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**EVALUATION OF PERSONAL BRANDING ACTIVITIES IN THE GHANA MUSIC
INDUSTRY: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY**

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**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
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MASTERS OF ART DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION (PUBLIC RELATIONS).**

OCTOBER, 2020.

STUDENT DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this long essay is my original research and no part has been presented for a degree in this state or any other.

.....

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.....

DATE

SUPERVISOR DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this long essay supervised by me is in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of dissertation laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

.....

DR. IKE TANDOH, APR

SUPERVISOR

.....

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, Mrs. Doris Arku and to all the key stakeholders in Ghana's Music Industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to the Almighty God for giving me strength and good health to complete this work amidst this difficult period. I will like to also thank my family for their support and encouraging words in this phase of my academic journey.

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of personal branding has received a lot of attention and has increasingly been contested and debated. In an age where the internet has permeated several aspects of our lives, everything seems to be mediated. The evolution and resultant proliferation of social media, as well as other activities that make up personal branding has brought some changes to the processes of personal branding, affording individuals with direct tools to manage and promote their brands. This essay seeks to analyze the various activities that make up the personal branding efforts of musicians in Ghana. The study will contribute to the scores of literatures on the subject by narrowing in on how musicians in Ghana understand the concept of personal branding, and how their various understanding has influenced their activities in pursuit of building, maintaining and promoting their brands. The study also examines the challenges involved in personal branding among the various musicians in Ghana. The study proposed a qualitative technique where ten individuals from the music industry will be interviewed, and the details of the interactions will be analyzed. The findings show that personal branding is a blend of various activities and social media appears to be predominant. The findings will augment existing literature and provide a useful insight regarding the nuances associated with personal branding among celebrities in Ghana

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter will look at the background to the problem, the problem statement, research objectives and questions, methodology, and finally narrow in on the significance of the study.

1. Background of the study

The word branding has been for a long time used about companies. But today, the evolution of branding has resulted in a very popular phenomenon known as Personal Branding. Today, everybody can attest to the fact that they have a personal brand, even though just a few have consciously made efforts at cultivating and shaping it (Petruca, 2016). Joseph alludes to this assertion by intimating that, personal branding begins at birth, when parents give name to a child; thereby unconsciously launching a new brand in which the person makes informed efforts to keep building through their lives. According to Socrates approximately 2400 years ago, the way an individual can gain good a reputation when he or she endeavors to be what one desires to appear. His words however emphasize the importance of the personal brand name that has gained currency today (Petruca, 2016). Personal branding should not be misconstrued as a luxury that is the preserve of celebrities or entrepreneurs, but it is a must for anyone who wants everyone to know what they do best. In that regard, the building of personal brands is highly dependent on what the person wants to be known for (Dalla-Camina, 2016). Arruda intimates in his book *Ditch, Dare, Do! Branding for Executive Success* that the personal brand is not all about job titles. Dalla-Camina (2016) agrees with this by arguing that, personal branding does not only comprise of what we do, but also embodies and emphasizes more on how, for whom and why it is done. It can be stated that the failure of an

individual or social actor to create a personal brand will end up in benefiting less than what his or her brand aware fellow stands to gain (Jim, 2013). The personal brand is more about the difference that one can bring in the industry through unique quality, experience and way of presenting these. People with strong personal brands easily get noticed because they share the passion for what they do in a way that makes them relevant to the people they serve (Dalla-Camina, 2016).

The globalized world we live in today has created pressures such as fierce competition in most aspects of our daily lives, which requires people to stand out and be different (Brooks & Anumudu, 2016; Arruda, 2005, cited in Shepherd, 2005). This has made the idea of differentiating oneself a more common concept and notion, which has made the idea of personal branding deeply rooted and ubiquitous among professionals. Most of the branding literature are precise and narrow in on the idea that branding one's self is pivotal to personal and professional success (Rampersad, 2008; Gehl, 2011; Khedher 2013; Gandini, 2016; Harris & Rae, 2011; Schwabel, 2011; Lair, Sullivan & Cheney, 2005). Moreover, the argument that "if you don't brand yourself, others will" (Kaputa, 2003, cited in Shepherd, 2005, p. 590) seems to have led to the increased interest in personal branding that we have seen for the past two decades.

The American writer on Business management practices, Tom Peters, made the term personal branding pervasive in an article titled "The Brand called you". The idea takes inspiration from the knowledge of the traditional idea of branding which was known as the strategy for the marketing and positioning of goods, services and organizations. In the article, Peters (1997) challenges individuals as well as professionals, to identify and market their unique strengths in order to stand out and succeed in the working environment. He encouraged the

use of new media such as personal websites and emails to market one's unique selling proposition (Peters, 1997).

Peters (1997) in espousing the idea of personal branding asserted that everybody has his or her own brand, and therefore has the power and possibility to be the marketer for themselves. The premise of personal branding is therefore that branding theories, which traditionally have been employed to products and services, can be extended to include humans. Interestingly, the idea of personal branding is not a relatively new phenomenon. Kotler and Levy (1969) already discussed in 1969 how marketing efforts could be applied not only to products, but also to services, persons and ideas. Currently, the idea of humans being a brand is recognized among researchers like Khedher (2015), who assess that humans can be strategically managed and that humans have additional associations and features of a brand.

Advocates of personal branding have vouched for the practice as a means of achieving professional enhancement or used in a bid for the sustenance of popularity (Peters, 1997; Arruda, 2013; Montoya, 2005, cited in Shepherd, 2005). Thus, personal branding has traditionally been the domain of celebrities, politicians or professionals who strive to succeed in their careers (Labrecque, Markos & Milne, 2011). But with the introduction of Web 2.0 along with the concurrent rise of social media, personal branding has evolved into a phenomenon not only exclusive to professionals and celebrities. By publishing personalized content on social media through the creation of personalized digital profiles, individuals are able to present themselves favorably to a broad range of audiences that can be reached immediately and simultaneously. Thus, social media has made personal branding both more relevant and far-reaching than ever before.

The business world is beginning to recognize the importance of controlling personal brands and offering strategic advice about how to project a desired personal brand identity mostly

through the use of different social media, among other strategies (Labrecque, Markos and Milne, 2011; Safko and Brake 2009; Schwabel 2009). Regardless of the importance of branding, very few specific, empirical studies like Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010) have dealt with these issues. The entertainment industry is an industry that is filled with individuals known and admired for the uniqueness of their craft and careers, hence, their interest in personal branding. So, there is an important need in the literature to explore the various activities involved in the process of personal branding among individuals who stand to benefit a great deal from it. It is against this backdrop that this study recognizes musicians as important beneficiaries of personal branding and takes a dive to evaluate the role of social media in the personal branding initiatives of Ghanaian musicians.

1.2 Problem Statement

Peters (1997) defined personal branding as the “proactive effort of creating messages and strategies to promote the unique value of an individual.” Job seekers are constantly and increasingly being advised by career counsellors and human resource executives to identify and promote a personal brand to increase their chances of securing a job in the competitive job market (Horton, 2011). “Developing your personal brand ensures that you are not left behind and that you develop the competitive advantage that positions you for the career opportunities you deserve” (Horton, 2011).

There is a growing awareness in Ghana about the idea of personal branding as the concept is increasingly discussed at career fairs, professional training workshops, entrepreneurship and business conferences and at Continuous Professional Development Programmes (Lewin, 2018) (GhanaWeb, 2017). Traditional media and new media have been argued by personal branding enthusiasts, to have contributed to increased awareness and interest in personal branding. Marketing experts share various perspectives on the importance of building a

personal brand and how this can be achieved through radio discussions, blog posts, podcasts and social media posts.

Thomson Mathews (2006) argues that much of the success of the media and entertainment industry hinges on the successful positioning of its key assets: celebrities. A careful review will reveal that the current crop of players in the entertainment industry in Ghana seem to follow along this tangent, devising new tactics to manage the impressions about the reputations of celebrities. Some are seen to be hiring experts such as management, branding experts, and image architects to work on positioning them. This study delves into the various strategies employed in building the personal brands of musicians in Ghana, and discuss how beneficial these strategies have been, as well as the challenges that lie therein.

The specific literature often speaks that you can hold in a competitive environment only if you know how to put yourself in value, only if you know how to differentiate yourself, or to be unique. Everything is energy, creativity, financial support, a determined team and the winning of target audience. Brands are those that succeed to differentiate a thing and to gain grip in our minds.

Some researchers have attributed the increased awareness and practice of personal branding to “the rising number of books on the subject, magazines, websites, training programs, personal coaches, and specialized literature about how exactly to brand oneself for success in the business world” (Khedher, 2015, p. 19). In Ghana, some marketing professionals, motivational speakers and career counsellors encourage people at all levels of their careers to identify their special qualities and communicate them to the right people for career success.

There is a growing awareness of the concept and significance of personal branding in Ghana. Celebrities are one of the classifications of people in Ghana who actively manage a personal

brand. Previous research works done on celebrity brands in Ghana, however, have been heavy on celebrity brand endorsements. Personal branding has been described as a strategic process and like any process, it has inputs, a method and intended outcomes (Zarkada 2012).

However, there appears to be a deficit in the scores of literature that speaks to the activities involved in the process of personal branding among musicians especially in Ghana. This research delves into the inputs and methods as are employed by professionals and practitioners who apply the concept of personal branding in managing the reputation and image of artistes in Ghana.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This thesis discusses the importance of personal branding to the reputation of musicians in Ghana. In recent years, companies as well as individuals have seen the importance of personal branding as a way of marketing their brands in a more effective way than traditional advertising techniques.

The purpose of this dissertation is to discover and evaluate the importance of the various strategies used by professionals in building the personal brands of musicians in Ghana. The paper will focus on the challenges of implementing the strategies of personal branding of Ghanaian musicians to increase their competitiveness on a theoretical and practical level. The study will also make some recommendations with regards to the best personal branding practices within the Ghanaian music industry.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives for this study are broadly captured in two main ways. The main objective for this study is to assess the various strategies employed by musicians in Ghana to build their personal brands. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following:

1. To ascertain the perceptions regarding the importance of personal branding in the Ghanaian Music Industry.
2. To explore how the musician in the Ghanaian entertainment industry, manage their brand
3. To understand the effect of personal branding strategies on the image of the musician in Ghana.

1.5 Research Questions

The following are the research questions that will guide the study

1. What are the perceptions of the audiences regarding the importance of personal branding in the Ghanaian music industry?
2. What are the strategies used by musicians in managing their personal brands?
3. What are the effects of the artiste's personal branding strategies on their image?

1.6 Significance of the study

Though there are diverse studies that all seek to examine the role of public relations in brand building, this study will narrow this research area by focusing on the effect that personal branding has on the brand of musicians in Ghana. It will explore the meanings and perceptions of personal branding which will help in testing the efficacy of the brands and

branding strategies of the artistes. It is predicated on the notion that, not only personal branding important to corporate organisation but its relevance in recent times has permeated the entertainment industry. As a practicing PR personnel, this study will go a long way to improve the understanding of personal branding.

The study will add on to the existing pool of knowledge on the subject matter. But more importantly, the study will bring to the fore problems regarding the use of personal branding and its effect on the brand of the musicians in the industry. It will examine what they are doing right, what they are doing wrong and will also make recommendations as to the best tools to use to improve their brand equity and competitiveness.

The study will also form a basis for more advanced research into the area in other jurisdictions.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This introductory chapter delved into the phenomenon of personal branding. The background to the study that contextualized the prominence of personal branding and the need to understand how musicians in Ghana manage their brands was underscored. The chapter also articulated the problem statement, where a case was made as to why it was important to analyse and assess personal branding activities of musicians in Ghana. It also made a case as to why this was a deficiency in the literature on personal branding. The chapter continued with the research questions which stemmed from the research objectives, that will undergird the navigation of this phenomenon. Th chapter ended by highlighting the importance of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This section considers relevant literature on the theoretical underpinnings of personal branding practices of celebrities in Ghana. This chapter will provide insight into how people, particularly Ghanaian musicians brand themselves and review relevant literature that see branding as a marketing principle that is very significant to humans in general and the career of artistes and

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Goffman's Theory of Dramaturgy

This theory was espoused by Erving Goffman, in a book published in America in 1959 titled "The Presentation of self in Everyday Life". Using the imagery of character, Goffman stresses that actors portray various nuanced and significant faces of social interaction. He

advanced the theory of social interaction he referred to as the Dramaturgical Model of Social Life.

According to Goffman, social interaction is analogous to a theatre, and people in everyday life likened to actors on a stage, each playing a variety of roles. The audience comprise of individuals who observe the role-playing and offer various distinguished reactions to the performances. Central to Goffman's theory is the idea that people, as they interact together in social settings, are constantly engaged in the process of impression management, where each person tries to present themselves and behave in a way that will prevent an embarrassment of themselves or others. This is primarily achieved when each person that is an integral part of the interaction work assiduously to ensure that all parties have the same definitions of the situation, that all of them understand what is meant to happen in that situation, what to expect from others involved, and thus how they themselves should behave (Goffman, 1956).

Shepherd (2005) proposes the use of Erving Goffman's (1956) to understanding mundane and proliferated human interaction as the theoretical underpinning for any study on personal branding. Goffman's theory interprets the interaction between people as a performance. He developed two concepts to explain human interactions: the first concept which he conceptualizes as the "front stage" is that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance (Goffman, 1956). Actors are conscious of the existence of the audience and the audience expectation of their roles they should play to influence the audience behavior. Shepherd (2005) considers the 'front page' as eerily prescient of the concept of personal brand image where people carefully construct and present themselves in a particular manner to manage the impression that people have of them.

Goffman explains that 'the back' is the place where the performer can reliably expect that no member of the audience will intrude (Goffman, 1956). It is the stage where individuals relax,

and are able to be themselves and the role or identity they play when they are in front of others. The backstage is where props that will be used at other times are stored and where the counterbalances, lights and so on that make the scenery convincing to an audience are hidden (Kivisto & Pittman, 2013). According to a perspective from Kivisto and Pittman (2013), the back is separated and kept private, away from the glare of the public, which is symbolic of the lives of human brands, and also the planning and strategy phase where “only team members have access.

Kivisto and Kittman (2013), in a bid to provide further elaboration on the theory raise concerns as to how people convince other people, specifically consumers to adopt a particular understanding of various social scenes. As if he were a soothsayer, Goffman (1956) explains that convincing people (i.e. consumers) to adopt to a particular understanding of social scenes takes a collaborative effort that stages a convincing performance complete with roles, scripts, costumes and a stage. It is until all these factors can be harmonized to create a coherent and holistic picture of reality that the idea of convincing people can be achieved.

Goffman (1956) also stressed on the salience of team effort, as articulated in the preceding paragraphs has a brutal resemblance with the process of human brand co-creation. Centeno & Wang (2016) demonstrate that the image and positioning of a personal brand are achieved through a collaborative effort of shareholders. This is a clear depiction of the tactics, strategies and media platforms employed to convey the brand image of a person.

2.1.2 Relevance of the theory to this study.

The theory is also relevant to understanding the concept of personal branding because of its focus on the manner people communicate about themselves and the steps used to present themselves to an audience. It captures the idea that personal branding pushes forth which is for individuals to construct and present an acceptable or saleable image of themselves in

order to make an impression on their target audience i.e. the person that they are interacting with. The theory also helps us to understand that there are two sides to all forms of human interactions that namely the conspicuous and the hidden, which Goffman (1956) describes as the front and the back. Personal branding operates on this understanding and serves as a guide to the construction of impressions of themselves that they wish to put across publicly.

For the purpose of this study, only the one side of this two-way interaction will be focused on: the actions and intentions of the person that tries to control the impression that people have of him or her. The theory guides this research to probe these activities, teams and resources that human brands employ to construct the desired impressions. The theory will also guide the research to navigate and analyze the ‘front’ where brand impression is communicated and how it is achieved for consumers to adopt what has been communicated. The theory states that it takes ‘collaborative effort to stage a convincing performance’ which is instrumental in persuading a consumer to take on a particular image of a person (Kivisto & Pittman, 2013). This will guide the study to observe how stakeholders gather to deliver the brand image of a celebrity brand. This will help gain a thorough understanding of the practices involved in the management of the personal brand of Ghanaian celebrities.

2.2. Review of related concepts

2.2. Brand and Brand Building

In a broad stroke, branding has been defined in literature as a physical representation of an entity or a tool for emotional connection. Ghodeswar (2008) advances his view of a brand as a distinguishing name and/or symbol such as a logo, trademark or package design that is intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of others. This is also called the representational aspect (Ghodeswar, 2008). McDonald focuses on the emotional aspect of a

brand where it is seen as an “identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique added values which match their needs most closely (McDonalds, 2007).

The representational and emotional aspects of brands are captured by Belch and Belch by describing it as a combination of many factors, including name, logo, symbols, design, packaging, and performance of a product or service as well as the image or type of associations that come to mind when consumers think about a brand. It encompasses the entire spectrum of consumers’ awareness, knowledge, and image of the brand as well as the company behind it” (Belch & Belch 2003 pg. 14).

A brand is far more than a visual symbol and memorable tag line because it anchors the mission and vision, operating principles and tactics of an organization as argued by Skinner (1994). Skinner (1994) defined a brand as” a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. A brand is not just relegated to programs, services, and products, displays. Rather, it encompasses everything else about an organization including reputation, culture and core values. As such, it is not simply advertising or marketing. Branding has been referred to by Fritz (2011) as a messaging instrument which helps the business reach its goals and encompasses the promotion of everything associated with the business. The functions of brand include creating an identification and brand awareness; guaranteeing a certain level of quality, quantity, and satisfaction; and, helping with promotion (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1997). The brand can also boost an organization’s search of legitimacy as it acts like the organization’s spokesperson. The brand affects consumer attitude and perceptions toward the product and, especially applicable to public relations, toward the organization that produces the product. No longer isolated to for-profit business, the past decade has witnessed brands increase in prevalence and importance in the area of sport, politics, culture, and non-profit segments.

2.2.2. Public Relations and Branding

The role of organizational public relations is expanding with the changing times. In that regard, Benyman (2010) posits that “public relations does not just focus on your business product; it also assists in shaping strategic messaging”. Consistent with this logic and line of reasoning of Benyman (2010), Winchel cautioned that brands are “being evangelized, dismissed, measured and documented in real time” and admonished business to “join the conversation” in social media, “a mission perfectly suited for public relations professional” (Winchel, 2010).

Public relations gives “legs” and life to brand attitudes and the essential brand promise by telling credible stories and providing support for the truth of a brand’s advertising images. This is all the more important in an evolving media and business environment. Although public relations is used for a wide variety of purposes in organizational communication, that of the representation of the organization, its goals, and its self-understanding has been increasingly influential with publics. This has become increasingly important given the marketplace transition to a consumer-driven, conversation economy characterized by two-way conversations between consumers and between consumer and organization. Moreover, there is increasing social consciousness among consumers who now place more emphasis on what an organization is about rather than simply what that organization produce in the form of services or products. Moreover, widespread consumer cynicism and loss of consumer trust and confidence driven by events of the past decade have forced business to reexamine their marketing and advertising communication strategies. One outcome has been integration of the public relations department into organizational branding initiatives. The proliferation of television channels and niche magazines, the easy availability 24 hours news and the exponential growth of the internet mean that organizations have no place to hide. They have to be up to the mark, ready to rebut damaging stories, and they must always make sure that

they get their message across. The reality is that, according to Harris research, companies in the top 200 of Fortune's Most Admired Companies list spent twice as much on public relations as those in the bottom 200. All this illustrates how important public relations is to brand strategy and to building and sustaining corporate reputation. The development of a successful public relation strategy involves four elements:

- Identification of the various attributes and characteristics of the brand; for example, its values and supporting behaviors, its positioning and identity. Once these have been identified an assessment must be made of their implications with regard to an organization's culture and opportunities for motivating performance. Then a public relations platform can be built on the brand's attributed, characteristics and promise.
- The perception of all external stakeholders must be assessed. This should extend beyond perception about products to include such drivers of reputation as leadership, innovation, financial value, quality of management and corporate citizenship.
- The corporate communications function should use the brand's attributes and characteristics internally to inform employees of the company's positioning on different issues to support change initiatives to underscore credibility in crisis and to guide behavior.
- An annual, measurable public relations plan should be created, anchored by the brand promise, with the objectives of shaping key audiences' perceptions of leadership, customer connections, marketplace innovation and corporate responsibility.

2.2.3 Personal Branding

Personal branding is the distinctive characteristics that are inherent in humans, as espoused by its key proponent, Tom Peters (Peters, 1997). He proposes that distinction must be managed and sold for other individuals and professionals to be outstanding and successful.

Therefore, the idea of managing and selling a personal brand is similar to other profit-oriented businesses like the shoemakers, Nike, as strategies are put in place to promote the salient and distinct features that gives the shoe a competitive advantage.

Previous research has explored the topic of self-marketing by examining the strategies people use to present themselves in personal web pages and various social media platforms (e.g., social networking sites, online forums, blogs, etc.) for various goals (e.g., Chen, 2013; Dominick, 1999; Kim & Tussyadiah, 2013; Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011; Shepherd, 2005). The premise of these studies is that consumers are applying the same marketing and branding principles originally developed for products and services to generate a favourable image of themselves (Chen, 2013; Schwabel, 2009). Specifically, Schwabel (2009) defines personal branding as the process by which individuals differentiate themselves from the crowd by articulating their unique value proposition and leveraging it with a consistent image across different platforms to achieve their goals. While a number of research on personal branding and selfmarketing focuses on leaders or celebrities (e.g., in political campaigns, in advertising within the entertainment industry), an increasing number of studies also deal with selfpresentation among “amateur individuals” or “everyday people” (Chen, 2013; Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011; Shepherd, 2005).

Once considered as a tactic for only celebrities (Kotler et al, 2006) and leaders in politics, online tools have been argued to have made personal branding a personal task for everyday people (Shepherd, 2005). The sole premise for personal branding lies in the idea that everyone has the power to be their own brand and with that, the person’s main job is to be the marketer of that brand (Peters, 1997). This is buttressed by the notion that, if people do not manage their own brands, the power is relinquished to someone else and increases the probability for their brand description being in the hands of others (Kaputa, 2005). The process of personal branding still shares the premise of personal selling since just like

products, people have personality traits that lead to successful sales. The difference is that in personal branding, there is no employer attachment, but behooves on the utilitarian power of the individuals to sell him or herself (Shepherd, 2005). Analogous to personal selling, personal branding also entails capturing and promoting an individual's strengths and uniqueness to a target audience (Kaputa, 2005). There are different motivations for personal branding, but several personal branding advocates perceive of the process which begins by having a well-defined brand identity, and actively communicating it to the market place through an efficient and effective positioning. Personal branding is associated with the process of "packaging and editing the self," which involves making choices of what information regarding self to include and what to leave out (Toma, Hancock, & Ellison, 2008).

Branding is an executive-level strategy that works for professionals at all levels, no matter what kinds of positions they are seeking. It is a powerful way to differentiating oneself that is being used for years. Branding in general, and personal branding for that matter enables individuals to establish themselves as natural and firm thought leaders. Building a strong personal brand helps to interact with the target audience in a clear, consistent way that quickly becomes familiar. There is an added advantage to personal branding, where its consistency builds trust in the target audience, which allows to form emotional connections. Personal Branding is the means by which people remember you. It is more than a trademark; it is how you present yourself online and offline to potential clients and customers. Your personal brand builds your business, but it still centers around you as an individual.

2.2.4 Personal Branding in Ghana's Entertainment Industry

Positioning has been thought of by academics is a pivotal part of branding. Thomson Mathews (2006), for instance argues that much of the success of the media and entertainment

industry hinges on the successful positioning of its key assets: celebrities. The new crop of players in Ghana's entertainment industry seems to provide some dose of truism along this line of thinking. Day in, day out, new tactics are devised to manage the impressions about and reputation of celebrities (Junia, 2018). Some Ghanaian celebrities are hiring the services of management teams, branding experts and image architects to work on positioning them as well as their art through traditional media features and social media marketing (Junia, 2018). Social media platforms have also provided them with more leverage to showcase their brand and interact directly with their fans and consumers.

In 2017 music, sports and movie personalities took the top eight positions as most influential Ghanaian personalities on social media in the Ghana Social Media Rankings coming before personalities such as the president of Ghana (Ghanaweb, 2018). New media has been espoused to have provided celebrity brands with more visibility as they capitalize on its potency to gather millions of followers on social media (ChiefBlogger, 2017). The reasons behind this upsurge in celebrity branding is a focus area of this study. However, it is worth noting that there could be potential economic benefits for a successful celebrity brand. In 2017, a PricewaterhouseCoopers' (PWC) report provided insights into the fiscal worth of Ghana's Entertainment & Media industry. The industry was worth US\$685 million in 2016. This value is expected to more than double over the next five years; revenues of US\$1 billion will be surpassed in 2019 and a total of US\$1.5 billion is projected for 2021, (PwC, 2017) (Ayemoba, 2017).

One could infer from the premises fore-mentioned that the positioning and differentiation that personal branding allows for, would enable celebrities to cash in on the market and fiscal potential of Ghana's Entertainment and Media Industry. Another economic benefit to personal branding could come in the form of endorsement deals. In Ghana celebrities from

worlds of sports, music, cinema, broadcasting, are often employed as human brands for the marketing and promotion of other consumer brands. For example, in 2012, Samsung Electronics appointed Ghanaian rap artiste Michael Owusu Addo, popularly known as Sarkodie as its brand ambassador to raise awareness about Samsung mobile devices within the West African sub-region and to position it as the preferred mobile brand (GNA, 2012). Sarkodie's endorsement deals, among other factors such as sales, investments and popularity have featured him as one of Africa's Top 10 Richest Artistes by Forbes for three consecutive periods – 2013 (Twum, 2013), 2015 (Philma, 2015) and 2017 (CNBC Africa, 2017).

Aside from their active presence on social media and endorsement deals, some celebrities in Ghana have found other ways to engage stakeholders with their brands. In 2017, Ghanaian musician, Okyeame Kwame, and his brand management team released a book on his personal brand, 'Okyeame Kwame Brand Book'. "The 36 paged-document details the basic particulars of the artiste, who is referred to as OK, plus the brand standards, style, an overview of its history, vision, personality, values among others" (NYDJ Live, 2017). This publication was released to "put out a collection of the brand elements to influence marketing campaigns, communication with stakeholders and products churned out from OK (Okyeame Kwame)" (NYDJ Live, 2017). At the launch of the book, it was explained that the book was a product of brand architects and years of research into how his fans and consumers view and interact with the musician (Ghanaweb, 2017).

A good PR team works tirelessly to build the star power of a celebrity behind the scenes. It ensures that the client is well represented in the public eye and that his or her brand is always visible and untainted. All these efforts are aimed at making sure the person or team is at all times in a good position to be clearly seen by potential clients. The mandate of a hired PR team also extends to dealing with the media on behalf of their client; managing their diaries,

booking and approving interviews as well as handling and quelling crisis situations. Cases have been made for the increased importance of public relations in the brand of musicians in Ghana. This study will provide an empirical basis to determining the veracity of this assertion.

2.3 Review of related studies

This section deals with a review of related empirical studies that relate to the subject under investigation. The discussions will mostly look at the arguments as to whether celebrities are human brands, the various activities that are involved in the process of personal branding and also examine the challenges of personal branding.

2.3.1 Understanding Personal Branding

In a bid to understanding the process of personal branding, emphasis is placed on the pioneering research work of Anna Zarkada who defined personal branding as “a new marketing concept related to marketing strategies that a person adopts in order to promote his or her major personal characteristics” (Zarkada, 2012). By conducting an extensive review of known perspectives on the issues of personal branding and analyzing the definitions given to personal branding, her research identified some scholars proposing psychotherapy-based personal development tactics for the practice of personal branding (Zarkada, 2012). Her study also unraveled other scores of definitions that project marketing thoughts and tactics such as one proposed by Thomas (2007), where he defined personal branding as being predominantly about the unique value proposition to a customer in a way that creates an emotional connection with that customer (Thomas 2007 as cited by Zarkada, 2012). People are equated to goods and services and personal branding is seen by some scholars such as Zarkada (2012) as the seller’s ability or promise to deliver consistently specific set of features, benefits and

services to buyers. This is achieved through four important characteristics namely attributes, benefits, values and personality (Hughes 2007 as quoted by Zarkada 2012).

Dani (2018) assessed the meaning of personal branding by sampling individual professionals across several institutions. Some descriptions such as marketing yourself were offered. Some stressed on the uniqueness in the personal branding process by advancing that “it involves presenting one’s self in a way that gets you noticed”.

2.3.2 Celebrities as Human Brands

Broadly speaking, celebrity is a noun used to refer to famous people (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). A lot more words have been used by scholars in a bid to describe who a celebrity such as; a commodity, a cultural formation (Turner G., 2004), a human brand (Holmes & Redmond, 2014). Some researchers advance the notion that, these descriptions are product of the activities that they engage in that influence their brand. Holmes & Redmond (2014) argue that the everyday life choices and values of celebrities are all actions that create brands and branding identities. Inadvertently, the human brand identities curated as a result are able to sell product brands through activities such as endorsements and persuasions. This is achieved through a process of transference there they give their personality qualities to inanimate brands, hence encouraging consumption.

As is practiced in several countries, corporate organizations in Ghana frequently take advantage of the popularity and image of celebrities to persuade consumers into patronizing their products through predominantly endorsement deals. Cases in point are instances where popular footballer and Black Stars footballer Dede Ayew, was made the brand ambassador for uniBank in 2016. The idea was to use his image and value as a popular player both locally and internationally, to enhance the image of the bank abroad (uniBank Ghana, 2016). One of the queens of the Ghanaian movie industry, Nana Ama McBrowne was also made the brand

ambassador for Kasapreko's Royal range of drinks. This is because, the company identified her as a person who embodies and personifies the core values of the company such as "innovation, creativity, authenticity, passion, originality and determination" (Aryee, 2018).

Centeno and Wang (2016) in their study discussed celebrities as human brands where they thought of the concept of celebrities as being multidimensional and multifaceted. The brand identity of these celebrities is formed through a cocreation process that involved the various activities of their stakeholders. The stakeholders identified in the study were the "advertisers, media, talent management, broadcast networks, consumers/fans, and celebrities themselves" (Centeno and Wang, 2016). They mostly occur as teams, not publicly known, working coherently and holistically in the shadows to deliver a consistent image of the celebrities (Goffman 1956, cited by Kivisto and Pitman 2013). This literature is found to be of immense importance to this study because there is the need to identify individual stakeholders who work cooperatively and assiduously to create the known brands of celebrities is an integral part of this study has been considered in this study. As such, it will form the basis within which this study seeks to identify and analyze the existence of those teams of individuals as well as the roles of various members of the stakeholders or teams working with the Ghanaian celebrities to manage their personal brand.

Centeno and Wang (2016) focused predominantly "celebrity sponsorship and social media advertising", as the parameters to interrogate how these stakeholders 'gather together in an assemblage of services in co-creating human brand identities'. This was achieved using results from prior studies and data analysis of an internet ethnography study of the social media posts and interactions of four Filipino celebrities where the researchers identified some pertinent roles played by these stakeholders and promulgated three classifications namely the focal, primary, and instrumental stakeholder-actors. Focal stakeholder-actors are the celebrities who were identified as structuring themselves in line with how ordinary people

enact themselves (Centeno & Wang). In so doing, they end up building emotive relationships with their fans and followers thereby enabling them to benefit through their social influence of the public socially and economically (Centeno & Wang, 2016). The “Primary stakeholder-actors”, as identified by Centeno & Wang (2016) are the consumers or fans. The fans were seen to be the freest, most active and highly expressive of the stakeholder groups identified who are indispensable in the value creation process that impacts on the brand of celebrities. The “instrumental stakeholder-actors” as advanced by the researchers, are the stakeholder group that have fiscal interests in celebrity. This group comprise predominantly of the media, advertisers, and talent management. Their instrumentality in the creation of brand is important as they serve as the mediators in the process. The overall success of the celebrity human brand is a resultant effect of the involvement of all these stakeholder groups this goes a long way to benefit all the stakeholders involved in the co-creation process.

2.3.4 The Practices and Activities That Make-up Personal Branding.

Other studies have as their singular objective, the task to understand and unearth the practices that make up personal branding and bring to the fore the underlying reasons for its use. Literature has been deconstructed to find the theoretical basis for personal branding. The knowledge basis that forms the very foundation of personal branding has been scrutinized and analyzed in a bid to appreciate the actions performed during the branding process. One of such researchers with such profound results is in the person of Dani (2018), who assessed in his study, the importance of personal branding for career development. The researcher intimates that branding is a process and a practice that is followed by people to market themselves and their career as a brand. The general purpose of the qualitative study by Dani (2018) is to investigate the tools of personal branding by professionals across different fields. The self-funded research analyzed eight professional individuals using qualitative techniques.

Dani (2018) concludes that personal branding plays an immense role in career development for any individual irrespective of the field of expertise, since it is a conscious and a subconscious effort made by every individual from different levels. In discussing the skills needed for personal branding, the study shows that knowledge, getting adapted to the culture and the ability to solve problems serve as the essential prerequisites for a successful branding initiative. Some other participants in the qualitative study intimated that education, promptness, planning, time management, confidence, creativity, communication and team-building as other essential skills in the promotion and development of a personal brand. In all these, what seemed like an integral part of Dani's study (2018) happens to be what he considered an essential tool in the personal branding process. Social media was advanced as one of the critical tools for the enhancement of personal brands. The importance of social media was underscored by the participants based on the ability to obtain feedback which helps measure and properly understand other significant other's perception of one's brand, and offers individuals a broader and bigger platform to exhibit and communicate their brands. Facebook remained the most dominant social media platform that was used in personal branding. However, others like LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Blogs and YouTube cropped up in the discussions and analyses of the responses from the respondents. But essentially, questions were framed to assess the tools used for personal branding other than social media. The study shows that the other tools used by the professionals for the study and that alluded to by the scholars in the vast literature on the subject were a match. Prominence and salience were given to communication and appearance, among other tools like visiting cards, gestures, interventions, etc.

It has been argued out that in current times, the introduction of web 2.0 has opened up more platforms and tactics for personal brand promotion beyond the tactics. According to Marwick and Boyd (2011), the advent of social media has caused a paradigm shift in the traditional

understanding of celebrity brand management from a highly controlled and institutional model to one where celebrities actively interact with fans in a free and open environment. Increasingly, personalities use social media to develop and maintain an audience. “Popularity is maintained through ongoing fan management and self-presentation is carefully constructed to be consumed by others” (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). The researchers interrogate celebrity brand management practices by examining and analyzing the activities of over 200 American celebrities on Twitter. Their discussions conclude that celebrity image is maintained through mutual recognition of the power differences between fans and celebrities, and maintenance of one’s fan base through performed intimacy, affiliation, and public acknowledgment (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). To achieve this, celebrities must skillfully give off the impression that they are sharing glimpses into their private lives. Some also respond to the individual comments of their followers. These tools have made it imperative for celebrities to maintain affiliations with fans in order to maintain their images and sustain their relevance and popularity. The findings of this research show how social media is influencing brand management strategies, which is a relevant consideration in the context of Ghana where celebrities are heavy users of social media. The context of the usage and outcomes may, however, differ because the research setting may inhabit certain cultural codes and ideals that may be inapplicable or unacceptable in Ghana.

2.3.5 Challenges in the approaches to personal branding.

The literature engaged in this chapter so far have highlighted marketing principles that inform the tactics and strategies involved in managing a personal brand. Some have questioned the ability of the marketing discipline to fully guide This section of the empirical review focuses on discussing the practical challenges of personal branding, as advanced by scholars in literature and other studies.

Zarkada (2012) challenges the practicality of these tactics arguing that the above descriptions imply that people have the means and the knowledge to define and research markets as they marketers of products would. The above approaches also assume that persons can be sold based on the ability to display attributes that are desirable by a segmented and targeted public with clear and distinct positioning. These are difficult in the normal cases of marketing products, and this is particularly hard to meet and unsustainable in the market of persons.

The final set of definitions the study identifies offer vague, and somewhat ambiguous descriptions that are open to varied interpretations and imaginations. The definition offered by Mobray (2009) proposes “a proactive behavior that influences your ability to be sought after, mentioned, valued and given a second, third and fourth look” (Mobray 2009 cited by Zarkada 2012, p.3). Shepherd (2005) also proposes the idea that the varied activities undertaken by individuals in a bid to make themselves known in the marketplace, usually for the purpose of obtaining gainful employment, although this may not be exclusive and intentional to all. (Shepherd 2005, cited by Zarkada 2012, p.4). Zarkada (2012) concludes by proposing that personal branding should be considered as a process which employs personal identity as its input, communication as its method and achieving career objectives as its outcome (Zarkada, 2012). She also identifies the practice of personal branding as falling within the corporate branding framework. Zarkada (2012) makes the above propositions as a means of overcoming the practical challenges posed by psychotherapy-based personal development tactics, marketing thoughts and vague definitions offered by some proponents of personal branding.

The assertions made by Zarkada (2012) regarding the debates surrounding the practices and assertions made in line with the theoretical underpinnings of personal branding are limited due to the type of data and methodology employed in her study. The scrutiny of written

opinions on what personal branding consists of and partially provide only serves the purpose a narrow window into the appreciation of the full conceptualization and operationalization of personal branding which real-life examples would have offered. The few definitions offered by some writers on the concept of personal branding as used by Zarkada (2012) reduces the strength of her evidence. But the study helps in the identification of some practical challenges that were seen in some of the marketing concepts of personal branding will have on the practice of personal branding. Zarkada (2012) explains in an instance that, the process of product branding focuses on how a product's identity can be built from the beginning and managed to elicit specific emotions and outcomes. However, in the process of branding people, there is the existence of persons with formed behaviours, history and attitudes to be dealt with (Zarkada, 2012).

In response to the above raised issues, Zarkada (2012) proposes the reconceptualization of personal branding within the framework of corporate branding based on similarities between people and corporations. She argues this in the excerpt below

“A person can create products for sale and can offer services in exchange for money but is much more than these potential offerings to society and the market, and as such, it functions in the socioeconomic system in a manner that resembles that of a corporation. A person has values and intrinsic qualities that may or may not be evident in the context of production and is visible, relevant and interdependent with a set of individuals and organizations that extends much beyond the confines of the actual and potential buyers of the products and services offered for sale – what is termed as ‘stakeholders’ in the case of corporations. Finally, both

people and corporations have distinct histories, identities and reputations that can form the basis for branding but cannot be changed through branding” (Zarkada, 2012).

Despite these views, some researchers seem to exhibit some skepticism about the notion that personal branding should mirror processes involved in the product and corporate branding process. Shepherd (2005) shares in this where a **case was** made for the inherent conceptual and practical challenges, making it problematic for it to be solely conceptualized as a marketing principle.

Shepherd’s (2005) study which examined the theoretical basis, as well as marketing strategies and principles used in personal branding, concluded that no coherent description of tactics and principles of personal branding emerged from analysing business self-help books and materials written by some marketing practitioners (Shepherd, 2005, p. 600). He identified challenges that limit the application of marketing principles on human brands. One of the challenges Shepherd (2005) identified was that, although contemporary marketing proposes a consumer-oriented

approach to marketing, personal branding advocates for a product-oriented approach (p.593).

Thus, in contemporary marketing, products and services are created to satisfy specific customer demands. However, in personal branding, proponents encourage people to look into themselves (i.e. products) identify their unique and strong traits, rightly package them and communicate them to the world. This means that individuals do not have to shape their qualities (i.e. products) to respond to market needs. Shepherd’s (2005) study further reveals how people can effectively market their brand. The various literature examined further explains that in order for a person to ‘sell’ a personal brand that is relevant, individuals must undertake a self-audit having a good appreciation of their marketplace i.e. who they are targeting and what their competition is offering. This ensures that the personal brand that is

constructed is not only a true reflection of the individual but a competing personal brand (Shepherd, 2005).

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on an examination of the literature on personal branding. The chapter began with the theoretical framework where the Goffman's theory will form the basis to deconstructing the process of persona branding in Ghana's entertainment industry. The chapter then discussed the basic concepts such as branding and personal branding and concluded by reviewing the scholarly and empirical works that focused on the understanding of personal branding, celebrities as human brands, the core practices and tools in personal branding as well as the challenges in personal branding.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

As explained in chapter one, the focus of this research is to explore the various activities that account for the personal branding of musicians in Ghana. To achieve the objectives of the study, and in an attempt to answer the research questions which were informed by the theoretical debates discussed in the first two chapters. This chapter discusses the selection of an appropriate research methodology that will aid in the achievement of these objectives and the answering of the proposed research questions.

This chapter explains the methodology used to examine and assess the personal brand building in the Ghanaian music industry. As previously argued out in the literature review,

there has been a change in the theories regarding the efficacy of personal branding and its prominence in terms of differentiation and competition. This change has partly been attributed to the development of communication and information technologies as well as the development of the worldwide web. The aim of the research is to investigate if there has been a substantial qualitative improvement in personal branding among Ghanaian celebrities. The research design, methodology and sampling techniques are briefly discussed in the pages that follow.

3.1. Research Design

It is defined as ‘a detailed blueprint used to guide implementations of a research study towards realizing its aims and objective (Aaker and Day, 1990). It focuses on the techniques and methods of collecting data and analyzing it. (Zokmund, 2003). Therefore, a design is about choosing the best approach or method in collecting data.

Personal branding is concerned with intentional, persuasive communication where the communicators and stakeholders are relationally active in creating, amending and reconstructing meanings and thereby transforming their social worlds. As such, well managed personal brands play a role as an unseen power that seeks to shape how and what we know of actors at individual and societal levels and how we define our identities in relation to others (Heath, 2009). Research should help in the understanding of this very complex and convoluted but contextualized process by giving us insights into how managed social media use in communications helps the brand of the musicians by influencing the dynamic process through which realities and cultures are created.

A study of this nature requires a flexible type of research where the process of discovery is blended with intuition. It is in light of this that the study adopted the use of qualitative

research to best reach its potential. Qualitative research is the best fit because of its ability to delve into the meaning and the interpretive ways of thinking that are concerned with the social construction of reality. Qualitative research aims at the systematic application of a predetermined set of procedures, to collect and analyze evidence, and present findings that resolve issues. Therefore, qualitative research aims to get an understanding only on the case studied rather than to generalize, or to use the data to support hypothesis. It thus provides complex descriptions of how people experience a given research issue by providing an overview of the human side of an issue in terms of behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions and relationships. It also looks critically at intangible factors such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity and religion.

As Keegan (2006) argues qualitative research is rigorous, reflective, reflexive, intuitive and contextualized subjectively. Qualitative research methods are a powerful means of gaining an in-depth and holistic understanding of the relationship social media and personal brands. It helps to get insight into a problem from an emic perspective, which will help to build and broaden understandings about personal branding, as well as social media branding due to the fact that the conclusions will be based on indigenous concepts. This will be richer source of information that cannot be universalized since they will have been derived terms and ideas about a crop of musicians' use of social media in building their personal brands.

The methodologies of qualitative research are usually grounded in interpretive thinking. Interpretive researchers are primarily concerned with reaching an understanding about how meaning is constructed and re-constructed through communication relationships which are studied in their natural settings. In this study, the aim is to know the implications of social media in personal branding, among others. The interest here is in the voice of the stakeholder engaged in the music industry in Ghana.

3.2. Case Studies

A qualitative case study examines a phenomenon within its real-life context. Data are collected on or about a single individual, group, or event. In some cases, several cases or events may be studied. The primary purpose of a case study is to understand something that is unique to the case(s). Knowledge from the study is then used to apply to other cases and contexts. Qualitative case study methods often involve several in-depth interviews over a period of time with each case. Interviews explore the unique aspects of the case in great detail, more so than would be typical for a phenomenological interview. Implications of a case study approach for qualitative data collection and analysis are several. First, participants and/or cases, by definition, should be selected for their unique properties. Because it is the case's special attributes that are of interest, sample sizes are generally small, usually one to several cases. Inquiry in these types of studies focuses largely on their defining case features and the differences they exhibit from other individuals/events in the larger population. The overall idea is to tease out what makes them so different and why. Often, knowledge gained from case studies is applied to a larger population

3.3. Population

A research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects known to have the same characteristics, which form the main focus of a scientific query. It is for the benefit of the population that researches are done. Polit and Hungler (1993:37) refer to population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects, or members that conform to a set of specifications.

The population for this study are musicians in Ghana. The rationale for the choice of the musicians is that, they form the stakeholders that stand to benefit most from the use of diverse strategies in building and managing personal brands and using them for the study will

provide the study with first-hand information from their perspectives as to the importance of their personal branding efforts. Additionally, the population chosen will give insightful data with regards to the effectiveness of personal branding. The population selected satisfy the theoretical considerations of the study. They are all likely to know what personal brands are, as they are living brands, and the various ways they have been able to cultivate their various brands over the years. Literacy was also a key consideration in the choice of population. For a commercial industry like the Ghanaian music industry, the ability of the participants to understand the role and significance of personal branding is highly dependent on their literacy level.

3.4. Sample

The sample is usually the subset of the population. Sampling is selecting a subset of a population to participate in the study, it is a fraction of the whole, selected to participate in the research project (Brink 1996:133; Polit and Hungler 1999:227). The concept of sampling comes from the inability of the researchers to test all individuals in a given population. The sample must be representative of the population from which it was drawn and it must have a good size to warrant statistical analysis. The main function of sampling is to allow the researchers to conduct the study to individuals from the population so that the results of their conclusion can be used to derive conclusions that will apply to the whole population.

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. The sample are selected because they are easier to recruit for the study. For a study of this nature, with emphasis on the limited time and resources, the study resorted to the use of convenience sampling in order to be resource and time conscious. As such, only participants that were available will be used for the study. That is why the study relied on a non-probability

sampling technique like convenience sampling which is the most common of all sampling techniques. It was also selected because it is fast, inexpensive, and easy and the subjects are readily available.

That said, a sample of ten (10) participants were used for the study. The participants were sampled from the Ghanaian music industry. As explained earlier, the choice of population and sample gives confidence in the findings of the study.

3.5. Data Collection Method and Instrument

The study adopted the use of interviews as the data collection method. According to Wimmer & Dominick (2006:135) “Intensive interviews or in-depth interviews are essentially a hybrid of the one-on-one interview approach.” To do this, semi-structured interviews was conducted on samples from the Ghanaian music industry.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher first determined the questions to pose that would provide the desired data. These questions originated from research questions that forms a basis for the study. A question guide for a semi-structured interview was thus be designed to aid researchers in collecting data. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative method of enquiry that combines a predetermined set of open questions (questions that prompt discussions) with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore particular themes or responses further.

Next, researcher conducted the interviews separately on the participants using question guides. These interviews were recorded using sound recorders. These audiotapes were later transcribed into textual data for the purpose of easy analysis. The next stage involved unitizing the data. According to Baxter & Babbie (2003:366), unitizing involves breaking down the data into the simplest form of information that could stand on its own. That is, “it

must be interpretable in the absence of any additional information other than a broad understanding of the context in which the inquiry is carried out”. Coding categories of the data were then developed. The various units of data were first coded under four broad themes which were later condensed into three themes, each of which presented in the findings. The researcher then combed through the entire data, categorizing each unit under the three broad coding categories identified in the research objectives. Each theme of data was then stored as a separate file for the purpose of analysis. Researchers then analyzed each thematic category of data for patterns. The patterns uncovered by analyzing the four separate files denoting different themes are then used to answer research question.

3.6. Data Analysis – Grounded Theory

The data was analyzed using the grounded theory. Grounded theory is a type of inductive thematic analysis employed in the social, behavioral and health sciences. Developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), grounded theory is a set of iterative techniques designed to identify categories and concepts within text that are then linked into formal theoretical models (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Charmaz (2006, p. 2) describes grounded theory as a set of methods that “consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data themselves.” The process entails systematically reviewing units of text (often line-by-line, but units can be words, paragraphs, or larger units of text) as they are collected, creating emergent codes for those units, and writing memos that expand on created codes and the relationships between codes. This process is repeated until data collection is completed.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns form a major deal of every research as it almost crops up in any research undertaking involving participants or individuals. Saunders et al. (2009) define research ethics as the appropriateness of a researcher's behaviour in the conduct of research, especially the researcher's relationship with the rights of participants. That is, participation in the research should be at the discretion of the participants. In this research, participants were exposed to the research objectives after which their consent were sought to be part of the study. All participants agreed to voluntarily be part of the research and they had the sole right to pull out of the study whenever they felt the need to do so. In addition, the study maintained a high level of participant's confidentiality by ensuring that the data provided were bereft of the participant's identity.

3.8. Chapter Summary.

This chapter focused on the methodology of the study. The chapter looked at case studies as the most appropriate qualitative methodology to use for a study of this nature. The study proposes the use of interviews as the data collection method where semi-structured interview protocols were used to elicit information from the selected sample. Convenience sample will be used for the study, while the grounded theory will be used as an analysis technique for the data that will be obtained. Ethical considerations were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary of the paper, conclusions and makes a stance on the research position.

4.1 Summary

This paper sought to evaluate the various practices that encompass personal branding. The study sought to achieve this evaluating the various ways and activities in which Ghanaian musicians use to build, maintain and promote their brands. The study was organized along with four main chapters that are discussed briefly as follows;

The first chapter was the introductory chapter that set the tone for the paper. The chapter discussed the background of the study thereby helping to put the study in a historical context to draw an understanding of the need to undertake an empirical study to understand the various practices that make up personal branding among Ghanaian musicians. The chapter discussed the research objectives that served as a guard in the navigation of literature and served as the basis for the research questions. The chapter ended by elucidating the significance of the paper, making a case for the relevance of the paper in contributing to existing pool of knowledge on the subject.

The second chapter is the literature review that served as the backbone of the discussion. This chapter entailed a discussion, evaluation and assessment of the various scores of literature that speak to the subject of personal branding. The discussions in this chapter took three main folds. The first part of the discussion looked at the discussion of the various concepts that underscored the topic. The second part also examined the empirical studies conducted in a bid to speak the issues of personal branding around the world. The discussion was done using the research objectives as themes that guided the selection of literature and the resultant analysis of each. The third part of the analysis was predominantly focused on the theoretical framework. As is the case of other empirical studies, the study was guided by a selection of a relevant theory that explains and speaks to the practices and believes that encapsulate personal branding. The researcher settled on Goffman's theory of Dramaturgy, a consequence of leads from other studies.

The next chapter was the methodology. This chapter espoused the proposed methodological approach that was considered by the researcher as the most appropriate for a study of this nature. The qualitative research approach was settled on and the chapter provided the justification for the choice. The chapter also explained the population, sample size and sampling procedure and discussed the method of data collection and analysis. The ethical considerations were also discussed.

The final chapter, which is the conclusion discusses the summary, conclusions and research position of the paper.

4.2 Conclusion

Broadly, the study sought to examine the practices that make up personal branding within the Ghanaian entertainment industry by focusing on musicians. But specifically, the following formed the research objective of the study

1. To ascertain the perceptions regarding the importance of personal branding in the Ghanaian Music Industry.
2. To explore how the musician in the Ghanaian entertainment industry, manage their brand
3. To understand the effect of personal branding strategies on the image of the musician in Ghana.

Taken together, the literature analyzed show that humans are analogous to physical products because they have unique qualities that distinguish them from other humans as products do. Several scholars have argued out the feasibility of applying the branding concept to humans. Peters (1999) is thought to have introduced the concept of personal branding as the identity, practices or characteristic one individual from another. A specific group of humans that are

seen to have brands that are significant to them are celebrities, who are considered by Marwick and Boyd (2011) to be famous people. These people perform activities that shape up their brands as their choices and actions directly or indirectly influence how their publics perceives them. An important group of celebrities is musicians and through history, authors have advanced that the constant use of musicians in endorsement and sponsorship deals, buttresses the fact they have a brand that appeals to a particular segment of the public, hence their use. It is with this in mind that some of these musicians actively and consciously engage in activities that positively promote their brands and communicates the uniqueness and core values. It is these perceptions, that drive their branding activities.

Literature spoke to the activities that make up personal branding, with some speaking on the skills needed. Dani (2018) argues that education, promptness, planning, time management, confidence, creativity, communication and team building as other essential skills in the promotion and development of a personal brand. One of the tools that were considered very integral and central to the process of personal branding was the internet, particularly, the use of social media which was underscored samples in various studies based on the feature of interactivity and instant feedback, which enables the celebrities to gauge people's perception of their brands, as well as serving as a surfboard to communicate and exhibit their brands.

In articulating the challenges in the various approaches to personal branding, most of the literature engaged questioned the ability to successfully apply marketing principles to humans. one of the challenges advanced by Shepherd (2005) was that there no coherent description of the tactics and practices of personal branding. While product branding on one hand uses a consumer-oriented approach, personal branding requires the product-oriented approach, thereby creating some challenges, difficulties and inconsistencies.

4.4 Research proposition

It is the conviction of the researcher, informed by the various theoretical debates concerning the issues of personal branding, that there is the need for a qualitative study to better appreciate the importance of personal branding to the building and maintenance of the careers of musicians, particularly in Ghana. This is because, the researcher believes that given the sociocultural contexts of the numerous studies, a Ghanaian one will add to the variety and richness of the literature available on the matter. The implications that will be drawn from this study will be useful to musicians, branding experts and other celebrities, as well as researchers in general. The findings of the study will help shape the role of personal branding in the lives and careers of celebrities. Although the issues regarding the various activities and practices of personal branding have been carefully espoused and digested by past research, this study will only compliment such discussions and offer a Ghanaian perspective that will enrich existing literature on the subject.

4.5 Recommendations for future study

The following are the recommendations for prospective studies

1. There should be an assessment or evaluation of the role that social media plays in promoting the personal brands of musicians in Ghana. This is because, the study uncovered the use of social media as one of most important tools that is used to build, maintain and promote personal brands.
2. There should also be an empirical analysis of the perception of a segment of fans or audiences regarding the personal brands of musicians in order to measure the importance of putting in efforts to build, maintain and promote strong brands.

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