksad.v6i4.1192

Citation: Vyacheslavovna, S., Aleksandrovna, G., Romanovna, T., & Aleksandrovich, G. (2017). Business Reputation and Management of the Socio-Pedagogical Image Formation of Institutions of Higher Education. Journal of History Culture and Art Research, 6(4), 1351-1357. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v6i4.1192

Business Reputation and Management of the Socio-Pedagogical Image Formation of Institutions of Higher Education

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Abstract

This article discusses current developments within educational system in Russian Federation, with emphasis to establishing innovative socio-pedagogical images of the educational institutions. In that way, main problems and impediments on the way to their successful management, and suggested modernized technological strategies for creating desired socio-pedagogical image are also defined. It also investigates components and sets the criteria for the process of developing business image and reputation of the educational institutions. There are defined mechanisms of formation of the educational institutions image based on innovative brand technologies, including: external and internal criteria for evaluating the project results effectiveness; estimation of the cluster identity, economic efficiency and risks leveling; the structure of semantic network of information flows and the specification of general and specialized information provided by the project participants.

Keywords: Strategy, Technologies, Reputation, Modernization, Innovation, Image, Management, Educational institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Rejection of the state system of distribution, transition to market relations between colleges and client organizations, identifying new ways of dealing with educational services promotion in a competitive environment have given rise to addressing the issue of formation of higher school image, which represents the general perception of actual and potential consumers of educational services provided by the educational institution. College reputation in the image formation context relies on its value characteristics, based on holistic perception and evaluation of the college activities by different public groups, formed on the basis of available information on various aspects of the educational institution.

Review of the problem of managing college image formation is a relatively new aspect, which is due to a number of outstanding issues related to the fact that at the present stage social relationships influence the conditions of higher school activities and determine the level and quality of education, both at home and in the global context.

At the present stage, we face a transition from the analysis of internal parameters to the study of society requirements towards future professionals, which stresses the need to develop innovative approaches to the management of socio-pedagogical image of colleges aimed at achieving business reputation (Dowling, 2003; Arefiev, 2008; Skripkina, 2010).

The most important advantages of the Russian education system are caused by the fact that it still preserves fundamentality, mass character and high quality –features that allow to quickly respond to the changing needs of the education sector, to stimulate the process of revision of training system of the personnel, aimed at creating a positive image of the organization.

Thereby, a need arises to form the organization business reputation through certain technologies, through the creation of a qualitatively new system of education positioning (Skripkina, 2014: 61). The basic research on the above issue represents theoretical and methodological foundations of image development in the work of teachers, humanitarian intellectuals, educational institutions of secondary and higher education (Volodarskaya, 2008; Lerner, 2006; Dagaeva, 2005; Shcherbakov, 2008). We wish to acknowledge that the formation of socio-pedagogical image in the strategy of educational institutions has not yet become a subject for a purposeful targeted study: it is necessary to consider issues on the impact of higher school on society, the possibilities for targeted image development as the most important factor for enhancing the educational organization competitiveness.

DISCUSSION

A significant reserve for efficiency increasing of higher school in the market of educational services, an indicator of the college business reputation are modern tools and mechanisms

used for the formation of higher school image, since that image is considered to be not only moral, but also quite tangible category able to generating big earnings and enhancing college competitiveness. Speaking about the modern higher school image, we should stress the enhancing role of immaterial, innovative and informational growth factors.

Taking into consideration the intangible character of educational services provided by higher school, image shaping has its own unique qualities, determined by an opportunity to use features that to the most extent influence the consumers' perception of quality and form the foundation for the institution business reputation. Based on the time factor, even prior to its direct activities, the college image generated in the minds of consumers is influenced by indirect physical evidence, prior to the procedure of providing services, for "the college image, formed in the mass awareness, has been emotionally affected, determined by the ratio between different sides of its internal and external activities" (Skripkina, 2012: 18).

To exercise control over the formation of socio-pedagogical college image it is important to examine and analyze the regional space - research and educational cluster in which colleges operate. Speaking about scientific and pedagogical educational cluster, we should consider regional education within the framework of institutional, infrastructural, natural resources and human resources dimensions (Skripkina, 2011; Gorbacheva et al., 2013).

The institutional dimension in the process of college image shaping, is being considered from the point of view of the implementation of integration, adaptation, stabilization and innovation features. It is related to the regulatory and political institutions that shape the rules of conduct for the regional entities and dictate socio-pedagogical roles to higher school in the environment of a specific research and educational regional cluster. While exercising college image management, it should be considered that the integration function is aimed at combining sectoral activities with important regional objectives.

The adaptation function of the given dimension is focused on ensuring stability to the conditions of regional space, to the dynamically changing factors of the internal and external regional environment. The stabilization function, as a factor of external environment examination of the college operation, is designed to support traditions established and selected in the course of historic process, the continuity and integration of multilevel educational institutions in a particular regional community; herewith the higher school is given a significant socio -educational role. The innovation function of the college image formation is focused on screening and systematization of new areas and forms of socio-pedagogical activities, on creation of conditions for their implementation and transformation into competitive advantages.

The system of interpersonal communication in the context of higher school image formation, aimed at business reputation achieving, and its manifestation in the multiplicity of human individuals, are being realized in informal everyday social practices (Turavets, 2012; Turavets & Shchurov, 2013). The complex of nonlinear interpersonal communications form an infrastructure dimension designed to provide opportunities for competitive behavior. Nature resources dimension includes economic, geographical and political situation of the region, its resources, and historically established education traditions. While forming the college image we should also consider the human resources dimension of the regional space, analyze such indicators as the environment, the population of the region where the institution carries out its educational activities, the balance of ethnic and sex, and age structure of the population, the level and profile of the population activities, the development of value-motivational scope (regional mentality, regional character), and etc.

In the conditions of yearly increasing competition, each college tends to create its own brand that considers the socio-educational status of the institution, its uniqueness and originality of educational services, and feeling and emotions it generates with the consumer. As a rule, the innovative technologies, focused on the creation of the college brand, do not appeal only to consciousness. Emotions that are consistently targeted to influence the subconscious mind of the potential consumers of educational services are playing a more significant role.

By creating a preferable and attractive brand identity, colleges distinguish their competitive advantages that often enable them to meet the demands of the educational services market and to avoid losing students. There are other advantages in developing socio-pedagogical innovative technologies in the process of staff training in the educational institutions – this is not just short-term expenses, this is a long-term investment.

The originality of the college image formation based on innovative technologies is particularly important for the consumer of educational services, since, firstly, it will facilitate the college identification for applicants, and secondly - potential college entrants consciously or unconsciously may chose a service, which symbolizes their quality of life. Therefore, self-determining process of choosing an educational institution due to the established image, as a rule, corresponds to the personal idea of the consumer of educational services with regard to the status of a modern educational institution.

The authors have developed mechanisms and technics for the formation of higher school image on the basis of innovative brand technologies, such as: design of an effective college brand (analysis of the current situation, definition of activities, development of criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the project results); the project scope (analysis and adjustments in the process of project development; monitoring over the project subject area development); stages of implementation of the image design project (time limit, development of resource

supply in accordance with project stages); succession of activities on the image formation based on the cluster peculiarities considering its core dimensions (demand of the project, the calendar project schedule based on time, resources and costs criteria, development of the brand project management plan); economic efficiency of the project under development (resources planning, assessment of the project financial feasibility based on the developed estimates, development of the plan for cost management and project investments); planning of information and communication, and advertising activities (development of structure for the semantic network of project information flows, identifying the information needs of the project participants, the regulations rationale for general and specific information, development of communications management plan); design and risk leveling (study of risks and risk occasions, evaluation of uncertainty and probability of risk events occurrence, stability testing and check of the project break-even point); effective contracts designing (carrying out organizational and educational research for contracts signing); forecasting and change planning (choice of methods and means for forecasting and designing of dynamics of the image events implementation, monitoring of the environment and trends for changes).

The following criteria of efficiency of innovative technologies in shaping higher school image have been selected and grouped: correspondence (the interaction of structural elements in the context of modern requirements for the college image formation, the accuracy of the developed image); diversification (existence of the structural unit, updating and adjusting of the existing image, the accumulation of ideas, methods and means of image formation, training of specialists in the field of higher school image formation and development); resources provision (economic effectiveness of the conducted events and activities aimed at increasing the college business reputation); individualization (identification of target audiences interacting with the university, determining directions of cooperation with each target group, tracking the dynamics of interaction with target audiences); comprehensiveness (identification and estimation of the college image depending on the content of social perceptions and stereotypes of target audiences); perspectivity (identification of specific features complementing to the image of the educational institution in the minds of target audiences, the integration of external and internal factors working on the creation of the college image).

In sum, if institutions of higher education want to create a socio-pedagogical image and achieve a reliable business reputation they should be involved in the production process and the everyday life of people through communication activities. We should define the college image essence as an integrity through the structure and nature of interaction between the substantive, emotional and evaluative, and corrective elements of the institution positioning. Innovative technologies aimed at the creation of a unique college brand act as matching of

ideal and actual characteristics significant for the given audience in a specific historical moment.

CONCLUSION

Innovative technologies used for higher school image formation aimed at increasing of business reputation present a particular significance for the implementation of the mission entrusted to colleges, which is regarded as a main objective, destination, philosophy and raison d'être of the staff training system; implementation of the educational process through information and communication activities; implementation of organizational and pedagogical component of information technologies as a concernment of pedagogical staff in attracting students to the educational system; improvement of the positioning of the professional high school level. Given technologies are aimed at improving external environment (effective communication technologies, development of the major trends of the labor market for young specialists - university graduates) and internal environment (mechanisms of the higher school resources analysis, corporate culture, organizational and educational technologies).

Mechanisms for monitoring and control of adequacy of terms of use of socio-pedagogical innovative technologies in shaping the college image, provide possibility to move towards sustainable progressive advance development of all structural units of the college, the creation of business reputation, social prestige and competitiveness of future specialists – college graduates.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors confirm that the provided data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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