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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH



**ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PERSONAL BRANDING IN
GHANA'S MUSIC INDUSTRY**

SUBMITTED BY

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MAPR20065

**A RESEARCH WORK SUBMITTED TO THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF
JOURNALISM IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

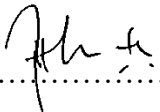
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DECLARATION

I, having duly acknowledged notable sources, declare that this dissertation is my own work and no part of this has been submitted for a Master’s Programme in this institution or any other. Findings herein however, would be suggested to the School of Graduate Studies and Research for consideration and possible implementation, since findings are peculiarly subjective to the latter.

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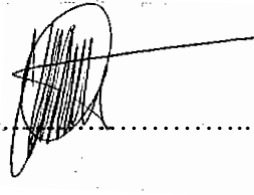
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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this project work has been strictly supervised by our noble outfit according to the principles set by the School of Graduate Studies and Research, Ghana Institute of Journalism Accra, Ghana.

NAME: DR. GEORGE K. ASAMOAH

SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'G' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right. The signature is written over a dotted line.

DATE: 10/ 11/ 21

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to the almighty God through whose guidance and divine selection I made it through this course. I also dedicate this work to my supervisor Dr. George Asamoah for his perfect interpersonal skills exhibited throughout the research period, and further to the School of Graduate Studies and Research and all its workers. I specially dedicate this work to my brother, Ing Emmanuel Johnson who through his massive support I have made it through this course with success.

ABSTRACT

This study is an assessment of the role of social media in the personal brands of the artistes in Ghana's entertainment industry. The objectives that underscored the objectives of the study were exploring the various meanings that stakeholders in the music industry ascribe to personal branding, how social media is used in the promotion of personal brands in the music industry and the importance of social media in the development and building of personal brands. The study employed a qualitative approach where semi-structured interviews were conducted on six stakeholders that were conveniently sampled. The stakeholders constituted of two artistes, three artiste management and one entertainment analyst, pundit and journalist. The findings of the study showed that, there was an appreciation of the concept of personal branding and musicians were seen as individuals who need to manage their brands well. Social media was seen as a critical tool in that regard, and could prove to be either advantageous or negative depending on how it is used. Social media was observed to be used to facilitate engagement with the fans of musicians, promote their projects as well as compliment other communication efforts. The effective use of social media positively impacts on the brand. The use of social media is fraught with some challenges which can be minimized through the constitution of a team have the mandate and responsibility to manage their social media pages and interactions.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

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

1.1 Background of the study

For a long time, the word branding has been used in reference to companies and corporate organizations. Presently, 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 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 conception, during the period parents give an identity by virtue of name to a child; thereby indirectly launching what is perceived by many as a brand which the person makes informed efforts to keep building through their lives. According to (Petruca, 2016), Socrates approximately 2400 intimated years ago that, the way an individual can gain good reputation when he or she endeavors to achieve what they desire to appear. His intimations 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, the corporate world or entrepreneurs, but it is an ideal process 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 noted and remembered for (Dalla-Camina, 2016). In his book titled *Ditch, Dare, Do! Branding for Executive Success*, Arruda intimates in his book that an individual's 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 distinction that one can bring and possess in the industry through the exhibition of unique quality and experience as well as how these are presented. People perceived as having strong and unique brands easily get the attention because they articulate the passion, they have for what they do in a way that exacerbates their relevance to the people in whose interest they serve (Dalla-Camina, 2016).

We live in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world today that has resulted in the creation of extreme competitiveness in core aspects of our daily lives, which requires people to be outstanding and be different (Brooks & Anumudu, 2016; Arruda, 2005, cited in Shepherd, 2005). This has made the notion of being distinct a more pervasive concept, which has made the idea of personal branding deeply rooted and ubiquitous among professionals. Most of the branding literature (such as Rampersad, 2008; Gehl, 2011; Khedher 2013; Gandini, 2016) are precise and narrow in on the idea that branding one's self is pivotal to their personal, as well as professional success. Moreover, the argument advanced by Kaputa, (2003) that "if you don't brand yourself, others will" seems to have led to the increased attention and reinvigorated interest in the process of personal branding that has permeated all aspects of our lives in the last twenty years.

Peters (1997) in espousing the idea of personal branding asserted that every individual and person have their own brand, and therefore has the power and possibility to be the marketer for themselves. The core premise of personal branding resonates with other traditional branding theories mostly used for products and services. Personal branding holds that branding can also can be extended to include humans. Interestingly, the idea of personal branding cannot be considered to be a relatively recent phenomenon. In defence of this, Kotler and Levy (1969) advanced that marketing principles, efforts and activities can also apply to humans and not just limited to products, goods and services. Currently, the idea of humans brands is recognized

among theorists and researchers like Khedher (2015), who assess that humans can be managed in a strategic manner because they have features that makes them worthy of being promoted as brands.

Some advocates of personal branding like Peters (1997), Montoya (2005) and Arruda (2013) have vouched for the practice as a means of achieving professional enhancement or used in a bid for the sustenance of popularity. Traditionally, personal branding has been thought of as being the preserve of individuals like celebrities, politicians or professionals who are publicly known to strive to succeed in their careers and professions (Labrecque, Markos & Milne, 2011). The concurrent introduction of Web 2.0 and the rise of social media has resulted in the evolution of personal branding into a phenomenon that is not only exclusive to professionals and celebrities. By publishing personalized content on social media through the creation of personalized digital profiles, ability of individuals to present themselves in a favourable manner to a broad range of audiences comes easily and with the added advantage of being able to reach audiences both immediately and simultaneously. Social media has made personal branding more relevant and far-reaching since its advent and subsequent proliferation.

The need to control personal brands has never been so important, so much so that the business world has begun to recognize the feasibility in this assertion, offering strategic advice about how to project a desired personal brand identity through the use of the many, varied and proliferated social media avenues (Labrecque, Markos and Milne, 2011). There is limited empirical studies to deal with these issues regardless of the importance of branding and the high adoption rate of social media. The existing studies are very few and far between. One study that easily and readily comes to mind is the study done by Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010). It has become imperative to explore the effects of social media on the personal brands of 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

Most of the existing literature like Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010), as well as (Labrecque, Markos and Milne, 2011) contend that one can increase their value and continue to hold their place in a competitive environment if they are discerning on how they can be different and unique. The ability to do this will entail energy, creativity, financial support, a determined team and the winning of target audience. The brands that come out on top and succeed are those that are able to understand these dynamics of differentiation and uniqueness, and possess the ability to gain and sustain a grip in the minds of their audiences and consumers.

The phenomenon of branding on social media has been an area of interest to researchers far and beyond. Such studies include that of Barware & Meehan (2010), Singh & Sonnenburg (2012), Gensler et al. (2013) and Holt (2016). However, it is only until recently that the issue of branding from a personal perspective generated an overwhelming interest among academics. There is the need to address the concerns, as well as deficiencies related to the existing literature on personal branding.

To start with, regardless of the growing interest in the phenomenon among academics, majority of personal branding literature assert that personal branding ideas are still within the remits of self-help books and articles by personal branding “gurus”. Some researchers like Khedher (2015) have asserted that the increased awareness and practice of personal branding can be attributed 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”. Some doyens and professionals operating within the Ghanaian

marketing industry, as well motivational speakers and career counsellors mostly encourage people at all levels of their careers to identify qualities that make them special and communicate them to the right people, with the justification that it is a recipe for career success. The deficiency with this literature is that “intuitive and informal approaches often predominate, and professional advice is often hype-ridden and rooted in uncorroborated case-study experience” (Shepherd, 2005). It is for this reason that this study is predicated on the idea that in order to have a much deeper and holistic understanding of the personal branding process. Also, it is the stern conviction of the researcher that, there is the need to augment the literature on personal branding with literature that is rooted in a deeper investigation of personal branding on social media.

Labrecque, Markos & Milne (2011) advance that the branding of humans is analogous to the branding of products and services where individuals are engaged in the processes of identifying and promoting their distinctiveness and uniqueness. While the literature of scholars who advocate for personal branding advance arguments that is likened to the established traditional marketing and branding theories, Shepherd (2005) believes that this had shaped the narrative as much of the existing literature that speak to personal branding has mainly been focused predominantly on reviewing and applying existing theories. Nolan (2015) believes that this is done from a sociocultural perspective and the sociological concept of the self. This study is buttressed on the believe it is possible and proceeds to argue that the phenomenon of personal branding should be investigated from a marketing perspective.

There is a growing awareness and acceptability of the concept of personal branding in Ghana, amidst its significance. More importantly, there is an increasing attention paid to social media in the process of building, sustaining and promoting personal brands. Musicians are an aspect the classifications of people in Ghana who are noted to be human brands, and are actively engrossed in the management of their personal brands. This research investigates the efforts

and activities that are employed in the use of social media to build, manage, sustain and promote the personal brands of musicians in Ghana by examining the motivations and advantages. The study also helps to understanding why social media is so important in the branding success of musicians, a deficiency that characterizes most of the studies done in this regard.

1.3 Research Objectives

The overarching research objective is to examine the role of social media in personal branding among musicians in Ghana. Specifically, the paper seeks to achieve the following sub-objectives:

- i. To explore the meanings Ghanaian musicians attribute to personal branding
- ii. To understand the nature of social media usage among the musicians in Ghana.
- iii. To examine the various ways in which the musicians use social media to build the personal brands in Ghana.
- iv. To establish the effect of using social media on the personal brands of Ghanaian musicians

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will undergird the realization of the study's broader objective.

- i. What meanings do Ghanaian musicians attribute to the concept of personal branding?
- ii. What is the nature of social media usage among the musicians in Ghana?
- iii. How do Ghanaian musicians use social media to build their brands?
- iv. What effect does the use of social media for branding purposes have on the brand of the musicians in Ghana?

1.5 Significance of the study

Though there are diverse studies that all seek to examine the role of social media in personal brand building, this study will narrow this research area by focusing on the effect that social media 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. This surge in attention paid to personal branding today, is also based on the enormous opportunities that social media brings to the area, and the perceived benefits.

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 the authenticity regarding the use of social media in 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.

1.6 Organization of the study

The study is organized into four main chapters. The first chapter is the introduction and discusses the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives and questions as well as the significance of the study. The second chapter is the literature review which contains the discussion of concepts, review of relevant literature to the topic and the theoretical framework. The third chapter discusses the methodology employed in the collection and analysis of data. The final happens to be the concluding chapter that discusses the summary of the paper, as well as key conclusions.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the background of the paper, the problem statement, research objectives and research questions. The chapter also discussed the significance of the paper as well as the organization of them paper

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 other celebrities.

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 Discussion of concepts

2.2.1 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.

2.2.3 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 self-marketing focuses on leaders or celebrities (e.g., in political campaigns, in advertising within the entertainment industry), an increasing number of studies also deal with self-presentation 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).

Building and maintaining a personal brand through social media

Social media refers to a sum of online communication channels based on content-sharing community, interaction, dialogue and collaboration (Petruca, 2016). EbizNBA Rank (2016) gives examples of top social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Tumblr, and Instagram. Petruca (2016) intimates that social media is a channel through which persons can disseminate thoughts, ideas, materials, pictures or videos to millions of people online who have the possibility to interact with them and to share their thoughts on content posted. Social media has turned users into creators of content in which knowledge is being democratized (Badau, 2011).

Presently, social media comprise of thousands of social media platforms, some of which are more popular than others, but each with its own audience and users, as each platform serves a different type of goal (Workitdaily, 2016). Petruc (2016) argues that social media is the best and easiest way to grown a personal identity, to establish a reputation and become visible in a specific industry. It is however considered as the perfect place for any personal brand to be actualized due to the number of people using these online platforms and the prospects these have for any brand. Therefore, with minimum effort, Huffingtonpost (2016) asserts that anyone can use social media to promote their activities in order to obtain more followers and shape their perception of them online. The business world have bean to pay more attention and prominence to managing personal brands and often strategically advices how to create desired brand identity with the help of social media.

Petruca (2016) outlines some aspects to consider when building a personal brand through social media;

1. Having different accounts on different media platforms which enables the individual to reach out to more people
2. Developing a strong positioning statement which encompasses a summary of who the person is, and what he/she does and statements about the brand.

She continues that in order to have success for personal brands, there is the need to employ the use of a consistent content on all the platforms. She argues that the name, colour, style and tone used are branding aspects that must be used on all accounts of the different channels (Petruca, 2016). This way, the personal brand will become memorable.

Building, maintaining and promoting personal brands using social media is its propensity to reach people effortlessly. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue that social media offers the opportunity for brands to be promoted in a cheap way, especially at a time where other branding efforts require considerable financial support for promotion. The best way to explain how relevant and important social media is for the building, maintenance and promotion of personal brands is surmised in the words of Jayson Demers as cited in Kevan (2015) that: "If content is the fuel for your personal brand, social media is the engine."

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 the challenges in personal branding.

2.3.1 Understanding Personal Branding

In understanding the process of personal branding, emphasis is placed on the pioneering research work of Anna Zarkada who defined 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, p.1). By conducting an extensive literature review of popular press and academic perspectives on 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 “all about the delivery of something of value to a customer in such a way that it 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 as the seller’s ability or promise to deliver consistently specific set of features, benefits and services to buyers through four important characteristics; attributes, benefits, values and personality (Hughes 2007 as quoted by Zarkada 2012, p.3).

Zakarda (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 category of definitions the study identifies offer vague descriptions that are open to varied interpretations. 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 this understanding; “those varied activities undertaken by individuals to make themselves known in the marketplace, usually, (though not exclusively) for the purpose of obtaining gainful employment (Shepherd 2005, cited by Zarkada 2012, p.4). Zarkada (2012) concludes her study by proposing that personal branding should be considered as a process which employs personal identity as it’s 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 insights made by Zarkada (2012) about the practices and theoretical underpinnings of personal branding are however very narrow and limited due to the type of data and methodology employed in her study. Written opinions on what personal branding consists of and partially provide only a narrow window into the full and actual operation of the concept which real-life examples would have offered. The researcher further reduces the strength of her evidence by focusing on a few definitions offered by some writers on the concept of personal branding. The study, however, helps us to identify the practical challenges that some marketing concepts transposed and adapted for personal branding will have on the practice of personal branding. For instance, Zarkada (2012) explains that under product branding, a product’s identity can be conjured up from scratch and stage-managed to elicit specific emotions and outcomes. However, in the case of branding a person, there is a fully-grown person with formed attributes, a personality, behaviors and a set history to be dealt with (Zarkada, 2012, p. 4).

Zarkada (2012) rather proposes that the practice of personal branding should be conceptualized within the corporate branding framework because of certain similar characteristics between people and corporations.

“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, pp. 4-5).

Despite these views, some researchers are sceptical about this idea that personal branding mirrors the product and corporate branding process. According to Shepherd’s (2005) study, personal branding comes with its conceptual and practical challenges, which make it difficult for it to be fully captured under the discipline of marketing alone (p.600).

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

In a broad stroke, celebrity is a noun meaning ‘a famous person’ (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). More descriptions have been offered by scholars such as; a commodity, a cultural formation (Turner G., 2004), a human brand (Holmes & Redmond, 2014, p. 223). Some writers advance

the notion that, these representations are product of their activities that shape up their brand. Celebrity performances are described as on- and offstage, off- and online, public or private, as a marketing and branding exercises. ‘Their everyday life choices and values are all actions that create brands and branding identities. Inadvertently, the human brand identities sell product brands through endorsements and persuasions by giving personality qualities to inanimate brands; and they encourage consumption through being an idealized consumer and a commodity vessel’ (Holmes & Redmond, 2014, p. 223).

Indeed, corporate organizations in Ghana often ride on celebrity popularity and image to persuade customers to purchase their products and services through brand endorsement deals. Popular footballer and Black Stars player Dede Ayew, was made the brand ambassador for Unibank in 2016 ‘to use his image and value as a player to help boost the image of the bank within and beyond the shores of Ghana’ (Unibank Ghana, 2016). Popular Ghanaian actress Nana Ama McBrown was recently made the brand ambassador for liquor producer Kasapreko’s Royal range of drinks because she embodies the “key attributions of the Royal range of soft drinks such as innovation and creativity, authenticity, passion, originality, and determination” (Aryee, 2018).

In a study by Centeno and Wang’s (2016) in a bid to discuss celebrities as human brands, they considered celebrities as a multidimensional concept whose brand identity is formed through a concretion 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. This literature has been considered in this study because identifying the people who work to create a personal brand image is part of this research, and contributes significantly to the brand of these celebrities. There mostly are a team working coherently and in conformity in the background, away from the purview of the public, whose activities, help to deliver a consist impression at the front (Goffman 1956, cited by

Kivisto and Pitman 2013, p.273). This literature is relevant for us to identify and analyze the roles of various members of the stakeholders or teams working with the Ghanaian celebrities to manage their personal brand.

Centeno and Wang's (2016) research focused predominantly celebrity sponsorship and social media advertising, as the parameters to examine how these stakeholders 'gather together in an assemblage of services in co-creating human brand identities' (Centeno & Wang, 2016, p. 133). Through prior studies and data analysis of 304 total posts with 34,767 aggregated comments in an internet ethnography study, the researchers identified three classifications for the stakeholders based on their roles and stakes in the co-creation process. These were; focal, primary, and instrumental stakeholder-actors. Focal stakeholder-actors are the celebrities. By studying the social media posts and interactions of four Filipino celebrities, the researchers identified that celebrities 'structure themselves according to how an ordinary person should enact one's self' (Centeno & Wang, 2016, p. 133) and by so doing they build emotional connections with their fans and consumers. The active participation of celebrities in the creation of their brand enables them to socially and economically benefit through their social influence of public actors (Centeno & Wang, 2016). The Primary stakeholder-actors, as identified by Centeno & Wang (2016) are the consumers or fans. The consumers were seen to be the freest, active and expressive stakeholder-actors who are indispensable in the creation of value for the brand of celebrities. The instrumental stakeholder-actors as advanced by the researchers, are those who have business interests in celebrity namely the media, advertisers, and talent management are some of the instrumental stakeholder-actors. They mediate the consumer-celebrity co-creation process. The success of the celebrity human brand overtime goes to benefit all three stakeholders.

2.3.3 The use of social media in building personal brands

In an earlier study, Scolere et al (2018) argues that with the widespread of social media, there has been a proliferation and pervasiveness of discussions and discourses on self-branding becoming an important pillar of our social and economic life. Their study was however concerned with the way digital brands get reproduced in the face of so many social media platforms, which according to Scolere et al (2018) has been under-theorized. Drawing on insights of in-depth interviews with 52 online content creators which included designers, artists, writers and marketing consultants, the authors examine how these stakeholders present themselves across the plethora of social media networking sites. The paper shows that the participants used social media in a professional capacity as part of their concerted efforts to promote themselves, their businesses and their creative products, with a lot of them alluding to the importance of having presence of several sites. The sample in Scolere et al (2018) indicated that they routinely made decisions about the platforms on which to create and share content based on a consideration of the design features and materiality of the site, the sites perceived culture, and the interaction of the elements with the broader environment, which solidifies the assumptions in Bucher and Helmond (2018). Highfield and Leaver (2016) express that there is a swelling importance of visual content on the social media sphere and this was dominantly featured in Scolere et al (2018) where several interviewees acknowledged how their image sharing activities were guided by the technical specificities of platforms

Scolere (2019) argues that the building of portfolios has been established as crucial and central to the work of creative industries and this practice has evolved as a key component of a personal brand and has more implications on the brand especially in the age of social media. Though the above premise has been largely understudied, the author conducts a year-long qualitative study which incorporated the interview of graphic design professionals. The study identifies that portfolios are multi-plat formed, connected and dynamic, a process that is suggestive of a

new pace and subjective nature which creative industry persons can build, maintain and promote their brands (Scolere, 2019). Almost all interviewees used in the study highlighted the importance of social media to promote the portfolio building efforts as part of steering the careers of creatives, as it was a motivating factor and afforded them with opportunities to promote their projects via digital platforms (Scolere, 2019). The study further argues by stating that the distribution of content and portfolios do not require labor due to the numerous advantages that sprawling social media ecology brings to the table.

Haynes and Marshall (2018) assert that there is optimism about the varied opportunities that the internet creates for independent musicians. In their article that sought to evaluate the role of social media in the careers of independent musicians, the authors agree that there has been impact of internet technologies on the music industry which have been often emphasized. Haynes and Marshall (2018) aver that these internet technologies enable artistes to reach new global audiences and engage with them in several ways that can help facilitate more stable, and financially sufficient and self-sustaining independent careers. The authors admit that there is a deficiency in literature with regards to the effect of internet technologies on the working experiences of independent musicians. Haynes and Marshall (2018) conducted a pilot study on the working experiences of independent musicians, and examines the musician's use of social media in the careers and discusses the benefits and advantages and disadvantages that social media has been in the careers of musicians signed to small labels in South-Western England. Their study concludes that social media is an essential tool in the arsenal of independent musicians and does provide advantages for them, but the findings also highlighted some significant disadvantages that emerged which shows that the benefits of social media in the career of musicians have been overstated.

Haynes and Marshall (2018) advance that the musicians perceived social media as being a part of social life and highlighted the role of the successes they have achieved. The response is

however unsurprising particularly since asking them this is more akin to asking them the role that electricity plays in their lives. The authors argue that the response comes as no surprise as the musicians sampled had a minimal experience of the music industry before social media (Hayne and Marshall, 2018). But the biggest impact of social media inferring from the findings of the survey was disintermediation, due to the fact that social media gave them the opportunity to get in touch with people without having to spend so much money on PR and promotional activities, together with the added advantage of direct engagement with people that care about their careers which has cut out the ancillary services and elements of the music industry (Hayne and Marshall, 2018). In a broad stroke, the findings showed the musicians demonstrating that social media was the platform upon which their careers has been based on social media by levelling the playing field.

The study also shows some frustrations and misgivings about the use of social media by the musicians who asserted that it was sometimes hard to measure the impact and tangible effects that social media has on their career and brand. Hayne and Marshall (2008) navigate the feelings of ambivalence and outlined areas where social media has helped solved a problem, as well as areas where it created new problems. Their analysis shows that social media offers benefits in terms of audience interaction where social media is seen as a conduit for feedback. In a study of a more established set of musicians and the role of social media in their careers, Baym (2012) notes that nearly all music professionals seem convinced that social media and particularly the musician's use of social media to connect with their audiences – consider social media as key to their survival. She advances that nearly all musicians engaged in her study experienced personal benefits as a result of direct access that blends the rewards of friendships with those of performer/audience relationships (Baym, 2012). This serves as a positive reinforcement in maintaining the morale of musicians +and helps validate their career choices.

But despite the positive role that social media plays, the Haynes and Marshall (2018) note that the musicians used in the study were also skeptical towards the perceived benefits of social media in relation to the audiences. Two criticisms arose which arose from their interactions with the musicians. First, the general view of the perceived difficulty or in other words impossibility to transform social media interactions with fans into financial income. This buttresses the discussions of Daym (2012) where she opined that social media interactions with audiences are mostly along the lines of friendship and fandom which may be emotionally rewarding for musicians. But these friendships are less commodifiable and it remains unclear that social media interactions can be monetized.

The second criticism was that social media enables one to connect with existing audiences and does not necessarily help in developing new ones (Haynes and Marshall, 2018). In his study of independent musicians in two US music scenes, Sargent (2009) found similar experiences and perspectives. The musicians in his study also viewed ‘cultivation of support in their local music scene as foundational’ to their careers but ‘despite the promise of ICTs to transform musicians’ access to new audiences, musicians were consistently frustrated by their inability to reach beyond their existing social networks. Haynes and Marshall (2018) argue that the difficulty in accessing new audiences was connected to the notion that there is so much music available online that it is extremely difficult for artistes to attract recognition.

Duufy and Pooley (2017) asserts that there is the growing and widespread redundancy of labour markets and contemporary workers, especially those in the media and creative industries being called upon for branding initiatives. The academics contend that.

2.3.4 Challenges in the approaches to personal branding.

The literature we have engaged in 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.

Zakarda (2012) challenges the practicality of these tactics by intimating that

“such approaches imply that people have the means and the knowledge to define and research their markets to great detail as they will need to access existing, explicit and emerging needs and desired benefits. The definitions also assumed that the person to be sold can easily be fashioned to display the attributes desired by a correctly segmented target market and clearly positioned as such to other competing persons The impossibility of achieving such a task is evident since the fundamental assumption of full information about the market and the competition, which is hard to meet with respect to products, is totally unsustainable in the fluid labor or fame markets for individuals” (Zarkada, 2012, p. 3).

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, p. 594).

Shepherd's (2005) study revealed that personal branding had some association with mainstream marketing. However, the concept of personal branding comes with some nuances, as discussed above that do not allow it to be "satisfactorily embedded in a suitable theoretical marketing framework" (Shepherd, 2005, p. 599). To this, Shepherd (2005) proposes that the concept of personal branding be studied and practiced using a multidisciplinary approach to understand other aspects of the concept (Shepherd, 2005, p. 599)

Another practical challenge that practitioners of personal branding may face when trying to apply marketing principles is the need for consistency in branding. It is a marketing principle that brands must be simple, clear and consistent. Consistency across all messages and communication targeted at customers is deemed critical to any brand-building effort (Ghodeswar, 2008 p.10). Living by this principle may be challenging as a personal brand because "despite the importance of developing a coherent brand image, it is normal for individuals to develop multiple roles, personas and self-images in their personal, social and working lives" (Shepherd, 2005, p. 7). Going by the mainstream marketing principle of coherent branding, a strategy that promotes multiple identities is likely to fail as there is a risk of one identity may overshadowing or undermining the other. Shepherd (2005) also argues that

the alternative, promoting a single brand identity, may prove difficult for a person as they may feel constraint in an attempt to hide other aspects of themselves that are not being projected, an act that is much simpler for organizations. Organizations can easily execute such a strategy; by employing a top-down communication strategy, the organisation can get all employees to stay on brand in their interactions with customers. These analyses provided by Shepherd (2005) forces us to pay attention to the inherent characteristics of people as we draw up strategies and tactics to manage human brands. We are challenged to see that what works for products and organizations may not always work for people because of naturally occurring human attributes.

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

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

As explained in chapter one, the focus of this research is to investigate the role of social media in personal branding of musicians in Ghana. In order 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 literature review as enumerated in the preliminary chapter, the study is gleaned towards the selection of an appropriate research methodology that will aid in the achievement of these objectives and the answering of the research questions.

This chapter will explain the methodology used to examine the role of social media in personal brand building. As previously argued out in the literature review, there has been a change in the theories regarding the efficacy of personal branding, a change that has been brought by development in 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 due to the advent of social media as well as social media friendly technologies. The research design, methodology and sampling techniques will be 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.

Social media 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” (Heath, 2009). As such, well managed social media brands play a role as an invincible force that seeks to shape our perceptions of actors at individual and societal levels. It also influences and shapes how we define our identities in relation to others. 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 that will require a flexible type of research where the process involved in the discovery of the role of social media in the personal branding efforts of musicians is blended with intuition. It is in light of this that the study will adopt the use of qualitative research to best reach its potential. Qualitative research is the best fit because of its interpretivist philosophical leaning and the idea that realities are constructed in a social context, enabling the researcher to delve deeper. This type of research focuses the application of a predetermined set of procedures in a systematic manner, in the collection, analysis and presentation of findings to understand the occurrence of a phenomena and to resolve issues. It therefore aims to get a grasp only on the case studied instead of the alternative of generalizing across populations, or to use the data to support hypothesis. Qualitative studies also provide complex descriptions of how people experience a given research phenomenon 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.

Keegan (2006) argues that qualitative research is distinct from other forms in that it is “rigorous, reflective, reflexive, intuitive and contextualized subjectively”. Qualitative studies are seen to be powerful means of getting a deeper 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 improve the conception, operationalizing and understanding of 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 because they are 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 case study is a qualitative study design that examines a phenomenon within its real-life context. In this process, data is collected on the phenomenon from individuals, groups, or even events. Case studies have the aim of understanding the uniqueness of a phenomena to a given subset of people due to sociocultural, political and economic differences that exist between people. The understanding garnered from the study is then used to apply to other cases and contexts to determine patterns or areas of differentiation. This method mostly comprises of the use of in-depth interviews where the uniqueness of the case is explored in greater detail. Qualitative case studies have several implications such that it entails the selection of participants based on their unique features in part due to the fact that the interest of researchers is mostly on the special attributes of the cases. Because of the uniqueness of the cases being the primary interest of the researchers, small sample sizes are mostly used. The process of inquiry in these types of studies focuses largely on their definitive and differentiating features exhibited from other individuals/events in the larger population. The utilitarian motive is to

unearth what makes the occurrence of the phenomenon among them so different, and the reasons that account for this difference. The study will adopt the use of qualitative case study to evaluate the differences and similarities in the use of social media for personal branding purposes of musicians in Ghana.

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 will be musicians in Ghana who use social media. The rationale for choosing the musicians is that, they form the stakeholders that stand to benefit most from the use of social media 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 role of social media in their personal branding efforts. Additionally, the population chosen will give insightful data with regards to the effectiveness of social media personal branding. The population selected satisfies the theoretical considerations of the study. They are all likely to use social media and have some degree of knowledge as to the various benefits derived from social media use. 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 determine the role of social media in 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.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their suitability to the research, based on certain theoretical considerations. The sample are selected because they are the best participants to gain a better insight from for the study. For a study of this nature, with emphasis on the limited time and resources, the study resorted to the use of purposive sampling to use participants who have been exposed to the phenomenon under investigation. As such, only musicians that use social media will be used for the study.

That said, a sample of twenty (10) musicians from the Ghanaian music industry who use social media will be used for the study. 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 will adopt the use of interviews as the qualitative approach. 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 will be conducted on samples from the Ghanaian music industry.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher first determines the questions to pose that would provide the desired data. These questions originate from research questions that forms a basis for the study. A question guide for a semi-structured interview will 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 plans to conduct the interviews separately on the participants using interview protocols. These interviews will be recorded using sound recorders. These audiotapes will later be transcribed into textual data for the purpose of easy analysis. The next stage involves 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 will then be developed. The various units of data will first be coded under four broad themes which will later be condensed into three themes, each of which will be presented in the findings. The researcher then combs through the entire data, categorizing each unit under the three broad coding categories identified in the research objectives. Each theme of data is 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.

To augment the use of interviews, the researcher will also examine the social media platforms of these musicians. Qualitative content analysis will be employed where the social media of the musicians will be analyzed using some predetermined indicators from the theoretical underpinnings of the study. This will include the use of scrapped data from their public social

media accounts. Data will be recorded through observations and notetaking and discussed in greater detail in the presentation of findings.

3.6. Data Analysis – Thematic Analysis

The method of data analysis that will be employed is thematic analysis. These audiotapes from the interviews will later be transcribed into textual data for the purpose of easy analysis. The data will then be broken down into the simplest form of information that could stand on its own. According to Baxter & Babbie (2003:366), “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 will be developed. The various units of data will first be coded under five broad themes which are captured in the research objectives. The researcher then combs through the entire data, categorizing them under the four broad coding categories identified. Each theme of data is 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 will help in answering the research questions

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. The ethical considerations were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is focused on critically analyzing the results obtained from the semi-structured interview protocol that was used as a data collection tool. Six people who are very active in the music industry in Ghana were conveniently sampled and interviewed for the study. The sampled included two musicians, three members of management of active musicians and an entertainment analyst. The various participants were selected due to their significant roles as stakeholders in the Ghanaian Music Industry. The discussion of the findings is done in relation to the empirical themes that were captured in the research objectives that set the tone for the study. The different themes are analyzed in a discussion, thereby providing the answers to the research questions empirically.

4.1 The Meanings that Ghanaian Musicians Attribute to Personal Branding.

The study explored the various meanings, understanding and perception that the stakeholders in the Ghanaian music industry have about the concept of personal branding. This part of the discussion focused on drawing from the stakeholders, their perspectives of what personal branding is, and what constitutes personal brands. The discussions also centered around whether they believed musicians had personal brands and their various justifications for thinking so. The various ways in which artistes in the music industry cultivate their brands was also explored. These formed the themes for the analysis of the discussions in this section.

Personal branding, as justified in the literature reviewed in the second chapter is a subjective concept that means different things to different people. However, the nature of the study necessitated finding out from the participants what their view of the concept is. The analysis of the findings shows that, the definition by Ghodewar (2008) where branding was

conceptualized as a distinguishing name or characteristic that differentiates between a set of entities featured prominently in the discussions with the stakeholders. The various individuals that participated in the semi-structured interviews demonstrated a high sense of understanding of the concept of branding. In a broad stroke, some intimated that, branding is the set of characteristics that differentiates one entity from another. Others also indicated that, it is a picture or representation of oneself, and more importantly, how one wants to be seen, understood and remembered. Some of the participants however referred to branding as a communication process since it is a message sent that recognizes the name and capabilities of an entity. These are manifested in the excerpts captured from the various conversations.

“Branding is more like what one needs to break through the cluster and then grab somebody's attention mostly it will be customers, audience yeah so basically that is my thinking of what branding is” (Participant one, Management of Teflon Flex).

“Branding is a form of communication. Branding is a manner of understanding. Branding is a message. Branding is that kind of thing that anyone can see and put a name to it, can identify a person out of it, an object, a material quantification of something” (Participant three, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

“Branding in my own simple terms will be defined as what identity, a product or an individual carries such that, once you see the product or once that name is mentioned something peculiar comes to mind” (Participant four, Artiste Manager).

“Branding simply is how we see things in our minds eye, which helps us to define what we see.” (Participant six, Artiste).

These diverse perspectives of the concept of branding also epitomize the representational perspectives promulgated by Belch and Belch (2003) who argued that branding refers to the audience awareness and knowledge of the brand and the individuals behind it. This motivated discussions within the purview of personal brands and what they are.

There were similar explanations regarding what personal branding is. The findings indicate that, the participants had a fair understanding as regards to what personal branding is. Some explained the concept as how an individual wants to be seen or remembered. However, the dominant view among the responses underscored how different personal branding is from business or organizational branding. For participant five, three and one, personal branding involves how one projects himself or herself in a given field and the various elements that characterizes the individual as unique and different. This view is buttressed in the propositions by one of the key scholars of personal branding Peters (1997) who views personal branding as the distinctive characteristics that are inherent in humans.

“Personal branding positions an individual as an expert in that chosen field. It's also a clear reflection of the overall message and identity, their personality, their style, their beliefs, their values and ambitions” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager)

“Branding it is something that deals with an individual, human being something that when you look at you can identify that okay, it is this particular person, something that can let you stand out of a whole crowd” (Participant 4, Entertainment Analyst).

“...personal branding is the effort you make to communicate or presents your values, yourself, your brand, what you stand for to the world, your personal brand normally revolves around you and how people see you so that's how you would package yourself and present it to your target audience” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager)

While the views expressed cements the intimations of Schwabel (2009) who argued that personal branding is the process in which individuals articulate their unique value proposition, Participant four, personal branding goes beyond the uniqueness but results in an emotional response where audiences cognitively remember the brand or the individual once those traits are exhibited somewhere.

“Personal Branding has everything to do with that individual, yeah, so personal branding is how an individual wants to be perceived or wants to be identified, what identity that individual wants to carry such that when their names, or when their name is mentioned, or when he or she is seen somewhere like the first thing that comes to mind or like what you have as a perception of them is what I can explain as a personal branding, yes so that's on a personal level” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

The participant went on to illustrate how personal branding plays out using his artiste and the uniqueness of his craft, that has earned him the recognition for a specific genre or type of music.

“Quamina MP, Then, what comes to mind is Oh that guy will mix, party, party music because he's put himself out there as like someone who predominantly like does party stuff” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

One of the artistes also emphasized on how personal branding helps in distinguishing between people

“Personal Branding also to my knowledge can be how an individual self wants other people to see them or what perception one wants some other person to perceive of them” (Participant 2, Artiste)

The constitution of personal brands has been a topic of interest among scholars in personal branding. Chen (2013) asserts that there are various self-marketing strategies used by personalities to present themselves for various reasons. The study sought to understand what

constitutes personal branding especially within the remits of the Ghana music industry. The analysis showed that there are different processes through which musicians in the industry present and cultivate their brands. While some brands constituted the distinct craft of the musician, their authenticity, consistency and story-telling ability. Others also indicated the fact that age, ethnicity, sex, appearance and lifestyle constitute the personal brands.

“I think in a modern case authenticity, because people need to know, and feel you for who you are. how consistent we see you or feel or hear you, storytelling, the things you tell us, and of course your network” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager)

“For me, it is appearance(dressing), attitude, accents, lifestyle etc.” (Participant 6, Artiste).

“Things that constitute personal branding like you carry yourself about so like usually when people say Sarkodie is ‘Guy Guy’ because he carries himself about in a particular way” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

“Certain things that constitute personal branding, is the age range, age range takes a big shape in personal branding. Sex of an individual takes a form of personal branding, tribe and race also take a form of personal branding” (Participant 3, Entertainment analyst and journalist).

Participant two who is a singer emphasized on the fact that, the constitution of personal brands is predicated on the conscious efforts that individuals make to create an impression within the market space in which they operate.

“...it can be my deliberate efforts to emphasize on maybe my delivery of when it comes to me singing. For me I want people to notice me for my voice and how powerful it is and how good my vocal abilities are so my conscious effort every time” (Participant 2, Artiste/Singer).

One of the central focuses of the interview was to understand from the perspectives of the participants whether celebrities have personal brands and whether musicians, who are mostly considered as celebrities have personal brands. Celebrities are mostly known for their fame as captured by Marwick and Boyd (2011) and are human brands due to the activities they engage in (Holmes and Redmond, 2014). There was a unanimous agreement among the participants with regards to this as some intimated that celebrities thrive on being liked, loved or adored and in so doing, make conscious efforts to cultivate brand that will make them stand out and relevant in the eyes of their supporters or audiences. Celebrities are known for what they represent and for that matter, use diverse marketing strategies to enjoy the social capital they have always accrued and enjoyed. The following excerpts are justifications from some of the participants regarding why they felt celebrities have personal brands.

“Personal branding is conscious and intentional effort to create and influence public perception of you the musician by positioning yourself as an authority in your industry, so you need to have this, you need to have this authority, you need to have this following” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

“Every celebrity has a personal brand because one you want to like you, you want people to choose you over the next person, you want people to vibe with you, you want people to be attracted to you, you want people understand that you are the best or you are good at it, so a personal brand is very important to celebrities” (Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

“Yeah, every, every celebrity has a personal brand because you need that brand positioning to be able to market yourself like when people know you for what you represent, then you can be able to channel that energy to or sell yourself in that regard” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

It was established that based on the notion that celebrities have personal brands based on what they do and what they represent, and as such adopt various approaches to manage and cultivate their brands. This is affirmed by Centeno and Wang (2016) who argue that, celebrities have multidimensional activities that involves several stakeholders. The study revealed that, celebrities in Ghana adopt marketing approaches in cultivating their respective brands.

Participant three indicated that, although he had no in-depth knowledge regarding the actual strategies used by the celebrities in cultivating their brands, he however explained that their activities are backed by vision and mission, or plans that undergirds their actions.

“I feel with everybody who wants to come into the limelight you come with a plan, you come with a level of understanding that this is the kind of thing I want to do”
(Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

For participant four, celebrities are always involved in activities that positions their brands and attracts attention due to the fact that, they thrive on people’s recognition of who they are what they do. But specifically, what stands out for him are conscious learning, originality of the celebrity, the personality’s ability to incorporate their brands into what they do and how interactive they are with their support base or publics. Participant five expressed similar opinions by advancing that, celebrities cultivate their brands through authenticity, a proper definition of the brand and the creation of opportunities through connections with other brands and corporations.

“The ways through which you can go to a solid brand is usually to learn, stay true to yourself and incorporating that with your work makes you have a very like solid identity which people can connect with. People are going to know you for being this very interactive person” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager)

The assessment of the various ways in which celebrities cultivate their brands was used as a background to understand whether the participants perceived the musicians in Ghana's music industry as celebrities who have brands. There were similar perceptions as well as points of divergence with respect to Ghanaian musicians being celebrities. Some of the perceptions were underscored by the understanding that celebrities are famous people. Musicians are famous and publicly recognized and are therefore considered as celebrities. Others explained that, the musicians have celebrity status due to the media exposure and attention their status command.

“Of course, musicians and celebrities. Celebrity is a condition of fame and broad public recognition of an individual or group as a result of the attention given to them by the mass media. So, clearly, they are celebrities” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager and Entertainment pundit)

“Because they make people happy, and all of that. So, musicians are celebrities because people look up to them and they have a lot of influence that's why politicians, try to fall on them for, for their political games and stuff like that” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

“Yes, because they are celebrated base on how their music influences society. Either good or bad.” (Participant 6, Artiste)

Other participants averred that, the conceptualization of musicians as celebrities is against the backdrop that they have chalked numerous successes locally and internationally.

“Musicians being celebrities, honestly I feel if you have achieved well enough, you've done things worth celebrating. Yeah, you can be called a celebrity. If you've been able to achieve like, higher heights in society, you've won international awards, or even nominations or collaborations and order that is that is enough to call you a celebrity” (Participant 3, Entertainment analyst and journalist).

Participant three however cautioned that the term celebrity is being misused and “thrown about” because to attain the status of a celebrity, the individual should have achieved something that makes them worthy of being celebrated. This has led to the reference given to all artistes as celebrities. Musicians like Jay-Z, Beyonce, Michael Jackson and on the Ghanaian front, Daddy Lumba, Amakye Dede, Kojo Antwi, Nana Acheampong, Sarkodie and Stoneboy in the perspective of the participant were well-deserving of being referred to as celebrities.

The reservations articulated above, was however expressed by participant one who indicated that not all musicians in the entertainment industry are celebrities although they refer to themselves as such.

“I don't think all musicians are celebrities. There are some who are doing the music just for doing sake, they are not doing it as a career. So, such people it's very hard to label them as celebrities, because what is the impact that they are having on the people? What are they being celebrated for?” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

4.2 Understanding the Various Ways in Which Musicians Use Social Media to Build Their Personal Brands in Ghana.

One of the main objectives of the study was to understand how the musicians use social media to build their brands. The respondents provided an assessment of the brands of the musicians in the Ghanaian music industry. This is based on earlier assertions about musicians being referred to as celebrities based on diverse indicators such as following, media attention, recognition, etc. Some of the participants indicated that, the brands of the musicians in the entertainment industry required a lot of work and improvement, with others asserting that the musicians are doing well with the management of their brands.

“...most of the musicians in Ghana have a lot of work to do on their brands. In as much as I agree that there has been an improvement, most of them still have some work to do” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

“I think the celebrities in Ghana marvelously doing very well. Even though our market here is not as big as Nigeria, you can see that the young ones are getting endorsement deals from close up, from other brands who want to associate themselves” (Participant 2, Artiste/Singer).

“I think that people are working hard on their brands these days because they are learning more and trying to understand what it means to have a solid brand positioning.” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

For participant five, while artistes like Sarkodie, Camidoh, Kwesi-Arthur, Becca and Shatta Wale has reputable brands in the music industry, it is cementing the importance of brands to young artistes. However, some participants raised concerns regarding how some brands were not being managed well enough. For Participant 3, although some of the music brands in Ghana’s music industry are not managing their brands in the most positive of ways, there is optimism regarding how the narrative can change.

“Various brands in the music industry don’t do much that makes them well celebrate. We tend to massage some issues because we can’t be washing out dirty linens in public but quite unfortunately there are so many things that they are doing, which is quite silly” (Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

“Basically, not every musician is a celebrity, there are people or artistes that have reached a celebrity level that are worldly known and celebrated for their good works. There are people in the industry that have gotten to that point where they can be called

a celebrity and I think celebrity is built, is built over time” (Participant 2, Artiste/Singer).

The participants discussed how social media can affect the brands of musicians in the music industry in Ghana. Scolere (2018) stated that the proliferation and pervasiveness of social media has resulted in discussions regarding its ability to affect the personal brands. The findings showed a general agreement among the participants with respect to the ability of social media to affect the brands of musicians. With a section of the participants indicating that social media has positive sides that should be leveraged on, it has the propensity to affect artistes negatively when not used well.

“...social media can have both positive and negative influence on your brand, depending on how or what you engage in, the kind of reaction you give to your followers” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

“Brands or musicians can be affected by social media you know sometimes too social media being good can also have its vice” (Participant 2, Artiste/Singer)

“Everybody’s brand can be affected by social media. One simple mistake on social media can bring you down. One simple good thing on social media can take you up. It has its advantages and disadvantages” (Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

“Yeah, social media can affect you man heavily imagine goofing on social media like everyone is going to be on you like everyone is going to bash you here and there and mainstream media is going to pick it up. News is going to be all over. So, your brand can be affected both positively and negatively on social media” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

Some explained that, in a country that is strict on religious and cultural values, social media posts have the tendency of affecting the perception of that brand using the events that featured a Ghanaian artiste who suffered from a naked publicity stunt gone wrong. He showed his private parts on stage which went viral on social media, and considering the cultural and religious context of Ghana, affected his brand greatly.

“Somebody like Wiser Greid goes out there to perform on stage and the video circulated on social media, especially on WhatsApp and till date Wiser Greid hasn't been able to recover from it, because he had a hit song which was the most sort after song in Ghana that got him a remix with Sarkodie, but right after doing that thing of showing his penis is on stage, he has not been able to recover from that blunder” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager)

The findings above are buttressed in the investigations by Hayne and Marshall (2018) who concluded that social media use by musicians can have both positive and negative consequences on their brands since in some cases, it helped solve a problem while in other extreme cases, it created new problems.

The participants assessed how musicians in the industry used social media as a way of evaluating whether social media was being used judiciously or otherwise. The sentiments raised in the discussions with the participants revealed that, social media was used as a tool in connecting with the fanbase and support base of the artistes. This confirms the findings of an earlier study by Haynes and Marshall (2018) who argued that there was optimism regarding the use of social media. They concluded that, social media played instrumental roles in the career of musicians through the facilitation of engagement with their audiences. This was epitomized in the following excerpts.

“I think now most of them are using it to touch base with their fans. Now, most musicians are always on social media, communicating, sharing stuff with their fans here and there because they easily touch base with them” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

“If you are an artiste, celebrity like whichever entertainment sector you are in, social media is important, you can't do away with it because as the new form of communication” (Participant 3, Entertainment analyst and Journalist).

“Social media has also given us an edge to reach out to our followers, people who are not in our jurisdiction. You know, I chat with people from Kenya to South Africa, America, Canada and all these places because of social media. I mean, the internet has no boundary” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

For another participant, his role as an artiste manager has been made easy through the use of social media which has enabled him spend less than he normally would in the promotion of the music of his artiste. Scolere (2018) justified this in an earlier study where it was concluded that social media helped them to promote their activities and portfolios as artistes and creatives.

“I think with me as an artist manager, social media has done a lot of good social media has one or the other, reduce the budget I would have used in promoting music the traditional media. Social media has made it a bit easier for me” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

“...people are learning to be able to use that to promote their songs and now we have songs blowing off” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

Participant three, who works as an entertainment analyst and journalist recounted instances where social media had been a favorable tool in the arsenal of the artiste. He explained that social media enables artistes to be on their toes through the incorporation of the views expressed by their supporters regarding projects or other necessary information that they

circulate on their social media platforms. But for participant 1, some artistes have gotten their use of social media right and as a result, are reaping the benefits.

“I’ll go back to Shatta Wale, he has used as his social media wisely, he has grabbed the numbers. Now most events houses, companies when they want people to do activation, Shatta is the first person they want to look at, they will look at Sarkodie, they will look at Stonebwoy” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

The use of social media by the Ghanaian musicians on the other hand has had some unfavorable implications on their brands, aside the afore discussed favorable ways in which it has been used. Some participants made references to instances when celebrities nakedness on stage were popular on social media and this affected their brands negatively.

“For example, when this this celebrity got naked on social media, people saw that picture on social media and mainstream media took it took it up. You might end up losing deals and stuff like that because the companies you work with might not love to have such controversies surrounding someone that they work with” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

Social media, based on its anonymity and pervasiveness also serves as a disadvantage to the artiste because it is a medium through which the artistes are attacked and insulted, and this goes a long way to affect the brands of the artistes.

“It’s been a disadvantage to their career because they easily get attacked, most of these celebrities they get attack, it could be from fans, from the opposing musicians you know of course there are people who do not like you so they will always come at you” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

“One the first disadvantage is the bad things that goes around, like posting insults, attacking people, being rude, trying to like create all these confusions and all that”
(Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist)

Some indicated that, some utterances from artistes themselves on social media have ended up in consequences that have significantly affected their brands.

“Shatta Wale has an incident, and he is in jail for now because of what they shared on social media. Same way as Medikal, a gun was brandished online, and he’s suffering for it. So, social media, like I said, is a positive tool but it can also be negative too”
(Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

“The simplest example I can give is Shatta Wale's outburst against Charterhouse the insults. It was that bad, and it was literally all over his social media and that is how bad social media can be” (Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

In their capacities as artiste managers or artistes themselves, the participants shared ways in which they have used social media to either develop their brand or maintain them. Some of the artiste managers indicated that, their activities are now dependent on social media.

“I think one kind of person who lives on social media. I have been able to develop brands that I've worked with like Camidoh, Keches and all these guys through social media” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager)

One of the artiste managers explained that social media was used to promote the release of his artiste’s song titled “Madina”, and this was done through some challenges that were done on social media to reward fans that had the most engaging dance videos and this improved the artiste’s visibility and popularity.

“Okay, so let me use Teflon flex, so when we released Banger, Madina, social media was our main drive, we use the bloggers to, push the song. And then we did a dance challenge of which we rewarded the winner of 1000 Ghana cedis. All the videos that came, we asked them to post them on Instagram and tag us, tag the artiste and tag management as well. The response was massive” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

For another artiste manager, social media was used in protracting the image of the artiste through sharing pictures and engaging with the fanbase.

“We use social media to put out pictures like photo shoots, you know, you put out, like saw some, some engagements you have at events and stuff and all of those things” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

With reference to how artistes are using social media to manage and develop their brands, Participant two, an artiste and a singer admitted her failure to effectively tap into the prospects of social media in her career, but does not however underestimate the power of social media and what it can do for the brands of musicians.

“I myself I think I've not capitalized social media enough in this and this is something that I like I talk about every time I go to my label meetings. I'm hoping that we could use social media to affect how my music is perceived in the market” (Participant 2, Artiste/Singer)

The various perspectives and insights shared by the artistes and the managers cements the idea that, there are varied opportunities that is created for musicians through the internet as advanced by Haynes and Marshall (2018). Social media, is no doubt an essential tool in the arsenal of musicians and their management. The analysis by Haynes and Marshall (2018) is a replication of the various perspectives shared by the participants, looking at the various gains they have made in their use of social media and their recognition of their inability to.

For Participant one, the use of social media to advance a dance challenge as a way of promoting the songs of his artiste worked well and raked in over 500 entries and helped his artiste win the Vodafone Unsung Category of the Ghana Music Awards last year.

4.3 Importance of Social Media in the Personal Brands of Musicians in the Entertainment Industry.

The final part of the study discussed the various ways in which social media has been or is important to the building of the personal brands of the musicians in the Ghanaian music industry. The findings of the study show that, the participants, including artistes, artiste managers and entertainment journalists were fully abreast of the centrality of social media to the development of brands in the music industry. Participant one indicated that social media was an effective and efficient way through which artistes can communicate with their fans and plays a pivotal role in the music that they churn out. However, the following on social media platforms helps the management of the artiste to secure ambassadorial deals since in comparison to traditional media, the latter has become obsolete.

“Companies will need the numbers on social media to be able to secure these positions as brand ambassadors. So, they need social media. Now, they do not have to go to traditional media all the time to speak to the people, they can just put up a tweet, put up a post on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, whichever way they think and communicate with their fans” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

Other participants such as the entertainment analyst explained that, social media puts artistes on their toes while complementing marketing strategies using traditional media.

“We have the radio, we have TV, the blogs and all that you can't do away with social media. It is a form or a tool of communication” (Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist)

Participant four, another artiste manager asserts that, social media enables artiste and management to have access to people, an advantage that was once a difficulty to artiste management. Its proliferated use gives the artistes a wider reach. Participant five establishes that social media gives artistes an edge over traditional media based on the ability of people to network on social media.

“So yeah, it's a platform where a lot of people have accounts on, and so if you put something out there, like for instance, Instagram, you know you're reaching about 100,000 people within a particular timeframe” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

“Just like the traditional media was doing and are still doing social media gives us the edge to get closer to the past, you know, so you can actually have an interaction with your fans by you know, texting them, video chatting them, responding to their comments on your pages.” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

“I've been able to promote my artistes or share them on these platforms, in order to reach a higher in a larger audience. I've been able to reach out to these people, with the music that I sell with the music brand that I'm building which is Camidoh. We get comments from Europe, America and of course, Africa, Asia” (Participant 5, Artiste Manager).

The artistes also emphasized how important social media is to their careers. The views expressed indicated that, social media served the purpose of communication and promotion.

“Social media helps the artiste to connect with their fans, promotion and business.” (Participant 6, Artiste).

These findings are true since they are collaborated by the findings of earlier studies like Haynes and Marshall (2018), Scolere (2019) and a few others. However, the importance and instrumentality of social media in the brand of artiste has been criticized due to thee lack of

means to effectively measure the tangible effects that social media has had on the career of the artistes as well as their brands. But the attestation of the managers and the artiste to the significance of social media is not surprising since the assessment of Baym (2012) produced similar results. The relationships built with the artiste on social media are along the lines of fandom and have emotional rewards to the musician (Baym, 2012).

Earlier studies have suggested various challenges regarding the use of social media such as the inability for management and artistes to do proper market research based on the deficiency in knowledge regarding these methods and these frustrations can be brought to bear on their appropriation of social media (Zakarda, 2012). While other studies like Shepherd's 2005 analysis have identified the challenge being the difficulty in the application of marketing principles on human brands, the findings of this study highlight how a lack of internet stability affected their brands although the impact was not that substantial.

“Maybe stable network because there are times you have to upload videos and it takes a long time depending on the network provider you use, it delays. Sometimes you want the thing to go as quick as possible but it takes time before it uploads” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

Trolls were also indicated as one of the biggest challenges that artistes and managers faced in their use of social media.

“So, with social media the biggest challenge I've had is trolls, people who create fake accounts to insult, people who come to bully. Celebrities are humans, they feel whatever that is going on, you try to like tell them to avoid a post and all that but it breaks them down.” (Participant 3, Entertainment Analyst and Journalist).

The participants however recommended that among other things, artistes should have a team whose mandate is to manage the social media pages of the artistes. Ghodeswar (2008) indicated

that there should be consistency across all the social media platforms as this is critical to any brand-building effort. As such, there needs to be a team that ensures that the strong and unique traits of the artiste are adequately packaged and communicated (Shepherd, 2005).

“I will recommend creative people to manage the brands personal account so that the page will always be busy. There should be fans engagements on a page all the time” (Participant 1, Artiste Manager).

“Artists must have social media management personnel on their team originally like the artist manager. Usually handles, social media for the artist equals usually sometimes responding to certain things that be controversial has to be done in a very skilled way such that you're not harming anybody” (Participant 4, Artiste Manager).

4.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of the interviews done with the various artistes, artiste managers and the entertainment pundits. The results indicate that, social media is an important arsenal that is used to promote the brands of artistes in Ghana. Although there are mixed sentiments regarding musicians being celebrities with brands, the findings point to the realization that, artistes need to have a team whose responsibility is to manage their social media pages and interactions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is the final chapter of this dissertation that will be focused on the discussion of the summary of the study, conclusions, limitations and recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the study.

The study sought to assess the role of social media in personal branding in Ghana's entertainment industry. The first chapter introduced and set the tone for the study. It gave an overview of what the study is going to look like. It contained the background of the study which created the setting of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, and the research questions. The organization of the study as well as the significance of the study were also discussed.

The second chapter was dedicated to a review of literature of other research materials that are related to the topic and its objectives. This was done to help contextualize the study to fit into the arguments of other related studies. The chapter began by exploring and discussing the various theoretical underpinnings of the study. The theory used in the study was the Theory of Dramaturgy. The chapter then continued with a review of the concepts undergirding this study such as the concept of branding and personal branding. There was a review of related studies that were tailored towards understanding celebrities as human brands, the importance of social media to the brands of musicians and the challenges associated with the use of social media in the building of personal brands of artistes in Ghana.

The third chapter basically talked about the methodology used in the collection of data. It was established that due to the nature of the research, it would be appropriate to solicit the views

from artistes, managers and analysts in the Ghanaian music. For the intent and purposes of this study as articulated in the research objectives, the study gleaned towards the qualitative methodology since the nature of the study lends itself to a contextual and artiste-specific approach, hence the case study approach. Convenience sampling was used due to the difficulty in getting respondents and time constraints. A total of six participants were sampled for the semi-structured interviews. An interview protocol was developed using themes from the research objectives and interviews were done through scheduled zoom meetings and phone calls with the participants due to the unavailability of the participants for a physical meeting.

The fourth chapter reviewed the data collected and made meaning out of them. Since the methodology adopted was one of qualitative approaches, the researcher used non-statistical methods in the analysis and interpretation of data. However, thematic analysis was used in the analysis of the data where the responses were assessed in terms of how they answered the questions informed by the research objectives and questions. The findings were then discussed in tune with the three broad research objectives that formed the basis for this study as well as relevant literature used in the second chapter of the study.

The fifth chapter, focuses on the summary of the study, the main conclusions as well as limitations of the study.

5.2 Conclusions of the study.

This analysis and discussions captured the objectives and also helped answer the questions proposed in the chapter one of the study by analyzing the data and making meaning out of it.

5.2.1 Meanings Attributed to Personal Branding in the Ghanaian Music Industry.

The findings of the study showed that the individuals that were sampled for the study had a firm understanding of the concept of branding and personal branding respectively. The two concepts were explained subjectively but one common denominator in all the definitions given

was the fact that brands help to distinguish and differentiate between entities and products. Personal branding was also seen as representational as the descriptions given by the various stakeholders implied how entities or individuals want to be remembered by their followers and audiences. Personal branding, according to stakeholders are the perception that people have about individual brands and how differently an individual is known to operate within a particular jurisdiction. The stakeholders believed that, although celebrities are generally regarded as having personal brands based on their value proposition, some maintained that musicians can be conceptualized as celebrities and for that matter, people with brands. There was skepticism regarding how often the reference of musicians as celebrities as the stakeholders regarded musicians who have chalked success or done things worthy of being celebrated as celebrities. A section of the participants argued that musicians offer value, they are popular and they have high media exposure making the brands. This is also because, some of the musicians are serving as brand ambassadors due to their huge following.

5.2.3 The Various Ways in Which Musicians in the Music Industry Use Social Media to Build their Brands.

The assessment of the various brands in the music industry revealed that, although a score of artistes are able to manage their brands very well, there are a few issues that are bedeviling the management of the brands of others. One of the central issues in brand management that came up in the study was social media. Social media was seen as a double-edged sword that can be a blessing to the careers and brands of the musicians or a curse. This is because, the use of social media has become proliferated and pervasiveness, and this can help artistes by expanding their reach and making access to their supporters and fanbase easier resulting in the formation of friendships and relationships that increases their visibility and popularity. The negative tangent was also explored, and the tendency for social media to impact on the career and brand of an artiste negatively is dependent on how viral their inactions can go based on the ubiquity

of social media. Instances where social media dealt drastic blows to the careers of some artistes like Wisa Greid's nude stage stunt, where little or no recovery has been made. The study also revealed that, some musicians are using social media well enough and are benefitting from the advantages. Some artiste used social media to connect more with their fans, while others use social media to help in the promotion of their music. However, although these uses of social media are favorable to the career and brand of the artiste, there are some conscious and unconscious unfavorable impacts of social media. Trolls, attacks and inability to effectively use social media platforms were dominant among the responses.

5.2.3 The Importance of Social Media in the Personal Brands of Ghanaian Musicians.

The importance of social media to the development and the management of the personal brands of artistes in the Ghanaian music industry was highlighted by the stakeholders that participated in the study. The following that, musicians are able to generate on social media based on their ability to foster and create relationships and friendships with their fans has prospects of earning them ambassadorial deals. For some artistes, the use of social media was very instrumental in their success and the subsequent winning of awards based on the buzz they were able to create. The importance of social media was also seen in its ability to compliment existing communication strategies and its ability to save cost, an upper hand over the use of traditional media to connect with the fans, share and promote their old and new projects. Some star within the music industry has risen to the spotlight due to the proliferation of social media. However, some contextual challenges more often than not obstructed the ability of artiste within the Ghanaian entertainment industry to offset the negative impacts of social media. Some of these factors were outside the control of the artistes such as trolls and negative comments. Those within the control of the artistes include their ability to connect and engage with their followers. That notwithstanding, it was proposed that artiste have a part of their management personnel dedicated to the management of their social media platforms.

5.3 Practical Suggestions of the Study.

The findings of the study necessitate the recommendations of some suggestions that will help artistes maximize the gains in their use of social media in the development of their careers and personal brands.

- i. Artistes should be wary of their articulations on social media, since the findings of the study provided testimony to instances where the wrong utterances have affected the brands of the artistes.
- ii. Management of artistes should now be more critical than ever of the actions and inactions of their artistes on or off social media due to its ability to spread information at a faster rate.
- iii. There should be investment into well-equipped and knowledgeable personnel who will be able to manage the social media profiles of artistes so as to ensure increased engagement and interactions with their fanbase.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study suffered from the following limitations.

- i. Time constraints resulted in the use of a smaller sample size. The researcher made do with the music industry stakeholders that were available at the time of the study due to deadline pressures.
- ii. The scope of the study was limited based on the non-generalizability of the findings. The smaller sample used limits the researcher from making generalizations on the role that social media plays in the personal brands of artistes in Ghana's music industry.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Studies

This study serves as a reference material for subsequent inquiries. Future studies that seek to assess the role that social media plays in the personal brands of the musicians in the Ghanaian music industry should take note of the following recommendations.

- i. There should be surveys to understand the public's perception of the role of social media in the development of the brands of musicians in Ghana. These studies can be tailored to assess how the public perceives of the ways in which some popular musicians in the music industry use social media to build their brands in terms of the gains and the setbacks.
- ii. Prospective studies should consider doing a content analysis to assess the way in which the various artistes in Ghana's music industry manage their social media. This will provide a more empirical insight into how they use social media to propagate their brands.

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