

**SHAPING THE IMAGE OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON THE
EXAMPLE OF THE ŁÓDZKIE VOIVODESHIP
SUMMARY**

The changes that occurred in education after 1990 resulted in the intensification of competition between secondary schools. There are many educational offers, and their assessment and choice are inhibited by the intangible and specific nature of the educational service. In this situation, the image of the school has become the natural instrument of competition. The essence of shaping the image is systematic communication with the internal and external environment of the school to win its favour and, consequently, gain a beneficial market position.

The justification for taking up the topic of shaping the image of secondary schools is the gaps that exist both in the area of theoretical studies and empirical research. Although more and more studies concerning the image of higher education institutions are being carried out, scientific research rarely focuses on the image of primary or secondary schools. It has to be said that if this issue is undertaken, it concerns primarily private schools.

The main purpose of the dissertation is to assess the process of shaping the image of a secondary school, with particular emphasis on the factors influencing this image.

The basis for the preparation of the dissertation was the analysis of Polish and foreign literature in the field of marketing theory, management, economics, psychology and sociology. The main goal of literature studies was to make a critical analysis of the issue of shaping the image of an organization in education. Due to the lack of sufficient data on the image of secondary schools and the lack of studies dealing with the issues of shaping the image in secondary education, empirical research was also carried out based on the method of indirect communication with respondents (secondary school students) using a questionnaire, and the method of direct communication with respondents (teachers and people related to the school environment) using the technique of unstructured interviews. The selection of the sample of interviewees was deliberate. The basic research was preceded by pilot research among students and their parents.

Taking into account the role played by instruments existing in a hypermedia computing environment in shaping the image of secondary schools, the dissertation also presents the evaluation of websites of selected public and non-public high schools located in the Łódzkie Voivodeship. Additionally, the activity of representatives of selected public and non-public high schools located in the Łódzkie Voivodeship on the Facebook social networking site was assessed. A valuable source

of qualitative information on shaping the image was the practical knowledge of the author of the dissertation, resulting from her own experience. The author is the founder and headmistress of a secondary school.

The dissertation consists of five chapters.

The first chapter concerns issues related to shaping the image of an organization and the impact of individual elements and actors of the environment on the image management process, including the specificity of education.

The second chapter is devoted to the role of marketing communication and its use in educational institutions. The models of marketing communication, as well as traditional and modern tools of marketing communication used by organizations to conduct dialogue with the environment and shape the image, were characterized.

The third chapter describes the methodology adopted for the research procedure and presents the results of qualitative studies on image shaping in secondary education. The author designed and conducted research using the technique of unstructured interviews among 30 representatives of the school environment. Based on the obtained data, conclusions of a cognitive and managerial nature were formulated. Moreover, the factors influencing the image of secondary schools were identified.

In chapter four the methodology of quantitative research is characterised in detail. Furthermore, the results of pilot studies and the results of basic research carried out among 240 high school students from the Łódzkie Voivodeship are presented. Based on the conducted analyses, the assessment of the factors important in the area of shaping the image of secondary schools was carried on. What is more, the key sources of information and marketing communication tools that should be used in shaping the image of a high school were indicated.

Chapter five contains an analysis and evaluation of the websites of selected 73 public and non-public high schools located in the Łódzkie Voivodeship in the context of shaping the image and communication with the environment. Additionally, the results of the evaluation of the activity of selected public and non-public high schools on the Facebook social network are presented. The author has decided to carry out these analyses due to the role that the website and social media play in contemporary marketing communication, especially for young people.

The work ends with a summary, which discusses the main research results and presents conclusions relating to the goals and research questions.