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Doctor of Science in Pedagogy, Full Professor, **ALLA KHARKIVSKA**
Municipal Establishment “Kharkiv Humanitarian Pedagogical Academy”
of Kharkiv Regional Council
Address: 7 Lane of Rustaveli, Kharkiv, 61001, Ukraine
E-mail: kharkivska_hgpa@ukr.net

THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF POSITIONING STRATEGY OF EUROPEAN AND UKRAINIAN MAJOR UNIVERSITIES IN THE CYBERSPACE AND METHODS OF THEIR ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT

The article examines conception “positioning strategy of major university in the cyberspace”, its main trends and functions. The author analyses the scientific works of classical and modern representatives of schools of management widely spread in different countries, according to their main conceptions, which single out the principal tendencies of management impact, formulate the most effective methods and forms of their putting into operation using knowledge from different fields of science. The completed analysis enabled to make the conclusion that the work of schools of management depends on using external information and changes in the environment. The use of synergetic approach makes it possible to formulate factors, which influence the work of educational establishments and stimulate major universities to modify in the direction of surrounding world development. The scientist studied the development of methods of positioning strategies of major universities in the international cyberspace, which are based on systematic, strategic, synergetic, socio-marketing, criteria-integrated and systematic-methodic methodological approaches. Important methodological aspects are the analysis of the system of positioning of higher educational establishments as a tool for influencing various spheres of society (political, economic, social and cultural spheres of life, etc.). On the basis of the examined literature, the author comes to the point that on the modern stage of the development of countries there are a lot of methods of competitive recovery such as Boston Consulting Group analysis, M. Portet model, McKenzie method, Shell/DPM method, LOTS method, PIMS method, situational analysis (SOT analysis), expert estimation method, Hofer/Schendel model, financial and economic method, method of strategical groups mapping and others. The researcher accents that clear implementation of the tasks of positioning strategies will ensure that higher educational establishments consolidate their positions, as well as contribute to the University’s competitiveness in the domestic and global scientific and educational space.

Keywords: *strategy, positioning, school of management, major university, competition, cyberspace, education, higher educational establishments.*

АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті розглянуто поняття «стратегія позиціонування провідного університету в міжнародному інформаційному просторі», його основні напрями та функції. Автор аналізує наукові праці класичних і сучасних представників шкіл менеджменту, поширених у різних країнах, за їхніми основними концепціями, які виокремлюють найважливіші напрями управлінського впливу, формулюють найефективніші методи



та форми їх впровадження, використовуючи для цього знання з різних галузей науки. Здійснений аналіз дав змогу дійти висновку, що робота шкіл менеджменту залежить від використання зовнішньої інформації та змін у навколишньому світі і, використавши синергетичний підхід, можна сформулювати чинники, що впливають на роботу закладів освіти та стимулюють провідні університети змінюватися до розвитку навколишнього середовища. Науковець дослідив розробки методик стратегій позиціонування провідних університетів у міжнародному інформаційному просторі, які спираються на системні, стратегічні, синергетичні, соціально-маркетингові, критеріально-комплексні та системно-методичні методологічні підходи. Важливими методологічними аспектами є аналіз системи позиціонування закладів вищої освіти як інструмента впливу на різні сфери суспільства (політичну, економічну, соціальну та культурну сфери життєдіяльності тощо). На основі розглянутої літератури, автор дійшов висновку, що на сучасному етапі розвитку країн, існує безліч методик підвищення конкурентоспроможності, а саме: модель Бостонської консультативної групи; модель М. Портера; метод «Мак-Кінзі»; модель Shell/DPM; метод LOTS; метод PIMS; ситуаційний аналіз (SWOT-аналіз); метод експертного оцінювання; модель Хофера/Шенделя; фінансово-економічний метод; метод картування стратегічних груп та ін. Дослідник наголошує, що чітке виконання завдань стратегій позиціонування, забезпечить закладу вищої освіти закріплення досягнутих позицій, а також сприятиме конкурентоспроможності університету у вітчизняному та світовому науково-освітньому просторі.

INTRODUCTION

The severe competition exists on the educational market and on the innovation activity scope in higher educational establishments (HEE) at the modern stage of high education development. The question of major universities positioning in the cyberspace gains extraordinary currency.

Universities in the 21st century are taking a new direction since the emergence of a universal phenomenon called globalization. It requires from higher educational establishments to converse their roles, goals and functions in relation to society, actually, the dynamics of socio-economic growth. A political, cultural, social and technological country requires from the education sector to make potential decisions that reflect the quality of theoretical information obtained during university education. For that reason, the creation of qualitative higher educational system is obvious in modern society (Castro, Chimborazo, Guevara & Toapanta, 2017).

The globalization of education becomes the main one when creating alliances between universities of different countries, and the internationalization of educational services, activation and improvement of the effectiveness of science research activities help Ukrainian universities to find a worthy ground in the world and national rating. At the same time, the problem of the outflow of talented young people and promising scientists to countries with a higher standard of living remains. For Ukrainian educational organizations of professional education, in order to withstand competition for domestic and foreign applicants, not only the highest quality of education and research becomes relevant, but also the formation of an attractive image, brand, maintaining a positive reputation in society, the implementation of a client-oriented marketing approach and the development of a positioning strategy taking into account the expectations and needs of students, consumers of educational services.

Universities and professional educational organizations are forced to carry out and improve marketing activities, paying more attention to managing their own brand, forming



and evaluating of their ground in the global, Ukrainian and regional markets of vocational education. In this regard, there is a practical need for serious theoretical searches in the field of positioning and managing the brand of educational organizations in the vocational education market.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

To analyze the problems of positioning strategies of major universities in Ukraine and Europe in the international cyberspace and methods of their analysis.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

The question of the management theories was given consideration by scientists such as I. Ansoff (1999), P. Drucker (2007), F. Taylor (2006), H. Fayol (2013), Ye. Khrykov (2017) and others. The methods preparation of the analysis of major universities positioning strategy in the international cyberspace was paid attention by scientists B. Adamson (2007), M. Bray (2007), O. Zozulov (2004), N. Kudenko (2002), Ed. Mason (2007), A. Nalyvaiko (2001), N. Pysarenko (2004), G. Hooley (2002) and others.

General and special methods of scientific research are used to achieve the goals set in the article: systems and target-problem analysis of philosophical, scientific and pedagogical, special literature, regulatory documents, and the Internet resources.

RESULTS

Major university positioning strategy in the international cyberspace is a bearer to the open dialog with the world and it is directed to the determination of interests and needs of target group; to formation of positive image (manner, brand) and support of reputation of major higher educational establishment in the awareness of consumers of educational services or users of educational products (for university entrants and students, this is the opportunity to study at a leading university; for graduating seniors this is the opportunity to get a highly paid job; for employers there are skilled workers; for scientists this is the obtaining of grants and scholarships for a realization of researches; for leadership and lecturers this is high salary and work at a prestigious university); to the convincing reporting to stakeholders about competitive advantages and prospects that appear before them after graduation in the range of international space of interchange and getting information with the help of correlation between materials and objects, subjects and phenomena.

Having considered the concept of “major university positioning strategy in the international cyberspace”, it can be argued that positioning performs one of the main functions of classical and modern management theory.

According to the opinion of Ye. Khrykov, the management theory of educational establishments in our country developed separately from the world’s management acquisitions for a long time. That is why the further development of theoretical principles of higher educational establishments’ management is impossible without analysis of widespread schools, conceptions and management theories in different countries (Khrykov, 2017).

One of the representatives of management schools is F. Taylor, who established the school of scientific management. The analyst developed main principles of management, which lie in the development of optimal methods of the work implementation on the ground of scientific study of time consuming factor, movements, efforts and etc.; the absolute adherence to the developed standards; staff recruiting, personnel training, and placing employees in the workplace and performing exactly the tasks, where they can be of the most usefulness; payment by results of the labor; the use of functional managers, who exercise the control on specialized areas; the support of friendly relations between employees and managers in order to provide opportunities for the realization of the scientific management (Taylor, 2006).



Another representative of the school of management is A. Fayol. The main merit of the scientist is based on the creation of fourteen management generalities: order; unity of direction; justice; division of labour; staff remuneration; centralization; authority and responsibility; initiative; discipline; autocracy, corporate spirit; stability of workplace for staff; subordination of personal interests to common interests; chain of command (hierarchy) (Fayol, 2013).

The representatives of the quantitative school are R. Acroff, D. Woodward, N. Lawrence, D. March, H. Simon, D. Thompson. The supply of objective and total information for the most favorable solving of the topical problems are the main idea of the given school.

P. Drucker represents the school of management concepts by objectives. He proved the priority of strategic goals studying, achieving tasks and interaction between elements of the subject area of the given strategies (Drucker, 2007).

Ch. Barnard, D. March, H. Simon and I. Ansoff were founders of the social system school. The main principle of the school consisted in the idea that any organization was a complicated system, which had to adapt to complex environment.

So, to ensure the effective work of the organization, the researchers who studied management, based on the principles of economic theory, identified the most important areas of managerial influence and formulated the most effective methods and forms of its implementation, using knowledge from various fields of science. Just these factors help business and higher educational establishments to develop themselves, fighting for their right to exist in a competitive business environment and global cyberspace.

The next aspect of the research will be the consideration of the development of methods for positioning strategies analysis of leading universities in the global cyberspace, which are based on systematic, strategic, synergetic, socio-marketing, criteria-integrated and system-methodic methodological approaches.

According to the opinion of M. Bray, B. Adamson, M. Mason (2007), in comparative pedagogical research, a particularly important idea is the multi-level analysis, which is clearly presented in the Bray and Tomas cube. According to the authors, in order to obtain a multifaceted and holistic assessment of educational phenomena, they must be considered in, at least, three dimensions. The front face of the cube shows geographical levels for comparison, the upper face shows non-localized demographic groups, and the side face shows aspects of education and society.

After having analyzed the psychological, pedagogical and special literature, we found out that there are a large number of methods for improving competitiveness on the present stage of development of countries, in particular: Boston Consulting Group analysis, M. Portet model, McKenzie method, Shell/DPM method, LOTS method, PIMS method, situational analysis (SOT analysis), expert estimation method, Hofer/Schendel model, financial and economic method, method of strategical groups mapping and others.

According to G. Hooley, the strategy should be developed in three stages: determining the current position includes: 1) formation of business rivals list, 2) determination of conforming product descriptions, 3) evaluation of the corresponding significance of attributes, 4) determination of the positions of competing products according to the most important attributes, 5) customer needs identification, 6) complex approach on all the mentioned above points; selection of the desired position: 1) determination of the target market (so, circles of possible rivals), 2) identification of competitive advantages or differences from rivals; development of strategy for achievement of the desired position,



after selecting it several main strategic alternatives are considered: 1) strengthening of existing positions; 2) gradual repositioning; 3) radical repositioning, 4) outing of rivals from their occupied position (G. Hooley, 2002).

Most scientists consider that it is necessary to identify the main parameters of the strategy, which were remained undisclosed in the work of G. Hooley during the development of methods of positioning strategy analysis.

O. Zozulov and N. Pysarenko proposed similar algorithm of positioning strategies. They sort out the following stages: the choice of parameters, by which the positioning will be carried out, determining their importance for the target audience; the identification of relevant firms, their products and brands belonging to this segment; the conduct of comparative analysis of competing brands; the analysis of positioning schemes and selection of positioning criteria; the identification of positioning strategy. Based on the analysis of the company's positioning schemes, it is necessary to determine the positioning strategy; the choice of the brand positioning type. At this stage, it is necessary to determine the type of positioning of the brand in the market that is the manner, in which the company will inculcate its brand in the minds of target consumers; realization of positioning to the general system of marketing strategies (Zozulov & Pysarenko, 2004).

A. Nalyvaiko thinks that the methods of efficiency analysis of business strategic should be based on determining the criteria of the key success factor; establishing of their relative importance and ranking; assessing the level of mastering the key success factors of the business by its competitors; reducing the resulting assessment to the overall result (Nalyvaiko, 2001).

The classification of marketing strategies for business positioning according to N. Kudenko, includes the nature of positioning (competitive and consumer positioning); positioning factor (indicator); the number of positioning factors (indicators) (based on one, two or three characteristics); determination of positioning errors (insufficient; excessive; mixed or doubtful positioning) (Kudenko, 2002, p. 169).

After analyzing this classification, we can identify several determinants (quantitative and qualitative). These signs, in our opinion, demonstrate the effectiveness of positioning strategies of leading universities in the global cyberspace.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the conducted analysis allow us to make such conclusions: the university positioning covers the process of creating an appropriate desired result and the strategy provides for the development of action plans as to the short-term, medium-term and long-term realization of the positioning process; the positioning process of the higher educational establishments is the occupation of a certain place in the global educational market and among consumers of these services.

Universities should carry out main conceptual strategy principles taking into account the experience of the best domestic and world universities. Accurate fulfilment of the strategy tasks will provide a higher educational establishment with consolidation of achieved positions and promote systemic and wide scale modernization of educational and scientific components and also competitiveness of the university in domestic and global educational space.

In modern conditions, positioning strategies are an integral part of any successful management strategy of higher educational establishments, and one of the most important tools for maintaining a rating position and competing for educational consumers. Their importance and position are constantly growing. On the one hand, the influence of



positioning strategies on the formation of other components of management strategies is increasing, and on the other hand, these strategies are the main means not only of generating demand for goods and services of businesses and higher educational establishments, but also of communicating corporate values and unity of direction to the target audience. Thus, the main directions of the positioning strategy of higher educational establishments (HEE) in global cyberspace (GCS) in the process of management are aimed at assistance of identification and representation of specific features of the educational establishment/educational service/educational product; implementation of the mission, goals, directions; analysis of the assessment of consumers of university educational services and its rivals; determination of the current state of positioning of the HEE and prospects for its development; preservation and expansion of the achieved results.

Theoretical analysis of the literature shows that the problem has been considered quite widely. Despite the importance of the works of the mentioned researchers, they do not exhaust the relevance of strategic research on the positioning of major universities of Ukraine and Europe in the global cyberspace.

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