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EMOTIONAL SURGE AS A MOTIVATOR OF PERSONAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT

ABSTRACT

The emergence of stress contributes to solving regular problems of adaptation, finding new ways of self-development, and social support. A short-term emotional surge (stress) stimulates the search for new ways of individual human development through ego marketing. Creating a personal brand on social networks is one of the ways to overcome the negative effects of stress. A popular personal brand focuses followers' attention on their personality, promoting self-improvement and personality development.

The main task of this study is to identify the motivational factors of personal brand development and the impact of stress on them. To solve this problem, we conducted an experimental study using a structured interview method with individuals who have created their brands. An a priori power analysis for repeated measures within-subjects analysis of variance was performed to determine the sample size.

At the same time, we conducted a regression analysis of the degree of involvement and trust in personal brands in social networks to determine the objects of the experimental analysis by the interview method. To analyze the effect of audience engagement through post-response, the effect of self-development and self-satisfaction, we ran a linear regression. The obtained data indicate that uncertainty about one's importance in society stimulates the appeal to social support through ego marketing, and stress factors motivate the development of a personal brand.

Keywords: personal brand, ego marketing, self-development, audience engagement

JEL Classification: M30, M31, M12

INTRODUCTION

The key issue of this study is the assessment of the importance of emotions on personality brand development; how an emotional surge (stress) stimulates the search for new ways of individual marketing; how this emotion can affect personal brand formation. Stress, as a state of psychological and physical tension in response to external influences, can cause difficult situations and emotional factors (both positive and negative). Stress helps to adapt to environmental changes, but it can cause negative health consequences.

Short-term, one-time stress is a powerful motivating factor. In response to a stimulus, the human body produces three hormones: cortisone, adrenaline and norepinephrine, which activate cells of the immune system. Thanks to this, the following short-term processes are activated in the body: memory improves; the level of immunity increases; the rate of tissue regeneration increases; intellectual abilities are activated; the endurance of the nervous system increases; the work of the senses improves, etc.

The main causes of stress are (1) unsatisfied needs, low self-esteem and perfectionism; (2) dissatisfaction with one's professional activity; (3) difficult family relationships; (4) conflicts, phobias, problems in communication, threats of various nature, insoluble problems, unfavourable social relations in the team; (5) change of place of residence or work, social or family status; (6) psycho-emotional tension caused by risk, the novelty of the situation or its uncertainty, etc.

The main task of this study is to identify the motivational factors of personal brand development and the impact of stress on them. Building on the identified prior research, the current study examines how stress (or other emotions) may influence the effectiveness—and perhaps even the counter-effectiveness—of a widely used persuasion heuristic in personal brand development. Given that stress promotes an adaptive strategy for relating to others, a personal brand that includes appeals for social support in social networks is likely to be particularly effective when people are in a state of uncertainty about their future fate. In summary, the following hypotheses of this study can be identified:

1. *H1: Uncertainty about one's importance in society stimulates the appeal to social support through ego marketing.*
2. *H2: Stressful factors are a motivating factor in the development of a personal brand.*

LITERATURE REVIEW

The problems of the formation and development of a personal brand are the subject of research by a large number of scientists and researchers of social networks. Applying branding principles to individuals, marketers have studied the concept of a personal brand as “a well-known person who is the target of marketing communications efforts” (Thomson, 2006, p. 104). This has spurred a stream of research on people as brands, examining human brands such as academics (Close, Moulard, & Monroe, 2011), celebrities (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015), and politicians (Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015). However, this study only looked at specific professional fields, whereas personal branding motivations indicate that anyone can create a personal brand (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Shepherd, 2005).

The significant increase in scholarly attention to personal branding, especially over the past 10 years, has given this contemporary phenomenon a broad if fragmented, academic presence. Shau and Gilley (2003), investigating self-presentation in a Web 1.0 environment, and Thomson (2006), investigating why consumers form strong attachments to human brands, published the first scholarly articles to empirically examine human brands. In the past few years, there has been a growing body of empirical research in this area (e.g., Parmentier et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., in press), but it remains scarce. Several frameworks of personal branding have also been proposed, some based on these empirical studies (e.g. Khedher, 2019) and some on more conceptual work (e.g. Bendisch et al., 2013). But the complex structure of personal branding, especially from the position of self-affirmation for social recognition, is still very lacking for academic purposes. Moreover, the key question of whether science can “bring self-marketing and personal branding back to enthusiasts” (Shepherd, 2005, p. 12) still awaits an academically sound answer.

Several theoretical perspectives on coping with stressors (Kendler, Kuhn, Vittum, Prescott, & Riley, 2005) suggest that individuals make efforts to cope with various coping strategies. Ego-marketing can be understood as a mechanism for coping with stress (Guinn & Russell, 1987; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989).

In our research, we follow the assumption that the occurrence of stress contributes to solving regular problems of adaptation and finding new ways of self-affirmation through ego marketing. This problem is not new. Early in human development, major problems of social adaptation included mutual protection from enemies, the creation of families, the organization of the social structure, and the avoidance of diseases (see Kenrick, Lee, and Butner 2003). Therefore, the strategy of seeking support and maintaining recognition in society is evolutionarily related to successful self-defence, which is an increase in personal safety. For example, when a social animal is threatened by a predator, that animal gathers closer to its group; this strategy increases survival as the animal becomes less conspicuous to the predator (Griskevicius, V., Goldstein, N. J., Mortensen, C. R., Sandi, J. M., Cialdini, R.B., & Kenrick, D.T., 2009). When people are forced to feel discomfort or rejection in society, they are more likely to side with the social majority.

Applying such an evolutionary approach, it is important to investigate the following question: Given that stressors elicit a need for self-actualization in people of all cultures, what might be the adaptive function of this effect? Emotions take an active part in stimulating the human motor system, which creates the need to solve various types of adaptation tasks. When the motivational system is stimulated, it sets off a chain reaction between perception, cognition, and behaviour that promotes successful adaptive problem-solving (Griskevicius, V., Goldstein, N. J., Mortensen, C. R., Sandi, J. M., Cialdini, R.B., & Kenrick, D.T., 2009). That is, the emotional effects that cause affect should depend not only on the specific type of affective stress state but also on the extent to which self-development and social support contribute to or hinder the resolution of recurrent ego marketing problems.

We tend to believe that a personal brand as a carrier of unique knowledge and professional skills can be defined as a product of public perception. This is confirmed by the fact that it is related to the created image, to which consumers and society as a whole react (Davidova, Sokolova, & Zariņa, 2014). The elements of a person's brand from the point of view of the brand identity model are considered in Aaker's (1997) model. According to D. Aaker, identity is based on the essence

of the brand. Therefore, a person's identity is related to the fundamental characteristics that make him who he is. The perception of an individual by other people is an important element in the formation of a personal brand. The stronger the public recognition, the more influence a person-brand will have. Thus, a personal brand is formed as a product of interaction with other people. The more people are involved and trust a person's brand, the faster and more effectively their personal brand will develop. Thus, personal branding is a competent step-by-step plan for personal promotion and development.

However, the study of motivational factors in the development of a personal brand as a tool for solving the problem of insecurity about one's importance in society remains unexplored. We assume that stress factors are a motivating factor in the development of a personal brand, which allows you to overcome stress and gain public recognition.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main task of this study is to identify the motivational factors of personal brand development and the impact of stress on them. The object of this study is to assess the influence of insecurity about one's importance in social development on the level of need for social support. We also explore how the crisis of personal development affects the appeal of attention deficit through ego marketing.

METHODS

To determine sample size, we performed an a priori power analysis for repeated measures analysis of variance within subjects. In parallel, we conducted a regression analysis of the degree of involvement and trust in personal brands in social networks to determine the objects of the experimental analysis using the structured interview method. The following methods were used to establish confirmability, validity, transferability, and reliability during qualitative data analysis: expert debriefing; coding etc. To analyze the qualitative research data, we ran a linear regression to analyze the effect of audience engagement through post-response, self-development effect, and self-satisfaction.

Previous research by A

To determine the sample size needed to conduct an experimental study using respondent interviews, we applied a priori power analysis to a 2×2 within-subjects repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), and we used SPSS software to estimate the sample size. The following parameters were defined as constant: power 0.8; an effect size of 0.40 (large effect size) and an alpha of 0.05. The result of the a priori analysis was an indicator of 19 people. This means that we need to recruit at least 19 respondents for our study.

Previous research by B

In parallel with the a priori analysis, we conducted a regression analysis of the degree of involvement and trust in personal brands in social networks. To do this, we first randomly interviewed 48 university students and asked them to list the social networks they spend the most time on, the bloggers they like to follow, and whose blogs they find interesting. This allowed us to compile a list of 264 blogs from 3 social networks: YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Our next step was to attract another group of participants, a total of 35 people, to fill out a questionnaire measuring the degree of trust and involvement in personal blogs through personal branding in social networks and to rate awareness of these people's blogs (using a 7-point scale Likert). At the same time, we divided the blogs selected in the first preliminary study into three categories: microblogs (up to 10,000 followers), mini-blogs (10-100,000 followers) and macro-blogs (over 100,000 followers). Paired sample t-test results showed that all had significant differences in the impact and awareness parameters: microblogs $M_c = 5.789$, $S.D. = 0.617$, $M_w = 2.659$, $S.D. = 1.281$, $t(1,35) = -7.435$, $p < 0.001$; midi-blogs $M_c = 6.134$, $S.D. = 0.672$, $M_w = 2.567$, $S.D. = 0.897$, $t(1,35) = -11.568$, $p < 0.001$; macro blogs $M_c = 2.986$, standard deviation. = 1.138, $M_w = 4.936$, $S.D. = 1.113$, $t(1,35) = 5.084$, $p < 0.001$. A follow-up paired sample t-test on familiarity revealed that subjects were more familiar with midi bloggers than macro bloggers $MM_{\text{Midi}} = 4.971$, $S.D.M_{\text{Midi}} = 1.723$, $MM_{\text{Macro}} = 5.154$, $S.D.M_{\text{Macro}} = 1.351$, $t(1, 35) = -2.114$, $p = 0.048$, and to trust microblogs more than macro blogs $MM_{\text{Micro}} = 4,169$, $S.D.M_{\text{Micro}} = 1,629$, $MM_{\text{Macro}} = 5,018$, $S.D.M_{\text{Macro}} = 1,235$, $t(1,35) = -4,647$, $p = 0.015$. Thus, based on the validation process described above, we considered awareness (midi blogs) and trust (microblogs) to be the two most important descriptors of personal development through personal branding on social media. Therefore, we chose microblogs and midi blogs for further experiments.

The main methodology

Respondents were selected from bloggers identified by students in a previous study. The selection was based on the degree of involvement and trust. Therefore, we chose 7 microblogs and 19 midi blogs for interviews. Coverage and page analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of respondents. (Source: the study is based on regression analysis of the degree of involvement and trust in personal brands in social networks)

Participants	Number of followers (K)	Gender	First publication	Reasons	Social Network
Interviewee 1	1	F	03.2020	Job Loose	Instagram
Interviewee 2	1,5	M	05.2019	Job Loose	YouTube
Interviewee 3	2,7	M	08.2018	Motherhood	Instagram
Interviewee 4	3,4	F	02.2020	Job Loose	Instagram
Interviewee 5	5	F	11.2015	Motherhood	Tik-Tok
Interviewee 6	7,8	F	09.2021	Self-promotion	YouTube
Interviewee 7	9,3	M	04.2017	Hobby	Instagram
Interviewee 8	9,5	F	03.2021	Promotion	Instagram
Interviewee 9	23,6	M	09.2014	Self-promotion	YouTube
Interviewee 10	37,5	F	03.2017	Job Loose	YouTube
Interviewee 11	48,7	M	08.2018	Self-promotion	Instagram
Interviewee 12	51,1	F	05.2017	Motherhood	Instagram
Interviewee 13	65	F	05.2013	Hobby	Instagram
Interviewee 14	76,8	F	01.2021	Motherhood	YouTube
Interviewee 15	77,2	M	03.2016	Job Loose	Tik-Tok
Interviewee 16	78,5	F	07.2020	Motherhood	Instagram
Interviewee 17	79,8	F	03.2019	Motherhood	Tik-Tok
Interviewee 18	82	F	01.2019	Motherhood	YouTube
Interviewee 19	83,4	M	05.2017	Job Loose	YouTube
Interviewee 20	86,5	F	09.2019	Self-promotion	Instagram
Interviewee 21	93,2	F	03.2016	Motherhood	Instagram
Interviewee 22	94	M	07.2016	Job Loose	Instagram
Interviewee 23	98,6	F	11.2020	Self-promotion	Instagram
Interviewee 24	99	F	08.2019	Motherhood	YouTube
Interviewee 25	99,6	M	06.2018	Job Loose	Instagram
Interviewee 26	102	F	01.2017	Motherhood	Instagram

To assess the motivation factors for blogging (at the stage of creating a personal brand), structured interview questions were developed, which included qualifying questions on a 5-point Likert scale to assess the level of self-satisfaction that results from blogging. The Likert scale consists of 5 different degrees of liking, namely: very dissatisfied VU (1), dissatisfied U (2), neutral N (3), satisfied S (4) and very satisfied BC (5). We asked the following questions: estimate how interesting your publications are to the target audience; when publishing new posts, determine the level of your influence on the opinion of readers; assess the level of growth of your personal brand from the moment of creation of the blog to today. The main issue of our conversation was to find out the motivational factors for creating a blog, among which stress factors were identified.

During the interviews, we encouraged respondents to provide descriptive and narrative responses to link the latent need for self-promotion through blogging and the objective reason for blogging. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Each interview lasted an average of one hour, and the results of the interviews yielded 347 pages of recorded data.

To increase confirmability, the transcripts were read through the interview script several times. We cross-checked interview results by summarizing and reviewing each other's notes to avoid misunderstandings and missing important data. We then

applied a coding system to identify relationships between dependent and independent variables (Hyeyoon Bae, Sang Hyun Jo, Semi Han, Euehun Lee, 2018).

As we read the data, we continually looked for the overall meaning of the information and for opportunities to reflect on its overall meaning. From the above procedure, a common denominator was found in the general content of the qualitative data. The micro- and midi-bloggers interviewed for this study had similar and different blogging needs, and they distinguished between 'self-promotion' and 'audience engagement'. Further, the collected transcript data were divided into two stages. First, they were reclassified as self-improvement-oriented behaviour. Second, this study focused on reader benefit.

RESULTS

The results of the qualification research by the interview method

Based on the previous analysis and a stress theory perspective, it is suggested that midi- and mini-bloggers engage in ego marketing to satisfy their social affiliation needs. This study identified a behavioural mechanism related to the need for help in response to negative personality stereotypes. During the interview, respondents provided descriptive and narrative responses in which we assessed the latent need for self-promotion through blogging and the objective reason for blogging (stress factor).

Although the questions did not concern the need for self-realization and self-affirmation, respondents' answers often came down to these problems. In communication with subscribers, respondents expressed and emphasized that they want to share their own experiences, show their achievements, and change people's thinking. Each respondent repeatedly noted: "I want to share the experience" and distinguished the usefulness and interest for subscribers through their own mistakes and ways to overcome them. The phrases "to show your own life", "to share your experience", "to motivate other people", etc. were often used. Thus, there was a clear tendency to want to be useful and interesting; involved in the community; get recognition This indicates that the main stimulating factor in the development of a personal brand was the development of personality and recognition in society.

The desire to be useful and valuable to an audience of followers has been shown to have three dimensions: physiological, individual, and social (Barnhart & Penaloza, 2013). First, the physiological dimension of popularity is closely related to biology and indicates whether a person is satisfied with his appearance and whether he is ready for criticism. The bloggers who participated in this study claimed that the blog helped them get rid of complexes about their appearance and they became more confident in themselves. They also noted that they are proud of their ability to show their flaws and convince others that everyone's ideals are different.

As for the individual and social aspects, the interviewed bloggers (in particular, 7 people) claimed that the blog helped them deal with their problems, allowed them to look at themselves differently and understand their own needs. Although it is often mentioned that the blog is not important in life, one can find numerous indirect strategies to protect against the need to spread one's opinion and value to blog readers.

We also asked about the life circumstances that prompted respondents to create a personal blog. Among the answers, the following were most often found: change of family status (motherhood or cohabitation) - 38% of respondents; job loss - 29% of respondents; the need to promote one's own business or one's own experience in a certain field - 24%; a childhood hobby that turned into a permanent business - 7%; and other reasons - 2%.

Thus, as a result of the survey of respondents, our assumption (**H1**) about turning to social support due to uncertainty about its significance in social development was confirmed.

The results of a quantitative study on a 5-point rating scale

We ran a linear regression to analyze the effect of audience engagement (via reactions to posts) on blogger self-affirmation. We conducted a separate analysis to assess the effect of self-affirmation on the blogger's personality profile. And they also analyzed the impact of an individual assessment of personal development on satisfaction with running one's blog.

By hypotheses 1 and 2, we traced the chain of interdependencies of the factors of involvement of the audience of subscribers to the blogger's self-affirmation; the blogger's self-affirmation by his self-development, and the blogger's self-development by satisfaction with blogging (Figure 1).

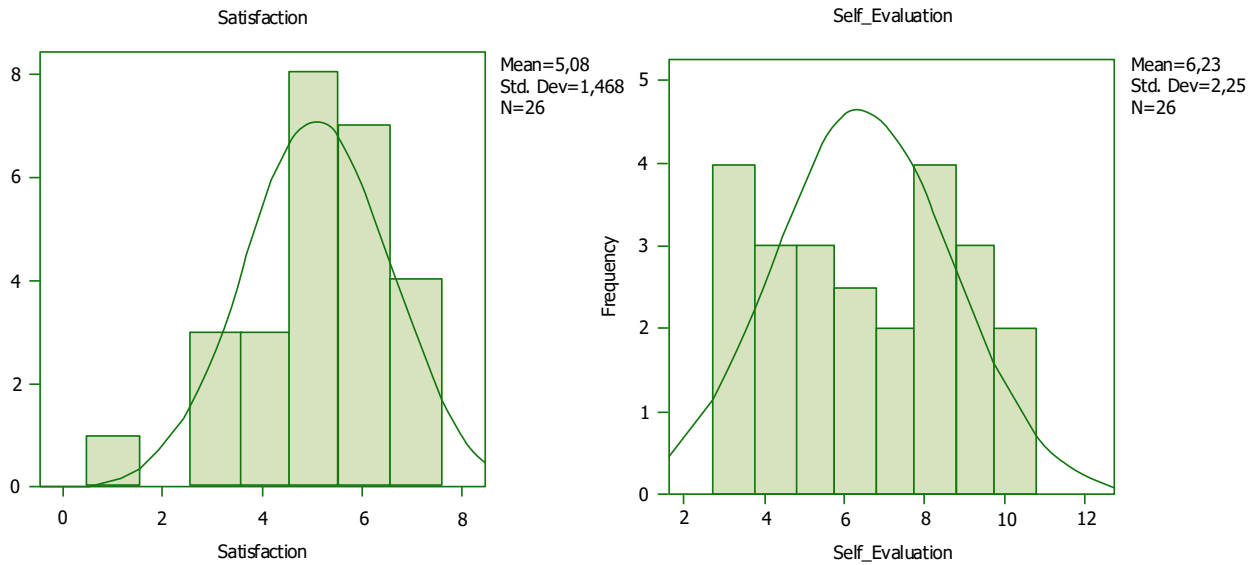


Figure 1. Distribution of indicators of blogger Self-Evaluation and satisfaction with blogging. (Source: own calculations based on research conducted using SPSS software)

That is, the significant effect of assessing the level of self-affirmation as a result of interaction with subscribers is $F(1,6) = 32.23$; $p = 0.008$. An extremely strong significant effect was found when analyzing the level of influence of self-affirmation on the assessment of the level of self-development $F(1,6) = 37.795$; $p=0.003$. The effect of self-development assessment on satisfaction with the blogging process also showed an extremely strong significant effect $F(1,6) = 7.663$; $p=0.001$ (Tables 2-3).

Table 2. Reliability Statistics of self-affirmation, self-development and followers Involvement.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.963	3

Table 3. ANOVA analysis of the significant effect of the level of self-affirmation as a result of interaction with subscribers; and the influence of the level of self-affirmation on the assessment of self-development. (Source: own calculations based on research conducted using SPSS software)

Self-affirmation					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	21.682	3	7.227	32.230	.008
Within Groups	4.933	22	.224		
Total	26.615	25			
Self-development					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	20.100	3	6.700	37.795	.003
Within Groups	3.900	22	.177		
Total	24.000	25			
Followers Involvement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.830	3	.943	7.663	.001
Within Groups	2.708	22	.123		
Total	5.538	25			

These data supported our hypothesis (**H2**) that a personal development crisis should make attention deficit appeals more persuasive than when no such appeals are present. That is, the involvement of subscribers in the blogging process motivates the blogger to feel satisfied with himself and his development. That is, stress factors in the short term are a motivating factor in the development of a personal brand.

The relationship between the variables studied in **H1** and **H2** and the degree of their interdependence, namely: self-affirmation as a result of interaction with subscribers is; the level of influence of self-affirmation on the assessment of the level of self-development; self-development on satisfaction with the blogging process is shown in Figure 2.

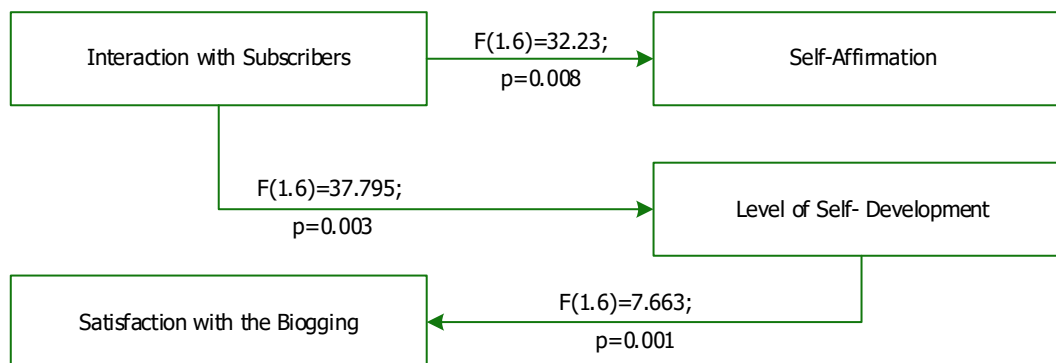


Figure 2. The relationship between the research variables and the effect of their interdependencies. (Source: own calculations based on research conducted using SPSS software)

DISCUSSION

In support of H1 and H2, the conducted interviews demonstrate that stress is a powerful factor of motivation and an incentive for finding new ways of development. This was confirmed by the participants of our study, identifying the primary reasons for blogging: a change in social status; job loss; the need to promote experience or domestic products. These reasons are also stress factors in humans. These are kind of turning points on the life path that stimulate the search for new opportunities. Of course, we realize that blogging is only a distant example of realizing the need for self-development through the prism of social relevance.

Also, an important result of our research was a conscious assessment of the importance of a blog for the formation of a personal brand. This awareness manifests itself through a chain of interrelationships of target audience engagement, self-affirmation, self-development, and personal satisfaction. Each of the elements of this chain of interconnection has a direct proportional dependence.

Importantly, although this study provided a better test of our proposed chain of relationships by critically analyzing individual participation in social development, it used limited exposures that occurred over a short period. If the study had been conducted over a longer period using a temporal comparison panel analysis in which participants had different numbers of conceptually related traits, the increase in significance should have been more pronounced.

CONCLUSIONS

Manifestations of stress have a double meaning for a person. On the one hand, it hurts the personality and reduces the motivation for personal development. On the other hand, stress helps to adapt to environmental changes. The main causes of stress are unmet needs and low self-esteem; dissatisfaction with one's professional activity; change of marital status, etc. The same reasons encourage people to search for new socially significant ways of self-development. One example of such actualization of the personality is the formation of a personal brand through the creation and maintenance of an individual blog on social networks. The emotional consequences of affect should depend not only on the specific type of affective stress but also on the extent to which self-development and social support facilitate or hinder the resolution of recurring adjustment problems.

A personal brand as a product of public perception is formed through interaction with other people. The more people engage and trust a person's brand, the faster and more effectively their personal brand will grow. A personal brand focuses on how a person's skills, motivations and interests are integrated into a single image that manifests itself through loyalty

and recognition, as well as self-development and self-affirmation. In this case, personal branding is a competent step-by-step plan for personal promotion and development.

Our study confirmed that confidence in one's importance in social development should make appeals for social support more persuasive than when such appeals do not come. However, the crisis of personal development makes appeals to attention deficit more convincing than when there are no such appeals.

These findings contribute to recent research on the importance of social media for personal branding. Previous studies have focused on investigating the impact of information broadcast through personal branding in social networks on the public's perception of the person broadcasting this information. Our findings add to this work by suggesting that social recognition also has a significant impact on personal blog development. This discovery indicates that conceptual interdependence is a confirmation of the evolutionary dependence of the individual and society and the need for leadership in it.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Conceptualization: *Yevhen Krykavskyy*

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ЕМОЦІЙНИЙ СПЛЕСК ЯК МОТИВАТОР РОЗВИТКУ ПЕРСОНАЛЬНОГО БРЕНДУ

Виникнення стресу сприяє вирішенню регулярних проблем адаптації, пошукові нових методів саморозвитку, соціальної підтримки. Короткочасний емоційний сплеск (стрес) стимулює пошук нових шляхів індивідуального розвитку

людини за допомогою его-маркетингу. Створення особистого бренду в соціальних мережах – один зі способів подолати негативний вплив стресу. Популярний персональний бренд фокусує увагу підписників на їхній особистості, сприяючи самовдосконаленню та розвитку особистості.

Основним завданням дослідження є виявлення мотиваційних факторів розвитку персонального бренду та впливу стресу на них. Щоб вирішити цю проблему, ми провели експериментальне дослідження методом структурованого інтерв'ю з особами, які створили власні бренди. Для визначення розміру вибірки було проведено апріорний аналіз потужності для повторних вимірювань дисперсійного аналізу в межах суб'єктів.

Водночас для визначення об'єктів експериментального аналізу методом інтерв'ю ми провели регресійний аналіз ступеня залученості та довіри до персональних брендів у соціальних мережах. Щоб проаналізувати ефект залучення аудиторії через пост-відповідь, ефект саморозвитку та самозадоволення, ми запустили лінійну регресію. Отримані дані свідчать про те, що невпевненість у власній значимості в суспільстві стимулює звернення до соціальної підтримки через его-маркетинг, а стресові фактори мотивують розвиток особистого бренду.

Ключові слова: персональний бренд, его-маркетинг, саморозвиток, залучення аудиторії

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