

REVIEW

Doctor of Economics, Professor, Professor of the Department of Economics and Entrepreneurship named after I.M. Briukhovetsky , Sumy National Agrarian University, Shcherbak Valerii
for the dissertation work of Liang Rui "Research of the tools for the implementation of the university's brand strategy", submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of knowledge 07 "Management and Administration" in the specialty 073 "Management"

The study of the tools for implementing the brand strategy of the university is an extremely relevant direction in modern higher education. The growing competition between higher education institutions and the rapid development of information technology make it necessary to position and determine the uniqueness of each university in the market of educational services. The implementation of a brand strategy allows universities to create a clear and recognizable image that attracts students, donors and professionals. In addition, changing perception of the public and employers, brand strategy can have a positive impact on the financial condition of the university by increasing the rating and attractiveness for investors. The study of this issue is also important because of the growing role of the international educational market. Thanks to globalization, students can choose educational institutions not only in their own country, but also abroad. Thus, an effective brand strategy contributes to increasing the competitiveness of the university in the international arena and attracts students from different countries. The study of the tools for implementing the university's brand strategy becomes a necessary step to understand and optimize this process so that universities can successfully compete in the modern educational market. From this point of view, Liang Rui's dissertation research on the topic "Research on the tools for implementing the university's brand strategy", which is devoted to the study of these issues, is relevant and timely.

The dissertation research was carried out in accordance with the topics of the research work of the Department of Marketing and Logistics of Sumy National Agrarian University, namely within the topic "Management of competitiveness of enterprises on the basis of innovative marketing" (state registration number 0119U100250, 2019-2022), the author identified the main principles and priorities that should be taken into account when developing strategies for managing the brand of a higher education institution. Part of the

research was carried out within the framework of scientific projects commissioned by Henan Province (China), in particular, the Social Science Planning Project (No. 2021BZZ004); Henan University Humanities and Social Sciences Research Project (No. 2022-ZDJH-0099); Henan University Humanities and Social Sciences Research Project (No. 2022-ZZJH-158). The author identifies the fundamental principles and priorities that should be taken into account in the management of the strategy for the formation of the brand of higher education institutions in China.

Characterizing the structure and content of the reviewed dissertation, I note that the work contains an introduction, three main sections, conclusions, a list of references and appendices. A brief description of the main content of the work and the results of the study is presented in the abstract. The main text of the work is presented on 210 pages, which also contains 22 tables and 26 figures, which complement the presentation of the author's text and illustrate the scientific results obtained. A significant number of scientific sources were used in the study – 195, which indicates the validity and reliability of the results obtained.

The introduction to the dissertation contains a statement of the relevance and main elements of scientific research: purpose, objectives, object and subject, research methods. The introduction also describes the scientific results obtained by the author and their practical significance.

In the first section, the dissertation defines the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study of the tools for implementing the university's brand strategy. A thorough analysis of literary sources is carried out using modern tools for evaluating the scientific data of publications. The basic principles of formation of concepts and types of brand management in the system of management activity are studied.

The second section is devoted to the analysis of the state of tools for implementing the university's brand strategy. The author conducts a detailed analysis of the state of management of branding processes in higher education institutions of the People's Republic of China based on four basic positions. In particular, the first refers to the directing effect of brand building too obvious, it lacks long-term planning based on connotative development. In the second, a certain number of brand components exceeds quality, so you should pay more attention to your own needs for high-end innovations. The third is the construction of cultural brands based on the inheritance of infrastructure. The fourth building of academic brands needs to take root in society, so attention

should be paid to building innovative academic brands. The main object of the study is the Henan Institute of Science and Technology.

The third section of the dissertation illustrates the applied aspect of the implementation of the proposed theoretical and methodological provisions. The author proposes applied ways of implementing the concepts of formation of an effective brand of the university. An organizational and managerial mechanism with the definition of responsibility for each participant in the process has been developed. An algorithm for the implementation of the proposed measures and methods for their evaluation have been developed.

The conclusions summarize the results obtained, illustrating their relationship with the tasks and the purpose of the study.

The language and style of the work meet the requirements of the scientific style.

In her dissertation, the author aims to develop theoretical and methodological foundations and formulate practical recommendations to ensure effective management of sustainable development of territorial communities in the regions. The tasks were identified, the solution of which should contribute to the achievement of the goal: - to carry out the theoretical substantiation and analysis of the university's brand strategy; - define the basic concepts and conduct a review of literary sources; - explore economic theories related to brand strategy; - to analyze the ways of implementing the brand strategy of systemically important universities with regional features on the example of the Henan Institute of Science and Technology; - build a brand structure based on the connotation of the university's brand; to form the prerequisites for the construction of characteristic main universities of Henan Province; to develop recommendations for the development of regional characteristic system-forming universities; to develop a mechanism for improving the brand strategy of regional comprehensive universities.

The scientific results of the study consist in the formation of new theoretical and methodological approaches and practical recommendations for the implementation of the university's brand strategy. The main provisions of the scientific novelty of the dissertation research include the identification of key factors influencing the psychology of university students as consumers of educational services, the perception of the quality of university education as the main goal of the brand, which provides identification of the image of the university brand and serves as a fundamental guarantee of its formation. The university brand reflects the quality of educational services and other

characteristics, reflects its social reputation and represents the employment prospects of graduates.

The scientific and practical significance of the dissertation is beyond doubt. The scientific and practical result of the study is the formation of theoretical and methodological foundations for ensuring effective management of sustainable development of the university and building an effective brand on the basis of this. The results of the study, conclusions and recommendations contained in the work can be implemented in the practice of various institutions and organizations involved in the management of higher education institutions, in particular: authorities, non-governmental public organizations, organizations representing the expert community. Based on the results obtained and the conclusions formulated, the decision-making process in such organizations can be improved.

In her dissertation, Liang Rui demonstrated a high level of theoretical awareness of understanding the conceptual provisions for managing the processes of forming an effective brand of a higher education institution. The analysis of the report on the results of the plagiarism check showed the lack of similarity with other texts, and therefore the grounds for doubting the academic integrity of the dissertation. The scientific ideas and provisions on which the author relies in the dissertation contain proper references.

9 scientific papers have been published on the topic of the dissertation, of which 5 articles are in professional scientific journals of Ukraine, and 2 articles are in scientific journals indexed by Scopus (1). Theses published on the materials of the dissertation in collections of scientific conferences ensure proper approbation of the results of scientific research. The total volume of publications is 3.6 prints. Arch. Scientific publications duly disclose the content of the scientific results obtained by the dissertator and the content of the dissertation.

The results of the scientific research were properly tested: they were reported and discussed during international scientific conferences in Ukraine and the People's Republic of China.

Evaluating the dissertation work positively, I consider it necessary to point out certain debatable issues:

- 1) In the first section of the dissertation, it would be necessary to answer how the theory of brand and the theory of higher education are combined. In our opinion, there is a synergistic effect of combining different concepts of university branding research, in particular, taking into account the lack of research on the difference in brand formation between different types of universities. Since, from the text of paragraph 1.2, it is not entirely clear how to provide an effective

combination of theories for a more detailed understanding and practical application of the research results.

2) in Figure 1.9 (pp. 61-63) the work considers the main ideas of Blackstone's brand relationship model. In our opinion, it would be expedient to analyze how the objective and subjective aspects of brand relations interact and how this interaction affects the brand image and attitude towards the brand. What factors affect the objective and subjective sides of brand relations?

3) Considering the Analytical Diagram of the University Brand Implementation Path (Fig. 2.2, p.80), it would be necessary to detail what possible comparative aspects between the engineering and non-engineering sequences of the university brand can be identified in order to understand and formulate reasonable assumptions. Also, would the study benefit significantly if the author extrapolated these comparisons to the development of university brands in China?

4) When formulating practical recommendations for the administrative level of university management, it would be necessary to answer the question How important it is to establish brand consciousness in the university educational environment, in particular, how it can affect the competitiveness of the university in the international space and its ability to adapt to modern trends in higher education. How can this consciousness interact with the current philosophy and strategy of university management, and how can it contribute to the motivation of teachers and students, as well as to strengthen unity and increase the visibility and image of the university? How can all this affect the core competitiveness of the university in the global educational market?

5) Given that the dissertation was written at a Ukrainian university, it would be necessary to substantiate how the implementation of the brand strategy of Ukrainian and Chinese universities can contribute to the development of joint research programs and projects in the context of an expanded partnership between the countries. How can Ukrainian and Chinese universities cooperate in the formation of joint brand strategies to strengthen their positions in the international higher education market?

6) there are minor stylistic and grammatical errors in the text of the work.

However, the above remarks do not detract from the overall appreciation of the study carried out by Liang Rui. According to the results of a detailed review of Liang Rui's dissertation and scientific publications, it should be noted the scientific maturity of the applicant, her ability to conduct independent research at a high scientific level. A peer-reviewed dissertation is a complete, independently

performed scientific work, characterized by integrity, significant theoretical and applied value.

Liang Rui's dissertation on the topic: "Research of the tools for implementing the brand strategy of the university" fully complies with the specialty 073 "Management", the requirements of paragraph 6 of the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the Procedure for awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and cancellation of the decision of a one-time specialized academic council of a higher education institution, scientific institution on awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy dated 12.01.2022 No. 44 and Requirements for registration of the dissertation, approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated 12.01.2017 No. 40. Therefore, the dissertation can be recommended for consideration at a meeting of a one-time specialized academic council, and its author – Liang Rui – can be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 073 "Management".

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