

REVIEW

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Doctor of Economics, Associate Professor Olha Popelo
for the dissertation of Sandra Plota**

**"Development of organizational culture in the system of higher education
quality improvement" submitted for the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy
in the specialty 051 Economics**

Based on the dissertation and scientific works published on the researched topic, as well as materials on the approbation and practical implementation of the results of the scientific research carried out by Sandra Plota, the following can be stated regarding the relevance, degree of validity of scientific provisions, conclusions and recommendations, reliability and scientific novelty of the obtained results, the completeness of their presentation in scientific publications and determine the overall assessment of the conducted research.

Relevance of the research topic

The dissertation of Sandra Plota is devoted to the study of the peculiarities of the organizational culture development in the quality improvement system of higher education. Organizational culture acts as the potential of a higher education institution, it unites employees with a common goal and forms relationships between them, which characterize certain norms and values, and also affects the result of the activities of a higher education institution, that is, the quality of the educational services provision. The organizational culture of a higher education institution should adapt to the modern conditions of the educational environment development and take into account social changes and trends, as well as be aimed at achieving the goal, fulfilling tasks and developing the higher education institution in accordance with modern educational trends. As world practice proves, the organizational culture is gaining more and more importance in management of educational processes in universities, as it makes it possible to harmonize social and labor relations, create a unique style of a higher education institution, unlock the potential of employees, contribute to a more effective solution of tasks and confront threats and risks.

It should be noted that education has a determining influence and is of key importance for understanding the essence of the paradigm of sustainable development and expanding humanity's capabilities in solving issues of economic development and environmental preservation. Higher education provides an opportunity to convey to students the existing global environmental threats arising from the destructive production activities of economic entities, to focus on the possibilities of their elimination and prevention of global environmental changes, as well as to cause a rethinking of life values and everyday behavior in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. That is why the issues of improving existing conceptual approaches to managing the development of the



organizational culture and improving the quality of education by the implementation of the sustainable development concept are becoming extremely urgent, which is what the dissertation of Sandra Plota is dedicated to.

Connection of the dissertation with scientific programs, projects

The dissertation was carried out in accordance with the plan of research works of the Chernihiv Polytechnic National University:

- as part of the scientific project: "Integrated Model of Competitive Higher Education in Ukraine under the Quadruple Helix Concept" (state registration number 0117U007258), the author proposed scientific and practical recommendations for improving organizational culture of higher education institutions to ensure their competitiveness in the educational services market;

- on the project "Activation of the Development of the Education System as a Factor in the Innovative Development of the National Economy" (state registration number 01114U003139), in which the dissertation justified the directions of the organizational culture transformation of higher education institutions to activate their innovative activities.

Degree of validity and reliability of scientific statements, conclusions and recommendations

Scientific propositions, conclusions and recommendations presented in the dissertation work are sufficiently substantiated, have scientific content and significance for economic science. The obtained scientific results are reliable and based on research of theoretical and empirical content. The formulated goal corresponds to the topic of the research, the object and subject of the dissertation meet scientific and methodological requirements.

The scientific presentation of the content of the dissertation is determined by the combination of the purpose, tasks, scientific novelty and conclusions. The presented dissertation research is a logical, structured and complete scientific work. The orderliness of the stages of the work and the systematicity of the research process made it possible to solve the scientific and applied tasks regarding the development of a strategy for the development of organizational culture and corporate social responsibility, which is an element of anti-crisis management of educational institutions in wartime conditions. The basis of scientific work from the standpoint of theoretical aspects was the work of domestic and foreign scientists regarding the systematization of approaches to determining the essence and functions of organizational culture, the study of the peculiarities of organizational culture in the context of the human capital formation, the outline of the quality assurance system of higher education and its importance for sustainable development of universities.

The research was carried out using general scientific and special methods, namely: scientific knowledge, analysis and synthesis, historical and logical; comparative analysis; expert assessment; classification and decomposition; structural and functional analysis.

Structure and content of the dissertation. Compliance of the dissertation with the established requirements

The dissertation is a complete, tailor-made scientific work. The manuscript contains all necessary structural elements, in accordance with the established requirements: abstract, introduction, three sections, conclusions, list of used sources, appendices. The main content of the work is 162 pages of printed text. The work contains 14 tables, 11 figures, 5 appendices. The list of used sources includes 178 items. The dissertation is enriched with logical schemes, structured tables, graphic interpretations, which allow to comprehensively perceive the conducted research as a detailed and generalizing scientific work.

The Abstract of the dissertation fully reflects its structure, reveals the obtained scientific results and conclusions, the structure and ordered logic of the conducted research.

The Introduction to the dissertation contains all structural elements, including information on the practical approbation of the research results, as well as the author's personal contribution to scientific works published in co-authorship.

In Chapter 1 "Theoretical foundations for the study of organizational culture in the field of education under the knowledge economy development", a set of tasks was solved, the fulfillment of which made it possible to form a theoretical basis for the conducted research. In particular, different approaches to defining the essence of the organizational culture were investigated, the improvement of conceptual approaches to the organizational culture of the company was presented, functions of the organizational culture were systematized, the model of the human capital formation in the system of interaction with the organizational culture of an educational institution was presented, the key concepts of the quality assurance system of higher education in European countries were defined, and the importance for sustainable development of universities and the formation of the knowledge economy is outlined.

In Chapter 2 "Analytical characteristics of the organizational culture in the national higher education system", quantitative methods of evaluating the organizational culture of educational institutions were described, the scale for evaluating the dynamics of the Integral index for evaluating the organizational culture of educational institutions and its partial indices was presented, an empirical study of the organizational culture of higher education institutions was conducted, the analysis of the elements of the organizational culture of the leading European educational institutions was carried out, the reserves of the development of the organizational culture in the context of improving the quality of higher education and sustainable development of universities were investigated.

Chapter 3 "Management of the development of organizational culture in the conditions of current socio-economic challenges" contains the results of the assigned tasks regarding the study of challenges affecting the activities of educational institutions in modern conditions, the analysis of the development of the organizational culture and corporate social responsibility in the strategy of anti-crisis management of educational institutions, the development of the author's strategies of anti-crisis management of educational institutions. The study also

identifies the components of the effective organizational culture for the personnel development of domestic companies in the conditions of war and the COVID-19 pandemic, presents the features of the transformation of the organizational culture to ensure the competitiveness and innovative development of educational institutions.

The Conclusions based on the results of the research are meaningful and reveal the results of the implementation of the tasks of the conducted research. In general, it can be stated that the presented dissertation is an original completed scientific work, contains valuable scientific provisions of the theoretical and applied nature, the recommendations have been brought to the level of practical use and tested in relevant institutions.

Completeness of the reflection of scientific provisions of the dissertation in published works

Scientific provisions of the dissertation were published by the author in 10 scientific works with a total volume of 8.82 printed sheets (of which 5.26 printed sheets belong to the author personally), including 7 scientific articles with the volume of 4.33 printed sheets, 3 publications of the approbation nature.

Scientific publications meet the requirements of clauses 8, 9 of the Procedure for awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and canceling the decision of the one-time specialized academic council of a higher education institution, scientific institution on awarding the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated January 12, 2022 No. 44). The acquaintance and detailed analysis of the presented scientific works makes it possible to assert that the elements of scientific novelty, on which the dissertation is positioned, are fully explained in the articles and theses of the reports. The content of the publications, the characteristics of the publications in which they are placed meet the requirements for the publication of the scientific provisions of the dissertation. Of the scientific works published in co-authorship, only the author's work was used in the dissertation research, as indicated in the list of publications.

Thus, there are reasons to claim that the dissertation research contains the author's scientific vision regarding the achievement of the set goal and the solution of the specified scientific and applied task.

Scientific novelty of the obtained results

The dissertation contains a number of formulated and substantiated scientific propositions that have theoretical and practical significance. We consider the following to be the most important scientific results:

first:

- a theoretical and methodological approach to the integral evaluation of the organizational culture of higher education institutions in the context of improving the quality of educational services is proposed, which includes the assessment of internal and external factors and involves the use of the indicators system for evaluating the organizational culture of educational institutions, normalization of indicators, formation of the components for each of three blocks and determination

of the integral indicator of the organizational culture of educational institutions, presentation of the results of the evaluation of the organizational culture of higher education institutions, qualitative and quantitative analysis of the organizational culture of educational institutions, study of reserves for the development of the organizational culture to improve the quality of higher education and presentation of recommendations for their implementation in the conditions of war and COVID-19 pandemic;

improved:

- the "organizational culture" concept, which, in contrast to existing approaches, is defined as the main element of the internal environment of the organization, characterized by the dominant moral norms and values, accepted traditions, customs and models of behavior, capable of integrating the achievement of the target result of the organization's activities and increasing the level of its development, which in aggregate reflects the essence and character of the organization itself;

- a model of the human capital formation in the system of interaction with the organizational culture of a higher education institution, which, in comparison with the existing practice, is based on the goals of the educational institution, organizational values and norms of behavior, traditions, provisions, standards, personal-cognitive, axiological, communicative-motivational and result-behavioral approaches, which is based on the system of actions of situational and individual components, tools of the organizational culture, motivational, communication and management factors;

- the system of indicators for evaluating the organizational culture of higher education institutions, which, unlike the existing, is based on taking into account important dimensions of the organizational culture and its elements, information about educational institutions from open sources and the method of expert evaluations, which is based on the defined evaluation criteria;

- the strategy of anti-crisis management of higher education institutions, which differs from current approaches in the implementation of measures that do not require significant financial resources and are oriented towards the use of existing resource provision of higher education institutions, effective use and development of human and intellectual capital, with the following components are highlighted: development of the organizational culture of higher education institutions and its adaptation to the changes in the external environment, creation of reserve funds of educational institutions due to attracting international grants, development of educational programs to increase the internationalization of higher education institutions; use and development of distance learning technologies;

further developed:

- a system of approaches to defining the essence of the "organizational culture" concept based on value-element, result-oriented, essential and human-oriented concepts;

- scientific approaches to distinguishing specific functions, namely educational, transformational, the source of identity, stabilizing, which are relevant and timely taking into account the modern realities of the formation of the

knowledge economy, digitalization of the economy, the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine;

- scientific and applied aspects of improving the organizational culture to ensure the competitiveness and innovative development of higher education institutions, which include management processes of higher education institutions, scientific and didactic activities, which, in comparison with current practice, take into account the priority directions of changes in the educational sphere in modern conditions of challenges and threats;

- scientific and methodical principles of delineating factors influencing the activity of higher education institutions in modern conditions, which will contribute to the assessment of the direction and strength of their influence.

Scientific and practical significance of research results

The scientific and practical significance of the research results lies in the solution of an important scientific and applied task of developing theoretical and methodological foundations of the study of organizational culture in the field of education.

The practical significance of the results obtained in the work lies in the applied application of the developed toolkit for managing the development of the organizational culture of higher education institutions in the conditions of modern challenges, in particular: the factors influencing the activity of educational institutions were used in the development of the Anti-Crisis Management Strategy of the ISMA University of Applied Sciences (Certificate No. 1-23/102 from 19.09.2022); the theoretical and methodological approach to the evaluation of the organizational culture of educational institutions is used in the activity of "Petniecibas centrs SEMS" (Certificate No. 23-1904/EU-2022 dated 12.09.2022); the directions of the changes in the organizational culture recommended by the author to ensure the competitiveness and innovative development of educational institutions are used in the practical activities of the Department of Education and Science of the Chernihiv Regional State Administration to develop a strategy for the development of the educational system of the region in the conditions of modern socio-economic and geopolitical challenges (Certificate No. 04-24/551 dated 16.02.2023).

The scientific developments of the author are used in the educational process of the Chernihiv Polytechnic National University, in particular, in the educational and methodological support of teaching the course "Organization of Business" (Certificate No. 202/08-1668/BC dated 18.10.2022).

Adherence to norms of academic integrity

The dissertation student adhered to academic integrity and the norms of copyright law, violations of which, as well as academic plagiarism, were not detected. In the dissertation, there are references to the relevant sources indicated in the list of used sources, the personal contribution of the author in the published scientific works is determined in co-authorship.

Conclusions and proposals that cause certain doubts, comments on individual contradictions and can serve as a basis for discussion during the defense of the dissertation

In general, while positively evaluating the scientific and practical development of the dissertation research by Sandra Plota, the work is not without certain shortcomings and debatable points.

1. In Fig. 1.3, the dissertation student presents a model of the human capital formation in the system of interaction with the organizational culture of the educational institution. The model is formed based on the materials of the author's research, but it is not specified exactly what research it is about and where its results are highlighted. Also, in Fig. 1.3, the tools of the organizational culture (higher education, social investment, physical and moral education, information provision, professional training, science and innovation) are outlined, however, according to the text of the dissertation in Chapter 1, in our opinion, these tools and methods, directions, conditions of their use are not sufficient.

2. In our opinion, considering in subparagraph 1.3 the system of ensuring the quality of higher education and its importance for sustainable development of universities, it would be advisable to pay more attention to the analysis of the content and features of the sustainable development concept.

3. In subparagraph 2.2 (Table 2.4), the author describes the system of indicators for evaluating the organizational culture of educational institutions and notes that 36 expert scientists from educational and social-labor issues were involved to determine the specific weight of these indicators. In our opinion, it would be appropriate to detail the information about the invited experts.

4. We believe that in the dissertation (Chapter 2) it would be worthwhile to more clearly characterize the criteria by which the applicant chose educational institutions of different countries to conduct an empirical study of their organizational cultures.

5. In Chapter 3 (Table 3.1), the dissertation author cites the main factors influencing the activities of educational institutions in modern conditions, among which she singles out the factors of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. We consider it debatable to assign an average level of influence to such factors.

6. In our opinion, the set of directions for changing the organizational culture to ensure competitiveness and innovative development of educational institutions (Table 3.3) should be supplemented with a group of directions for transformations in the field of international activities of universities. This is justified by the growing internationalization and globalization of the educational space, which affects the processes of formation of competitive advantages of higher education institutions, as well as stimulates their innovative activity.

7. In subparagraph 3.3, we believe that it would be appropriate to propose an organizational and economic mechanism for the transformation of organizational culture in the context of ensuring the competitiveness and innovative development of the higher education system, taking into account modern socio-economic challenges.

However, the given remarks are mostly of a debatable nature and do not

reduce the overall positive assessment of the theoretical and practical value of the dissertation work.

General conclusions and evaluation of the dissertation

The dissertation work of Sandra Plota "Development of organizational culture in the system of higher education quality improvement" is a complete, integral scientific study, carried out on the urgent topic, contains provisions of scientific novelty and has theoretical and practical significance.

The dissertation was produced in accordance with the requirements of the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine "On approval of requirements for the preparation of dissertations" dated 12.01.2017 No. 40. The dissertation "Development of organizational culture in the system of higher education quality improvement" corresponds to the specialty 051 Economics, in terms of the form and content meets the requirements set forth in the Procedure for awarding the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy and revoking the decision of the one-time specialized academic council of the higher education institution, scientific institution on awarding the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy, approved by the Resolution No. 44 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated January 12, 2022.

Sandra Plota - the author of the dissertation "Development of organizational culture in the system of higher education quality improvement", deserves to be awarded the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 051 Economics.

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