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Social Media Storytelling as a Marketing Tool for Personal Branding: Empowering Human Brands and Addressing Ethical Concerns

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INTRODUCTION

I. Background & Context

Social media has become a great part of our lives. Everyone is spending more time on their accounts each day, checking on others' lives; whether family, friends, or even strangers, besides posting an enhanced version of their events and life episodes. And we have seen that companies have taken advantage of this. They have used social media as a cheap means of communicating and promoting their products to vast amounts of people.

At first, it worked very well for them. However, tendencies in social media have changed. Recently, in markets such as the English and the Spanish, the arousal of entrepreneurs promoting themselves has begun on different platforms: not just advertising their services, but their know-how as well. They have been sharing their experiences online and advising those interested in being their own bosses and living out of their know-how, just like these influencers are doing. And it has revolutionized the online universe since everyone can achieve such conditions. Consumers have lost interest in what messages enterprises spread and have started to pay more attention to what personal brands have to say.

As a Marketing student, it has fascinated me the different achievements this trend has encountered. First, it has released the impact personal brands can have on consumer behaviour. Second, it has spread the belief that anyone can develop a human brand and be inspirational to such an amount of people. Third, regarding consumer behaviour, how users are capable of paying such high prices, because of their deep connection with the brands. Fourth, the importance of telling stories to captivate people: it is not about the story itself. It goes beyond what you tell. It is also about how you tell stories, and when these are told. Lastly, there have been some cases in which ethical concerns might have arisen. Up to which points are ethical values, such as authenticity, transparency, or privacy, necessary to have a successful personal brand? Will the audience ever notice about them?

Thus, it would be interesting to study how this shift from companies to personal brands, from a Marketing perspective, is affecting social media and its users. It would be a great opportunity to understand the environment we are surrounded by, and the future that awaits us. Moreover, it brings the perfect chance for a Marketing student to apply all the knowledge acquired throughout their degree.

II. Objectives of the Investigation

The main objective of this study is to give further understanding as to why Storytelling has become so effective on social media recently; to explain the impact personal branding has on users, and to visualize how ethical these practices are considered.

A quantitative research design method has been implemented to give answers to the following hypotheses formulated:

H1: Personal branding Storytelling does not have benefits just for the human brand owner, but for the audience as well.

H2: Ethical values, such as authenticity, transparency, and privacy, are not considered key factors to success as a personal brand.

H3: Users are not aware of the influence of Storytelling used on personal branding on their purchasing behaviour.

III. Research Justification

Although personal reasons have been expressed already, there are academic reasons that need to be mentioned.

This paper will contribute to Marketing researchers' heightened awareness of the usage of personal branding as a marketing tool to increase revenues and the potential effects Storytelling can have on users and brand owners.

Some of the consequences of Storytelling have been the following:

1. Emotional connection: As personal, sometimes private, topics are spoken through Storytelling and personal brands, the audience creates a strong bond with the brand, that helps them start pursuing their goals.
2. Memorability: Stories are better stored than arguments, making it a great advantage for personal brands to help their audience recall their message.
3. Engagement: Storytelling captivates people and retains their attention span much longer, which involves users more.
4. Long-run impact: Stories influence more positively on followers' lives, helping them significantly on their personal development journeys.

Storytelling can be very helpful and can increase the overall well-being of the audience and of those behind a human brand. However, it is perceived as a malicious, traitorous tool used to increase sales, neglecting customers' emotions and values.

This paper is made to unravel the truth behind the universal perception and inform of the importance it has to establish relationships with customers. Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is to explain why a communication tool, such as Storytelling, and the marketing strategy of personal branding, will be the best marketing strategies used on social media in the future.

IV. Architecture of the Paper

This paper is composed of five different parts, all necessary to get a deep understanding of the subject to be studied, the analysis, and the conclusions of the research.

These five parts are the following:

First, the introduction of the paper, where the project is presented, along with the reasons that have moved the researcher, the objectives, and the hypotheses formulated.

Second, the theoretical framework is essential to provide background knowledge about Storytelling, personal branding, and its usage on social media.

Third, an explanation of the methodology used to carry out this research, and a deeper analysis of the survey technique.

Fourth, related to the analysis of the data gathered, and the findings of the investigation.

Lastly, the fifth part gives the conclusions taken from this research, as well as limitations and recommendations for future investigations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I. Storytelling

1. Understanding the concept of Storytelling

As new as the concept of “Storytelling” might sound, it is one of the oldest practices adopted by humankind. We have always used this technique to interact, as well as to engage and connect with others. In other words, Storytelling has become an essential part of the human bonding experience.

This technique has not only been used for interacting with potential clients, but it has also been widely spread throughout the enterprise. Besides the marketing department, it can also be found in human resources or the finance department (Kemp et al., 2023). Employers at human resources use stories to communicate company values and recruit talented employees. Finance workers use data-driven Storytelling to present results, or new strategies (Kemp et al., 2023, p. 318). It has become a powerful tool for brands to connect with their customers and workforce. But why is Storytelling so appealing to everybody?

Storytelling “is a way people have found to influence others’ behaviour and thinking” (Korzch & Estima, 2022, p. 5). To understand how, it is important to have an idea in mind of what Storytelling is, although conceptual and operational definitions are diverse and fragmented (Walls, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2013), failing to structure a universal clarification and, therefore, leading to a common misunderstanding. If the company is looking for ways to explore and develop the brand story (Delgado-Ballester & Fernández-Sabiote, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2016), create or analyse the intrinsic characteristics belonging to the story (Sanders & Van Krieken, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2018), or communication techniques (Chiu et al., quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2012), then Storytelling is the perfect solution.

According to Westby & Culatta, quoted by Korzch & Estima, 2016, Storytelling “is the act of telling a story, in some type of chronological order, of fictional or real events”. Mancuso & Stuth, quoted by Coker et al., 2014, suggest that “entails “conveying messages and sharing accumulated knowledge and wisdom to help navigate and explain the world around us”. This means that, through stories, our brains can easily understand experiences, as well as the know-how we acquire throughout our lives. Stories help us have an overview of the process and the events that have happened, and, therefore, construct a logical meaning of them in our minds. Human beings need clarity, whether of the conversations they recently had, the stream of events they have lived, or the outcomes of the choices they have made (Woodside et al., 2008). And Storytelling is there to bring us just that.

But it is not just that comprehension of experiences that Storytelling seeks. At least not in a unidirectional way. Through Storytelling, a shared understanding is built, in addition to an empowered team (of storytellers), and serves as a bridge for effectively creating content (McDougal et al., 2021; Nicoli et al., 2022, quoted from Kemp et al., 2023)

Storytelling goes far beyond telling stories. They can reach so deeply that they can, consciously or unconsciously, arouse emotions in the audience (McGaugh, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2003). Stories are deeply intertwined with our feelings. According to

Korzch & Estima, 2022, they are “our own way of expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas”. They can easily provoke melancholy if the story reminds of a childhood memory; pride, if it speaks about a professional accomplishment; or even arise the sparks that the first love brought you if speaking about passionate love. Stories connect with those memories of the past and give them life, due to the relationship the spectators find between the story being told, and their retrospections. It is easier for Storytelling to impact affective memory because information is stored in an episodic manner rather than an argumentative manner (Woodside et al., 2008).

Like every powerful tool, capable of making us understand the world we live in, influencing us, and even linking the meaning of data science and strategic persuasion (Boldosova, 2020, Dykes, 2015, quoted by Kemp et al., 2023), the appropriate use of Storytelling is a life-changing factor. We already know that, to ensure a good narrative structure, according to Rosen, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2000) every story needs to have an exposure, a rising action, a climax, a falling, and a stripping. In other words, every story needs an introduction of the elements that belong to the story, a confrontation arising, where it hits its highest peak, a resolution of the conflict, and, eventually, things falling into place again. Even though time in real life is a constant, continuous flow, time in stories must have an organized structure (Bruner, 1990, Escalas 1998, quoted by Woodside et al., 2008), to be understood correctly. Moreover, narratives need a set of elements, such as scenes, characters, acts, and talk, to give the audience the sense of a coherent arrangement, where all elements have their relationships established (Delgadillo & Escalas, quoted by Woodside, 2004). Besides the basic structure elements, for the story to impact the user’s minds, it must be specific, and credible, so that the consumer relates to the narrative, have a connection with social or cultural norms, and, most of all, be unique, be different (Morgan & Dennehy, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 1997).

2. Analyzing the importance of Storytelling

There is no doubt that Storytelling can impact our decisions, as we get to associate those stories with experiences from our past and, therefore, develop a strong, emotional bond with the storyteller. When the audience relates to the story, there is an undeniable connection that links the brand with potential clients. Because of that, their perception suddenly lifts, making customers more prone to buying the company’s products. As Korzch & Estima stated (2022), “We do not buy the products, we buy the emotions and the sensations that their stories make us believe in”.

Not only does Storytelling build relationships, but it also builds realities, even identities (Lund et al., quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2018). The feeling of connection is so strong that customers adopt the brand’s values and make them their own, they become part of their identity. Anker et al., quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2015, described that those stories with an engaging narrative could reorient the brain, making it possible for them to retain full attention to the story, and, therefore, feel that “transporting into the narrative” phenomenon. By achieving full attention, the audience will, more likely, resonate with the narrative and feel identified with the story. (De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2022).

It is quite fascinating how can the brain be tricked and persuaded to buy something from the feeling of belonging. This influence comes from the way our brains are built and work. As previously stated, our brains work in episodic memory rather than in argumentative memory, having stories a higher impact on our minds. However, this is not the only reason why narratives

resonate with us. Stories impact on narrative terms, rather than argumentative, not only for his nature, but because of the association our minds make between narrative stories and self-knowing consciousness (Tulving, quoted by Woodside et al., 1985). This confirms that a self-identification process is being made in our minds and, therefore, makes relatable narratives a stronger drive to act according to the brand, to the story being told. Because of this identity formation, as De Oliveira Júnior et al. confirmed (2022), “some purchases are not just a manifestation of a consumer’s self-image; they are an integral part of self-identity”

Viewers can also feel identified with the story a brand tells because of the characters involved in it, especially the protagonist. Through Storytelling, the audience does not play exclusively the role of listener, but of the main character as well (Megehee & Woodside, quoted by Coker et al., 2017). In these narratives, “the protagonist has the function of highlighting the similarities between the company and the consumer” (De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2022, p. 251). Therefore, it is crucial for the customer to feel like the story is about him, like the protagonist's problems are the audience’s struggles. In other words, “It is important for the reader to feel like a hero” (Korzch & Estima, 2022, p.10)

The relationship the readers establish with the main character, besides the story, pulls an emotional bond with the brand and, therefore, triggers customers to act positively towards the brand values (Escalas, Woodside et al.; quoted by Kemp et al.; 2004, 2008).

We can say, thus, that Storytelling is not just important for the storyteller itself. The storylistener plays a huge role in the process, as it co-creates value with the storyteller (La Rocca, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2015). Brands can express their beliefs through narratives, but it would make no sense to do so, unless there is someone on the other side, receiving that information, identifying themselves with it and, consequently, cooperating in the value-creation process of the company.

Storytelling helps build a deeper connection between the company and their audience (Whitler, quoted by Korzch & Estima, 2018), as well as create a stronger affective response towards customers (Coker et al., 2017). Despite not being aware of it, Storytelling is everywhere we go. Not just in marketing, not even in enterprises, but in our everyday lives. Storytelling belongs to society’s DNA, since “the sharing of personal events is a major component of all social interactions, and thus relates to the ability to function in natural contexts” (Schank, quoted by Korzch & Estima, 1995).

So, using this technique to promote the brand’s values is a very wise decision. However, we must take precautions. As an intrinsic part of our nature, people do differentiate a good story from a bad one and thus do not provoke an emotional response, in case of being a bad one (De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2022). So, when making stories, make sure your story comes from an emotional point of view, not from a selling one.

II. Personal Branding

1. Investigation of Personal Branding

It is known that first impressions are always the ones that impact most others, when we first meet them. And, therefore, people have been told have an appealing style, as well as good manners, to make that impression beneficial for your personal or professional life. All those

efforts would be part of the personal branding each of us develop, on everyday basis, to get the opportunities we want, for instance. Though the concept of “personal branding” is now very popular, due to social media activity, it has always been present in our society.

We could define personal branding as “the entire process of establishing, maintaining and developing an individual’s human brand” (Scheidt et al., 2020, p. 4), being a human brand “an intangible asset linked to a person, which generates economic and social value through its visibility as a result of a personal branding process” (Scheidt et al., 2020, p. 4-5). As we can see, personal branding and a human brand are quite linked to one another. Personal branding affects the human brand, but there are no human brands without personal branding. This is why people tend to use one concept or another indistinctively, although they are different. To distinguish them and clarify them, we could say that personal branding is the process of marketing ourselves (Scheidt et al., 2020) and human brands are the result of those self-marketing efforts.

Personal branding used to be for professional purposes, but, since the increased usage of social media, younger generations have used this technique to get their dream job position (Jacobson, 2020), among other reasons. According to Gander, quoted by Korzch & Estima, 2014, “A personal brand will let people know what you offer above what your CV says”. It tells employers what differentiates one candidate from the rest. As Korzch & Estima quoted (2022, p. 7), “personal branding is similar to professional branding”, so it is a key factor to consider when meeting new people, or applying for a new job, for instance.

Self-marketing does not focus on satisfying the market’s needs (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018), but rather shows the market the value that might be getting if acquiring the self-marketer. To clarify, personal branding does not adapt to the market, but the market adapts to what the human brand has to offer. There are a great number of characteristics a personal brand can offer. From basic information, such as your name, biography, experience, knowledge, and more, to more complex information, some of them difficult to explain verbally, such as personality, lifestyle, strengths, weaknesses, passions, beliefs, and communication styles, among others (Korzch & Estima, 2022). Personal branding involves every single aspect that can be considered to develop the self-image desired. It is a mix of reputation, trust, attention, and execution (Korzch & Estima, 2022, p. 3)

To have a successful personal branding strategy, some features must be covered, including authenticity, consistency, charisma, purpose, strong personality, creativity, and distinctive (Korzch & Estima, 2022). With these characteristics, it is almost inevitable that not only will the brand be seen, but as well stand out, develop a deeper connection with the audience, and form a loyal community around it.

2. Exploring the importance of human branding

Personal branding will help us, no matter in what stage of our lives, build and design the image we want to share with the world, and how are we interested in being perceived. To get the most out of self-marketing, it is important to have a clear vision in our minds of what message we want to convey. Thus, introspection, as well as a sense of purpose are essential (Shepherd, Gander; quoted by Korzch & Estima; 2005, 2014). These two principles will enable the self-marketer to build a solid, coherent, and trustworthy personal brand (Korzch & Estima, 2022). But that is not enough. There is a small part of the branding process that does not depend on oneself, but on the people who are reached out to. Whether those are your current colleagues or future coworkers, even if you don’t know who will come across your personal brand, it is important to be aware of what can be considered as an advantage, or as a differentiating skill or personality trait, that can be beneficial for you. We should never forget that a human brand

exists because there is someone, on the other side, consuming it, and enjoying the brand content. As Korzch & Estima mentioned (2022), “It is necessary to see and to be seen. But, more important than that, it is necessary to listen”.

When a strong, consistent human brand is formed, it will become, almost, a natural process to attract a great audience. Personal branding can work as an “attention-getting device” (Shepherd, quoted by Jacobson, 2005) perfect for those seeking a specific job position or any other professional goals, as it will help them position in the market and, therefore, gain a competitive advantage. As Korzch & Estima stated, 2022, “We make sure the other person comes to us, and not the other way around. That is why personal branding is so important”. We could say that human branding helps with self-presentation, which can be considered, nowadays, as the internet’s word of mouth (Pasternak et al., quoted by Jacobson, 2017). Thus, it is important to take care about what characteristics are we bringing to the personal brand, and who might be consuming our content. When building the personal branding strategy, it is important to choose the ideal self-presentation techniques, to present ourselves positively (Rosenberg & Egbert, quoted by Jacobson, 2011).

Personal branding, according to Gehl, quoted by Johnson, 2011, can increase the social capital of those who implement it correctly. Social capital can be defined as the network of relationships and influence an individual builds to enhance their reputation, opportunities, and credibility, achieved through meaningful engagement and contribution to their community. Therefore, through personal branding, it is easier to increase human connection and establish professional or personal relationships that can be helpful in the future, as cooperation might emerge from that interaction.

According to Scheidt et al., 2020, there are a few theories that can be related to a human brand:

2.1 Attachment theory

Attachments can be created or developed through personal branding between the brand and the customers. These attachments can become strong marketing relationships and, therefore, cause a positive and effective response in consumers when exposed to their products. In other words, as a consequence of the bond created between the brand and the user, the customer’s willingness to buy more expensive, or rare products, is higher.

There are several ways to create this attachment, but these would be the principal ones:

2. Consistency
3. Appeal
4. Focus
5. Longevity

2.2 Self-determination theory

This theory reflects on what inner motivations drive us to do certain things, such as developing a personal brand, for instance. As stated previously, only those brands that are considered authentic will connect with the audience and, therefore, provoke them to change the way consumers feel, think, and act. Authenticity can be achieved through autonomic, relatable, and competent behaviour. In other words, only intrinsic behaviour, that can be relatable in any aspect, and comes within oneself, can be considered authentic.

2.3 Attribution theory

Associating an action’s causes with their consequences is essential for human psychology. And it builds one of the bases of personal branding.

There are two values, related to this theory, that can awaken this craving of bonding with the personal brand:

1. **Rarity:**
When a personal brand shows behaviours that are not common, that involve some risks, or sacrifices, those are more likely to be related to the self-marketer, rather than to external causes. This attribute is also linked to the idea of the difficultness of expressing oneself, in a truthfully, with all sorts of risks involved, sometimes.
2. **Stability:**
Stability is perceived when a personal brand shows a certain behaviour that perdures over long periods of time.

It is interesting to see how younger people connect more with rarity, when exposed to a human brand, than older people, who would rather connect with stability.

2.3 Social-identity theory

Personal branding does not only help with those who implement it, but also with those who decide to follow that brand, shaping an identity around their values. Consumers, by associating with certain human brands, position themselves in a certain social status, improving, sometimes, their self-esteem.

Customers, by following certain personal brands, can differentiate them as well from their surroundings, making them, perhaps, more interesting and, thus, giving them a sense of satisfaction.

2.4 Cue-utilization theory

The cue-utilization theory suggests how people use pieces of information (also called cues) to make a decision. According to Olson; Richardson et al., quoted by Scheidt et al., 1977; 1994, some of these cues are more predictive and have higher confidence values than others. The higher the value, the more reliable will it become in terms of assessing quality.

2.5 Structuration theory

An important factor, when it comes to the human brand strategy, is the circumstances the self-marketer is involved in. The character that is being created is affected by the social structures to which they belong. The same brand will hit different 50 years later, due to all the changes that will be made in society. Despite being a brake for the development of the personal brand, the marketer of the brand is not subjected to it and can go against the social structures.

Everyone wants to showcase a good image of themselves to the world. By giving the audience a good perception of ourselves, we can get opportunities that, otherwise, we would not be able to, like getting the job position desired, for instance. Therefore, personal branding is something we all have within us, but only a small percentage invest in improving it (Korzch & Estima, 2022). It is up to us whether we work in developing a personal brand and use it for our benefit, or let people shape how we are perceived.

III. Social-media Storytelling for Personal Branding

1. Storytelling for Personal Branding

In 2024, users spend on average 143 minutes per day on social media. After adding all the time spent by all users throughout the year, we would get more than 260 trillion minutes,

or, in other words, 500 million years (Kemp, 2024). That is an insane amount of time. But, if we use it wisely, we can get our personal brand to become quite successful. That is why an effective strategy is essential for those self-marketers that want to go a step further.

One of the main strategies used for improving personal branding is applying Storytelling tools. Indeed, personal branding and Storytelling almost come hand in hand. Without a story, consumers cannot relate to brands and, therefore, cannot establish an emotional connection. To be more precise, there is no brand without a story (Korzch & Estima, 2022).

As Santos mentioned, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2022, stories unify customers and clients as co-protagonists in the process of buying a particular product. Furthermore, consumption plays a huge role in our society and culture, as it helps satisfying society's customs and traditions. That is why Storytelling plays such a great part in influencing consumers, consumption goes beyond economic reasons (De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2022).

Storytelling and personal branding have always been part of our cultural bases. However, since the emergence of social media, and its incorporation into our everyday lives, these practices have increased exponentially, as social media is a relatively cheap and efficient way to attract new consumers and, therefore, make it attractive for self-marketers to promote themselves (Karaduman, quoted by Korzch & Estima, 2013). According to Scheidt et al., 2020, "Social media allows all individuals to create their own unique virtual spaces and to reach broader audiences irrespective of time or place". On the contrary, there is a physical and a temporal limitation in real life. Therefore, with social media, a personal brand can promote itself even when asleep, and reach users interested in them on the other side of the world. The possibilities are endless. So, when considering a personal brand, we must consider social media as essential for the visibility aspect of the strategy (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018).

With its ideological and technological structure, social media is not great just for visibility. It is also important to develop stronger bonds (Chen, quoted by Scheidt et al., 2013). Thus, what better place to implement Storytelling for your brand than social media? By sharing the real identity of the human brand, Storytelling promotes one's uniqueness. Still, perhaps the place is not an adequate one (Pera et al., quoted by Korzch & Estima, 2016), as the desired audience may be lacking. However, if the brand's story is promoted through social media, it will connect with the real self of the consumers we want, as there is no limit of any sort. Moreover, people tend to be more influenced on social media, by what the brand is consolidated by, and by the story behind the human brand, than in real life (Belk, quoted by Scheidt et al., 2013). This makes social media platforms the perfect means of creating stronger relationships with the target audience.

Nonetheless, there is something that has been a subject of research throughout the years. Why do some personal brands connect deeper with consumers than others, even if they all show their identities through social media? This is because, those who connect less with the emotional cognitive part, tend to divide their online identity from the offline identity. Personal branding is successful only when online and offline identities merge since, if they remain divided, can make customers feel as not realistic as if the human brand is fake. As Elwell, quoted by Scheidt et al., once said (2014) "Online and offline identities are not functionally equivalent to one another such that one is interchangeable for the other. Rather, together they cocreate the experience of identity in space between the digital and the analog". Thus, it is impossible to separate the online side of your life and the offline side. They coexist.

As we all know, personal branding is crucial for social media footprints. However, there are some disadvantages to using social media as the main Storytelling channel for developing a human brand. On one hand, there is a great amount of information and available on social media, the so-called information exchange system (Jacobson, 2020), that can be seen by anyone

who finds it. This might cause some trouble for consumers, as they are exposed to unreal or mistrustful information and, thus, cause a sense of doubt and confusion about believing in the brand (Labrecque & Milne, quoted by Korzch & Estima, 2011). On the other hand, self-marketers must be aware of what they post on their social media platforms, as they are being watched all the time. 60% of employers often use social media to research on the future employees of their company (Grasz, quoted by Johnson, 2017), meaning that posting something inappropriate could bring a bad reputation of them, and can prevent them from getting the opportunities desired.

2. The difference of Storytelling strategies throughout social media platforms

It is very easy to judge and make assumptions about other's lives through social media platforms. When a picture, or any sort of post, is uploaded online, it is not up to the owner to create an identity to the rest of the users, but, rather, the idea that others conceived throughout the post, shapes the identity of the responsible of the post. In other words, our identities are developed through the interactions among users (Jacobson, 2020). That is why personal branding is such a useful tool for all users, as it helps in "taking control of the impressions one is making in the virtual world" (Schau & Gilly, quoted by Johnson, 2003).

For that reason, we must consider what is posted and where it is posted. Nowadays, with all the pressure of fitting into the desired social status or getting the professional opportunity of their dreams, users can no longer afford to post their lifestyles and personalities on social media (Johnson, 2017). They cannot post their entire content on their social media account. However, they can have multiple social media accounts, on different platforms, where they can upload what is most suitable for each platform, according to the type of content. A possible solution could be to keep a private account on Facebook, or even Pinterest, where users can upload private content, that can only be visible to their relatives (Johnson, 2017), keeping a good image for those who first come across the human brand.

In terms of what is posted, it is always a good idea to post audiovisual content, besides textual content, to give followers a better understanding of the personality and the behaviour the self-marketer reflects. Especially with video-format content, users can engage more, and create stronger emotional connections with the personal brand. As Pera, quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., said (2017), video Storytelling "favors the emotional dimension of consumer relationship experiences, transforming individual consumption experiences into collective ones". In addition, researchers have concluded that, when heavy users are exposed to Storytelling videos on social media, they react more favourably towards the brand, and the product itself, than those who are not as engaged on social media (Coker et al., 2017). This enables video Storytelling as one of the most powerful tools personal brandings can use, to get their potential followers' attention.

To come to an end, as social media users cannot separate offline and online identities, they could carefully separate different social aspects of their lives, such as the professional or the personal, and post it on different platforms, according to the type of content. Moreover, if there could be a secret tool to boost personal branding strategies, that would be video Storytelling. It is slowly becoming one of the main means of communication. According to Berthon et al., quoted by Coker et al., 2011, "if text was the medium of the analog era, video is the medium of the digital era". Therefore, why not use this wonderful tool and enjoy its benefits?

3. Benefits of using Storytelling for Personal Branding

When conducting a personal branding strategy, it is almost impossible not to think about Storytelling as part of that strategy. Narratives in the human brand give extra benefits that can make a difference. But not just for those behind the brand, but as well for the users that consume their content. Throughout the project, a few benefits have been mentioned about these practices. However, it is quite important to emphasize why are these such powerful tools.

3.1 Benefits for the brand

One of the most visible benefits of Storytelling for personal branding is the differentiation it gives to the brand. By adding the core beliefs of the human brand through a story, consumers are able to notice why is that brand special from others and can connect deeper with them than if there were no story. This relationship is what can really make people feel a sense of difference, of understanding between them and the personal brand.

Another benefit to consider is that, due to the differentiation with those from the same market, personal branding can help get more visibility and, thus, provide greater social capital (Scheidt et al., 2020). Social capital could be very useful for future opportunities, such as collaborations among brands, as it enables individuals to strengthen their Storytelling expertise to build trust and amplify their personal brand's reach and influence.

Storytelling can also help throughout the different aspects of a human brand. It gives the chance, if there is a group behind the brand, to empower the group members, strengthen their bonds, and helps them be on the same point of view (McDougal et al., Nicoli et al.; quoted by Kemp et al.; 2021, 2022), resulting in a solid strategy approach, with increasing results. Telling stories cannot only help develop creative skills, or unify team members, but it also helps personal branding affiliates to improve their listening skills (Kemp et al., 2023). This is due to the proactive investigation of new opportunities, and new stories to tell. They must be aware of what is happening around them, as anything can become the perfect opportunity to create a narrative about it.

Personal branding may be a powerful tool for selling products or promoting oneself, to better opportunities. Nevertheless, it is even better for your personal growth and development. Not only does it help with self-awareness, self-esteem, or self-worth (Scheidt et al., 2020), but it also helps with reflecting on past actions, decisions, or situations, and learning from them. Whether that is by applying a different solution, changing the dealing perspective of the situation, or accepting how things are right now, according to what the past has built, recalling those stories due to the personal brand will help develop people's mindsets and become more valuable to society, and oneself. As Scheidt et al. stated (2020), "continuous reflection may lead to continuous learning".

3.2 Benefits for consumers

It is expected that Storytelling for personal branding has numerous advantages for the own brand. However, Storytelling used for human brands also has great benefits for the consumers themselves. The impact it can create on them can have various positive consequences, such as changing behavioural habits that were not very useful for better ones.

Storytelling affects intrinsically to user's psychology. Stories that impact consumers positively can immerse them in such a powerful experience that can make them feel triggered to act differently, to improve their lifestyles. It can even be felt as an exaggeration of real life, a distortion of perceptions (Harris et al., quoted by De Oliveira Júnior et al., 2016), but it is just the consequence of a strong, meaningful narrative.

A common phenomenon that happens nowadays with personal brands on social media, especially after using Storytelling to connect with users, is that those followers who consume the content of a particular brand, tend to perceive a sense of closeness, besides intimacy and familiarity, with the personal brand, despite not having interacted with one another. This is known as Parasocial Interaction Theory, also called PSI (Lund et al., 2017). Even though not much research has been found about this curious theory, it is quite interesting to see at what extent can humans psychologically react to the exposure of Storytelling in human brands.

For consumers, Storytelling can help reduce risks in terms of decision-making, as personal branding builds them enough trust to rely on the brand (Scheidt et al., 2020). For this reason, the willingness of clients to buy any kind of product, at higher prices, increases. In other words, Storytelling creates an attachment between the brand and the consumer, that serves as a major force in their purchasing behaviours (Scheidt et al., 2020).

This sense of attachment can become crucial to some users. The relationship they establish with the human brand can be integrated as part of their identity, fostering that sense of connection and loyalty that characterizes personal branding for. In some cases, especially with younger audiences, these brands can complement, or even replace the family system of the user (Scheidt et al., 2020). Therefore, it is essential to know the power that is held, for consumers, in sharing relevant stories for personal branding.

IV. Ethical Considerations for Storytelling in Social-media Personal Branding

Throughout human's history, on one hand, Storytelling has been a tool of such great use. It has been the main technique by which people were entertained and connected. On the other hand, although personal branding has always existed, as in how someone presents themselves to their environment, not until the beginning of social media, especially as a marketing means, this tool has become a statement that no one can escape from. As everyone projects an image to their surroundings, personal branding becomes necessary, and, almost inevitable, Storytelling.

During the project, various benefits have been mentioned about these two communication strategies. However, they can also lead to consequences that might be harmful, especially on ethical issues. Some of these include authenticity, transparency, and privacy.

1. Authenticity

Authenticity is one of the most valuable assets a personal brand can have. It is one of the key features of successful brands.

In personal branding, authenticity can be described as the capability of the self-marketer to portray their character, their values, and personality, throughout different stages of their lives (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018). Authenticity is crucial for Storytelling purposes because, if brands do not add different, valuable elements to consumers, they will lose interest sooner than expected. The elements of every authentic personal brand are the same. Elements such as credibility, uniqueness, and clarity (Scheidt et al., 2020). Yet, due to the difference in personality, cognitive, and behavioural traits, human brands get to be distinctive from one another (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018).

In addition, authentic brands are successful because they face challenges most honestly, following their values, beliefs, and instincts. They do not solve problems, or act, according to what society might accept. If the brand feels there is a cause worth fighting for, all efforts will be placed in there, no matter how accepted the cause is (Korzch & Estima, 2022). The fact that they follow their instincts makes them fail sometimes, and that feeling of imperfection makes

them more human, more alike users. Because every human being makes mistakes, those brands who do not show them, as well as what they learn from them, can only lose connection with their followers and, thus, lose appeal to new users.

Authenticity is highly linked with the identity of the personal brand. It entails how genuinely the self-marketers portray themselves to their listeners (Jacobson, 2020). However, there is a concern among users who follow a personal brand, as they struggle to differentiate authentic brands from those faking. In some cases, there is a perception that online and offline identities are completely different, being the offline identity the “real” one, and the online identity the “fake” one (Jacobson, 2020), due to people posting what they consider. Followers do not have an overall view of the identity of the brand, but a formed identity based on the bits of information they receive, in addition to their perceptions. Is that, therefore, the real self of those behind the human brand? Can the audience say that know the personal brand they are following?

Authentic Storytelling must come from within, through intrinsic motivators, to assure meaningful connections. However, there are the case of some personal brands who act according to external reasons, often wrong reasons, just because of profits. This can imply social conflicts, for instance. Yet, they are still famous (Scheidt et al., 2020). This would be the case of Paris Hilton, for instance. Another case could be the owner of the human brand stopping to make their own stories for the brand, to being the stakeholders the responsible of the brand stories, also called “storygiving” (Scheidt et al., 2020). Moreover, some brand owners, to strive success, try different communication approaches, acting as different role models, to see which one the audience cherishes more (Scheidt et al., 2020). These previous cases are not being truthful, yet their personal branding is strong and successful. Scheidt et al. suggest a question that is worth considering (2020), “is authenticity then indeed indispensable in personal branding?”.

2. Transparency

Just as important as it is to create an authentic Storytelling base, to develop an authentic personal branding strategy, it is essential to consider transparency in human branding strategy. Sometimes these two concepts are linked together, mistaken as just one concept (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018). But we must understand them as different concepts.

Transparency is often mistaken as truthfulness or genuineness. However, it has nothing to do with the veracity of a personal brand’s message. It involves the amount of information the self-marketer shares with their audience. Therefore, someone’s message can be authentic independently of the level of transparency (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018).

On one hand, as we have previously mentioned about the relationship between authenticity and identity, there is also a link between transparency and identity. Transparency is essential for identity building and identity sharing. By being clear with the audience, a better understanding of the human brand’s identity can be established. But like with authenticity, people often tend to perceive the offline identity as the “real” one (Jacobson, 2020), because, in the online world, there are several things that cannot be mentioned, mainly due to privacy reasons. Therefore, as the self-marketer is not being fully transparent with their followers, they can perceive the absence of connection between them and fail to be successful. That leads us to think, is a lack of transparency harmful to the human brand?

On the other hand, being too transparent online can be concerning for personal branding. For instance, giving opinions about social conflicts, or even participating in social scandals publicly (Scheidt et al., 2020), can differ your audience in terms of opinion, or create problematic situations for the human brand. Posting inappropriate content, or confidentialities,

online, or expressing inadequately online, can also be reasons for conflictive situations (Harris and Rae, quoted by Scheidt et al., 2011).

Thus, where is the balance where transparency can work towards a good Storytelling and personal branding strategy?

3. Privacy

One of the biggest ethical concerns regarding personal branding is privacy. When developing a human brand, the privacy of the owner can be seriously damaged, as developers are constantly sharing their lives, their thoughts, their decisions, and so on. There needs to be a limit in sharing content, some boundaries established by the manager (Bossio et al., quoted by Jacobson, 2020), as oversharing might harm not just the brand owner, but their relatives, their professional and personal opportunities, and so on. The use of social media, whether professionally or personally, can damage, as well, the personal brand (Christensen, 2018), as it might damage the reputation of the brand, for instance.

Shepherd, quoted by Johnson (2005), mentions that “individuals can no longer afford to express the multiple personalities they used to have”. The use of social media has placed users into a state of always posting more content, always looking for validation, or always commenting, and even criticising others’ actions. It is true that combining different social media platforms, and planning how we present ourselves through each one of them, is a great Storytelling strategy for personal branding. However, using several social media platforms can imply posting more content, personal content perhaps, endangering our privacy. Therefore, a strategic plan must be carefully thought out to ensure that our privacy remains intact.

There are some cases, such as journalists, where they have to find the balance between personal opinions and professional duties on social media, even when they are not working. They are expected, on the one hand, to constantly promote the brand values, even when they are not working, whereas, on the other hand, expressing themselves online could detriment their image (Christensen, 2018).

This is subject to reflection: up to what extent should human brands share personal content? Could the owner’s opinions harm their brand? Are people being deprived of the freedom to express themselves due to privacy reasons?

METHODOLOGY

I. What is Research?

Research could be one of the most important steps in every investigation. Without research, we would not be able to confirm hypotheses, therefore humankind would not be able to discover new findings and evolve.

According to Woody, quoted by Mishra & Alok (n.d.), “research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypotheses or suggested solutions; collecting, organizing and evaluating data; (...) and, at last, carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis”. With the aim of finding out hidden facts and conclusions that shape our reality, research is not only an important step in every study, but the foundation.

As there are various types of purposes on investigations, there are as well different types of research, according to the purpose it must fulfil. According to Mishra & Alok (2019), some of those could be:

1. **Descriptive vs. Analytical:**
Descriptive research aims to explain reality as it is presented. There is no manipulation of the variables, only outlines the circumstances which they are going through. Through data-gathering, an observation of the variables studied is being made.
However, in analytical research, there is no observation as such, but rather an examination of data, facts and information already available.
2. **Applied vs. Fundamental:**
Applied research wants to find a specific solution for a problem, for instance, how to successfully launch a product. Fundamental research relies on the study for the confirmation of a theoretical hypothesis, such as how habits impact our daily lives.
3. **Quantitative vs. Qualitative:**
Quantitative research implies any kind of study that includes quantifiable observations that can be counted. These investigations appear in a numerical form. However, qualitative research involves any research that cannot be expressed with numbers, but with descriptions, or qualities. Qualitative research is harder to analyse than quantitative.
4. **Conceptual vs. Empirical:**
Conceptual research is usually carried out by philosophers or logicians, as it involves the analysis of abstract terms and concepts. Empirical research, nonetheless, needs to engage with the subject of the study actively. It is based on observation, whether that is direct or indirect. In other words, experiments must be conducted to participate in empirical research studies.

Research can help us find answers to the questions of how Storytelling in personal branding influences the customers how this technique is perceived among social media users, and the ethical issues it might carry within.

However, formulating correct hypotheses, or gathering enough data is not the most important thing. What is valued the most is the analysis and interpretation of the findings, to check if the initial statement is correct or not. Therefore, we must choose proper analysis techniques to interpret the given data and successfully conclude the research.

II. Research Design: Using Quantitative Methods

Once a hypothesis has been established, and we know what to look for, it is essential to plan how to gather proper data and how it will be analysed. In other words, we have to find out the most fitting research design.

What is research design? According to Bloomfield & Fisher (2019), it consists of “the blueprint or plan that will be used by researchers to answer a specific research question”. Therefore, we should not forget about this important step. An effective planning can lead to the solutions of the problem stated and, consequently, to successful research.

For this research, as the aim of it is to find a correlation between Storytelling being made by personal brands and the behaviour of consumers, in addition to the descriptive approach to ethical conducts of Storytelling in personal branding, a quantitative analysis must be conducted.

As Burns et al. mentioned, quoted by Bloomfield & Fisher (2015), quantitative research design consists of a systematic and objective process, in which objective scientific methods are being made, used to describe variables, whereas investigate the relationship between them, finding what causal effect these might have. It is much easier to interpret results in quantitative research since the data gathered is quantifiable, therefore easier to be patterned and extract conclusions than in qualitative studies, for instance, where researchers have to give meaning to the data gathered (Rahman, 2016).

In this type of research, the investigation is usually based on a hypothesis which is neither positive nor negative, that assumes there is no relationship among the variables, called the null hypothesis (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The hypothesis can be, either confirmed, or discarded, after the research has finished.

In terms of the types of quantitative research design, there are 4 main types, as specified by Burns et al. (2015). We can find descriptive quantitative research, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental. In the table below, some features of the different types of quantitative research will be provided.

Types of Quantitative Research Design	Features
Descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used to describe a phenomenon in a real-life setting. - Quantifies characteristics of identified individuals, groups, or situations. - Typically conducted with large numbers - Does not involve manipulation of variables
Correlational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigates the relationship among selected variables in a sample using correlational statistics. - Determines the degree, strength, and type of the relationship between variables. - Does not determine cause and effect.
Quasi-experimental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examines causal relationships or determines the effect of one variable on another. - Lacks the level of control achieved in experimental studies.
Experimental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examines causal relationships between dependent and independent variables under highly controlled conditions. - Involves the manipulation of independent variable/s, random assignment of subjects to the experimental or control groups, and exposure of the experimental group to at least one intervention and the control group to none.

Table 1. Features of the different types of quantitative research. Source: Bloomfield & Fisher (2019).

1. Advantages of quantitative research

The advantages of using quantitative research methods for any investigation are numerous. Rahman (2016) listed a few of them, which are the following:

1. It is more likely to apply the conclusions to a whole population, or sub-population, as it is based on a large, random sample (Carr, quoted by Rahman, 1994).
2. Being the data numerical, is easier to examine than qualitative data, in which the researcher must give meaning to the answers given.
3. It takes less time to analyse and interpret the results, due to the use of statistical software that helps make the process easier, such as SPSS (Connolly, quoted by Rahman, 2007).

The following benefits give the researcher an easy and rapid alternative to extract conclusions, and either confirm, or reject, the initial hypothesis.

2. Disadvantages of quantitative research

Quantitative research can be very useful in many situations. However, there are drawbacks that need to be considered before starting any research. Rahman (2016) has clarified some of them, being the following:

1. Fails to give further meaning as to the reasons behind sample's behaviour.
2. Cannot contextualize researchers how individual's experiences and perspectives form sample's realities, due to the lack of connection between them and participants (Ary et al., quoted by Rahman, 2013).
3. It gives an overall view of the variables analysed.

Thus, the research behind the quantitative design needs to interpret the data to gain a perspective of the context and the reasons of sample's conduct. Other methods can be used to complement this type of research design, such as qualitative methods.

III. Internet Survey: Most Fitting Research Method

For this investigation, what is most appropriate is to conduct a survey, since the aim of the research is to get the responses of the population when exposed to Storytelling techniques used by human brands in social media platforms. A survey is a data-gathering and further analysis system in which participants answer questions that were previously stated, with the objective of getting a general view of the beliefs and opinions of society about a certain topic (Kasunic, 2005).

To conduct the survey, an online questionnaire must be designed. It is important to highlight the difference between survey and questionnaire. Although these terms have been used indistinctively, it must be remarked that a survey is a process as a whole, whereas the questionnaire is the tool used to fulfil the survey research (Kasunic, 2005).

In terms of analysing the questionnaire, a snowball sampling technique will be applied. This type of sampling is the most suitable one when conducting studies through social networks, as it is in this case. Snowball sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling method. With this investigation, the sample chosen was individuals who disposed of social media platforms and used them regularly. Therefore, the selection of the sample was not fully random.

To carry out this study, a questionnaire has been designed with the aim of discovering the following objectives:

1. How does the consumer react and behave to Storytelling techniques used by personal brands on social media. Does it affect positively or negatively? Are individuals aware of their exposure to Storytelling strategies?
2. The perception consumers have of Storytelling as a tool personal branding uses to increase sales. What are the ethical values of using this strategy on social media?

1. Advantages of surveys

Internet surveys can provide various advantages, that should be considered before starting any research. As Kasunic stated (2005), these are some of the advantages online surveys have:

1. Fast response rate.
2. Easy to send reminders to participants.
3. Easy to process data.
4. Use pop-up definitions and instructions for some questions.
5. Use drop-down boxes.

2. Disadvantages of surveys

Surveys can be related to great amounts of benefits. However, some limitations must be in mind before applying this research method. Kasunic (2005) mentioned some of them, which are the following:

1. Strict processes for choosing who takes part in the research must be followed to generalize a conclusion for the whole sample or population.
2. It can be expensive to implement a survey correctly and time-consuming.
3. It cannot go into detail and cannot give explanations of behaviours or opinions.
4. Participant's answers may be altered due to the awareness of them being part of a research study.

IV. Construct of the Questionnaire

To have a general idea of what has been requested in the online survey, and what will later be analysed, the following table will provide the relationship between the questions asked to participants and the elements to be studied, all seen beforehand in the theoretical framework.

To encourage the sample to answer the survey, the questionnaire was designed in their mother-tongue language, Spanish, so it was easier for participants to know what was asked of them. However, in the table below, the questions will appear in English for this research paper.

QN	Question	Relationship with paper
Q1	Do you believe that, by telling stories, users connect better with personal brands and their products?	III.3.2
Q2	Do you often feel a connection with personal brands telling life issues or events?	I.2
Q3	Do you agree that emotional connection influences consumer buying behaviour?	I
Q4	What are your motives for buying a product, when in doubt?	I.2
Q5	In which way Storytelling impacts consumers' attitudes and behaviours?	I

Q6	Does every user own a human brand?	II.1
Q7	Why do people develop a human brand on social media?	II
Q8	Do you agree that consumers develop an identity due to the Storytelling practices of personal brands?	I.2
Q9	Do consumers buy personal brand products to differentiate them from others?	II.2
Q10	Would you pay a higher price if you feel an emotional bond with the selling human brand?	III.3.2
Q11	How much time do you spend on social media?	III.2
Q12	What was the impact that ad 1 has made to you?	
Q13&15	Do you feel identified with the human brand?	
Q14	What was the impact that ad 2 has made to you?	
Q16	Which brand would you rather buy at?	
Q17	Do you consider Storytelling as a manipulative tool used for personal branding to increase sales?	IV
Q18&19	If answered yes/no, why?	
Q20	Would you identify when Storytelling is authentic, from when is fake or manipulative?	I.2, IV.1
Q21	Do you believe authenticity is a great factor for personal branding?	IV.1
Q22	How much do brands show their real identities online?	
Q23	How much does transparency affect consumer's trust in human brands?	IV.2
Q24	Would social media opinions harm human brands online?	IV.3
Q25	If so, are brands limited by the image they must portray?	
Q26	What Storytelling practices in personal branding do you consider manipulative from an ethical perspective?	IV

Table 2. Construct of the questionnaire used for research. Source: Author.

V. Technical Datasheet of the Research

In terms of the future analysis of the investigation data, here can you find a summary of the methodology implemented for this research.

Features	Online Survey
Participants	102
Dates of implementation	19 th May – 31 st May
Duration	10 min
Sampling Technique	Snowball Sampling
Analysis Technique	Statistical procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Univariate analysis (frequencies, central and variability measures)- Bivariate analysis (contingency tables, Pearson's correlation)
Software used	Excel

Table 3. Technical Datasheet of the investigation. Source: Author.

FINDINGS

I. Survey Findings

Once all the data was gathered, through an online questionnaire, an analysis was conducted to confirm the hypothesis stated previously. For the analysis, an univariate and bivariate analysis was performed, to check whether a relationship between variables was established.

1. Univariate Analysis

These are the results of the variables' analysis conducted on their own.

Questions 1-16 were designed to get more information about the perception the population had about Storytelling and personal branding, to confirm whether hypotheses 1 and 3 were correct.

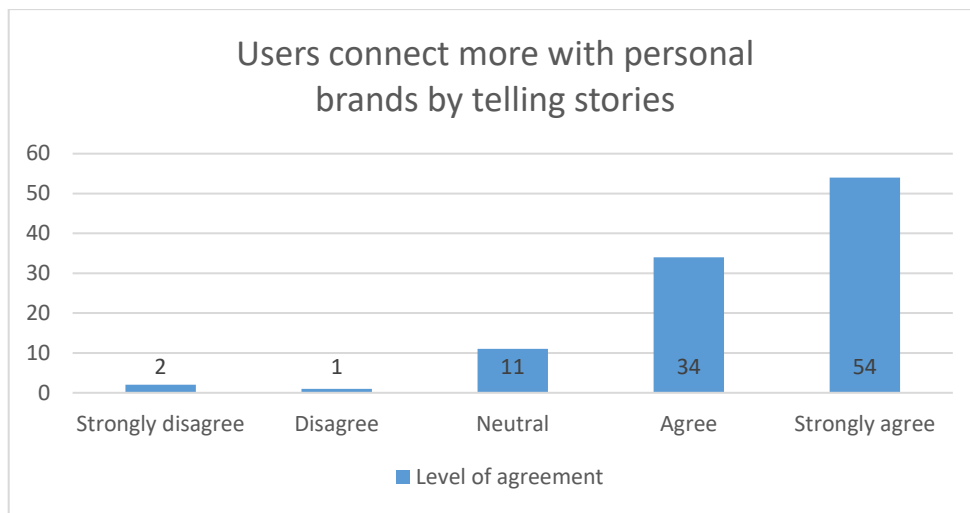


Figure 1. Question 1 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

More than half of the sample (52,9%) strongly agree that consumers connect more with human brands and their products by implementing Storytelling techniques. Therefore, this entails a common knowledge of the impact Storytelling makes on customers.

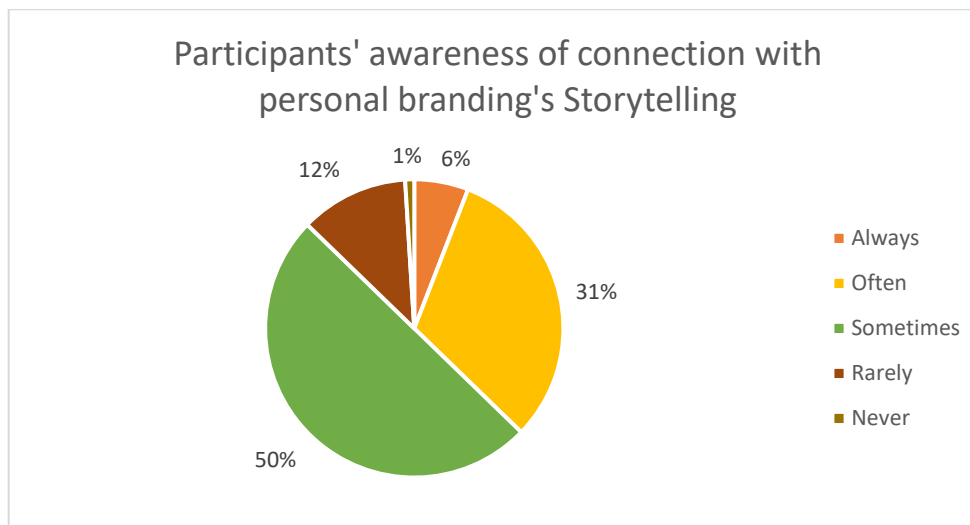


Figure 2. Question 2 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

After asking if participants felt an emotional connection with personal brands who narrated life events or issues, half of the sample connected with those human brands just sometimes, which is interesting to analyse, after seeing in the previous question, that most of them were convinced of the influence telling stories makes on consumers. Does that mean that the sample is not fully aware of the connection they establish with human brands?

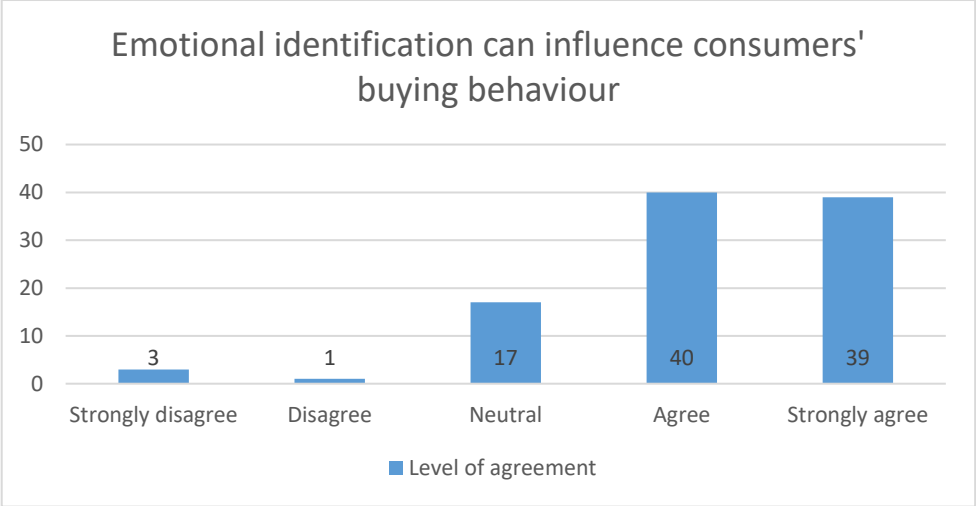


Figure 3. Question 3 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

Once again, we can see how most of the sample (77,4%) agree that feeling an emotional identification can significantly influence consumers' buying behaviour. This reassures the understanding users have of the impact Storytelling may have on consumers, and the reasons behind it.

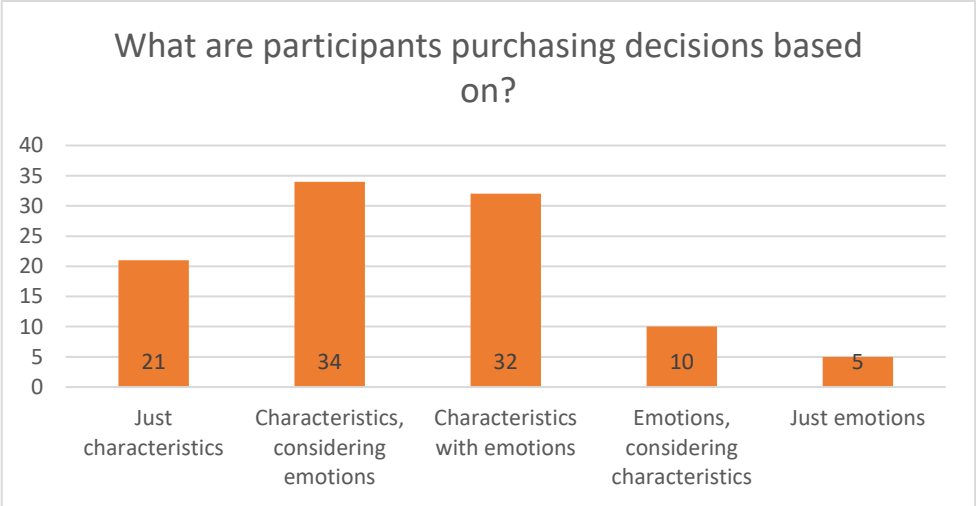


Figure 4. Question 4 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

Through this chart, we can see that most of the participants mainly consider characteristics as the main factor in their purchasing behaviour. However, 64,7% of the sample also consider emotions when deciding their acquisitions.

Question 5 of the questionnaire was an open-ended question, that asked how personal branding's Storytelling affected consumers' attitudes and behaviours towards the human brand. There was a great variety of answers. Some of them said that it had a positive impact, others

said it had a negative one, considering Storytelling a manipulative tool. However, all of them agreed that it made an impressive effect on customers. Personal branding's Storytelling was more powerful than regular brands.

It was said that it also had an unconscious impact on purchasing behaviour. There is a common believe that Storytelling captivates clients and increases sales due to the connection it establishes between users and the brand, as well as the simplification of one's life, or the increased memory retention it can provide. Emotional connection benefits the human brand as it enhances their image, helps customers identify with their values, and provides virtues, such as authenticity, or familiarity.

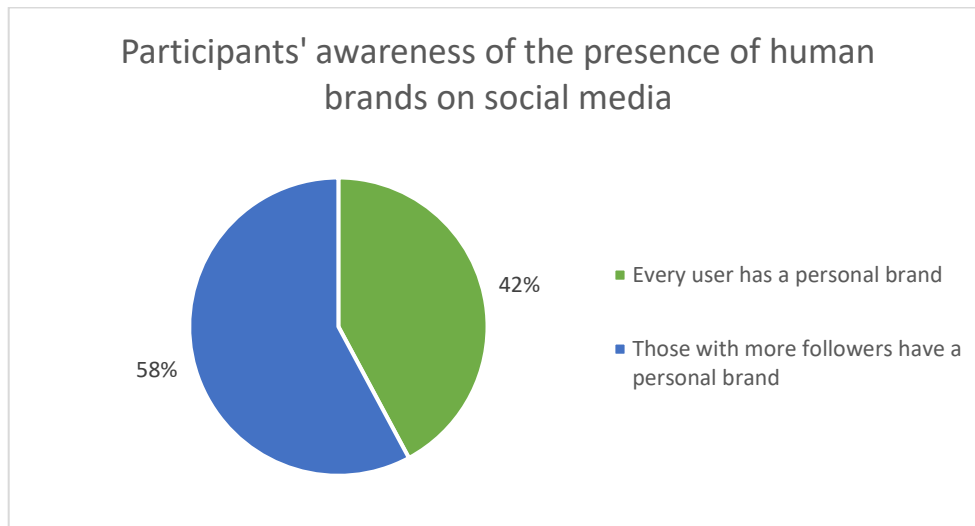


Figure 5. Question 6 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

58% of the sample has the misconception that only those whose accounts have more followers and, therefore, could be more influential, have human brands. However, everyone has a personal brand. This leads to the believe that consumers are not fully aware of their exposure to personal branding and, therefore, the influence it has on them.

Question 7 is an open-ended question as well. Due to the misbelief of what personal branding is, there are some answers focused on influential personal branding, rather than personal branding, in general terms. The main reasons people think people develop their human brands on social media are the following:

1. Increase sales or revenues
2. Amplify emotional connection with clients
3. Become more known or influential
4. Help others with their content
5. Improve their portrayed image.

When it comes to improving their image, they have mentioned some reasons of why doing it. These vary from improving their self-esteem, portraying an idyllic version of themselves, or winning credibility, to presenting themselves to society or obtaining better opportunities for their professional and personal life.

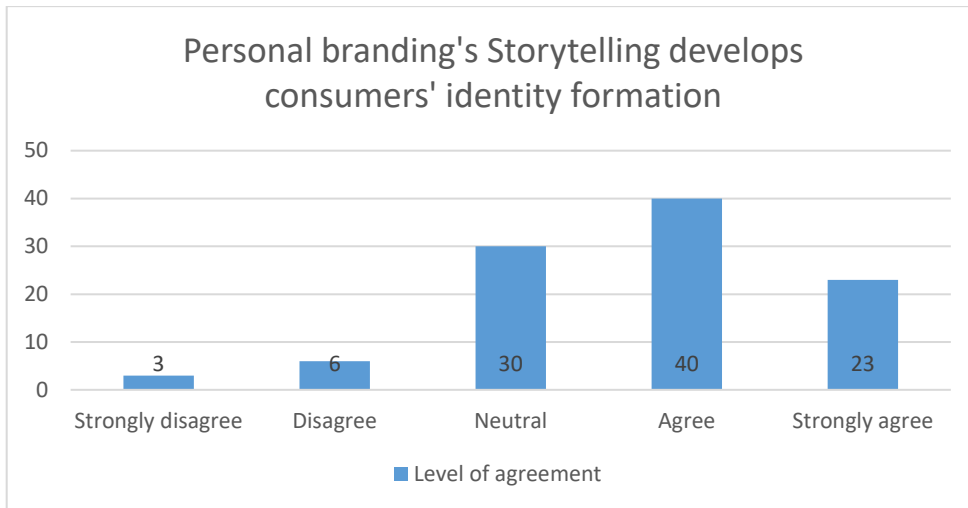


Figure 6. Question 8 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

Like with the emotional connection, most of the sample agrees that Storytelling of human brands help consumers, in general terms, build an identity. It shows that, once again, population is aware of the global effects Storytelling can have on users.

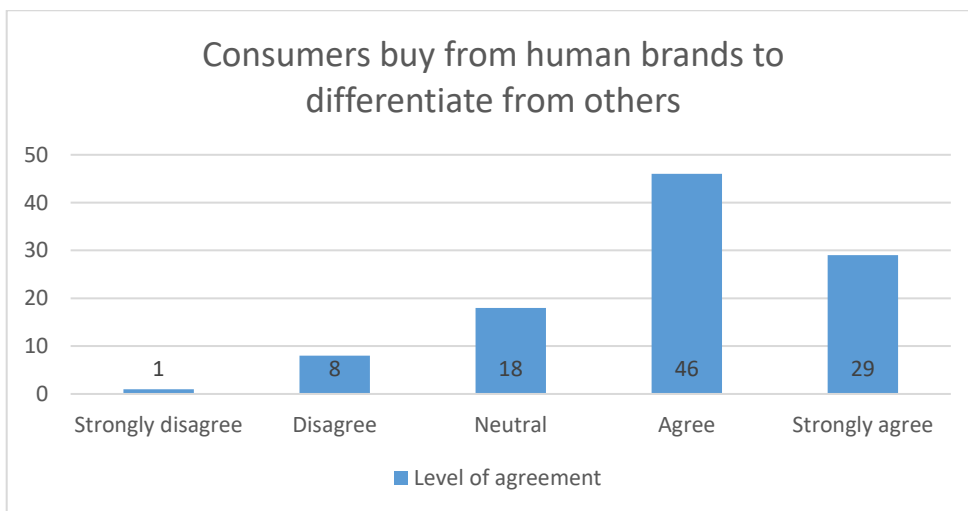


Figure 7. Question 9 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

Here, it is clearly visible that most of the sample (73,5%) believes that people buy from human brands to feel different from society, to distinguish themselves from others. Therefore, we can see that personal branding has a strong power of influencing consumers. They can make people feel different things, it goes beyond what they sell.

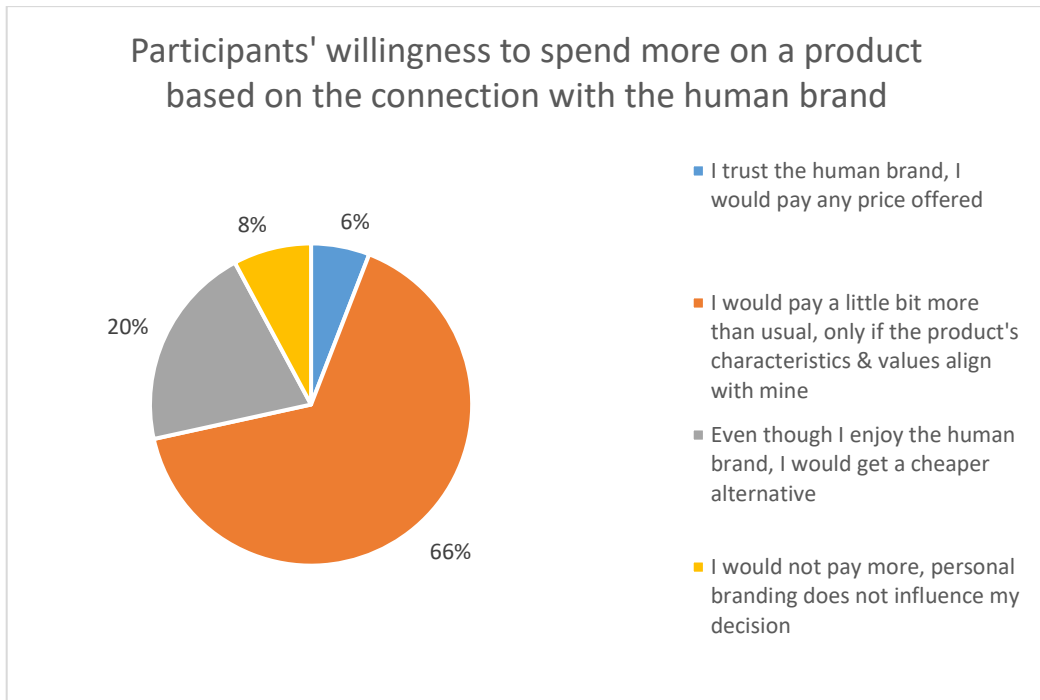


Figure 8. Question 10 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

This graph shows the level of sensitivity to which the consumer can be influenced. Although most tend to buy more expensive things just if they value the product itself, 86% of the sample can be influenced to spend more of what they have first planned, showing high levels of captivity, when personal brands use Storytelling.

To show empirical evidence of the hypothesis stated at the beginning, a small study was conducted, in which participants were exposed to a Storytelling ad and, afterward, a regular ad, to see how Storytelling influenced consumers, using the same personal brand, who was Rafael Nadal. Questions 11-16 involve this study.

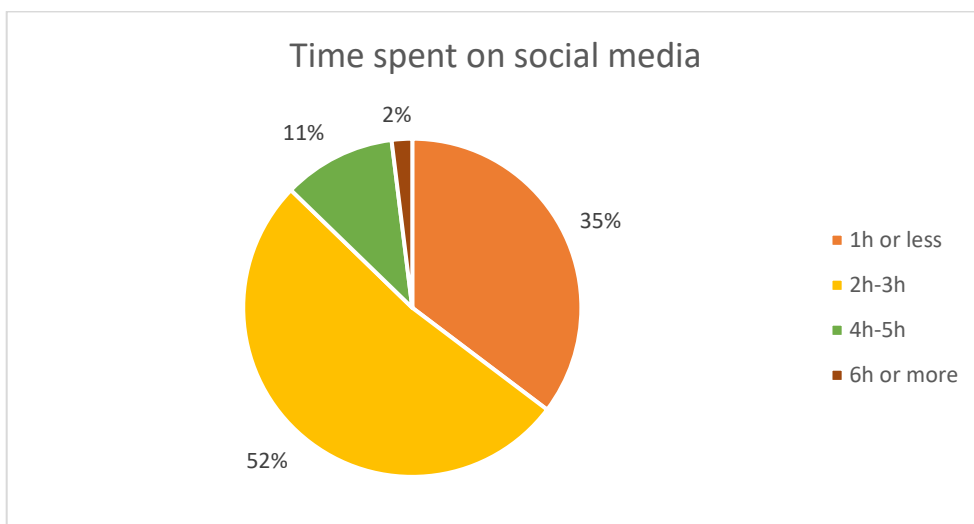


Figure 9. Question 11 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

To give background contexts, as well as to prove whether those spending more time on social media are more influential to personal branding's Storytelling, participants were asked how many hours they spent on social media per day. For this sample, more than half of the

sample spent an average of 2h to 3h, which is the mean of today's society. However, there is a great number of people who uses it less than average, just an hour, or less, per day.

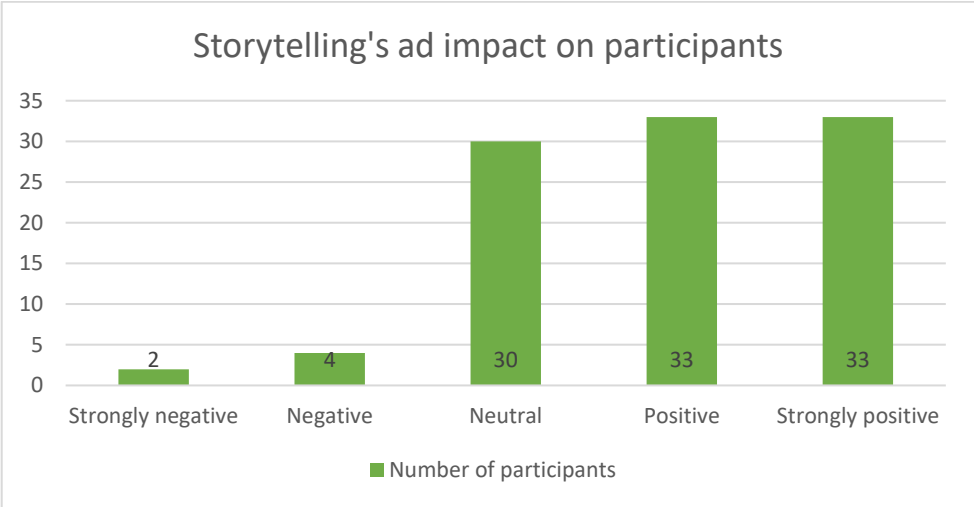


Figure 10. Question 12 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

After watching Storytelling's ad, it is clear that it has a strong, positive, influence on consumers. 65% of participants had a positive impression of the personal brand, whereas just 6% left the ad with a negative impression. To confirm the power Storytelling has, we must analyse the following questions.

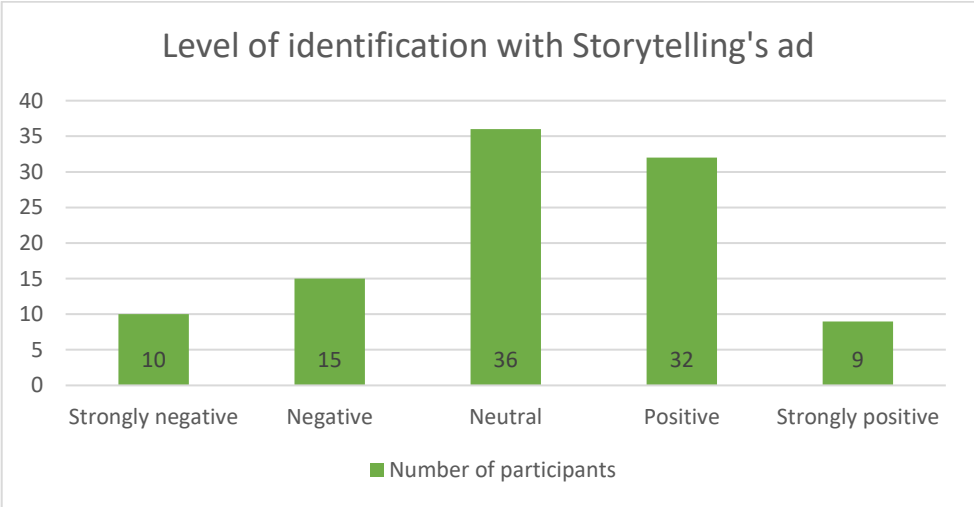


Figure 11. Question 13 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

When it comes to the Storytelling ad, the level of identification noticed by the sample tends to be positive (40,2%), although few participants recognise it as strong. 35,3% of the sample admits to having an indifferent level of identification, meaning that they neither relate, nor unrelate with the human brand. They don't know if they feel any connection with the personal brand.

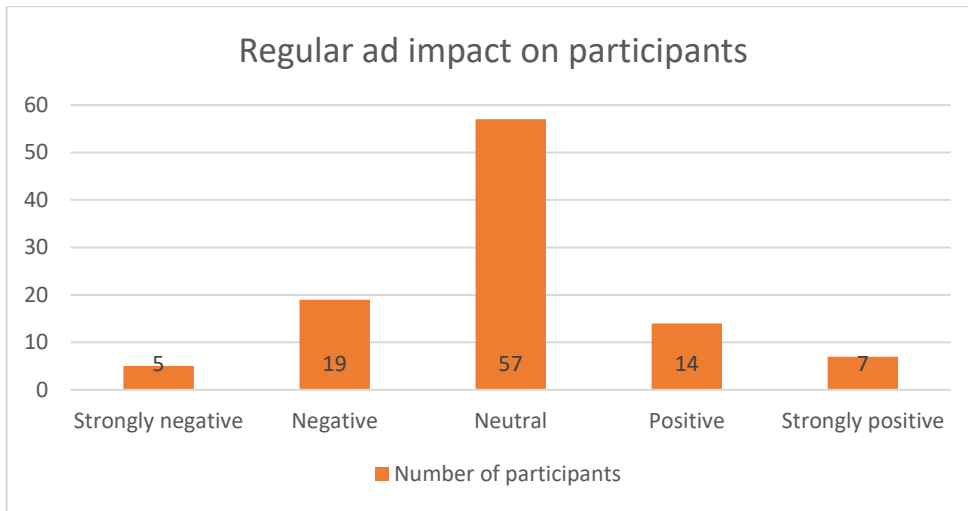


Figure 12. Question 14 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

However, after watching the regular ad, the perception of the personal brand tends to decrease. From 65% of positive impressions, it reduces to 56% of neutral impressions. Negative impressions suddenly increase, from 6% to 24%. Therefore, the use of Storytelling benefits personal branding.

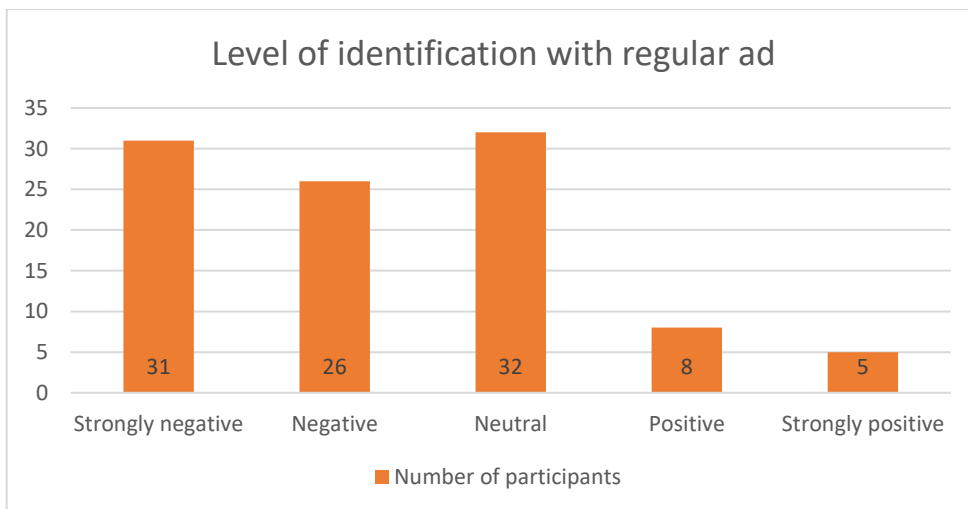


Figure 13. Question 15 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

The level of identification with the regular ad looks quite different than the Storytelling one. 56% of participants have a negative level of identification. Over half of the sample admits not feeling any connection with the personal brand. Just 12,7% of the population considers feeling aligned with the brand in some way.

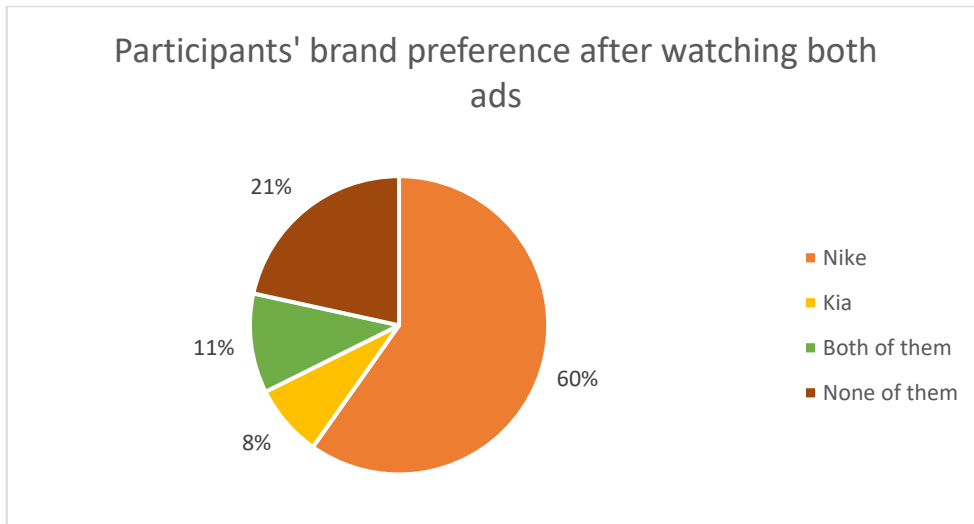


Figure 14. Question 16 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

After watching both ads, participants were asked in which brand they would prefer to buy, to test if the Storytelling technique really made a difference in purchasing behaviour. In the end, even though participants just saw a total of 2 minutes, adding both ads, 60% of participants preferred to buy at Nike, which was the brand that used Rafael Nadal's personal branding to apply Storytelling techniques. Kia, the brand that used personal branding without Storytelling, just to improve their image, was preferred by 8% of the sample, quite a low number. This would confirm the difference Storytelling causes in the perception of a product, or a personal brand.

The second part of the questionnaire, formed by questions 17-26, aims to get a deeper understanding of the ethical values that personal branding Storytelling must have, with the opinion of whether Storytelling is a manipulative tool.

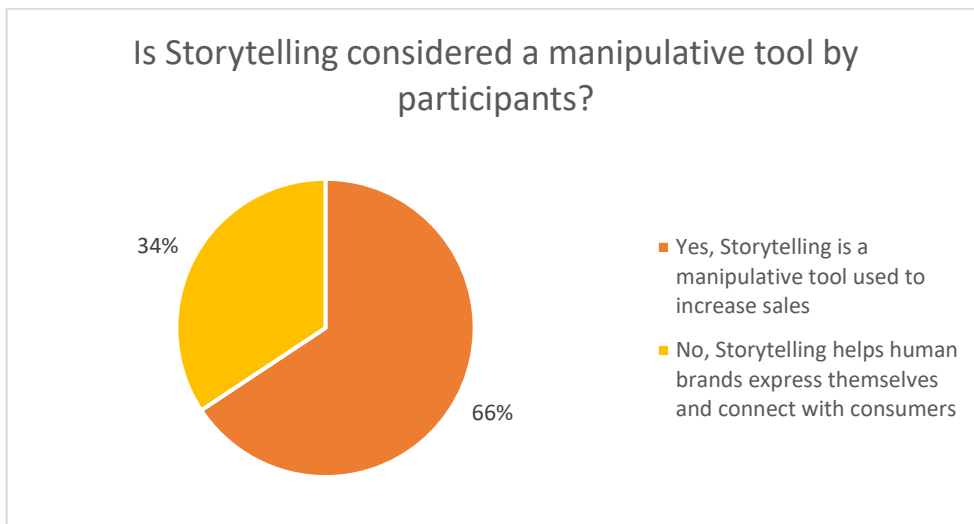


Figure 15. Question 17 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

According to the data gathered, most of the sample (66%) consider Storytelling a manipulative tool used by personal brands to increase sales. The following questions will give us a hint as to why they consider it manipulative.

Question 18 of the questionnaire is an open-ended question, in which participants who said Storytelling was manipulative, had to express the reasons behind their choice. Although some participants failed to answer, there were a few different reasons. The main ones were the following:

1. Storytelling encouraged to buy.
2. Personal brands invented events, sometimes, to make a story more realistic or, on the contrary, more impressive.
3. The focus is on personal branding's image, omitting objective product characteristics.
4. Plays with consumers' feelings and emotions, by creating needs, for instance, through persuasive techniques.

It was interesting to see that, sometimes, people just admitted as a fact that Storytelling was a manipulative tool, or that it was manipulative just because it connected with people's emotions. Very few people are aware that consumers are often not aware of the influence it can have on them. Some of the statements were quite generic, leading to the belief that people think Storytelling is manipulative due to a lack of knowledge of this concept.

Question 19 of the questionnaire is an open-ended question, in which participants who said Storytelling was not manipulative, had to express the reasons behind their choice. Some of the main answers, although not every participant answered, were the following:

1. Storytelling is used to express human brands' values and lifestyles, to spread positive behaviour.
2. It is considered another way to connect with users, it helps consumers feel more identified with the human brand.
3. Consumers, in the end, have the liberty, and the criteria, to choose whether the product offered is beneficial to some extent.

There were a few answers that followed the concept of "it does not influence me", which could just show how these participants are not influenced consciously. Other answers just stated that Storytelling is advertising, and there was also a statement that could open a new debate: "Manipulation is cheating. Storytelling is not cheating". Overall, participants stated that, if used correctly, Storytelling does not have to be a manipulative tool.

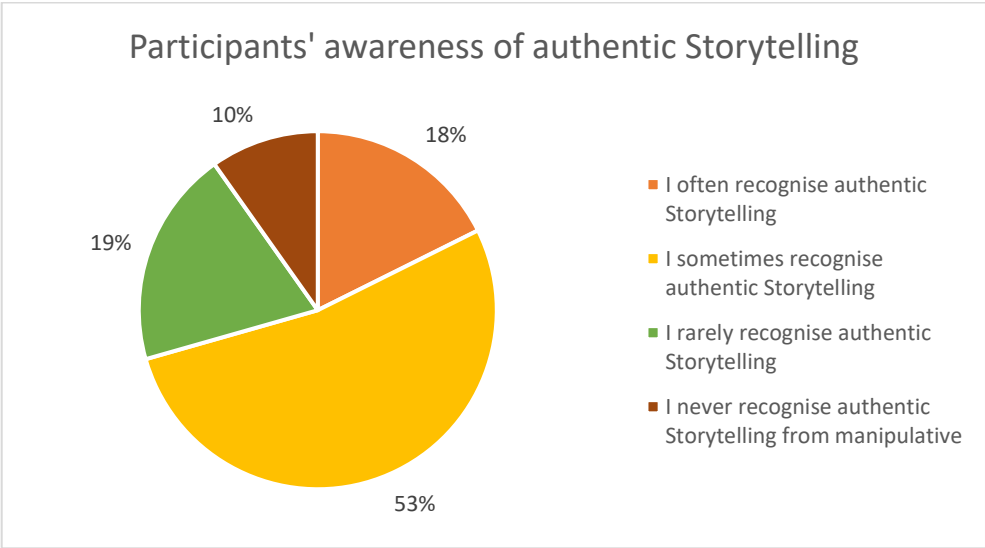


Figure 16. Question 20 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

This question was asked to get an idea of how conscious were people about being exposed to real stories or fake ones, aiming to get more income. Most of the people usually differ authentic stories from manipulative ones (71%). Consumers can tell when they are being persuaded to buy a product by telling unreal events. However, sometimes, when stories are well planned, people can misbelieve a fake story for an authentic one.

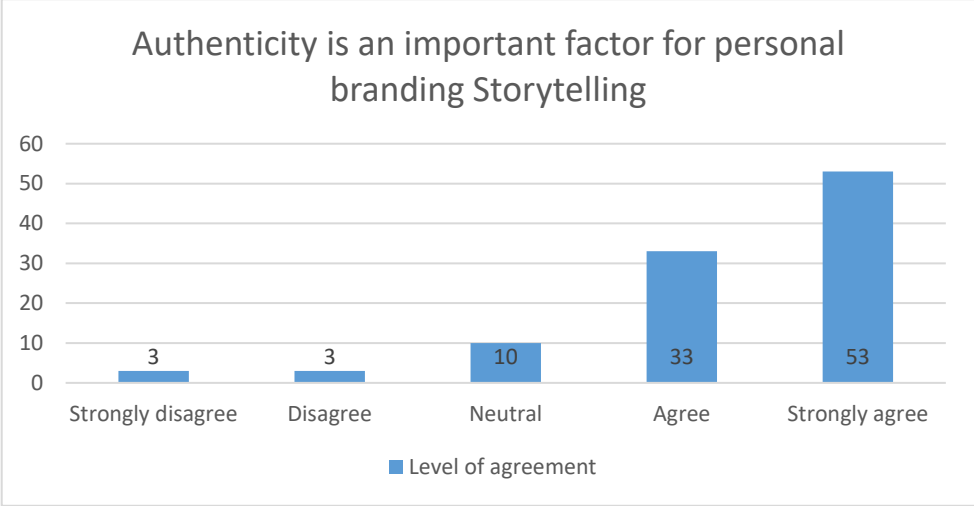


Figure 17. Question 21 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

The previous graph shows us that, from the perspective of consumers, authenticity is a factor of significant importance. 84,3% of the sample said it is crucial for Storytelling, whereas 0,06% said it was not necessary. This means that, for potential clients, authentic stories will be considered when following a certain personal brand.

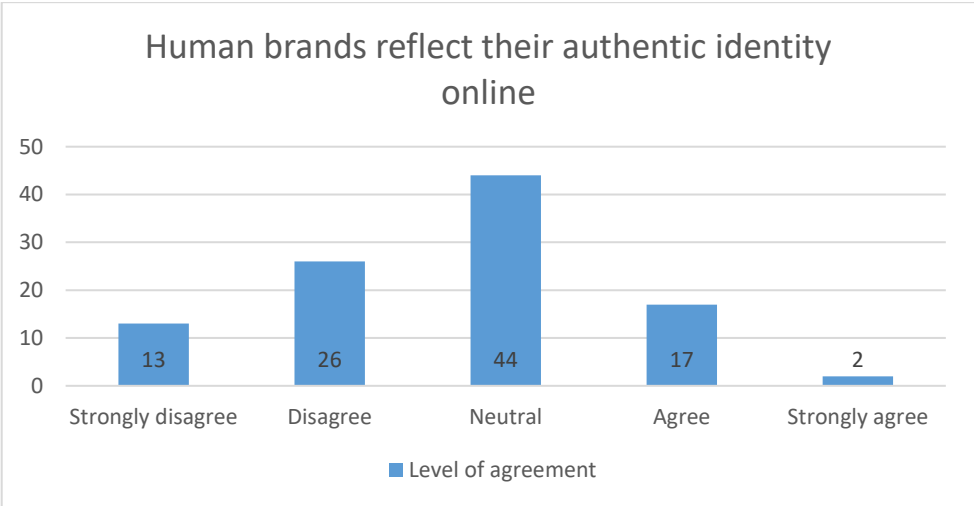


Figure 18. Question 22 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

It is interesting to see through this graph how most of the sample (43,1%) do not know the veracity of the image shown by personal brands online. However, what is most interesting is the fact that, rather than believing the human brand, users tend to mistrust the stories told by human brands. 38,2% do not believe what they are exposed to, in comparison with 18,6%, who believe the image portrayed as true.

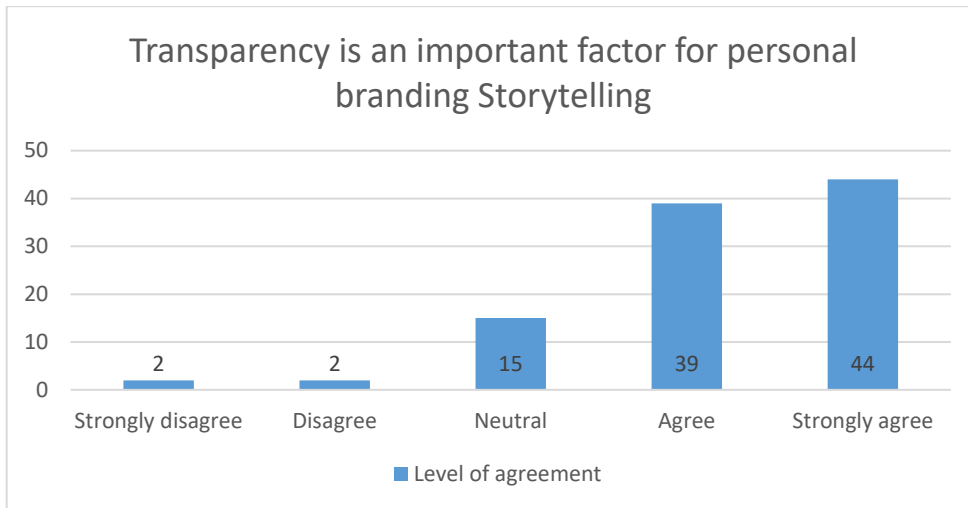


Figure 19. Question 23 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

As it happened previously with authenticity, most of the sample (81,4%) believe that transparency should be part of every personal branding’s Storytelling, if they want to win consumers’ trust. This emphasises the importance of ethical values for consumers on what they are exposed to.

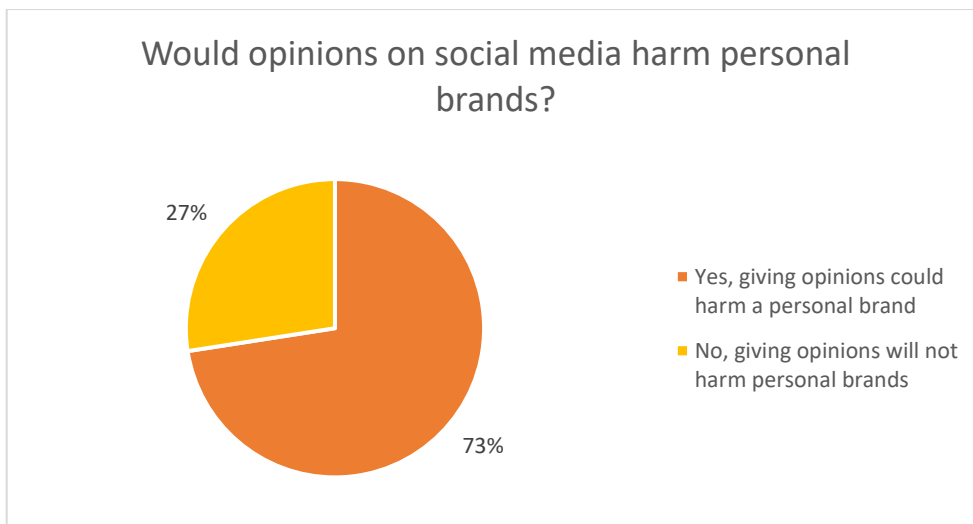


Figure 20. Question 24 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

Diving into the privacy aspects of Storytelling for personal branding, most of the participants agreed that giving an opinion on social media could harm, in some respects, the image you have created online. If that is the case, how can brands be transparent without endangering their privacy? That was the following question asked.

Question 25 was open-ended, aiming to obtain participants' opinions on how restricted human brands were online. Therefore, consumers were asked if personal branding was limited by the image they had to stand by. Most of the answers agreed that personal branding was limited by the perception that was set by online users. Some of the reasons were the following:

1. Personal branding’s reputation, and influential power, depended on their image and, therefore, they could lose that power by giving opinions.

2. The consequence of a human brand's actions is the willingness of consumers to support them and buy their products.
3. Human brand opinion can, unconsciously, influence users.

For these reasons, a few conclusions can be taken. Firstly, every action we make, every decision we make, can influence, whether consciously or unconsciously, consumers. This makes it hard to post content freely and, therefore, be transparent. This leads us to the second conclusion. Should we sacrifice privacy to have transparent human brands?

Very few people stated that it was not necessary to be restricted by users' opinions. They would understand that those behind the brand are humans and, thus, have opinions and criteria.



Figure 21. Question 26 of the questionnaire. Source: Author.

To conclude the second part of the questionnaire and, thus, the survey, participants were asked about what practices they consider manipulative for personal branding Storytelling. The ones that stood out the most were lying or exaggerating events and hiding key information. Both of them come from the perspective of being transparent. Therefore, although consumers positioned authenticity as the most important one, they wanted to mean transparency. This shows that, first, authenticity is not as crucial as it is believed to be and, second, there is a general misconception of authenticity, mistaking it for transparency.

2. Bivariate Analysis

Through univariate analysis, there has been found proof that Storytelling for personal branding has amazing benefits for the audience, in addition to human brands. Those include a sense of belonging, a way to differentiate in society, and stronger bonds among human beings. However, Storytelling is perceived as a manipulative tool to increase revenues, not considering the human emotions of consumers.

The sample we have used for this study highlighted the importance of ethical values, such as authenticity, transparency, and privacy, to connect with consumers through Storytelling. However, according to the literature exposed previously, there are some doubts about them being important for personal branding success.

To check whether these factors are essential for establishing human bonds, Excel pivot tables have been used to check the correlation between these factors.

Count of ¿Consideras el Storytelling una técnica manipuladora utilizada para ayudar a las personas a conectar? Column Labels	No, el Storytelling ayuda a conectar	Sí, el Storytelling es una técnica manipuladora	Grand Total
A veces lo diferencio	18	36	54
Me cuesta mucho diferenciar uno auténtico de uno ficticio o manipulador	5	15	20
No sé identificarlo	3	7	10
Suelo identificarlo con facilidad	9	9	18
Grand Total	35	67	102

Table 4. Correlation between identifying manipulative Storytelling and considering Storytelling manipulative. Source: Author.

After analysing the previous tables, knowing that most of the sample does not know a lot of times whether they are exposed to a real story or a manipulative one, 36 participants (35,2%) think that Storytelling is a manipulative tool, whereas 18 participants (17,6%) think that Storytelling could be a helpful communication tool for creating connections. Not only that, but 15 participants (14,7%) that believe Storytelling is not authentic, do not really differentiate when they are exposed to real or fake stories. This leads to the conclusion that most people who believe Storytelling is manipulative, do not clearly know what an unauthentic story is. Thus, they tend to believe that they are being used, because of lack of knowledge.

Count of ¿Crees que la autenticidad es un factor importante para el Storytelling? Column Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
A veces lo diferencio	2	2	2	19	29	54
Me cuesta mucho diferenciar uno auténtico de uno ficticio o manipulador	1	3	7	9		20
No sé identificarlo			4	4	2	10
Suelo identificarlo con facilidad	1	1	3	13		18
Grand Total	3	3	10	33	53	102

Table 5. Correlation between identifying manipulative Storytelling and the importance of authenticity for Storytelling. Source: Author.

We already discovered that authenticity was a crucial factor for participants when it comes to Storytelling. However, we can see that most of the participants (47%) voted between 4 and 5 out of 5, meaning that they really valued authenticity, and struggled to differentiate, sometimes, when authentic stories are being told. This could be translated into the fact that, if a fake story is well-prepared, it can be mistaken with a real one. Therefore, even though authenticity is highly valued, it can be mistaken sometimes.

Although it is possible to lie to customers with stories, people can still catch fake stories, so it would not be easy to make up stories. There needs to remain caution.

Count of ¿En qué medida dirías que la transparencia en el Storytelling influye en la confianza? Column Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
A veces lo diferencio		1	7	27	19	54
Me cuesta mucho diferenciar uno auténtico de uno ficticio o manipulador	1		3	5	11	20
No sé identificarlo			1	4	4	10
Suelo identificarlo con facilidad	1	1	6	10		18
Grand Total	2	2	15	39	44	102

Table 6. Correlation between identifying manipulative Storytelling and the importance of transparency for Storytelling. Source: Author.

As with authenticity, most of the people who does not always differentiate authentic Storytelling from manipulative one, think that transparency should be an essential part of Storytelling. Is it, thus, necessary to be fully transparent to, consequently, be successful?

Count of ¿Opinas que dar una opinión en redes sociales puede dañar una marca personal?	Column Labels		Grand Total
Row Labels	No, dar una opinión	Sí, puede dañar	
No, el Storytelling ayuda a las marcas personales a expresar sus sentimientos y conectar con los consumidores	13	22	35
Sí, el Storytelling es una técnica manipuladora utilizada para conseguir más ventas	15	52	67
Grand Total	28	74	102

Table 7. Correlation between considering Storytelling manipulative and the importance of privacy for Storytelling. Source: Author.

To see if consumers believe that privacy and authentic Storytelling are possible to tell good stories, a correlation between the belief of Storytelling being manipulative, and the belief that giving opinions and, therefore, exposing private thoughts, could harm a personal brand, was made. As a conclusion, half of the sample (51%) believes that Storytelling is manipulative, besides the fact that giving opinions online could harm the human brand. Thus, if personal branding needs to remain private to protect them from possible harm, but still needs authenticity and, especially, transparency, to become more attractive and less manipulative, how can that be possible? Is it possible to develop ethical personal branding?

When it comes to the last hypothesis, even though some univariate analyses can give us a hint of whether consumers are aware of to what extent they are being influenced, Rafael Nadal’s experiment will be useful to, lastly, give a conclusion about what has been found.

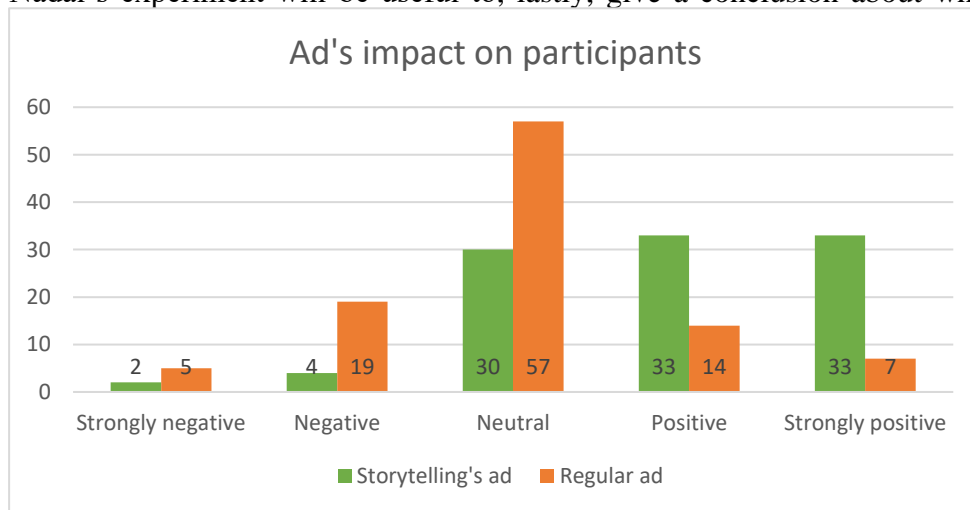


Figure 22. Difference of impact between the Storytelling ad and the traditional ad. Source: Author.

Through this graph, we can check the difference of impact between the Storytelling ad (Nike) and the traditional ad (Kia). While the Storytelling ad has caused a rather positive impact, as 64,7% of the sample voted for a positive impact, the traditional ad had a worse impact; 58,9% of the sample had a neutral impact, while 23,5% had a negative one.

If we compare both negative opinions, there is a significant increase of negative opinions in the traditional ad, being even higher than positive opinions. On the contrary, Storytelling ad’s negative opinions are very scarce, having, by far, more positive opinions than negative ones. This, therefore, shows how Storytelling impacts significantly better than traditional communication systems.

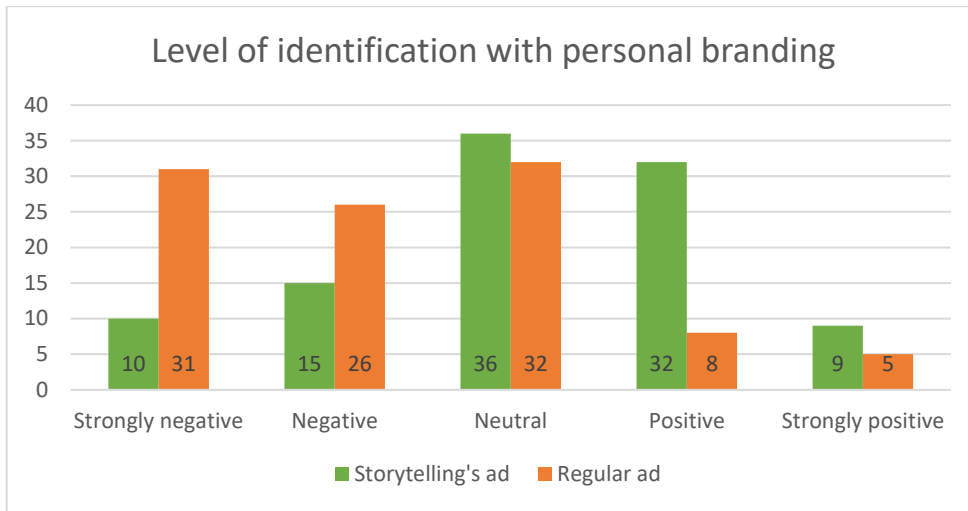


Figure 23. Difference in emotional identification between the Storytelling ad and the traditional ad. Source: Author.

Comparing the level of identification the sample has felt with the Storytelling ad and the traditional ad, there is a strong difference between both.

While Storytelling's ad has a rather positive level, the traditional ad has a great number of negative levels of identification. In other words, people emotionally connect more with Storytelling ads than with traditional ads. Indeed, not only do not consumers connect with traditional ads, but they also reject them. The emotional connection that can happen with Storytelling, as well as the avoidance of rejecting a human brand highlight, once more, the benefits that Storytelling can have for personal branding, as well as for consumers.

Count of Tras haber observado ambos cortometrajes, ¿en qué marca preferirías comprar?	Column Labels					
Row Labels	Ambas por igual	Kia	Nike	Ninguna	Grand Total	
A veces		6	3	31	11	51
Casi nunca		1		7	4	12
Casi siempre		3	4	21	4	32
Nunca					1	1
Siempre		1	1	2	2	6
Grand Total		11	8	61	22	102

Table 8. Correlation between considering a connection with personal branding Storytelling and Rafael Nadal's experiment analysis. Source: Author.

After analysing the correlation between how connected they feel to personal branding Storytelling, and which brand they would buy at depending on the ad seen, it is curious to see that, in most cases, people would rather buy at Nike, which was the brand with a Storytelling ad, rather than Kia, which was the brand which used a traditional ad. People who agreed that are rarely influenced by Storytelling, have chosen Nike instead of Kia. Those who admit to be more influenced by stories, all picked Nike, rather than Kia.

However, indeed, data may not be as objective as it could be, because participants knew they were going to be exposed to influenceable content. That is the reason why there are a few participants, especially those who are not always influenced, who chose they would not buy on either of the brands shown.

Count of Cuando estás indeciso sobre comprar un producto, ¿Qué motivos te impulsan a comprarlo?	Column Labels					
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Ambas por igual	4	4	1	2		11
Kia	1	2	3	2		8
Nike	9	24	20	7	1	61
Ninguna	7	4	8	1	2	22
Grand Total	21	34	32	10	5	102

Table 9. Correlation between Rafael Nadal's experiment analysis and what moves consumers to buy a product.
Source: Author.

It is curious to see that, even though most people suggested that they go for characteristics when buying a product, taking into consideration the emotions they felt when deciding, it is visible in this table that, those who preferred characteristics over emotional aspects, when being exposed to a practical case, they chose the emotional option, Nike, rather than the objective or practical option, Kia. This shows that consumers, without being aware of it, are moved towards a brand or a product for what they feel, rather than the characteristics by itself.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Conclusions

Once we have concluded theoretical research, along with practical analysis, there are a few things that have been interesting to find out throughout the process.

Storytelling has taken an important role in our society from the beginning of human existence, despite believing it is a modern term. It has helped us spread a message, express ourselves to connect with others and empathise with other's feelings. The same happens with personal branding. Even though it was named for the first few times not so long ago, self-image has always been an important factor to consider when presenting ourselves to the world, connecting with it, and finding a place in society. Nonetheless, with social media, the perception others get of us has become even more important.

We have proven that Storytelling can be the best way to create strong and sustainable bonds. On one hand, a personal brand needs to have a loyal online community supporting it. Human brands need someone on the other side to give meaning to all the efforts made to spread their values. They need someone to confirm that all the products they are releasing are helpful to customers, and economically aid them, by paying slightly higher prices, to keep their mission going.

On the other hand, customers also benefit from personal branding. Sometimes, these human brands offer them all the motivation they need to accept their selves and start pursuing their dreams. They feel accepted, even reinforced, by these brands. The connection, and the identity, personal branding can provide could be life-changing for some consumers. Have we not heard about someone being happier since they started following a specific human brand philosophy?

However, there has been a discussion about considering Storytelling unauthentic and, therefore, unethical communicative tool. As we have seen in our theoretical research, there are some cases, such as the Paris Hilton case (Scheidt et al., 2020), that are not fully authentic, yet they still are famous and influential. Does that mean we can have successful personal branding, though lacking ethical values?

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, there are two definitions for success. The first one is "the achieving of the results wanted or hoped for" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024), and the second one is "something that achieves positive results" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). Would someone hope to be known for the wrong reasons, and be famous by being insulted or mistreated? I guess that is not what people think of in terms of success. Moreover, people usually notice when a personal brand's Storytelling is not being authentic or fully transparent. Unless it is highly planned, which can mislead customers. Nevertheless, it is hard to maintain something unreal for long periods. Thus, to have positive results with personal branding, ethical Storytelling is quite important. In other words, to become known, there is no need to be ethical, but to have a positive, long-lasting, and sustainable impact on society, Storytelling must be authentic, and transparent, as long as privacy remains safe.

Lastly, what has impacted me the most of all this research was, besides the fact that Storytelling was commonly called "manipulative", the extent to which personal branding Storytelling can influence all of us. It is such a powerful tool, that we do not know we are being influenced sometimes, especially in the social-media interactive era. Despite saying that we know when Storytelling techniques are being used, and that we base our purchasing decisions mostly on characteristics, the truth is that it is not always like that. It is more common than what we think to buy something based on emotions, and the connections we have unconsciously

made with a human brand. Moreover, we are being more influenced than we believe due to the misconception of personal branding. People do not know that all social media users own a human brand and, therefore, do not know that they are being influenced by everyone, even their family and friends. It is ignored how influenced we are every day, and how likely we are to make purchasing decisions based on unconscious emotional connections with human brands.

II. Hypothesis Confirmation

After exposing the research conclusions, here is the confirmation of the hypotheses stated at the beginning of this paper.

HYPOTHESIS	CONTRAST (ACCEPTED OR REJECTED)
H1: Personal branding Storytelling does not have benefits just for the human brand owner, but for the audience as well.	ACCEPTED
H2: Ethical values, such as authenticity, transparency, and privacy, are not considered key factors to success as a personal brand.	REJECTED
H3: Users are not aware of the influence of personal branding Storytelling used on their purchasing behaviour.	ACCEPTED

Table 10. Confirmation of the hypotheses stated. Source: Author.

III. Recommendations

Although many recommendations can be given, a couple are worth mentioning.

First, I would advise to do further investigation of how Storytelling is beneficial for those who consume it, rather than human brands. Even though some of the benefits have been mentioned in this paper, it would be remarkable to get a deeper understanding of how this communication strategy is not beneficial just for personal branding, or brands in general, but to customers as well. It would help consumers improve their perspective of human brands and be less resistant to them when being exposed.

Second, it would help social media users by teaching them more about personal branding, besides Storytelling. Sometimes, human beings tend to think something is wrong or unethical due to a lack of knowledge. And I believe that is the case with personal branding Storytelling. If consumers knew they had a human brand, just by showing their own selves on social media, and knew they were telling stories of their lives, their achievements, and their values, they would start to see personal branding Storytelling as an intrinsic part of communication, instead of as a manipulative tool to increase sales. Therefore, educating users on Storytelling and personal branding would not only help them understand better how human brands work, but it would guide them to improve their communication skills, in addition to the image they portray online to get more personal and professional opportunities.

IV. Limitations of the Research

Before concluding this research, a few limitations need to be considered for future investigation.

To begin with, even though a lot of literature about personal branding has been gathered, giving a proper vision of human brands, it would have been appropriate to complement that literature with an interview with a personal branding specialist, to have the perspective of both sides: consumers, on one side, and the human brand's owner, on the other.

To continue, when it comes to the research on the ethical values of personal branding Storytelling on social media, it would have been great to collect more information about privacy aspects. However, there is a lack of literature. I believe it would be a great subject, for future research, to study how privacy affects human brands and to what extent can successful Storytelling practices keep privacy aspects safe.

To conclude, it would have been interesting to carry out more sophisticated experiments with this research's participants. Even though the data collected provided solid conclusions, they knew they were being under an experiment and, therefore, were going to be judged. It would have been fabulous to expose participants to both ads without them knowing why they were seeing them, and asking more questions, such as the amount of money they would have paid for the products of the ads.

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APPENDIX

I. Questionnaire Template

1. ¿Crees que, contando historias, los usuarios conectan mejor con las marcas personales y sus productos? (escala de 1 a 5)
2. ¿Sueles sentir una conexión con aquellas marcas personales que cuentan eventos o dificultades de su vida?
 1. Siempre
 2. Casi siempre
 3. A veces
 4. Casi nunca
 5. Nunca
3. ¿Estás de acuerdo en que la identificación emocional con una historia puede influir significativamente en el comportamiento de compra de los consumidores? (escala de 1 a 5)
4. Cuando estás indeciso sobre comprar un producto, ¿Qué motivos que impulsan a comprarlo? (1: decisión basada en las características del producto, sin tener en cuenta mis emociones, 5: decisión basada en qué me hace sentir, dejando de lado las características)
5. ¿De qué manera el Storytelling impacta en las actitudes y comportamientos de los consumidores hacia una marca personal? (pregunta abierta)
6. ¿Dirías que todos los usuarios de redes sociales son dueños de una marca personal?
 1. Sí, todos aquellos que tienen redes sociales tienen, por defecto, una marca personal
 2. No, solo la gente con más seguidores, o con cierta influencia en redes, tiene una marca personal
7. ¿Con qué motivo crees que los usuarios desarrollan y mejoran su marca personal en redes sociales? (preguntas abiertas)
8. ¿Estás de acuerdo con que el Storytelling en las marcas personales crean una identidad en los consumidores? (escala de 1 a 5)
9. ¿Dirías que los consumidores compran productos de ciertas marcas personales, con el fin de diferenciarse del resto? (escala de 1 a 5)
10. ¿Estarías dispuesto a pagar un precio un poco más alto por un producto, si sientes cierta conexión con la marca personal que lo vende?
 1. Sí, confío plenamente en la marca personal que vende el producto, y no me importa pagar un poco más
 2. Sí, pero solo si las características y los valores del producto se alinean con mis intereses
 3. No, aunque me guste mucho la marca personal, sé que puedo conseguir alternativas más baratas
 4. No, la conexión con la marca personal no influye en mi presupuesto a gastar del producto
11. ¿Cuánto tiempo diario dedicas a las redes sociales?
 1. 1h o menos
 2. 2h-3h
 3. 4h-5h
 4. 6h o más

12. (anuncio Storytelling rafa nadal) Tras observar este cortometraje, ¿cuál dirías que ha sido el impacto que te ha generado? (escala 1: muy negativo; a 5: muy positivo)
13. ¿Cómo de identificado se siente con la marca personal? (escala 1 a 5)
14. (anuncio convencional rafa nadal) Tras observar este cortometraje, ¿cuál dirías que ha sido el impacto que te ha generado? (escala 1: muy negativo; a 5: muy positivo)
15. ¿Cómo de identificado se siente con la marca personal? (escala 1 a 5)
16. Tras haber observado ambos cortometrajes, ¿en qué marca preferirías comprar?
 1. Nike
 2. Kia
 3. Ambas por igual
 4. Ninguna
17. ¿Consideras el Storytelling una técnica manipuladora utilizada por las marcas personales para conseguir más ventas? (sí o no)
18. En el caso de que no, ¿por qué?
19. En el caso de que no, ¿por qué?
20. ¿Sabrías identificar cuándo el Storytelling de una marca personal es auténtico, de cuándo es ficticio o manipulador?
 1. Suelo identificarlo con facilidad
 2. A veces lo diferencio
 3. Me cuesta mucho diferenciarlo
 4. No lo identifico
21. ¿Crees que la autenticidad es un factor importante para el Storytelling de una marca personal? (escala de 1 a 5)
22. ¿Cuánto dirías que las marcas personales reflejan su identidad verdadera de manera online? (escala de 1 a 5)
23. ¿En qué medida dirías que la transparencia en el Storytelling influye en la confianza del consumidor hacia una marca personal? (escala de 1 a 5)
24. ¿Opinas que dar una opinión en redes sociales puede dañar una marca personal? (sí o no)
25. En el caso de que sí, ¿están las marcas personales limitadas por la imagen que deben dar al público?
26. ¿Qué prácticas de Storytelling podrían considerarse manipuladoras desde una perspectiva ética en el contexto de las marcas personales? (pregunta abierta o darles respuestas sugeridas)
 1. Mentir o exagerar hechos
 2. Ocultar información importante
 3. Jugar con emociones
 4. Usar estereotipos negativos o discriminatorios
 5. Manipular datos
 6. Otros (libre respuesta)