TYPES OF IMAGE: ANALYSIS OF THEORETICAL APPROACHES, CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA, AND TYPOLOGICAL MODELS

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Abstract. *The article presents a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the concept of "image," its socio-psychological nature, and multi-component structure. The study systematically examines acmeological, functional, contextual, comparative, axiological, internal-external, emotional-cognitive, as well as personal and corporate types of image. Based on theoretical models of foreign scholars, the formation of personal and corporate image, audience perception, and management mechanisms are analyzed in depth. The study also explores the role of image in contemporary communication strategies and PR activities.*

Keywords: *image, typology, personal image, corporate image, acmeological approach, functional approach, emotional-cognitive image, internal and external image, socio-psychological analysis, communication strategy, PR.*

Introduction

In recent years, various new approaches to interpreting the concept of "image" have emerged. One such conceptual approach is the acmeological approach. Supporters of this approach include A.A. Derkach, V.G. Zazykin, E.B. Perelygina, and E.P. Kostenko. The essence of the acmeological approach is that it interprets image not as an artificially created means of external influence, but as a phenomenon inextricably linked to indicators of an individual's internal development. Within this approach, special attention is paid to criteria such as professionalism and competence, self-awareness (self-knowledge), self-development, self-improvement, and self-realization. Thus, the acmeological approach evaluates image not as an external effect, but as a form of manifestation of the individual's level of maturity and internal potential [2].

Methodology

In addition to the acmeological approach, researchers also identify three main approaches to classifying images. These are [14; 10]:

The *contextual approach* to imagery requires that the image be holistic and systematic, with its individual elements consistent and harmonized within a single conceptual framework. ***The comparative approach*** is a methodological approach based on the systematic comparison of closely related or content-similar image manifestations. This process analyzes the structural elements of images, their functional purposes, and the characteristics of their audience perception [16; 11].

The functional, contextual, and comparative approaches discussed above allow for the interpretation of images from different theoretical perspectives. Each reveals a specific aspect of the image phenomenon and serves as a complementary methodological foundation. ***The functional approach*** is important when analyzing images from a practical management

perspective. This, in turn, helps develop specific criteria for strategic planning. ***The contextual approach*** is important because it considers images as inextricably linked to the sociocultural and political environment. ***The comparative approach*** serves to identify common and distinct aspects of similar images and to refine the theoretical model through their comparison.

- **Functional approach –** in which different forms of image are defined based on the functions they perform. That is, the image is classified according to the social or communicative role it performs.
- **Contextual approach –** in this approach, types of image differ according to the environment and conditions in which they are realized. That is, the image is analyzed according to how it manifests itself in different social, political, cultural, or professional contexts.
- **Comparative approach –** within the framework of this approach, similar or similar images are compared. In this way, their common and different aspects are identified and typological conclusions are drawn.

Frank Jeffkins, a supporter of ***the functional approach***, identifies the following types of images [3]:

A mirror image is a person's or organization's perception of itself, formed based on the subject's self-perception.

Present image is the image that exists in the external environment, that is, in the eyes of the audience or the public. This type reflects the real views and assessments of others regarding the subject.

A desired image is an image that an individual aims to achieve, viewed as ideal. It is important in the process of strategic planning and self-presentation.

Corporate image is the overall image of the entire organization, not the individual divisions or results of its activities.

A multifaceted image is an image that is formed in an environment where there are several independent structures instead of a single corporation. In this case, the overall image is created as a result of the activities of various independent entities.

Analysis of the relevant literature. L.I. Skurtova and E.V. Fedorova also explain the classification of images proposed by Frank Jeffkins in their article “Basic approaches to the interpretation of the concept of “Image” and the typology of images” as follows [10; 32-33].

This classification of image types allows for a deep and multifaceted analysis of the organization. It is important to understand the image not only as an external appearance or advertising product, but as a complex and systematic phenomenon that is formed in the social consciousness. The formation and management of the image is of strategic importance for any organization, it is a factor determining not only reputation, but also internal stability and competitiveness.

The alternative classifications of the image are also widely covered in the scientific literature. For example, according to the concept of R.A. Depelyan, the image can be manifested in a positive or negative form, depending on its axiological (evaluative) character.

The perceived image is the perception of the company's management and employees about how the public thinks about the company. In practice, such perceptions of the organization's image are often artificially overestimated or the company's image is not perceived objectively enough.

Presemt image is the real image of the organization in the eyes of customers, investors, competitors, and the general public. This image is formed based on the assessments and experiences of the external audience.

A desired image is a strategically designed image that an organization aims to achieve. It is closely linked to the company's long-term development concept and communication policy.

Corporate image is a holistic image that embodies the historical development of a company, the quality of its products or services, its corporate social responsibility, and the professional reputation of its employees.

A multi-component image is an image that consists of a set of elements that form the corporate style of an organization. It includes employee uniforms, building design and interior layout, symbols and signs, identification attributes, employee qualifications, and other factors that determine the visual and institutional identity of the organization.

POSITIVE IMAGE is a set of assessments, perceptions, and social opinions formed about the activities of an organization, which interprets this entity as an institution that meets modern management requirements and standards.

Such an image is determined primarily by criteria such as the organization's ability to effectively organize management processes, establish constructive and systematic cooperation with the external environment, and implement business processes on a strategic basis.

From this perspective, a positive image is not limited to external attributes or communicative presentation, but is interpreted as a complex socio-psychological phenomenon that reflects the institutional maturity, management culture, and functional effectiveness of an organization.

The negative image encompasses shortcomings in the organization's activities, shortcomings in the management system, existing problems, and the deepening of internal conflicts. Such an image leads to the formation of distrust, suspicion, and negative stereotypes (stereotypes) in the minds of the audience towards the organization. The consequences of a negative image are also felt at the institutional level. It can mainly lead to a decrease in employee motivation, increased staff dissatisfaction, a weakening of corporate culture, and a decrease in

overall efficiency. Therefore, it is of strategic importance for companies to form a stable and positive public opinion about their activities and consistently support it [4].

The negative image is especially widely used in the political sphere. It is often formed by the opposition in the process of political competition through anti-advertising and "black PR" technologies. In this case, the image becomes a means of manipulative communication and manifests itself as a mechanism for targeted influence on public consciousness [17; 332-337]. According to the criterion of emotional diversity, L. Elizarova, the founder of the Image Corporation, the image is divided into three types:

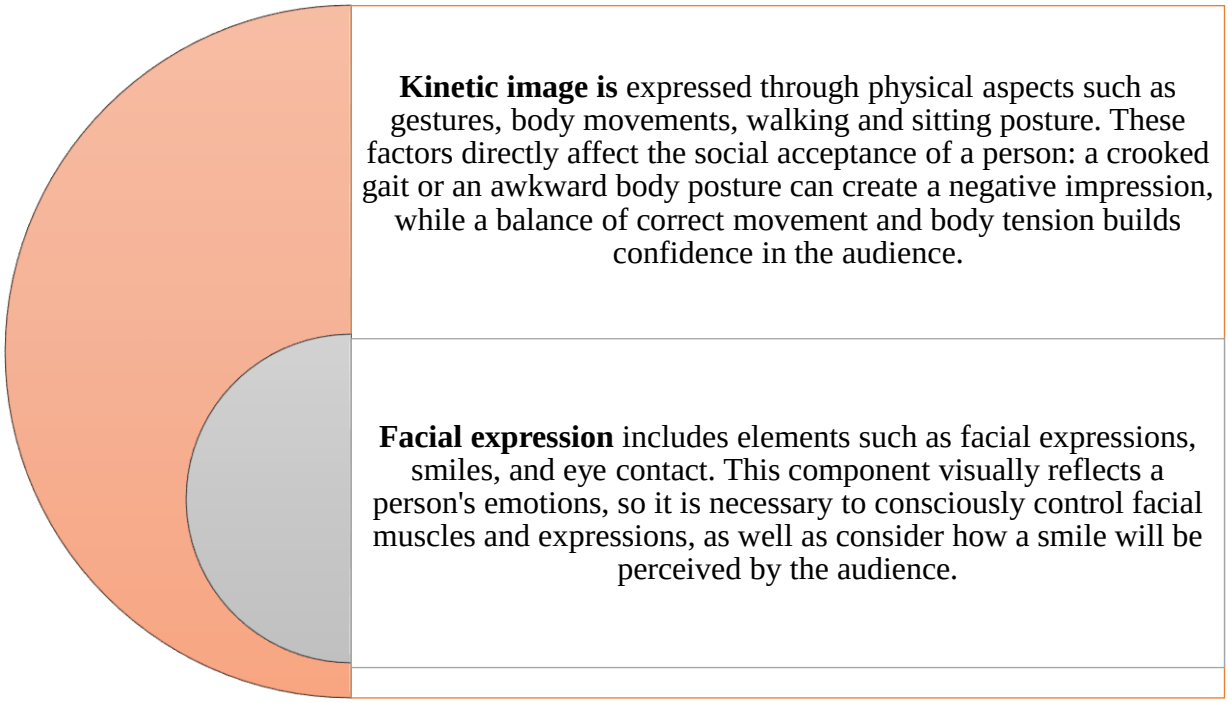
- Positive image - creates positive emotions, trust, sympathy, support or encouraging attitudes in the audience.
- Negative image - stimulates negative emotions, distrust, critical attitude or resistance.
- Neutral image - has minimal emotional diversity and presents the audience with an objective, fact-based or neutral assessment. More precisely, this image does not evoke a strong emotional impact [5].

The author also notes that the image should be classified depending on the object to which it is directed when forming the image, and gives his own definition of personal and corporate image:

1. Personal image - this is the image of a person, including a businessman, teacher, politician, public figure, creator or artist, created in relation to individuals. Personal image serves to strengthen the social acceptance of the subject, his professional and personal reputation.

2. Corporate (organizational) image is an image that reflects the social and professional image of a company, political party, organization or state. Corporate image is of decisive importance in the formation of the public reputation, brand value and public acceptance of the organization.

Research methodology. The process of forming a personal image requires the systematic and comprehensive development of its structural components. Each element of the image has a separate psychological and social function that determines the impression that the person makes in the minds of the audience [6]:



Verbal image is formed through speech style, voice timbre, and intonation. More important than the content of speech is its pronunciation, rhythm, and tone of voice. A logically connected, grammatically correct speech structure is a key condition for strengthening a personal image.

Mental image is expressed through a person's beliefs, worldview, and values. The mental component shapes the subject's decision-making mechanisms, professional, and personal behavior.

Latent (background) image – formed by third parties who are not in direct contact with the individual, through the media. This component helps determine the general social perception that the audience has of the individual.

Material image is related to the material resources and attributes surrounding an individual, and is expressed through elements such as a car, a home, and household appliances. This component visually reflects an individual's social status and style.

External image includes elements of clothing, personal style, and appearance. Often, image makers focus on this element, but it is only one part of the personal image, which is implemented in harmony with other components.

Analysis and results. E.N. Bogdanov and V.G. Zazykin used the following criteria in developing their image classification:

• Direction of formation – explained by the signs on the basis of which the image is formed (external and internal images);

• Emotional component – the emotional impact of the image, i.e., it can have a positive or negative tone.

• Target orientation – the natural or artificial nature of the image.

• Level of rationality – cognitive or emotional analysis plays a key role in image perception [1].

It is known that V.M. Shepel divides images into two main types: corporate and personal. A corporate image is the image of a company, firm, enterprise, institution, political party, or public organization. A personal image reflects the personal image of a politician, entrepreneur, artist, leader, or leader of a social movement [18].

From this orientation criterion, L.I. Skurtova and E.V. Fedorova divide images into external and internal types [11; 34]:

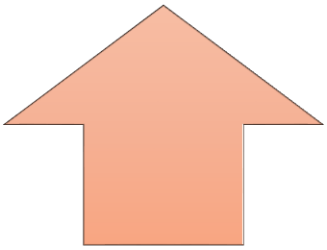
V.N. Cherepanova, reinterpreting Western studies of imagery, proposes the most effective system for analyzing image. According to her, this system includes two main components. The first component is the internal image. This is the core of the image, representing the individual's self-confidence (self-esteem, as defined by E. Sampson). The main elements of the internal image include the concept of "I," the psyche, value orientations, attitudes, and skills. It also consists of several levels:

1. The first is the superficial level, encompassing the totality of knowledge, ideas, and perceived information about the image;

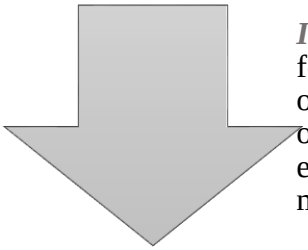
2. The second level includes socially formed and stabilized relationships;

3. The third level consists of a system of value orientations, representing the individual's basic life principles and religious views;

4. The fourth, deepest level is the "concept of Self," which is the central and integrating element of the core image. This level links the previous three levels and ensures the internal integrity and stability of the system [13; 10-12].



External image includes the set of perceptions of an organization that are formed in the minds of external observers, partners, and the general public. It represents the organization's image, prestige, and level of public acceptance in the social environment.



Internal image is a system of opinions and assessments formed in the minds of the direct participants of the organization (employees, managers and owners). This type of image is closely related to the socio-psychological environment within the organization, corporate culture and management effectiveness.

The second component is the external image, which includes a set of signs and expressive means aimed at the perception of the subject by others. The foundation of the external image is formed by factors of external expressiveness. The structure of the external image includes the following images: visual image (appearance, clothing style, facial expression, and general appearance), auditory image (voice pitch, speech culture, intonation), olfactory image (sensory factors associated with odor), and kinetic image (movement, gesture, body position, and nonverbal behavior). These components play a significant role in shaping the external image and create a specific image in the minds of the audience [8; 55].

Although the content of the image and the mechanisms for its classification differ, they are inextricably linked. We can speak of external and internal manifestations of the image both in relation to an organization and in relation to an individual (personality).

An organization's external image is its image formed in the environment, that is, the totality of perceptions about it, and these perceptions are formed in the minds of those who interact with the organization (clients, consumers, competitors, government agencies, the media, and the general public).

An individual's external image is formed based on their verbal (speech), visual (appearance), ethical (moral), and aesthetic (taste and style) forms of expression and behavior. The subjects who receive and evaluate this image are those who directly or indirectly interact with the individual [15; 10].

According to the criterion of the purposefulness of advertising and PR activities, the image is divided into natural and artificial types [19]:

According to rationality criteria, images are divided into two main types: emotional and cognitive. The primary goal of an emotional image is to generate strong emotional effects in the audience, aimed at creating a positive attitude toward a person or object. This type of image is formed primarily through symbolism, visual, and verbal expression, and is intended for a general public. Its primary goal is to create meaningful emotional experiences, such as trust, emotion,

surprise, or inspiration. A cognitive image is intended for a narrow circle of specialists or a professional audience and serves to convey information based primarily on logical facts and devoid of emotional content [20].

NATURAL IMAGE – this is an image that is formed spontaneously, naturally, without any specially planned communicative influence. It is formed on the basis of the real activities of an organization or individual, daily practice, direct experience and oral communication. Managing this type of image is complex, and it depends more on the independent assessments of the audience and the influence of the social environment.

ARTIFICIAL IMAGE is consciously created through a specially developed strategy, communicative policy, PR and advertising technologies. It is aimed at a specific target audience and is formed through special methods and techniques (visual identification, branding, media campaigns, image materials, etc.).

In addition to the above classifications, images are also divided into actual and potential types [4]:

ACTUAL IMAGE	is a system of social perceptions, assessments, and stereotypes formed in the minds of internal and external stakeholders during a certain period of an organization's activity. It is formed on the basis of indicators such as the organization's economic efficiency, strategic development prospects, management model, corporate culture, and institutional stability.
POTENTIAL IMAGE	it refers to the construction of social visions that are expected to form in the future, based on the future development trends of the organization. It relies on strategic planning, innovative capacity, and institutional transformation processes.

English scholar E. Sampson interprets personal image as a socio-psychological phenomenon and divides it into three types based on the interaction of internal self-awareness processes and external social evaluation mechanisms:

SELF-IMAGE

PERCEIVED IMAGE

• REQUIRED IMAGE

Self-presentation refers to an individual's system of conceptual representations of their self. It is formed through processes of self-awareness, self-identification, and self-assessment and constitutes the internal, reflective component of self-image.

The perceived image is a model of an individual's perception that is formed in the social environment and ingrained in the public consciousness.

The desired image represents a system of normative requirements formed in relation to a particular social role or professional status [16;11].

In our opinion, the triadic typology of the English researcher E. Sampson is a very useful and practical approach to understanding personal image. It does not limit image to mere appearance or audience interpretation, but also reveals the complex relationship between an

individual's self-image, the perception of others (the perceived image), and the desired image (the desired image).

It is worth noting that in the context of modern digital platforms, this triadic model has become even more complex. Thus, although E. Sampson's typology is relevant as a theoretical framework, it is advisable to expand it in the context of the modern information and communication environment and enrich it with empirical research.

The approach presented by the English scientist E. Sampson is also advanced by the color researcher G.G. Pocheptsov. Using more expressive terminology in Russian, he divides image into three types [9; 41]:



This classification allows for a systematic study of image and serves to identify differences and relationships between its current state, social acceptance, and purposeful formation. Another researcher, Z.A. Toboeva, in her scientific article "Approaches to Defining Image and Its Structure," also divides image into the following types, based on the classification of a foreign scholar:

Self-image is a system of a person's socio-psychological self-concepts, in which the main factors reflect the individual's subjective qualities, previously accumulated experience, level of self-esteem, and personal competencies.

A perceived image is the perception and evaluation of an individual or organization by an external audience. This type is formed through social perception and interactive evaluation and is directly linked to the subject's social acceptance.

A desired image is a set of standards established in the minds of others based on an individual's social status, profession, age, or other factors. It serves to define the ideal-typical social image of an individual or organization [12; 337-348].

Conclusion. Summarizing scientific and theoretical views and data, we can conclude that:

First, the theoretical and methodological foundations of the concept of "image" have been comprehensively analyzed, substantiating its multi-level and integrative socio-psychological phenomenon. It has been demonstrated that image is not only an external communicative construct but also a complex systemic phenomenon formed through interaction with the internal content, value orientations, professional potential, and social environment of an individual or organization.

Secondly, several approaches to image are analyzed, with the acmeological approach revealing the mechanisms of image formation as an indicator of a person's level of maturity, professional competence, and self-awareness.

Thirdly, the functional approach is based on the classification of image in terms of management and communication strategies. The contextual and comparative approaches serve to refine the theoretical model, based on the relationship of image with the sociocultural environment and a comparative analysis of similar images.

Fourthly, the multicomponent nature of image is revealed through axiological (positive-negative), systemic (internal-external), functional (natural-artificial), perceptual (emotional-cognitive), and subject-oriented (personal-corporate) classifications. In particular, the one proposed by E. Sampson and G.G. Pocheptsov's triple typology systematizes its ontological and

communicative aspects, identifying the self-presentation of the image, and the acceptable and required dimensions of the image.

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