

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadezhda Dimova

on the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

at the "D.A.Tsenov" Academic University - Svishtov

Prepared by the opinion: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadezhda Dimova, Department of Economics, New Bulgarian University, Member of the Scientific Jury, determined by Order No. 785 of the Rector of the "D.A.Tsenov" Academic University.

Author of the dissertation: Kristiana Cheshmedzhieva

Topic of the dissertation: "Communication tools for positioning a school in the digital environment"

I. General presentation of the dissertation.

The dissertation submitted for preparation of an opinion is 163 pages long, of which 151 are main text. The work is made up of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of cited literature - a total of 125 sources. In support of the above, 13 tables and 4 figures are included.

The aim of the study is to develop and validate a conceptual framework (model) of the process of implementing the positioning strategy of a school institution, based on the use of digital communication channels.

In accordance with the aim, object and subject of the study, the doctoral student has identified the following specific tasks:

- To analyze the evolution of the digital environment and its influence on the transformation of marketing practices in education.
- To identify the features of positioning in the context of school institutions

- To assess the capabilities of social media as a tool for supporting the process of strategic positioning of schools by systematizing existing models, concepts and research in the field of digital marketing and institutional communication.

- To identify the key indicators for assessing the effectiveness of communication activities carried out by the school institution and to justify their applicability as a tool for assessing and optimizing marketing activities in the school environment.

- To develop a conceptual framework (model) for the use of communication tools in the implementation of the positioning strategy of a school institution in a digital environment, which would integrate analytical, communication and management elements applicable in the context of Bulgarian education.

- To demonstrate the capabilities of the proposed conceptual framework by testing it in a specific school institution.

- To formulate general recommendations for using the proposed model in the activities of Bulgarian schools.

The subject of this dissertation is the strategic communication (goals and tools used) of the school in a digital environment. In the conditions of digitalization and the growing importance of online interaction between institutions and users, the school is establishing itself both as an educational center and as an active communication entity, which should use its communication activities to build a clear identity in the minds of both its target audiences (students and parents) and a wider range of stakeholders, including institutional and public entities.

The subject of the study is the capacity (opportunities and limitations) of social channels as a tool for implementing the school's positioning strategy, in the conditions of an intensified competitive environment, dynamic technological changes and increased digital literacy of the target audiences.

I believe that the volume of the dissertation work is balanced and optimal in terms of content.

II. Relevance of the researched scientific problem.

Undoubtedly, digital transformation has a direct impact on educational institutions that operate in conditions of increasing requirements for publicity, transparency and effective

communication. Social media are establishing themselves as the main channel for interaction with audiences, providing opportunities for two-way communication, engagement and building an institutional image. The communication activities of school institutions in a digital environment are often implemented without a clearly formulated strategy, without a connection between goals, audiences and content, as well as without the use of systematic indicators for evaluating results.

The relevance can be united around the fact that the significance of the researched problem stems from the need to adapt modern marketing approaches to the management of communication in education, which is clearly emphasized by the doctoral student.

III. Structure and content of the dissertation.

The doctoral student has tried to prepare a dissertation that is balanced in form and content, which is evidence of the researcher's skills to correctly and scientifically arrange the information and analyze it by offering adequate conclusions and recommendations.

The first chapter is theoretical in nature and is aimed at clarifying the conceptual foundations of the positioning of school institutions in a digital environment. The essence and features of positioning in the educational sector, the specifics of the digital communication environment and the role of social media in building institutional identity and public presence are examined.

The opportunities and challenges facing school institutions in the use of digital communication tools, as well as existing good practices in the education sector, are analyzed.

The second chapter is methodological in nature and builds on the conceptual statements discussed in the previous part of the study. The presentation is aimed at substantiating the logic, structure and applicability of the model, examining the main components necessary for targeted management of the school institution's digital positioning.

The third chapter focuses on testing the proposed model for implementing the school institution's positioning strategy in a digital environment. Data from a case study and interpretation of secondary quantitative data, including key marketing metrics, are presented. The chapter contains a structured framework for digital positioning, proposals for measuring effectiveness through KPIs, as well as practical guidelines for improving digital presence and engagement with the audience. Based on the analyzed results, conclusions are formulated

regarding the impact of social networks on the strategic identity and reputation of the school institution.

IV. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation work.

The dissertation work has clearly defined scientific and scientific-applied contributions, which I approve and consider to be completely sufficient for such a type of development, namely:

- Concepts and tools from the field of marketing, brand management and digital communications have been adapted to the specifics of school institutions.

- Theoretical statements regarding the positioning of educational institutions in a digital environment have been systematized and on this basis a conceptual connection between marketing theory and the practice of educational institutions has been built.

- The features of the digital environment have been systematized and the impact of social media on the communication strategy and the positioning of school institutions in the conditions of digital transformation has been substantiated.

- A conceptual model has been developed for the implementation of the positioning strategy of a school institution through the use of digital communication tools.

- The indicators for assessing the effectiveness of digital communications in the context of the educational environment have been systematized.

- The proposed model is tested in a real school environment and based on the results, recommendations have been formulated for improving the communication policy of educational institutions.

V. Critical notes and recommendations.

I have no specific notes or questions regarding the dissertation work of Kristiana Cheshmedzhieva and I believe that the development has the necessary depth and scientific validity.

I have a recommendation that the dissertation work be published as a monograph that is accessible to all interested parties and the general public.

VI. Questions on the dissertation work.

I have one question for the doctoral student, which he can answer during his defense:

VII. Fulfilment of the national minimum requirements for acquiring the ONS "Doctor".

I believe that all national minimum requirements for acquiring the ONS "Doctor" have been met.

VIII. Conclusion.

The presented dissertation on the topic: "Communication tools for positioning a school in the digital environment" with the author doctoral student Kristiana Cheshmedzhieva is dedicated to a current topic and is developed in depth and with a clearly academic style and understanding of the existing problems in this area. Based on the above, a positive assessment of the dissertation can be given and it can be proposed to award the ONS "doctor" to doctoral student Kristiana Cheshmedzhieva in the scientific specialty "Marketing".

Date:

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