Universidade de Aveiro
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JOSÉ MARIA PORTUGAL AZEVEDO GONÇALVES PREZA

CRISTINA FERREIRA: CASO DE ESTUDO SOBRE INDIVÍDUOS COMO MARCAS E AUTOGESTÃO DA CARREIRA

CRISTINA FERREIRA: A CASE STUDY ON INDIVIDUALS AS BRANDS AND CAREER SELF-MANAGEMENT

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Dissertação apresentada à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Gestão, realizada sob a orientação científica da Doutora Nina Katarzyna Szczygiel, Professora Auxiliar do Departamento de Economia, Gestão, Engenharia Industrial e Turismo da Universidade de Aveiro

This dissertation is dedicated to all those who see beyond the fog, the storm and the rain, and who, unwaveringly, tenaciously and tirelessly continue to push through, regardless of whether it is Sirocco, or Zephyr, Meltemi, or Bora, Haboob, or Tramontane.

"- *Computers aren't paintings.*
*- F*** you.*"

Excerpt from a scene of the movie "*Steve Jobs*"(2015), directed by Danny Boyle – Universal Pictures.

o júri

presidente

Prof. Doutor Jorge Humberto Fernandes Mota
Professor Auxiliar em Regime Laboral, Universidade de Aveiro

vogais

Prof. Doutora Maria Jorge S. Almeida Rama Ferro
Professora Auxiliar, Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação da Universidade de Coimbra

Prof. Professora Doutora Nina Katarzyna Szczygiel
Professora Auxiliar, Universidade de Aveiro

agradecimentos

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palavras-chave

marca humana, marca pessoal, indivíduos como marcas, gestão da carreira, gestão da carreira individual, autogestão da carreira, Cristina Ferreira

resumo

A evolução inevitável da humanidade provocou numerosas mudanças na experiência humana, em especial na forma como diferentes fatores (por exemplo, económicos, sociais, tecnológicos, etc.) obrigaram as pessoas a reorganizarem-se a si próprias e às suas carreiras para resistirem a um contexto laboral em constante mutação. O cenário profissional contemporâneo, em que quase todos têm acesso a ferramentas de promoção online (e.g., redes sociais), podendo-se assim tornar uma marca, exige aos indivíduos que se comercializem e se organizem de forma autónoma e como empresas. Consequentemente, a marca pessoal e a gestão da carreira individual são indissociáveis na atual tentativa de obter sucesso profissional. No entanto, também é possível tornar-se uma celebridade, expandindo o seu alcance e evoluindo de uma marca pessoal para uma marca humana. Embora estes tópicos sejam normalmente aplicados no contexto de modelos de trabalho por projeto e de sistemas de emprego temporário, ambos os temas podem ser aplicados a vários sectores, como o entretenimento, a economia, a política, etc. Ademais, embora *personal branding* se tenha tornado um conceito significativo na literatura nos últimos anos, este tema desenvolveu-se numa área de investigação dispersa e fragmentada que engloba uma miríade de definições e fronteiras conceptuais. Relativamente à gestão da carreira individual, devido à sua novidade, a investigação é ainda escassa. A literatura sobre ambos os temas, é ainda mais rara e dispersa no contexto português. Consequentemente, este estudo de caso qualitativo centrou-se na apresentadora de televisão portuguesa Cristina Ferreira e, procurou compreender as estratégias de autogestão de carreira e de gestão da marca humana que Cristina Ferreira tem utilizado ao longo da sua carreira, a importância da sua personalidade no desenvolvimento da sua carreira e marca humana, e a importância de *stakeholders* nestes processos. Os resultados desta investigação sugerem que os indivíduos são continuamente e profundamente influenciados tanto pela sua própria personalidade como pelos *stakeholders* que os rodeiam. Adicionalmente, verificou-se também que a autenticidade desempenha um papel fundamental tanto na marca como na carreira. Este estudo contribui para uma melhor compreensão do processo de gestão de carreira e de gestão de marca humana.

keywords

human brand, personal brand, individuals as brands, career management, individual career management, career self-management, Cristina Ferreira

abstract

The unavoidable evolution of mankind has brought forward numerous changes in the human experience, particularly how different factors (e.g., economic, social, technological, etc) have forced individuals to rearrange themselves and one's careers to endure in a rapidly changing workplace landscape. Today's dynamic work environment, where virtually everyone has access to online promotion tools (e.g., social media), and can thus become a brand, demands individuals to autonomously market and manage themselves as companies. Therefore, personal branding and individual career management go hand in hand in today's quest for success. Yet, one can also become a celebrity by expanding one's reach and evolving from a personal brand to a human brand. Although these topics are usually applied in the context of project-based work structures and more temporary employment systems, both subject matters can be applied to several industries such as entertainment, finance, politics, etc. Moreover, even if personal branding has become an important concept in management literature in recent years, this topic has developed into dispersed and fragmented area research encompassing miscellany of definitions and conceptual boundaries. As for individual career management, due to its novelty, research is still scarce. Literature on both topics is even more rare and far between in the context of Portugal. Consequently, this qualitative case study centred on Portuguese television personality Cristina Ferreira and sought to understand the career self-management and human brand management strategies Cristina Ferreira has used throughout her career, the importance of her personality in the development of her career and human brand, and the importance of stakeholders in these processes. The results of this research suggest that individuals are continuously and profoundly influenced by both their own personality and the stakeholders that surround them. In addition, it was also found that authenticity plays a key role in both one's brand and career. This study contributes to a better understanding of the process of career management and human brand management.

Index

Acronym List

ICM	Individual Career Management
CSM	Career Self-management
HRM	Human Resources Management
OCM	Organizational Career Management
HR	Human Resources

1. Introduction

Over the last few decades, sweeping shifts have been continuously taking place in society and in the world. Such changes, driven by different factors (e.g., economic, social, technological, environmental, etc) have altered the way we see and approach both work and ourselves, resulting in an endlessly complex and chaotic landscape.

The transition from an industrial economy to an information-based economy, the mutations globalisation imposed on organisations, the new emerging arenas of competition, the rapidly evolving information technologies, and new social circumstances (e.g., increasing life spans, and consequent work lives), along with a multitude of other factors, originated a new and unpredictable employment context characterised by an increase in job competition and the unpredictability of careers. In such a background, the spread of neoliberal capitalism reinforced ideas of individualism and neoliberalism, such as the expanding belief that the responsibility for the career progression of the individual does not fall on the organization but on the individual alone. Hereafter, one is now a corporate business responsible not only for managing oneself correctly but also for maintain one's competitive advantage and skills, originating a wave of "forced entrepreneurship". Now that individuals are forced to create work for themselves, making use of a recent and inexpensive technological tool (i.e., the Internet), and taking charge of their own career management (by developing themselves without support from their organizations), individual career management (ICM), also called career self-management (CSM), begins to replace the traditional career.

In such workplace culture, where old jobs and occupations are being eliminated, new jobs and occupations are being created and taken up by those who are able to adapt to such complexity, the competition for a position is no different from the competition between products or services for attention in saturated markets. Thereby, much in line with an enterprise, the individual must also master one's own brand and marketing strategies, originating the phenomenon of personal branding. This auxiliary tool to better compete and offer one's abilities, skills, and performance, was democratized, in part, by the explosion of the Web 2.0 and social media. These tools, in turn, allowed every branded individual the possibility to have one's network brimming with other branded individuals eager to implement their own branding strategies, expand their skills and forge useful alliances to conquer this new reality.

Nevertheless, one is not constrained to be a personal brand for ever. In today's increasingly fame and attention-driven society, where attention is vital for any media, advertising, or public relations campaign wanting to break through the cluttered society of symbols which values image over substance, branded individuals can metamorphose into a human brand. Human brands, concept where celebrities are included, can hold tremendous influence and power and are present in every sector and aspect of today's society, from the entertainment industry to the world of politics.

Although there is some literature on the aforementioned subjects, only rarely does it approach and explain the full spectrum of branded individuals (from personal brand to human brand). There is also a considerable research gap regarding the merge of branded individuals and the individual management of careers. Within the Portuguese context, such research gaps are even more substantial as any literature on the subject is practically non-existent.

Therefore, this research project seeks to shed some light on these subjects, and in particularly, in the context of Portugal, by aiming to ascertain what approaches television personality Cristina Ferreira has adopted to manage her career and human brand throughout her career. To this end, the present case study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What career self-management strategies has Cristina Ferreira employed throughout her career?
- What human brand management strategies has Cristina Ferreira used throughout her career?
- How did her personality influence her career and human brand?
- How did her stakeholders influence her career and human brand?

In order to bring forward answers to these research questions, the present work is divided into seven main chapters. The first section comprises the introduction, which contextualises the subjects, the research question and objectives, as well as the structure of the work. The second and third chapter consist of the literature review, presenting the research concerning the main concepts and theories covering the two themes of this study – “Career Management” and “Individuals as Brands”, respectively. The fourth section briefly introduces the subject of this case study – the Portuguese television personality Cristina Ferreira – providing some context about her and her career. The fifth chapter focuses on the research methodology, which is based on a quantitative method. The sixth section addresses the presentation of the results, which are discussed in the subsequent chapter. In the last chapter, a brief conclusion is provided, as well as the study’s limitations and some suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Career Management

2.1.1. Definition and context

Up until some decades ago, careers were traditionally based on the relationship between the individual and an employing organization (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). This employer - employee relationship consisted in an exchange of loyalty for the firm's implicit promise of job security (Rousseau, 1989) and would usually take place within stable organizational structures (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009)(e.g., (Levinson, 1978; Super, 1957)) where the individual was given the possibility of progressing and obtaining greater extrinsic rewards (Rosenbaum, 1979). These models of linear careers were popularized throughout the 1950s and 1960s as a result of economic and workplace environments characterized by the introduction and growth of new technologies as well as social norms and structures that tended to support the male-as-breadwinner family structure (Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007). However, numerous and profound changes have been taking place, continuously contesting the established ideas about work and careers and defying the way work is structured and organized (Arnold & Jackson, 1997; Jackson, Arnold, Nicholson, & Watts, 1996; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Predominantly in industrialized countries, these changes include economic, social and environmental shifts such as the rapid globalization, and consequent increasing globalized competition and economy; the changing organizational structures; the blurring of organizational, industry, and occupational boundaries; the expanding use of outsourcing, part-time and temporary employees; the increased diversity in the workforce; and the rapid advancement of technology; among others (Arnold & Jackson, 1997; Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019; Hirschi & Koen, 2021). As a result, and also due to mass layoffs and credit crunches, there was a rise in "forced entrepreneurship" (Richtel & Wortham, 2009), when many individuals created work for themselves, using the Internet as an inexpensive tool to find business partners, market their products, and connect with suppliers (Carraher, 2005). Many other workers, especially older ones, were forced to reconsider career paths (Browning & Silver, 2008), by being laid off, shifted around within their firms in response to changes in organizational strategies or by being forced to postpone retirement plans owing to financial problems (Browning & Silver, 2008; Johnson, Soto, & Zedlewski, 2008; Wang, Adams, Beehr, & Shultz, 2009).

Concurrently, some individuals are also adapting their career behaviours and attitudes to new circumstances, namely, increasing life spans, and hence work lives; changing family structures (the increasing number of dual-career couples, single working parents, employees with eldercare responsibilities…); and intrinsic need for personal learning, development, and growth (Hall D. T., 2004). These individuals would, for example, purposely take a break from paid professional activity to become the primary caregiver for children or elderly relatives or to expand their education or gain valuable skills through volunteer work, in order to build their resume and ease their re-entry into the workforce (Belkin, 2008; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Others might act on changing needs at midlife (Power S. J., 2009) and/or individual reflection and re-evaluation (Ibarra, 2003) by becoming more self-directed in their careers, through the self-initiation of international careers (Tharenou, 2009) or by choosing lateral, or even downward, job positions to fulfil personal needs (Hall, Gardner, & Baugh, 2008). As a consequence, individuals are increasingly more driven by their own desires than by organizational career management practices (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

In this new work context where old jobs and occupations are being eliminated, new jobs and occupations are being created (Arntz, Gregory, & Zierahn, 2016) and those who are unable to deal with unpredictable and dynamic career environments and adapt themselves to career complexity usually fail to have a great career (Gunkel, Schlaegel, Langella, & Peluchette, 2010; Hirschi A. , 2018; Zhu, et al., 2013); some have argued that the term "career" is obsolete (Arnold & Jackson, 1997). Even though contemporary scholars tend to define careers much more broadly (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989; Baruch & Rosenstein, 1992; Hall, 2002; Hall, 1996b; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009), there is no agreement on a common definition of career (Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Based on their review of literature, Sullivan and Baruch (2009) define the concept of career as "an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organizations, that form a unique pattern over the individual's life span" (p. 2). This definition not only acknowledges both physical movements, such as "between levels, jobs, employers, occupations, and industries", as well as the interpretation of the individual, "including his or her perceptions of career events" (e.g., viewing job loss as failure vs. as an opportunity for a new beginning), career alternatives (e.g., viewing limited vs. unlimited options), and outcomes (e.g., how one defines career success) (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p. 2). Besides the individual, other factors shape the career, such as national culture, the economy, and the political environment, as well as interpersonal factors, such as relationships with others (e.g., dual-career marriages) (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

2.1.2. Organizational career management versus individual career managements

As most companies value skilled employees and strive to retain them for long-term employment (Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011; Mohsin & Kumar, 2013), career management is considered a vital component of contemporary human resources management (HRM) practices, as it accomplishes both organizational and personal goals (Atkinson, 2002; Barnett & Bradley, 2007; Cappellen & Janssens, 2010; Kong, Cheung, & Zhang, 2010; Sturges, Conway, Guest, & Lifefooghe, 2005). In human resources management literature, career orientations have been a focal point in research (Hirschi & Koen, 2021), being often described in terms of traditional and organization-centred versus new and self-centred, corresponding to "traditional" and "new" forms of career, respectively (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009; Grote & Hall, 2013). The traditional career can be described by upward steps in the organizational hierarchy, in which the employer, through organizational career management (OCM) practices, is responsible for career management and for providing job security for the employees (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). Through these practices, the organization promotes employee development and performance, consequently guaranteeing the long-term availability of skilled and competent employees to reach business goals (Appelbaum, Ayre, & Shapiro, 2002; Lewis & Arnold, 2012; De Vos, Dewettinck, & Buyens, 2008).

Nevertheless, individuals can take charge of their own career management (Hirschi & Koen, 2021), developing themselves without support from their organizations (Quigley & Tymon Jr., 2006). In the literature, this is often called individual career management (ICM) or career self-management (CSM) and arises a new form of career, which is characterized by frequent changes in jobs, organizations and/or occupations (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). Individuals who choose to self-manage their careers tend to focus on occupational goals, prefer long-term career development and seem to be more proactive than those people who do not take action on their own career management (King, 2004; Nie, Lian, & Huang, 2012; Raabe, Frese, & Beehr, 2007). As these proactive behaviours of employees have been shown to foster both individual and organizational success (Bjorklund, Bhatli, & Laakso, 2013; Converse, Pathak, DePaul-Haddock, Gotlib, & Merbedone, 2012; Crant, 2000), the notion of career self-management behaviours is thought to be crucial for human resources (HR) practitioners (Bambacas & Bordia, 2009; Chiaburu, Baker, & Pitariu, 2006). Both concepts will be explored in detail in the next section.

2.1.2.1. Organizational career management

Organizational career management (OCM) consists of practices, programs and activities provided by the organizations in order to develop, manage and support employees' careers (Kong, Cheung, & Zhang, 2010; Verbruggen, Sels, & Forrier, 2007). OCM practices may consist of training and educational opportunities, performance review for career planning, mentoring and career development programs, among other activities (Crawshaw, 2006; Lewis & Arnold, 2012). Previous studies show that OCM practices can influence career satisfaction (Kong, Cheung, & Song, 2012; Chiaburu, Diaz, & De Vos, 2013), strengthen organizational commitment (Bambacas, 2010; Hsiao & Chen, 2012; Morrow, 2011; Shibin, 2006), enhance job involvement (Zhou & Li, 2008) and consequent performance (Rotenberry & Moberg, 2007).

A fundamental tool of OCM is career planning, used by organizations to match their objectives with the individuals' career plans and goals (MacDonald & Arthur, 2005; Mayrhofer, Meyer, Iellatchitch, & Schiffinger, 2004; Tzabbar, Vardi, & Baruch, 2003), comprising, in part, by guaranteeing that their employees acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the future (Martín, Romero, Valle, & Dolan, 2001). In order to learn and develop these expertise (e.g. technical and interpersonal competencies) (McQuade & Maguire, 2005), the organization provides career development programs for employees, which in turn, promote career advancements and sustains their future employability (Kong, Cheung, & Song, 2012; McQuade & Maguire, 2005; Mihail & Elefterie, 2006; Pinnington, 2011; De Vos, De Hauw, & Van de Heijden, 2011). Therefore, career planning is the key which unlocks the career advancements of employees in organizational contexts (Arokiasamy, Ismail, Ahmad, & Othman, 2011).

Although scholars in the beginning of the mid-1990s shifted from a long emphasize on careers within the confines of traditional organizational structures to an increasing focus on careers outside of organizations, OCM and the traditional career path are still relevant (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Several studies have reported that individuals in their samples exhibited a more traditional career path, by presenting infrequent job or firm changes and working in the organization for 10 or more years (Cabrera, 2009; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Sargent & Domberger, 2007; Smith-Ruig, 2009; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Both McDonald, Brown and Bradley (2005) and O'Neil, Bilimoria, and Saatciogle (2004) have found that while most employees, especially women, opted for non-traditional career paths, some still steer their careers by following predictable and ladder-like organizational advancement patterns (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Therefore, different factors such as organizational policies that reward long tenure (e.g., 3 months of paid leave after 10 years of continuous service), personal attributes or industry characteristics might determine the career path adopted (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). In the film industry, for example, while many individuals have short tenures, others follow a more traditional career path by moving from personal assistant directly to producer, with scarce roles in between, and remaining with the same production company even when they become producers themselves and have the opportunity to establish their own enterprise (Skilton & Bravo, 2008; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

2.1.2.2. Individual career management/career self-management

While many organizations try to adapt to environmental changes by implementing organizational strategies (such as restructuring and downsizing) without losing profitability and competitiveness (Gustavsson, 2012; Lee & Corbett, 2006; Zhao, Rust, McKinley, & Edwards, 2010), a transformation in career management practices is noticeable (Gustavsson, 2012; Muňoz-Bullon & Sanchez-Bueno, 2010; Sheaffer, Carmeli, Steiner-Revivo, & Zionit, 2009). There is an expanding belief that the responsibility for the career progression of the individual does not fall on the organization but on the individual alone (Clarke, 2008; Enache, Sallán, Simo, & Fernandez, 2013). This idea of encouraging employees to remain employable and marketable by managing their own careers is closely linked to the literature on career self-management – CSM –, also called individual career management – ICM (King, 2004; Mihail, 2008; De Vos & Segers, 2013). By being the central actors in self-career management, the employees develop an increased perception of control over their careers, which in turn leads to career satisfaction (King, 2004; Raabe, Frese, & Beehr, 2007; De Vos & Segers, 2013). Defined as "a person's subjective attitudes about a lifetime of work" (Lounsbury, et al., 2012, p. 520), the concept of career satisfaction is considered a key factor for individual and organizational success, as those who feel it remain in their position, promoting their career growth, and those who do not might change their position or career (Joo & Park, 2010).

Whilst there has been vast research on the subject, there is no clear consensus on how CSM should be defined (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). In fact, it is believed that CSM should be an umbrella term which englobes both attitudinal and behavioural activities that condition how the individual approaches expected and unexpected career events, challenges, and career transitions, ultimately shaping one's career (Wang & Wanberg, 2017). In order to recognize the dynamic nature of CSM, as well as to integrate both the cognitive and the behavioural aspects, Greenhaus, Callanan, and

Godshalk (2010) proposed the following definition: “a process by which individuals develop, implement, and monitor career goals and strategies” (p. 12), which implies a range of specific behaviours, such as career exploration, learning, or networking (Lent & Brown, 2013). This requires not only self-knowledge and goal commitment, which lead to higher-quality career planning and career actions (Raabe, Frese, & Beehr, 2007), but also constant communication with their surroundings, as individuals identify a need to make a career decision based on environmental information, opportunities, and supports (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010). In the following text, the breakdown of the definition will be explained.

From a behavioural nature perspective, CSM can be defined as “a dynamic process, involving execution of a set of co-occurring behaviours (…) that is intended to prevail upon the decisions made by those gatekeepers who are in a position to influence (…) desired career outcomes” (King, 2004, p. 119). The co-occurring behaviours aforementioned can be grouped into three main categories: positioning behaviours (e.g., human capital and network development), influence behaviours (e.g., self-promotion), and boundary management (e.g., boundary maintenance between work and nonwork) (King, 2004). These co-occurring behaviours, also called career actions, are guided by the attitudinal side of CSM – from where the individuals set goals for their careers and where contextual and personality factors act as moderators, affecting directly and indirectly self-efficacy beliefs, goals, actions, and outcomes (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Lent & Brown, 2013). The common denominator across behavioural conceptualizations of CSM is the fact that they are centred on proactive behaviours, which entail taking action in a self-starting, change oriented and future focused way – contrasting with being reactive, aiming to preserving the status quo and focusing on current circumstances (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). A proactive personality and self-control are both characteristics closely linked to career success, as proactive employees are more prone to participate in improvement opportunities and innovative behaviours (Converse, Pathak, DePaul-Haddock, Gotlib, & Merbedone, 2012; Joo & Ready, 2012; King, 2004; Prabhu, 2013; Raabe, Frese, & Beehr, 2007).

Apart from the behavioural aspect of CSM, it also comprises an attitudinal facet – which includes motivational and cognitive components (Hirschi & Koen, 2021) – consisting of activities such as goal development, planning, or devising career strategies (Lent & Brown, 2013)[1]. The motivational aspect of CSM corresponds to the career orientation of the individual, acting as a compass or a mindset that can motivate the individual to engage in certain career self-management behaviours (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). Career orientations are connected to the way in which one views and approach one’s career, which is assumed to be an essential driving force behind career choices and career self-management behaviour (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006; Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014). The career orientations of today comprise a diversity of attitudes and preferences that help becoming

[1] In the text, the behavioural facet of CSM is explain before it’s the attitudinal component as “attitudes and behaviours are not on the same level and, hence, should not simply represent interchangeable components of CSM” (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 9). As in self-regulation theories, attitudinal cognitive and motivational factors (e.g., decision-making, goal setting) usually proceed behavioural action and, even though, the results of such actions can lead to changes in attitudinal factors (Bandura, 2001; Carver & Scheier, 1982; Frese & Zapf, 1994; Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Karoly, 1993; Lord, Diefendorff, Schmidt, & Hall, 2010), the behavioural facet of CSM is explained first, followed by the attitudinal component.

more self-directed and flexible in managing one's career in today's dynamic world of work (Gubler, Arnold, & Coombs, 2014a; Gubler, Arnold, & Coombs, 2014b; Wiernik & Kostal, 2019). The cognitive aspect of CSM is based on the action regulation theory, "a meta-framework of self-regulation which describes how people manage goals by setting or developing goals, mapping the environment for goal-relevant information, developing plans to attain goals, monitoring goal enactment and progress, and processing feedback regarding the results of one's actions" (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 4; Frese & Zapf, 1994; Zacher & Frese, 2018). In line with this theory, Hirschi and Koen (2021) propose that career self-management is a dynamic self-regulation process that includes attitudinal and behavioural aspects in four key phases:

- goal setting and development – including attitudes which reflect career decidedness, identity clarity, or having clear career plans, along with career decision-making behaviours, career goal selection and development;
- information seeking – which includes self- and environmental career exploration behaviours or seeking information, guidance, and advice on career opportunities from others;
- execution of behaviours – comprising of a wide range of (proactive) career behaviours which can be applied to achieve career goals (e.g., developing career strategies, networking, skill development, seeking social support, or job search);
- monitoring and feedback processing – which covers behaviours that seek to oversee career progress or obtain feedback on career progress.

This self-regulation process consists of a "feedback cycle between individuals' attitudes and behavioural actions, and the conditions and reactions of the social and organizational context" (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 9). At the centre of the self-regulation process are career orientations, affecting all phases of the cycle (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). Career orientations not only act as a regulatory mechanism, guiding the attention of individuals towards specific aspects in their career self-regulation process (e.g., certain career goals, available resources, actions, or outcomes), as it also serves as a standard to evaluate goal progress and attainment and to adjust self-regulatory processes if the feedback demonstrates the necessity (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Karoly, 1993). Therefore, by engaging in this cycle, the individual has two possible end results. If the desired career outcomes are accomplishment, career satisfaction is increased and the behaviour is reinforced; if the outcome is not attained, it may originate helplessness and a need for change to attain a better fit with the standard set by the career orientation (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Schein, 1996). In either way, the outcomes of career actions lead to learning experiences through a feedback effect on self-efficacy beliefs and career self-management behaviours, which consequently influence outcome expectations for future CSM goals and actions (King, 2004; Lent & Brown, 2013) – self-regulation process. In other words, the career orientations which guide and help individuals to engage in career self-management behaviours are also shaped and solidified by the outcomes of such behaviours (i.e., feedback) – hence making CSM a dynamic process (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Ibarra, 1999; King, 2004; Lent & Brown, 2013; Koen & Sijbom, 2020; Koen, Van Vianen, Klehe, & Zikic, 2016). An individual processing the feedback regarding the effectiveness of one's career self-management behaviours may lead to a re-evaluation of standards and consequent shift in goals, actions, or desired outcomes, depending on the extent to which previous actions proved effective in attaining goals (Zacher & Frese, 2018). Consequently, it is also possible to argue that career orientations are malleable and might adjust overtime depending on the evolution of the individual (Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018).

Other factors such as personal factors, environmental factors, and career interventions can also influence all self-regulatory phases of CSM, as well as the relation between career orientations and CSM (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). Personal factors can be categorized in terms of socio-demographics (e.g., gender, race, socio-economic status), career history and accumulated career/work experiences, available knowledge, skills, and abilities, dispositions (e.g., proactivity, openness), and career attitudes (e.g., career self-efficacy, outcome expectations, career calling (Hirschi & Koen, 2021)). Personal factors can also either facilitate CSM (by directly or indirectly providing skills, abilities and resources) or create obstacles – making the attainment of career goals and execution of career behaviours more difficult (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019; Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Ng & Feldman, 2012). The influence which environmental factors exert on CSM can be divided into macro-level, meso-level and micro-level (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). The macro-level influences such as cultural context, public policies, or gender norms, shape the extent to which individuals develop certain career orientations, and how they engage in the various CSM aspects (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Kim, Fouad, & Lee, 2018). Meso-level influences, such as organizational culture or HRM practices, can either promote or hinder the expression of career orientations and the extent to which employees participate in CSM as well as the degree to which career orientations and/or CSM may lead to desired career progress (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019; Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Sturges, Conway, & Liefooghe, 2010). The micro-level influences (e.g. emotional and practical support from family, peers, supervisors, and work colleagues) can significantly influence individuals' endorsement and enactment of various career orientations and CSM, as well as personal attitudes towards work and career development (Feij, Whitely, Peiro, & Taris, 1995; Hirschi & Koen, 2021). At last, both career orientations and CSM goals and behaviours can be purposefully and systematically changed by career interventions (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Verbruggen & Sels, 2008), through activities such as help clarifying values and career goals, identifying career resources and barriers, developing and executing career strategies and behaviours, assessing and processing feedback of progress towards set career goals (Hirschi A. , 2020). However, the "effectiveness of interventions may also depend on the context in which individuals operate" (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 11), as if, for example, "an intervention aimed at stimulating a new career orientation may prove to be less effective for workers who operate in a traditional professional context" (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 11).

2.1.2.2.1. Forms, antecedents and outcomes of individual career orientations

As discussed before, career orientations are at the core of the self-regulating process of career self-management. Despite being very prominent in the literature, there is yet no consensus about the content validity and distinctiveness of career orientations (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). There is, nonetheless, “conceptual and empirical consensus about their predictive validity” (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 3), that is, “that career orientations form the attitudinal foundations of individuals’ engagement in career self-management behaviours” (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 3). If career choices and actions of the individuals are influenced by all career orientations (Arthur, 2014; Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018), this is even more noticeable in the new career orientations (such as protean, boundaryless, independent, proactive), which display a strong goal-oriented component by inducing individuals to proactively engage in managing their careers to accomplish valued objectives (Wiernik & Kostal, 2019). However, as careers do not occur in a vacuum (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009) and career orientations are malleable (Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018; Hirschi & Koen, 2021), it is pertinent to tackle the antecedents and outcomes of career orientations.

The antecedents of career orientations can be classified into three different groups – demographic, dispositional, and self-efficacy related (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). The demographic antecedents comprise factors such as education, gender, and age. For instance, highly educated employees, younger employees and/or female employees have a propensity for stronger protean career orientations and are increasingly more keen to be mobile and self-directed as their career progresses (Kostal & Wiernik, 2017; Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). Contrastingly, older and more tenured employees exhibit a preference for traditional career orientations and are increasingly more rooted and less flexible in their non-work situations (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009; Kostal & Wiernik, 2017). The second group – dispositional antecedents – encompasses factors such as proactive personality and big-five personality dimensions as both openness to experience and proactive personality tend to be positively associated to the psychological components of both protean and boundaryless career orientations (Briscoe, Hall, & DeMuth, 2006; Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Uy, et al., 2015; Wiernik & Kostal, 2019). The final group which is self-efficacy-related antecedents includes factors such as self-efficacy, core self-evaluations, or self-esteem (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). These factors are all usually associated with the new career orientations (Herrmann, Hirschi, & Baruch, 2015; Steiner, Hirschi, & Wang, 2019).

As far as the outcomes are concerned, outcomes of career orientations can be sorted into three clusters – career self-management behavioural outcomes, career-related outcomes, and performance-related outcomes (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). The first cluster of outcomes consists of “engagement in different types of career self-management behaviours which is generally assumed to be the most proximal outcome of career orientations” (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 6). For instance, employees who exhibit a protean career orientation tend to engage in networking, career planning and exploration (Herrmann, Hirschi, & Baruch, 2015; De Vos & Soens, 2008)) as well as employees with a boundaryless career orientation tend to pursue different work experiences, take part in networking and display self-development behaviours (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). The career-related outcomes, which can be factors such as employability, mobility intentions and mobility behaviour and career success, are positively associated with new career orientations, especially in terms of job search behaviour and/or reemployment (Briscoe, Henagan, Burton, & Murphy, 2012; Waters, Briscoe, Hall, & Wang, 2014), and negatively associated with traditional career orientations (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009). The last cluster – performance-related outcomes – which includes task performance, contextual performance, and promotions, showcases mixed results in the literature, indicating a possible need for more research on the subject (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). On one hand, independent career orientations are usually linked to a higher income, higher status, and more promotions (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019). Additionally, in precarious employment contexts, it is also associated with higher performance (Briscoe, Henagan, Burton, & Murphy, 2012). On the other hand, traditional career orientations are also associated with higher performance (Chan, et al., 2012). Therefore, it is possible that different working environments may value distinct career orientations differently (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019).

Subsequently, and to better understand this subject, the most influential and relevant new career orientations will be discussed in the following section. The protean career orientation and the boundaryless career orientation are the most prominent and influential orientations representing different forms of the modern career in literature (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001; Hall, 2004; Hirschi & Koen, 2021). Both the protean and boundaryless career orientations express the preference for a career relatively independent from the organization or employer (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009). The protean career orientation emphasizes self-management and a career driven by the individual pursuing one's own career goals and values, independently from an organization (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). As for the boundaryless career orientation, it refers to the infinite opportunities of a career which goes beyond all types of boundaries, including organizational, occupational, and geographical (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001; Gubler, Arnold, & Coombs, 2014a; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

The term protean career, coined by Hall in (1996a; 1996b), makes use of a metaphor of the Greek god Proteus, who had the ability to change His shape at will, to describe those individuals who could stay marketable in a changing work environment by remoulding their knowledge, skills, and abilities to fit in (Hall, 1996a; Hall, 1996b; Sargent & Domberger, 2007). The concept of protean career can be characterized by its two components: value-driven – the preference for making career choices and evaluating career success based on one's personal values – and self-directedness – the preference for being responsible for and in control of one's own career, while having the ability to adapt to learning and performance demands (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Hall, 2004). Building on the possible combinations of these two components, Briscoe and Hall (2006) suggested four primary categories of protean career: dependent (low values driven, low self-direction), rigid (high values driven, low self-direction), reactive (low values driven, high self-direction), and protean or transformational (high values driven, high self-direction) (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Embodying the spirit of career self-management to face decreased stability, increased uncertainty in the work environment and changes in employment relationships (Hall, 2002; Hall & Moss, 1998; Mirvis & Hall, 1996), individuals with a protean career orientation are usually flexible, believe in continuous learning, value freedom and strive for intrinsic rewards from work (Hall, 1996a; Hall, 1996b). Further research also revealed a positive link between protean attitudes and proactive personality, career authenticity (e.g., feeling true to oneself in one's career role), openness to experience, and mastery goal orientation (e.g., emphasizing learning and embracing challenge) (Briscoe, Hall, & DeMuth, 2006). Furthermore, and contrary to the assumption that a protean career orientation creates employees less committed to the organization, research has found that self-directed career management and values driven attitudes have no significant relationship to affective, continuance, or normative commitment (Briscoe & Finkelstein, 2009). In addition, contextual factors such as culture can also influence the protean career orientation (Agarwala, 2008; Baruch & Altman, 2008; Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). For instance, in low masculine cultures (with a higher focus on relationships and quality of life over extrinsic rewards and competition), individuals tend to be more values driven (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). The same applies to low power distance cultures as it is expected from the individuals to find their own way and are less compelled by authority, these individuals are more self-directed in their own career management (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). Nevertheless, a protean career may not be for everyone as those who do not hold the required transferable knowledge to change organizations or find trouble comprehending the essentials of their new work setting, such as organizational culture or norms (Blenkinsopp & Zdunczyk, 2005; van Emmerik & Euwema, 2007), can sometimes feel lost, shaken by the changing variables of the context and unable to redeem themselves (Peiperl & Baruch, 1997; Power, 2006).

The other concept established to offer a new perspective on contemporary careers was the boundaryless career. The concept refers to a “sequences of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of single employment settings” (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994, p. 307) characterized by being “one of independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational career arrangements” (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996, p. 116). As boundaryless careers can be envision in various ways, Arthur and Rousseau (1996) presented six different meanings to illustrate the concept and to demonstrate how taking part in a boundaryless career might involve crossing different boundaries, including organizational, relational, hierarchical, work-life and psychological. The six meanings are: the stereotypical Silicon Valley career, with individuals moving inside the same industry but across the boundaries of separate employers; academics or carpenters, who extract validation and marketability from outside the present employer; real estate agents, who are sustained by external information and networks; those who go against the traditional organizational assumptions of hierarchy and career advancement; those who reject existing career opportunities for personal or family reasons; and those who, based on the interpretation of the career actor, may perceive a boundaryless future regardless of structural constraints (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996).

Given that a boundaryless career relies on crossing frontiers, research tends to focus on the physical aspect of movement, neglecting the psychological aspect of it[2]. Yet, it is necessary to distinguish between the two, as well as the causes (voluntary or involuntary), origin (company or self-directed), direction (up, down, lateral), and duration of movement in and out of the workforce (Feldman & Ng, 2007). While physical mobility consists in the actual career movements and

[2] Compared to physical mobility, little research has been conducted on psychological mobility because physical change is easier to measure than psychological movement (e.g., count the number of job changes, count the number of national borders crossed), and also because until recently, there was no measure of psychological mobility available to researchers (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005; Briscoe, Hall, & DeMuth, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

transitions across physical boundaries, psychological mobility refers to the one's psychological orientation towards making those movements, including the preference, desire and self-confidence to frequently move between employers, occupations, work contexts, or locations (Gubler, Arnold, & Coombs, 2014a; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Physical mobility can be operationalized into different types, such as role mobility, job-related mobility (hierarchical or lateral), organizational mobility, changes of employment forms, occupational mobility, industrial mobility, geographical mobility, employment patterns mobility (unemployment, part-time employment, fulltime employment, self-employment), etc (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019). As for psychological aspect, the psychological mobility is guided by a boundaryless career mindset, which refers to the individuals' interest in working with people outside the organization and to pursue a self-directed career – approach motivation (the sensitivity and effort to achieving positive outcomes) (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019). Nonetheless, the boundaryless career mindset can also reflect motivations to avoid negative work experiences, such as job insecurity and person-organization misfit – avoidance motivation (the sensitivity and effort to preventing negative outcomes) (Direnzo & Greenhaus, 2011; Feldman & Ng, 2007; Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019).

Due to the different dimensions and complexity of the concept of boundaryless career, a 2x2 model was proposed by Sullivan and Arthur (2006) to approach and measure the degree of boundarylessness displayed by the career actor, along with both the physical and psychological dimensions, instead of characterizing it as an either/or proposition (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). This 2x2 model holds the physical movement along the horizontal continuum and psychological movement along the vertical continuum, allowing to define the boundaryless career by the varying levels of physical and psychological career passages between consecutive employment circumstances (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). In addition to the model, several possible obstacles to boundaryless career were also included by the authors. Obstacles such as gender difference, gender discrimination, cultural differences and individual competencies illustrate the reality where although limitations in general have been overcome, not all individuals enjoy the same easiness of passage between boundaries (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Women, for example, undergo more career interruptions (i.e., physical mobility) due to family pressures (i.e., rejecting career opportunities for personal or family reasons) than men, even if women display higher psychological mobility (Malach-Pines & Schwartz, 2007; Kirchmeyer, 2002; Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). On the opposite side, men show higher physical mobility because they face less job discrimination and their career interruptions are usually due to job loss (Kirchmeyer, 2002; Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). Other potential barriers to a boundaryless career might be individual factors such as the difficulty in learning how to work in new teams and with new co-workers, in each career transition (van Emmerik & Euwema, 2007), or a lack in sponsors who offer access to opportunities (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019; Judge, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Bretz, 2004; Skilton & Bravo, 2008). Besides individual factors, structural factors can also play a part, such as demographic background, social class, organizational policies, firm staffing policies, industry policies, industrial characteristics, labour market segmentation, occupational barriers, and government regulations (Forrier, Sels, & Stynen, 2009; Gunz, Evans, & Jalland, 2000; Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh, & Roper, 2012; Mayrhofer, Meyer, Steyrer, & Langer, 2007; Ng T. , Sorensen, Eby, & Feldman, 2007; Pang, 2003). Due to this complexity, research as also shown that some individuals might find their identity by using a trial-and-error method, along with self-reflection, with even some unexpected cases of physical movement across boundaries between occupations – e.g., from psychiatrist to Buddhist monk (Ibarra, 2003; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

When facing such obstacles, complexity, and uncertainty, characteristic of boundaryless careers, individuals encounter several risks, costs, and threats (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019). Common situations such as when the knowledge, skills and social support from the last job are not transferable to the new work context can require extra efforts, which can be a draining process and may bring risks to individuals' physical or mental health or negatively affect work-life balance (Baker & Aldrich, 1996; Baruch & Vardi, 2016; Currie, Tempest, & Starkey, 2006; Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008; Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004; Jackson, 1996). To counter this negative facet of boundaryless careers, individuals can adopt functional strategies, such as maintaining motivation, making future plans, and building new social networks (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2006; Zikic, Bonache, & Cerdin, 2010). Hand in hand with the individuals, organizations can also offer a variety of supportive institutional resources, such as mentorship and organizational career management programs, career counselling and training agencies and also aid boundary-crossing behaviours (Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008; Guan, et al., 2014; Guan, Zhou, Ye, Jiang, & Zhou, 2015; Zeitz, Blau, & Fertig, 2009). In addition, governments can also support the organizations and individuals in this process by developing and enforcing policies and legislation to facilitate labour market mobility, and also by improving welfare-sustaining policies and legislation (such as unemployment subsidies) which reduce risk and promote job external mobility (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Fouad & Bynner, 2008; Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019; Ng T. , Sorensen, Eby, & Feldman, 2007). If the circumstances are more boundaryless career friendly, more and more employees will be able to experience opportunities which enable individuals to engage in various forms of learning and experimenting behaviours to develop new career competencies, construct new identities, build new social networks and accrue new career resources (Arthur, Claman, & DeFillippi, 1995; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Ibarra, 1999; Weick, 1996), to accumulate valuable experiences (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019) which, in the long haul, allows individuals to explore and build a career based on their own preferences (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Ibarra, 1999; Weick, 1996).

The concept of boundaryless career has also crossed conceptual boundaries, by extending its influence onto other well-established careers subjects such as retirement (Wang, Adams, Beehr, & Shultz, 2009), plateauing (Bown-Wilson & Parry, 2009), learning and development (Gentry, Griggs, Deal, & Mondore, 2009), work/nonwork conflict (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), career renewal (Baruch & Quick, 2007; Power, 2009) and expatriate assignments (Mezias & Scandura, 2005; Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Sanchez, 2000; Tharenou, 2009). One of these subjects is mentoring, which was initially conceptualized as a one-on-one, intense relationship between an "veteran" employee (i.e., the mentor) and a greener, usually younger employee (i.e., the protégé) within the context of one organization (Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1978). However, with the increasing mobility of employees, especially among firms, as well as growing performance pressures, one single mentor is forced to have multiple protégés in order to fulfil increasing needs (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2005; Baugh & Scandura, 1999; Baugh & Sullivan, 2005; Higgins, 2005; Higgins, 2000; de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). On top of this, individuals also search for other forms of guidance and support outside of the organization, aiming to complement their mentoring with networking or with external mentors (Arthur, Claman, & DeFillippi, 1995; Baugh & Sullivan, 2009; Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Higgins & Kram, 2001; McCallum & Forret, 2009; Molloy, 2006; Wolff & Moser, 2009).

Although the concept of boundaryless career has been at the centre of research, it was not spared to critics (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008; Inkson, 2006; Pringle & Mallon, 2003; Sullivan, 1999), being the main two issues, the lack of measurement instruments (Briscoe, Hall, & DeMuth, 2006; Sullivan, 1999) and further clarification and conceptualization of the construct (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008; Inkson, 2006; Pringle & Mallon, 2003; Sullivan, 1999).

In the same line of thought, and despite the vast research on the protean and boundaryless careers, there is no consensus on the subject as some researchers deem protean and boundaryless career orientations as different concepts, while others interpret them as fundamentally interchangeable new forms of career orientations (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Wiernik & Kostal, 2019). Those who do not distinguish between protean and boundaryless careers suggest that the two constructs reflect a new and more ambiguous context of employer-employee relationships (Granrose & Baccili, 2006), where it is difficult to "determine where boundarylessness ends and protean begins" (Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008, p. 285). As a consequence, some view the protean and boundaryless careers as complementary (Inkson, 2006) or as distinct but intersecting constructs (Briscoe & Hall, 2006), while others demand for the integration of these two concepts into a more thorough model of career (Peiperl & Baruch, 1997). To solve this discord, three main integrative frameworks were offered to explain the connection between the protean and the boundaryless career orientations.

The postcorporate career concept was the first solution proposed to integrate the protean and boundaryless concepts. Individuals who exhibit a postcorporate career are usually those who voluntarily or involuntarily leave organizations for a range of alternative employment plans such as working as independent contractors and temporary workers, or operating for a small firm which provides professional services to large organizations (Peiperl & Baruch, 1997). Thus, these individuals are self-directed, responsible for their own career management, aware of the diversity of career options, and willing to cross several boundaries to fulfil their wants and needs for inherent job satisfaction as well as financial rewards (Peiperl & Baruch, 1997).

Other relevant integrative framework is the boundaryless perspective, which combines the major aspects of both the protean and boundaryless career literatures (Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008). This framework is composed by three main components: mobility patterns, career competencies and protean orientation (Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008). Contrasting with the traditional career, the mobility patterns of the boundaryless perspective are multidirectional, which can be between firms or between employment forms – from full-time to part-time work (Baruch, 2004). This first component also includes job crafting (the actions taken by an individual to change and redefine one's job), which can take place by physically changing the job (for example, the nature and number of tasks), psychologically adjusting the way the job is perceived, and/or changing whom one interacts with on the job (Greenhaus, Callanan, & DiRenzo, 2008). The second component is career competencies, which can be defined as "knowledge, skills, and abilities central to career development, which can be influenced and developed by the individual" (Akkermans, Brenninkmeijer, Huibers, & Blonk, 2013, p. 246). Career competencies are manifested through career capital, comprehending the knowing how (i.e., skills, knowledge), knowing why (i.e., goals, motivations, beliefs and identities), and knowing whom (i.e., networks, social supports and relationships) of the individual (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996; Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Inkson & Arthur, 2001; Parker, Khapova, & Arthur, 2009). Finally, the last component is the protean orientation, which can be, for example, self-directed career management and values driven attitudes (Briscoe & Hall, 2006).

The last main integrative framework is a combination of elements from the protean orientation with the boundaryless career with the objective to produce 16 different career profiles (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). These profiles are grounded on two protean dimensions (self-directed career management and values driven attitudes) and two boundaryless career dimensions (psychological and physical mobility), which is then used to describe each profile as being high or low in each dimension (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). To exemplify, a fortressed profile is defined as having a high values driven attitude, low self-directed career management and low physical and psychological mobility; while a solid citizen profile has low physical mobility but high psychological mobility as well as high self-directed career management and values driven attitudes (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Some other relevant career profiles are, for example, the protean career architect profile (values driven, self-directed in career management, and psychologically and physically mobile), the trapped/lost profile (no emphasis on inner values and no possible alternative career options), hired gun/hired hand – physically mobile and adaptive but with difficulties at defining and acting upon own values (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). While empirically testing this framework, Segers, et al. (2008) identified an additional profile, the curious/wanderer, who are physically and psychologically mobile but not values driven or self-directed individuals (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). These career profiles are, ultimately, affected by contextual factors such as country or industry (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). In Scandinavian countries, for example, the protean career architect profile is more predominant than in Italy or Belgium (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). By the same token, the protean career architect profile is more recurrent in industries such as health and social work, counselling, science and research, marketing, and government; while the trapped/lost profile is prevalent in industries such as construction, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and Internet/new technologies (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008).

Notwithstanding, and due to the empirical reassessment and lack of consensus on the protean and boundaryless career orientations, two important forms of new career orientations arose – the independent career orientation and the proactive career orientation (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009; Wiernik & Kostal, 2019). Like the frameworks aforementioned, the independent career orientation also exhibits features from both the protean and boundaryless career orientation, in particular the positive attitude towards recurrent changes of organizations and the commitment to oneself rather than the employer (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009; Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014). Individuals who have chosen an independent career orientation have shown the highest levels of employability, contrasting with the traditional career orientation individuals who present the lowest levels of employability (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009). As for the proactive career orientation, which focuses on self-driven, goal-directed work behaviours, integrates the aspects of self-directedness and values-driven from the protean career orientation and psychological mobility from the boundaryless orientation (Kostal & Wiernik, 2017; Wiernik & Kostal, 2019). Although the independent career orientation and the proactive career orientation may seem as very similar to the protean and boundaryless career orientations, "some authors have argued for an expansion rather than a reduction of the constructs" (Hirschi & Koen, 2021, p. 3). In the reassessment of the protean career concept, it is proposed to integrate the meta-competencies of adaptability and identity to the self-directed and values-driven components (Gubler, Arnold, & Coombs, 2014b), as well as replace the protean component values-driven for intrinsic work values (Hall, Yip, & Doiron, 2018). Regarding the reassessment of the boundaryless career concept, it is proposed that the boundaryless career orientation should reflect five rather than two mobility components – organizational mobility, geographical mobility, occupational mobility, working beyond organizational boundaries, and rejection of career opportunities, as evidence of two survey studies indicated (Gubler, Arnold, & Coombs, 2014a; Hirschi & Koen, 2021).

2.1.2.3. The next generation of career concepts

As shown before, the literature on career management has mainly been separated into two – organizational career management and individual career management – with most advances begin focused on the latter. However, as the fashion and interior designer icon (Apfel) put it, "the world is not black and white; there are lots of shades of grey", and the same applies to career management. Several new concepts and models have been presented to explain the diversity of career patterns present in today's dynamic work environment (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Nevertheless, empirical evidence of the theoretical assumption that these new career orientations have replaced traditional career orientations has been scarce (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffelbach, 2009). In fact, a preference for long tenure with an employer and organizational support for career management is more common than often assumed, as almost two thirds of Gerber, Wittekind, Grote and

Staffelbach's (2009) sample reported a traditional career orientation. In pursuance of a solution to the complexity of today's work environment, newer concepts emerged; some based on the interpretations of research findings (e.g., hybrid careers), while other conceptualizations are an alternative lens to look at the problem and not an extension of the protean or boundaryless career concept – e.g., kaleidoscope (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

The concept of a hybrid career, for example, epitomizes today's work environment as it is characterized by components of traditional and non-traditional career concepts (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). This hybrid career can take many shapes as, for example, an employee who wants job security and upward mobility (traditional career outcomes) but also desires "boundaryless training" (i.e., training that could be used both in and outside the firm) and/or "protean well-being" (i.e., an open, trusting, and respectful work atmosphere) – non-traditional outcomes (Granrose & Baccili, 2006). It can also be the case of an individual focused on upward advancement inside the organization and with an orderly career, but also self-directed in one's career management (O'Neil, Bilimoria, & Saatciogle, 2004). This career is very common in the film industry as employees move "up the latter" assuming different functions in the hierarchy (traditional career) but also work on different projects with distinct degrees of control (non-traditional career) – for example producing one project and directing another (Skilton & Bravo, 2008).

Another concept which aims to explain some of today's complex careers is the kaleidoscope career model – KCM (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). The KCM was recently created outside the protean or boundaryless career conversation to explain how individuals shift their careers patterns throughout their lives in response to internal changes (such as those due to maturation) and/or to environmental changes, such as being laid off (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). The kaleidoscope career model is based on the same concept of the kaleidoscope, which utilizes three mirrors to create infinite patterns by rotating the object and thus making the glass chips fall into new arrangements (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). In the same way, when making decisions, the individual considers the options available to achieve the best fit between one's work (demands, constraints, and opportunities) and one's personal life (relationships, personal values, and interests). Once the decision is made, and the most important "mirror" (parameter or motivator) is identified, the individual rotates one's career to give more preponderance to the chosen parameter, thus creating a new career pattern, and consequently affecting the outcomes of the kaleidoscope career pattern (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). The three "mirrors" (motivators or parameters) of the KCM are: authenticity (in which the individual acts accordingly to what allows to be true to oneself); balance (which strives to reach an equilibrium between work and nonwork demands such as family, friends, elderly relatives, personal interests); and challenge – which represents the need for career advancement and stimulating work – e.g., responsibility and autonomy (Cabrera, 2007; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Although all three parameters are simultaneously active during one's life, the main parameter which steers career decisions and transitions varies according to the individual's life circumstances at that particular time (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). As one motivator gains strength, moves forward and takes the lead, the other two diminish in intensity and retrieve to the background but remain present and active, because all three mirrors are necessary to create a pattern (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). The sequence of how one chooses the parameters throughout one's life indicates if the career displays an alpha pattern (which prefers challenge early in the career, followed by authenticity, and then balance) or a beta pattern – which focus on challenge, followed by balance, and then authenticity later in the career (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007a; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b). Studies have found that while most men exhibit an alpha career pattern, most women followed a beta pattern (Cabrera, 2009; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007a; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b). Studies also found that different generations may differ in need for authenticity, balance, and challenge (Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Mainiero, 2009), as well as individuals in different industries (Futagami & Helms, 2009; Grady & McCarthy, 2008; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007a; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

2.2. Individuals as Brands

2.2.1. Terminology and definitions

2.2.1.1. Brand

According to Kotler (1997), the concept of brand can be defined as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (p. 443). It can also be described as a multidimensional construct, a set of tangible and intangible attributes created to generate awareness and interest in a product or service by combining the organization’s functional and emotional values with the performance and psychosocial needs of consumers (Aaker D. A., 1991; De Chernatony & Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998). Given that brand is the core concept sustaining customer value, market positioning, consumer experience and management performance (Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015), it is important to understand this concept from the perspective of both, the consumer and the company/marketer.

From the consumer’s perspective, brand is “a language – a meaning system” (Bendinger, 1999, p. 12), a symbolic embodiment of information associated to a company, product or service (Kotler, 2000; Olins, 2003), a bridge between the business and its customers (Kotler, 1998; McNally & Speak, 2002). It is a method by which businesses provide to customers the information about the product or service’s expected quality, which in turn, makes the brand a way for the customer to identify and characterized the product/service (Kotler, 1998; McNally & Speak, 2002; Bendinger, 1999). By providing cues about the quality of the product/service, especially important in the case of imperfect information and highly complex goods, the brand reduces the consumer’s shopping effort and allows consumers to evaluate the product/service itself (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022; Bendinger, 1999). These cues can be intrinsic, if addressing the product/service physical characteristics, functions or special features, or extrinsic, if referring to characteristics which are not part of the physical product/service itself – such as price or symbolic meaning (Hu, 2021; Olson & Jacoby, 1972; Richardson, Dick, & Jain, 1994). After the purchase, the brand also represents the values shared not only by the business, but also by the customer (Kotler, 1998; McNally & Speak, 2002).

From the perspective of the company or marketer, a brand is more than just a name or a trademark to identify or differentiate, it is a concept which adds meaning and acts as the centre for the organization of marketing activities to building equities for the brand in the marketplace (Bendinger, 1999; Berger, 2001). A brand can also reduce costs sustained by customers when searching for a product/service and add financial value to a business by improving evaluations, accessibility, and images connected to a company (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Simon & Sullivan, 1993), making the brand’s worth develop (Faquhar, 1989). Furthermore, as consumers tend to place their faith in and remain loyal to brands that appeal to them, brands can act as a kind of promise and object for loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2006); ergo, being considered a company’s most valuable asset (Keller, 1993). To summarize brand from the perspective of the company or marketer, Hankinson (2004) proposed that:

- Brands are used to create a product's positioning and differentiation amongst the competition by communicating the organization's vision of a brand;
- Brands are perceptual entities that deliver feelings and sensations to consumers;
- Brands enhance brand equity and financial value, as marketers view brand equity as an indicator of future income, due to brand loyalty;
- Brands satisfy customer demand as relationships of exchange.

In conclusion, and considering both perspectives, brands are heuristic devices embodying a series of symbolic values, characteristics, and ideas which subjectively reflect a corporation, product(s), or service(s), adding value to a business and delivering combination of sensations and feelings, such as trust, to the consumer (Chen & Chung, 2017; Lin & Siu, 2020).

Branding, which term derives from the metaphor of branding of livestock, is the act of building a brand, making it salient and memorable (Hu L. , 2021; Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Even if its uses have reached new levels of market penetration in recent years (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005), branding is not a new concept nor set of practices (Hu L. , 2021; Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Branding has been present in product development and promotion in some shape or form since the mid-19th century, as certain stores and factories were linked to particular products through print advertising (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Until the 1970s, consumer branding was the norm, being consumer branding the association of consumer products with an easily identifiable brand name (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Through direct and clear advertising and other marketing strategies, brand products were mainly focused on mundane, primarily household-related, consumer products targeted especially to housewives (Olins, 2000), marketed as unique goods able to provide unique advantages to consumers (Hu L. , 2021; Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). However, due to the expanding market of the 1970s and 1980s, there was an increment in competition in both consumer products and the media through which they were marketed (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). As television now addressed broader audience groups (e.g., CNN's global audience by the 1990s) and audiences were organized around more specific interests (e.g., Lifetime, Animal Planet, and Outdoor Life networks) because of the advent of cable television, new challenges and opportunities arouse for branding (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Once the market started demanding well-crafted identities "able to stand out and break through the clutter" (Christensen & Cheney, 2000, p. 246) and constant repetitions reinforcing the products' uniqueness and distinctiveness were not enough to shape the audience's perception about a certain brand or product (Brems, Temmerman, Graham, & Broersma, 2017; Hu L. , 2021), brands began to develop symbolic meanings (Aaker D. A., 1996; Aaker J. L., 1997). From this point forward, brand as a concept began to be both the material/functional features as well as the virtual/symbolic images of a product (Holt, 2004; Hu, 2021). Branding, thus, became a flexible solution for the crowded communication environment where innovative communication strategies have to pierce through an increasing number of products and messages created by other corporations (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Schultz, Tannenbaum, & Lauterborn, 1994; Trout & Ries, 1986). This flexibility of branding has guided its evolution as consumer brands now also represent services and brands are now promoted in increasingly diverse and complex manners (e.g., multimedia promotion involving e-commerce) (Olins, 2000).

After this evolution over the years, brands today are able to link products and services with resonant cultural meanings through narratives and images; and more than trying to discipline consumer taste directly, brands strive to indirectly develop a relationship between the consumer and a "sets of relations between products and services" (Hearn, 2008; Lury, 2004, p. 1). This is achieved by constructing a particular ambience (with feelings and values), which may then condition consumer behaviour, transforming a simple commodity into an entire virtual context for consumption – "a specific way of using the object, a propertied form of life to be realized in consumption" (Arvidson, 2005, p. 244). In this new context of brands, the material form of the brand (image, logo, or trademark) is the first line of any marketing strategy (Hearn, 2008). The logo or trademark, which was initially a guarantee of quality, is now also a symbol of a specific type of social identity, which summons consumers to become a part of its fabricated world of appropriated cultural meanings (Hearn, 2008). Brands can also be a value-generating form of property in its own right, as companies can consider the brand itself as a distinct and intangible commercial asset, since recognized by the trademark licensing law in the 1980s (Hearn, 2008). In this way, companies can buy and sell brands as assets, and in essence, monetize the symbolic meaning-making activities of consumers (Hearn, 2008).

2.2.1.2. Branding of individuals

While brands have traditionally been correlated with products and services, it is now assumed that an individual can also be a brand (Allport, 1937; Cohen, 2014; Fournier, 2010; Hirschman, 1987; Thomson, 2006). Revisiting the idea of brand, four types of brands can be identified: brand as a product/service; brand as an organization; brand as a symbol; and brand as people (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Olins, 2000; Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). As corporations diversify their product lines and begun to profit from their brand name by selling products that go beyond what they are traditionally known for (for example, Super Wal-Mart sells tires and lettuce under the same roof), they have intentionally differentiated their own internal brands to promote product brands, as was done by Toyota marketing the non-Toyota-identified Lexus brand in the same way as other high-end Toyota models (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Simultaneously, corporations take advantage of corporate brands to brand themselves relatively independent of their product lines while projecting an image of unity, of multiple brands under one umbrella brand, to various stakeholders (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Olins, 2000). As an example, Nike is the pinnacle of a corporate brand, with advertisements promoting exclusively the corporate name and logo with no association to a specific product (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). Along with these, individuals as brands are following the same logic, with celebrities cashing in on their brand name recognition themselves, as David Bowie did in the late 1990s with his initial public offering of "Bowie Bonds" (which raised $55 million), or as James Brown did when he sold $30 million worth of stock in future earnings (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Peters, 1999). Other names such as Oprah Winfrey, Michael Jordan, and Madonna are also examples of what can come about when individuals are given control over their own economic destiny by shaping the package they present to others (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Peters, 1999).

Despite today's common assumption that the branding of individuals is a modern invention, this practice is as old as human interaction and society itself and has put forward numerous examples, such as: the first celebrity in human history, Alexander the Great (Braudy, 1997); and Goethe, who used all elements of the marketing mix to differentiate himself from other authors of his time (Bendisch, Larsen, & Trueman, 2013). Almost as a rule, the attainment of celebrity was, for a long time, associated with family relationships (royalty) or talent (Rojek, 2012), as analyses of 18th century auction records show that the artists' reputation and status in society determined their artworks prices (Preece & Kerrigan, 2015). This pattern was brought to a halt, however, with the birth of Hollywood star system between the 1910s and the 1920s, when celebrities captured the consumers' attention and imagination with both their creative performances and later, their private lives (Barbas, 2001; De Cordova, 1990; O'Guinn, 1991). In some cases, the public is more interested in their private lives than in their actual work – the affair of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in the early sixties is considered its epitome (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). According to some (De Cordova, 1990; Dyer, 1998), this star system was initially manufactured by a "coalition" of the film industry and the media to give to film audiences the necessary knowledge to identify the people they saw on screen as actors. Through the disclosure of the actors' names and personal interviews runed by film magazines to report about their private lives off the screen, the star system was eventually born (De Cordova, 1990). Later, during the post-Hollywood studio era, the lines between film stars and other media personalities became blurred over time as music stars like Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley or David Bowie starred in films while some film stars crossed over into TV or music (Hills, 2016; McDonald, 2000). The demand for celebrities has grown so much that the present era is characterized by personalization. For instance, the personalization of: politicians through party bureaucracies and political programs (Stanyer, 2007); CEOs directly contributing about half of a company's reputation and/or market valuation (Gaines-Ross, 2003) and their brands define and sustain corporate brands (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004; Ind, 1997); and the existence of a film star, director, rock/pop star, athlete, novelist or model that appeals and attracts the attention off a specific portion of the public (Thomson, 2006; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012). All of these people are hence an essential part of everyday culture (Gabler, 1998; Geraghty, 2000) and of the contemporary market economy (McCracken, 1989; Thomson, 2006). Thus, it is possible to affirm that humans are marketable entities and, consequently, capable of becoming brands (Verčič & Verčič, 2011).

In the same way that celebrities, business leaders and politicians who successfully develop their brand can benefit from positioning strategies that enhance their own career (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016; Rein, Kotler, & Shields, 2006; Schawbel, 2009; Shepherd, 2005; Trout & Ries, 1986; Vosloban, 2013), the self-marketing idea is also valid for everyone else competing in today's complex work environment (Karaduman, 2013; Kucharska & Dąbrowski, 2016; Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011; Lampel & Bhalla, 2007; Schawbel, 2009; Vitberg, 2009). This person-centred approach, which consists in "constructing a product based on themselves that can then be marketed as effectively as possible" (Shepherd, 2005, p. 6), suffers from a lack of consistent terminology. Even though terms such as self-branding, self-marketing, or corporate personhood are used, personal branding and human brand are the most recognized and consistently used (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020)[3]. Personal branding goes hand in hand with the idea that individuals, especially in the corporate world, can succeed by participating in the self-management process (Lo & Peng, 2022).

However, one might ask how personal branding surfaced. This movement emerged in the late 1990s as a connection point between the increasingly complex and chaotic worlds of employment and communication (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). This context was driven by different factors such as economic, technological, and social changes (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005), which will be explained in the following section.

Since the mid-1980s, the industrial world has been undergoing major economic shifts (Smith V. , 1997; Smith V. , 2001). Trends such as the privatization of public services, corporate mergers and consolidation of industries, technological replacement of jobs, reduced labour costs through industrial relocation, disaggregation (or molecularization) of the organizational value chain, and outsourcing of non-core functions have changed the economic world (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Tapscott, 1997). Along with this increasing complexity and spread of neoliberal capitalism, there was also a shift in the world of work, from industrial economy to information-based economy, which also added more complexity and turbulence to the social organization of work (Casey, 1995; Castells, 2000; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020; Smith, 2001). In the industrial economy, work was more stable, jobs were relatively secure, retirement benefits were more reliably and readily available, and workers stayed with jobs and companies for extended periods of time (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). However, with the transformation of the employment conditions in the wake of the shift to an information-based economy (Ackerman, Goodwin, Dougherty, & Gallagher, 1998), work became less stable, benefits packages slimmed or disappeared, salaries decreased, available jobs were increasingly located in low-paying, part-time service sectors and temporary and contract labour became increasingly prominent (Gossett, 2003; Noyelle, 1990; Smith, 2001). This new unpredictable employment context, comprising part-time, seasonal, episodic, contract based, and temp work, forced the employees to worry about the erosion of benefits and to work longer hours to make ends meet, eventually increasing the number of persons working two or three jobs, the length of the work week and widening the gap between the rich and the poor (Schor, 2003; Schor, 1992; Sennett, 1998; Smith, 2001).

Not only the employees were affected by the economic changes of the late 20th and early 21st century, but also the organizations were forced to mutate by the economic globalization, the new arenas of competition, and the rapidly evolving information technologies (March, 1995). The new

[3] Both marketing research and cultural studies use the same terms ("self-branding" or "personal branding") to refer to different phenomena, which may lead to confusion. To prevent any misunderstanding, marketing studies usually use the terms as a strategy individuals adopt to promote their professional careers, while cultural studies use them as immaterial labour associated with consumerism and implies hierarchy and inequality (Hu, 2021).

version of capitalism marked by flexibility, subcontracting, casualization, segmentation, speed-up, work intensity, and increased job competition or precariousness (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2002; Hearn, 2008), compelled companies to the "flexible accumulation" (Harvey, 1990). Flexible accumulation is a mode of production based on strategies of permanent innovation, mobility, of change and subcontracting, and of just-in-time, decentralized production, which depends a great deal on communication networks and on lateral flows of information and production, as opposed to hierarchical ones (Harvey, 1990). In this manner, corporations gradually altered their modus operandi to "the agency of small, independent production units, employing skilled work teams" which relies on "relatively spontaneous forms of cooperation with other such teams to meet rapidly changing market demands at low cost and high speed" (Holmes, 2006, p. 5). With the increasing job competition, the unpredictability of careers and the fact that the traditional job applications based on a curriculum vitae are outdated, the hiring process became a "matter of choosing potential employees who signal that they are managing themselves correctly" (Gershon, 2014, p. 288) and retain the necessary "expandable skills, useful alliances, and appropriate branding strategies" (Gershon, 2014, p. 288). This workplace culture, not different from the competition between products or services for attention in saturated markets, laid the ground for the emergence of the networked organization and the entrepreneurial workplace (Gandini, 2016a; Hearn, 2008; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). If it is expected from the employees to become enterprises in their own right in corporate employment or in a job application process and certain enterprising qualities are valued – such as self-reliance, personal responsibility, boldness and a willingness to take risks – it is evident that they will use personal branding as a supportive tool to compete and better offer their abilities, skills, and performance, as any other company would (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). It is important, however, to bear in mind that most of these "entrepreneurs of the self" (du Gay, 1996, p. 70) are still inserted in an organization setting and therefore, require containment and control by management (Hearn, 2008). Accordingly, the organizations adopted different management strategies, such as team or family concepts and total quality management circles, that specifically target the production and regulation of particular work-based subjectivities and keep workers invested in corporate functioning by addressing each worker's subjective sense of self and identity, asking them to express their uniqueness and tying that to corporate objectives (Hearn, 2008; du Gay, 1996).

Besides economic factors, technological aspects also fuelled the personal branding movement. The explosion of the Web 2.0 and social media allowed for the democratization of personal branding, as any individual now had the means to access and contribute to the story of the individual self by searching on Google, sharing via Facebook, networking on LinkedIn, broadcasting on YouTube, or linking via Twitter (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). In this computer-mediated environment where visibility is a key currency in life, individuals can participate in the presentation of self in everyday life, while interacting with broader audiences and niche markets without being constrained to schedules or physical boundaries (Goffman, 1956; Schau & Gilly, 2003; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). The access to everything and everyone everywhere also affected cultural values, turning people into "gossip-hungry consumers" (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015, p. 1) who attribute increasing significance to fame and attention (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Thus, it is possible to argue that "personal branding reflects one logical reaction to the cultural and political economics of Web 2.0" (Gehl, 2011, p. 2; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020).

As mentioned before, the birth of personal branding was also influenced by a social aspect. Besides the value mutation brought by technology aforementioned, ideas of individualism and neoliberalism were reinforced (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). The fact that the individual is now a corporate business responsible for one's self-fulfilment, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, self-actualization, and self-realization, supported the idea that "you can create and recreate yourself so as to be the master of your own destiny" (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005, p. 314). In addition, as society becomes more fame and attention driven, the marketing culture matured to a point that begun to encounter its own logical limits (Baudrillard, 1988; Belch & Belch, 1998; Cheney & Christensen, 2001; Ewen, 1988; Fill, 1999; Laufer & Paradeise, 1990). Attention becomes a priority for any media, advertising, or public relations campaign which desires to break through the cluttered society of symbols which values image over substance (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). As a result, personal branding goes along the same lines, perpetuating the world of appearance which is not only articulated and accepted, but it is also "valorised and held up as the only reasonable way to negotiate the contemporary world of work and professions" (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005, p. 8). That being the case, the ethos and the ephemeral images created and deployed by individuals and organizations play a central part in today's world as "investment in image building... becomes as important as investment in new plants and machinery"(Harvey, 1990, p. 288) and branding, as an "institutionalized method of practically materializing the political economy of signs" (Goldman & Papson, 2006, p. 328), becomes the "core activity of capitalism" (Holt D. , 2006, p. 300).

With this beforementioned complex background, the term personal branding emerged in 1997, coined by Peters (1997) in his article "The Brand Called You" for the Fast Company Magazine (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020)) where he argued that a personal brand could be understood as the brand of the individual as an organization and also stated that this strategy could be utilized by individuals beyond the world of business, entertainment and politics (Kondor, Takács, & Takács, 2018; Pich, Armannsdottir, & Dean, 2020). This phenomenon surfaced within the business self-help genre of management communication where authors offer eager audiences the insights to the keys of success in their books, such as *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (Carnegie, 1982) or *Seven Habits for Highly Effective People* (Covey, 1989). Even though it shares some similarities with the self-help movements by offering a programmatic set of strategies for individuals to improve their chances at business success, it is also very different from previous self-help movements (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005). In personal branding, the success of the individual is determined by how effectively one's sets of skills, motivations, and interests are branded (i.e., arranged, crystallized, and labelled) rather than focusing on self-improvement as the means to achievement (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005).

In its initial description, personal branding is seen as a process in which individuals differentiate themselves from others by defining their own personal value proposition and by consistently and consciously displaying it on different platforms of their lives (Kondor, Takács, & Takács, 2018; Peters, 1997). Since this description, the view of the individual as more than a set of skills serving an employer has been adapted, enriched, and reinterpreted (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017), using the symbolic interactionism theory and the self-presentation theory as a starting point (Sharifzadeh, Brison, & Bennett, 2021). The symbolic interactionism theory suggests that the self is perceived as a combination of interactions including language, dialect, gestures, and actions (Mead, 1934). As the individual's perception of oneself is based on what other people think of oneself, the individual consistently tries to control how others evaluate and perceive oneself by showcasing desired images of oneself to manage their impressions (Mead, 1934; Schlenker & Pontari, 2000). As for the self-presentation theory (also called impression management and rooted on the symbolic interactionism theory), implies that the individuals adopt different identities regarding a situation, setting or audience, depending on if they are front stage or backstage (Goffman, 1956; Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995). Like an actor's performance, the attempt for impression management on the front stage might differ from the performance on the backstage, where, in the absence of others, individuals tend to be more sincere and candid (Goffman, 1956; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). In order to prevent discrepancies between the desired image projected to an audience and the reality which can be harmful to the individual's reputation, Goffman (1956) advises to create a front stage as similar as possible to the backstage. Therefore, many authors defend that, more than creating a brand by reskilling and shaping themselves to meet market circumstances, the brand should be uncovered, strengthened and nurtured based on what they have to offer and on one's true character, values, strengths and flaws (Arruda, 2002; Montoya, 2002; Shepherd, 2005). The self-knowledge required to do so, can also offer a useful guide to career development, career rethinking, and career success in a world where employees start on career paths which they may later regret (Arruda & Dixson, 2007). Even if some the literature agrees that personal branding consists of individuals commodifying their self-images, or embodying a cultural symbol or ideology, and presenting them in front of an audience to get attention and thus to realize their social or economic goals (Hearn, 2010; Hearn, 2011), some authors go even further stating that it "is not about achieving status, wealth or fame", it is about taking responsibility for one's happiness and fulfilment and "creating a life of value by putting your gifts to their highest use" (Graham, 2001, p. 22). It is yet here where a major issue is presented, as contemporary marketing is underpinned in a consumer-focused approach, where product brands are mostly created and shaped to seamlessly serve and fulfil the expectations of the consumers (Shepherd, 2005). If the personal brand takes a more person-focused approach by initiating its construction from the individual outwards, an unavoidable conflict between marketing principles and personal branding is evident and the question of whether personal brand can fit and fulfil the criterion of consumer-focus is raised (Shepherd, 2005). It is then important to reinforce the idea clearly demonstrated in Peters' (1997) definition that by emphasizing the individual's personal values, the concept of personal brand does not rigidly follow the conventional, consumer-focused marketing principle (Kondor, Takács, & Takács, 2018).

A personal brand, which can be seen as the individual's ability, character, professional and personal attitudes and behaviours developed over time (Ewing & Allen, 2017; Pagis & Ailon, 2017; Vallas & Christin, 2018), can be challenging to manage, particularly if the individual is inexperienced in this area, as it is a complex manifestation structured around tangible and intangible dimensions (Pich, Armannsdottir, & Dean, 2020). While tangible dimensions can be physical appearance, style, online and offline communications, actions/activities, etc; intangible dimensions can be lived experiences, life stories, values, charisma, perceived authenticity and authority, etc (Cortsen, 2013; Green, 2016; Lopez, 2010; Pluntz & Pras, 2020a; Rampersad, 2008)[4].

One intangible dimension of personal branding is reputation, which is important to understand before advancing further into the chapter. In the context of network relationships, reputation can be defined as "relationship of mutual acquaintance or recognition among social actors" (Gandini, 2014, p. 24). It can function as an index of quality, a signal of employability in unstable labour markets (Gandini, 2016a), as a "prediction of future behaviours that is based on an assessment of how past behaviours meet the role expectations that follow occupying a particular social status" (Jensen, Kim, & Kim, 2012, p. 153). Along these lines, it can be said that reputation is shaped by the combination of performance, behaviour, and communication, especially when the reputation is damage (Doorley & Garcia, 2011). It is also point out that in relation to two important concepts associated with personal branding, image covers external qualities of individuals, while reputation describes values and qualities internal to the individual (Haaranen, 2005). A positive reputation, achieved through labour and/or talent, can generate tangible and intangible benefits for both parties, as it may lead to economic outcomes for the individual, but, to the employer, it also minimizes the risk of choosing the wrong person for the job (Doorley & Garcia, 2011; Gandini, 2016a; Gandini, 2014; Gandini, 2016b; Schirmer, 2013). From a resource-based strategic point of view, reputation fulfils the VRIN (valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable) criteria and can therefore be considered an intangible property (Gandini, 2016a; Gandini, 2016b). The VRIN criteria is a combination of properties that distinguish critical resources from those that are not relevant for gaining a competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Reputation is valuable because it is a key for entering the professional networks of an occupational community, especially if the occupation is project-based (Eigler & Azarpour, 2020). Reputation is also rare because not all actors in the same context display the same level of reputation (Eigler & Azarpour, 2020). Reputation is imperfectly imitable because, as the actions and outcomes are inseparably associated with the personality or characteristics of the individuals, it is difficult to replicate the status quo where the reputation was moulded (Eigler & Azarpour, 2020). At last, reputation is non-substitutable because no other resource with similar signalling features can replace it (Eigler & Azarpour, 2020).

[4] The most relevant tangible and intangible dimensions will be deconstructed and explain later in this chapter.

Personal branding is, in almost everything, similar to corporate branding (Hu, 2021), as distinctiveness is needed to surpass the competition and, like branded products, personal brands can distinguish themselves from others via the emotional response and connection they induce in customers (Arruda & Dixson, 2007). There are, however, some keys differences. First, while company brands are created on demand, personal brands form throughout a person's development and can be developed or modified to reshape the organic impression created on others (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017). Secondly, personal brands can be more focused, as for example, a salesperson can develop a brand specially to target a set of customers at a particular organizational level in a given industry, while product brands have to communicate to shareholders, employees, and potential employees (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017). In addition, personal brands are easier to change and evolve over time, as the individual ascends in the organizational ladder (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017). At last, while in corporate branding, the subject is the producer and the object is the product, service, or organization; in personal branding, the human component, the individual is both the subject and the object (Hu, 2021) – the self is regarded as a "commodity, or form of property subject to market exchange" (Hearn, 2008, p. 199). To better understand this duality of the individual as both the subject and the object of personal branding, a 2x2 dimension conceptual model was proposed by Hu (2021). In this model, personal branding (or self-branding) is examined from a functional perspective (where it can be seen as advertising or product) and from a strategic perspective (as a "self as brand" or as a "brand as self") (Hu, 2021). Both dimensions are not mutually exclusive and can be simultaneous (which is particularly common is a media environment) (Hu, 2021).

If a personal brand is used as advertising, the individual is, through different strategies, getting more attention, more opportunities and better career development. In this case, the product being advertised is the professional value of an individual (Hu, 2021). To exemplify, this might happen when, through social media or mass media exposure, a businessperson gets more opportunities to close contracts with others or a journalist gets access more easily to desired interviewees (Brems, Temmerman, Graham, & Broersma, 2017; Hermida, 2013; Hu, 2021). Still, the personal brand can also function as a product, when, like in media branding, "media companies use branding as a way to build awareness and identity connected with content products" (Albarran, 2004, p. 300). As brand and content are both information and can be intertwined, combined, and transferred into branded content (Siegert, Förster, Chan-Olmsted, & Ots, 2015), self-branded individuals are able to use the Web 2.0 and 3.0 tools to create, produce and distribute their self-branded media content, thus generating other economic gains parallel to the realization of their professional values (Hu, 2021). An excellent example is the case of David Dobrik, an Youtuber with several millions of subscribers on different platforms, who was predicted to generate around $24,000 per day from his videos on the platform YouTube (Twersky, 2019). Like most media companies' business models (Croteau & Hoynes, 2006; Hoskins, McFadyen, & Finn, 2004; Picard, 2011), self-branded individuals can sell their content (e.g. selling tickets to online show or live streamers who get tips from their audience) or they can choose a dual product business process (Hu, 2021). In this dual product business process, the content is produced and “offered” for free to the audience (getting their attention) then selling the access to the audience to advertisers (Albarran, 1996; Croteau & Hoynes, 2006). Some media platforms (e.g., WeChat) can even act as intermediaries (as advertising agencies) and pay to content creators according to click rate or other indicators (Hu, 2021).

As aforesaid, brands as advertising and brands as product are not mutually exclusive, which allows individuals to sell their branded content on top of promoting their personal brand to achieve other goals (Hu, 2021). Again as an example, David Dobrik generates revenue from the advertising on his YouTube videos, as well as from his performance (in movies, television shows, and web series) and merchandise online shop (where he sells clothes and other products) (Twersky, 2019). It is then possible to conclude that although self-branding functions through two different business models (i.e. as advertising or as products), individuals can benefit simultaneously from the two (Hu, 2021). It is also possible to conclude that, with the internet and social media, the boundary between interpersonal communication level of self-branding and mass communication level of self-branding is blurring, giving the chance for everyone to display their professional persona in front of a broad audience (Hu, 2021).

Form a strategic point of view, when a personal brand emphasizes special features, key attributes or functional values of an individual, it can be considered a “self as brand” (Hu, 2021). As previously stated, both dimensions (functional and strategic) of the model can be concurrent, which means that when the “self as brand” functions as advertising, individuals are separated into a private persona and professional persona, with only the latter being presented to the audience (Hu, 2021). In other words, personal characteristics, experiences or feelings that are irrelevant to the professional or functional values are erased (e.g. their happiness, sorrow, anxiety, etc.) and the features that can manifest those values and realize them into social or economic benefits are highlighted, i.e. complex human beings are “simplified” into simple but memorable branded products (Hu, 2021). Journalists, for example, tend to embody this by posting on social media almost exclusively about news and contemporary topics such as politics (which are accordance with their profession and expertise) and scarcely posting about their private life or opinions (Hu, 2021). Contrastingly, when the “self as brand” functions as a product, the characteristics, experiences, and feelings of the individual is assimilated into the branded content, and it is packaged all together as one product (selling their private persona as well) (Hearn, 2010; Hu, 2021). On the internet, for example, several self-branded individuals produce content about their living, playing, or entertaining and create considerable followings (Hu, 2021). This occurs not particularly because of the usefulness of the information provided but because the audience develops a “parasocial relationship” (concept which will be explained further in this chapter) with the self-branded individual (Baek, Bae, & Jang., 2013; Cohen & Tyler, 2016; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Rubin & McHugh, 1987). In such manner, activities like eating, pranking or playing videogames defies and distorts the frontiers of traditional professions (Gandini, 2016a; Hogan, 2010).

From a strategic perspective, personal branding can also happen as “brand as self”, which occurs brands are associated with idealized images in consumers’ symbolic world (Hu, 2021). Since consumers usually need time to form a collective perception about a brand and anchor it into the symbolic system, this process requires some time to occur naturally, making it available to only a few big companies and celebrities (turning them into cultural icons – e.g. Elvis Presley) (Hu, 2021). Nonetheless, those self-branded individuals who do not have the opportunity to perform a consistent role for enough time to allow their audience to refine perceptions and reach consensus can borrow symbolic meanings from already existing brands (Hu, 2021). As "to a large degree, we are what we have and possess" (Tuan, 1980, p. 472), that is, "our fragile sense of self needs support" (Tuan, 1980, p. 472), which is provided by possessing objects and things, people absorb the characteristics of the products or brands which consume, reshaping their self-concepts and self-identities (Hu, 2021). By possessing a product or brand, it comprises the physical as well as the symbolic aspect of possession – including the socially constructed meanings of products and brands, as they are socially produced (Hu, 2021). This process of presenting self-images with products or brands, coined by Hu (2021) as "brand as self", is the exact inverse of celebrity endorsement (concept which will be explained further in this chapter), which happens when a celebrity gets paid to represent a brand and consequently borrows one's meanings or characteristics (Escalas & Bettman, 2017).

Like "self a brand", the "brand as self" can also be applied to the advertising model (Hu, 2021). Once consumers experience the symbolic meanings of the world created through the consumption of products and brands, their perceptions of self are expanded and a relationship called consumer-company identification is develop, regardless of their membership ties (Belk, 1988; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Hu, 2021). Likewise, any person can build a branded persona in everyday life through consumption (Hu, 2021). For instance, someone with an interest in IT and proficient at accessing information can identify their brand as Google (Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011). Equally, businesspeople may be more willing to hold The Economist (branded as highly educated, intelligence leadership) than Playboy (Hu, 2021). When "brand as self" carries out the function of product, it embodies a certain kind of cultural symbol, ideology, or ways of living, building an idealized or enviable self-image which consequently obtains social or economic benefits (Hu, 2021). In this case, the individuals attract attention not because they produce anything, but because they can consume, especially luxury products and brands not available to the majority (Hu, 2021). The most representative example of "brand as self" is the case of fashion bloggers who present their images along with fashion brands (Hu, 2021). From the perspective of the audience, they are the embodiment of fashion, beauty, exquisiteness, wealth, success, freedom or other traits fashion brands or products symbolize (Hu, 2021). To clarify the strategic perspective, while the "self as brand" are seen as the "producers" of useful or entertaining content and emphasizes individuals' functional values, the "brand as self" emphasize symbolic values and are seen as the "consumers" who draw the audience's attention not by their special talents, but by their ability to consume (Hu, 2021). Nevertheless, these two strategies are not mutually exclusive as individuals are more or less simultaneously adopting both (Hu, 2021). Fashion bloggers, for example, can merge consumption and production by absorbing the "outside" meanings into their self-images and building their self-images according to the idealized social expectations (symbolic value) while giving the audience advice on how to choose clothes or make up (functional value) (Hu, 2021).

2.2.1.3. Brand spectrum

Different terms are often used without any explicit or consistent definition by academics and practitioners to indicate the branding of individuals, such as human branding, celebrity branding, personal branding, and person-branding (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Even in this scenario of terminological fuzziness with no consensus on the exact boundaries of each concept (Arai, Ko, & Ross, 2014; Gorbatov, Khapova, & Lysova, 2018; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020; Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015), it is possible to identify common ground beyond the premise that product branding concepts can be applied to people when aimed at attaining the same results (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020; Shepherd, 2005). After a deep investigation of the definitions, Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler (2020) suggested a conceptual approach based on three pillars: first, the contribution of the branded individual (personal qualifications – skills, competencies, experience, or expertise); second, the focus on the audience or specific target groups (and their perceptions of the branded person and relevant associations); and third, the perception of personal branding being a process aiming to produce a distinction from peers by leveraging one's points of difference and defining individual unique selling proposition – differentiation as the end product (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Beside these three main points, other particularly keys aspects can be identified such as a strong focus on career and employment as well as the commercialization of the branded individual (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Rather than being approached as independent constructs, it is possible to conceptualize them as part of a continuum in which personal brands are placed at one end and human brands are located at the other, with stages of the transformation process in between (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). This spectrum, where celebrity brands being a particular case of human brands (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020), will be subsequently explained.

2.2.1.3.1. Personal brand

Located at one extreme of the spectrum, a personal brand can be considered a personal intangible asset defined by a combination of the name of a real individual and all the notions intended to identify and distinguish him/her from others (Kucharska & Mikołajczak, 2018). These notions include the public's perceptions on one's personality, reputation, character values, strengths, experience, proficiencies, ideas, passions and actions (Carter, 2010; Montoya, 2002). Personal brands have become so common and essential today, not only to gain employment opportunities, but also for many other social reasons including dating, establishing friendships, or simply for self-expression (Chen & Chung, 2017). The literature on the subject has found the presence of personal branding in the most varied professions such as: CEOs (Bendisch, Larsen, & Trueman, 2013; Fetscherin, 2015); business leaders and entrepreneurs (Lair, Sullivan, & Cheney, 2005; Nolan, 2015; Schawbel, 2009; Scheidt, Gelhard, Strotzer, & Henseler, 2018; Shepherd, 2005; Thompson-Whiteside, Turnbull, & Howe-Walsh, 2018); politicians (Marland, 2016; Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015); sports personalities – including athletes (Arai, Ko, & Kaplanidou, 2013; Cortsen, 2013;

Dumont & Ots, 2020; Green, 2016; Lobpries, Bennett, & Brison, 2018); models (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013); journalists (Ottovordemgentschenfelde, 2017; Vallas & Christin, 2018); nurses (Trepanier & Gooch, 2014); creatives – including artists (McGinnis & Glibkowski, 2019; Scolere, Pruchniewska, & Duffy, 2018); students who are about to enter the labour market (Lee & Cavanaugh, 2016; Pagis & Ailon, 2017); bloggers and influencers (Duffy & Hund, 2015; Erz & Christensen, 2018); gig workers (Gandini, 2016a); knowledge workers (Bandinelli & Arvidsson, 2013; Gandini, 2016a; Kucharska, 2019), including managers (Brunetti, Confente, & Kaufmann, 2019), scientists and higher education teachers (Gander, 2014; Noble, Bentley, Campbell, & Singh, 2010), accountants (Vitberg A. , 2010) and librarians (Gall, 2012); personnel in different industries (Vallas & Christin, 2018); and all social media users, regardless of their profession (Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011). This widespread use of personal brand is also partially motivated by the fear that that if one does not manage one's own brand, the power is given to someone else and "chances are that their brand description won't be what you have in mind" (Kaputa, 2005, p. 8).

As there is little research exists on how to build, monitor, and maintain personal brands, no explanation of personal branding has been unanimously accepted (Marland, 2016; Philbrick & Cleveland, 2015; Pich, Armannsdottir, & Dean, 2020). However, personal branding can then be defined as the strategic process of creating, positioning, and maintaining a positive impression of oneself, based on a unique combination of individual characteristics, through a differentiated narrative and imagery, to gain a competitive advantage in the minds of the target audience (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Lysova, 2018). Although personal branding may include the use of professional publicists, it is mainly a self-commodification strategy where the individuals take charge of all the decisions related to their brands (Casprini, Melanthiou, Pucci, & Zanni, 2020; Gorbatov, Khapova, & Lysova, 2018; Johnson, 2014; Kotler, Wong, Saunders, & Armstrong, 2005; Pluntz & Pras, 2020a; Vallas & Christin, 2018) to provide a complete narrative for others to effortlessly comprehend one's individuality (Jacobson, 2020).

While some believe every individual has an intrinsic brand, others defend that a personal brand must be consciously and intentionally conceived (Górska, 2021). On one hand, some scholars and practitioners argue that each person inevitably has a constantly evolving brand which is deployed whenever a social contact is kept and consequently, others analyse one's actions and behaviours (Arruda, 2002; Hearn, 2008; Montoya, 2002; Peters, 1997; Shepherd, 2005). On the other hand, others argue that personal branding is a deliberate process with a clear goal and is initiated either consciously (as explicitly expressed information) or contextually (implicitly expressed information) (Khedher, 2014; Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011; Roffler, 2002). In other words, personal branding can entail unconscious (when individuals are not in control of the information shared), and thus uncontrolled, while it remains assessed and judged by the audience and has an impact on one's self-projection (Górska, 2021; Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011). Therefore, personal branding is a synonym of continual behaviour which occurs on both a conscious and unconscious level and may remain beyond the control of the individual (Górska, 2021; Labrecque, Markos, & Milne, 2011). Nevertheless, even though the personal brand is naturally formed in the minds of others (Hearn, 2008), it is up to the individual to consciously and intentionally brand oneself beyond the already existing image (Górska, 2021; Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997).

In the same lines, there is a question relating to the formation process of the personal brand, where there are two main approaches: the brand as a reflection of true self and the brand as the reflection of market needs (Górska, 2021). Even if most scholars defend that the personal brand should be authentic and reveal one's true self with reconstructing it (Arruda, 2002; Khedher, 2014; Peters, The Brand Called You, 1997; Peters, 1999; Roffler, 2002), some argue that practitioners often encourage their clients to develop skills desired by the market (Shepherd, 2005). As a result, it is possible to recognise two differing personal branding strategies – the true self approach (Peters, 1997; Peters, 1999) and the consumer-oriented approach (Bendisch, Larsen, & Trueman, 2013; Khedher, 2014). The true self approach consists in presenting authenticity to the target audience, i.e., to "work with what you've got, and make it special" (Peters, 1997, p. 7). This approach supports the idea of individuals discovering their true/real self through self-discovery and trial-and-error and only then present it to the target audience instead of submitting the person to makeovers and adaptation to consumers (Peters, 1997). Contrariwise, the consumer-oriented approach orientates the individual to build one's personal brand based on the identification and integration of valuable skills and characteristics in a given industry or audience (Khedher, 2014). The crucial element of this approach is thus customization and adaptability for specific audiences (Górska, 2021). There is consequently a conflict between approaches regarding whether one should remain honest and truthful to one's own values, brand, and unique value proposition (Shepherd, 2005) or should oblige the marketing principles and respond to the audience and market needs (Hearn, 2008). Still, both approaches can be complementary rather than opposing, as, even if each personal brand is based on a particular set of characteristics, any individual can consciously transform one's brand in order to attain specific goals (Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997). Once the target audiences are identified, consistency is a key factor for the success of a personal brand as it allows the individual to deliver on expectations time after time (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017).

In the process of personal branding, once the brand has been created and positioned, it is necessary to maintain it (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017). In the process of monitoring a personal brand, the individual can periodically evaluate how one's brand is currently perceived and compare it to the desired brand when first created, along with its vision, missions, and values (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017). If a gap is found, the behavioural changes necessary to close it must be identified and implemented; if no significant gap exists, the personal brand must be re-assed after a set period of time (Rangarajan, Gelb, & Vandaveer, 2017).

After this brief explanation of personal branding, it is then possible to conclude that the mix of reputation, trust, attention, and execution which is a strong personal brand (Harris & Rae, 2011), not only differentiates and individual but also guides one's decisions (Chen & Chung, 2017).

2.2.1.3.2. Brand transformation process

In the brand spectrum, when a brand goes from one extreme to the other, a transformation process takes place, converting a personal brand into a human brand (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). Although the research on this topic is still scarce, Erz and Christensen (2018) and Pihl (2013) have identified this transformation while studying the evolution of individuals to prominence in the digital environment. Arguing that this process exists for all contexts where human brands develop, the authors divided the process into three distinct stages: the starting stage, the middle stage and the ending stage (Erz & Christensen, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Pihl, 2013).

The starting stage leads with the realization of a potentially desirable future self and consists in the adoption of a new social role connected to a new set of stakeholders and a new self-conception (Erz & Christensen, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Pihl, 2013). The middle stage of the process presents itself as the early signals of positive feedback from the surrounding context, i.e., the first signs of recognition and establishment of authority, increasing audience, initial and continual success and beginning/expansion of the brand's commercialization (Erz & Christensen, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Pihl, 2013). The ending stage of the transformation process takes place when the constructed human brand (the persona) emerges from the person him/herself and the unified entity, the individual as a whole, is a human brand (Erz & Christensen, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Pihl, 2013). In this phase, the individual becomes conscious of the shared meaning that they convey as a brand as well as their identity cocreation process (Erz & Christensen, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Pihl, 2013).

2.2.1.3.3. Human brand

As a result of the brand transformation process abovementioned, the human brand appears, being located at the opposite extreme of the brand spectrum (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). A human brand can be defined as "any well-known persona who is the subject of marketing communications effort" (Thomson, 2006, p. 104)[5]. Other academics have further expanded the concept stating that human brands are essentially brands that are also people (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020), i.e., an inevitably united "entity that is at once a person and a commercialized brand offering, wherein both the person and the brand are referenced using the same brand naming convention" (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019, p. 603). A human brand can also be regarded as an intangible asset linked to an individual, and constituting one's social image, authenticity, likeability and credibility, which generates economic and social value through its visibility as a result of a personal branding process (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020; Thomson, 2006). At last, human brand can also be described as any type of

[5] The term persona, which was originally employed to describe a mask actors used to help spectators recognize stereotypical characters (Dion & Arnould, 2016). It can also describe the part of the personality that organises a person's relationship with society, the manner in which people conform to a recognised or predefined personage in order to play a social role (Jung, 1959/1916). Associated with brands and cultural meanings, a persona can fold personality traits and psychographic details into a cultural stereotype, e.g., the tragic hero, the trickster, or the femme fatale (Keller, 2009; Stern, 1995; Stern, 1991).

persona, emerging or well-known, who is subject of marketing, interpersonal or inter-organizational communications (Close, Moulard, & Monroe, 2011). Human brands, where celebrity brands are now included as a particular and prominent type of human brand (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Centeno & Wang, 2016; Chae & Lee, 2013; Huang & Huang, 2016; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020), are often characterized by a high professionalism, high attractiveness, and truthfulness (Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020). Today, is possible to identify an array of human brand examples such as politicians (Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015), artists (including designers, writers, actors, musicians, etc) (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Moulard, Rice, Garrity, & Mangus, 2014; Muñiz, Norris, & Fine, 2014; Schroeder, 2005), CEOs (Bendisch, Larsen, & Trueman, 2013; Cottan-Nir & Lehman-Wilzig, 2018; Scheidt, Gelhard, Strotzer, & Henseler, 2018), chefs (Dion & Arnould, 2016; Jones, 2009), football players (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012), athletes (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Hodge & Walker, 2015; Su, Baker, Doyle, & Kunkel, 2020), journalists (López-Meri & Casero-Ripollés, 2017), fashion models (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013), icons (Eagar & Lindridge, 2014), celebrities (Chae & Lee, 2013; Eagar & Lindridge, 2015; Huang & Huang, 2016; Parmentier, 2010; Parmentier, 2011; Thomson, 2006), television celebrities (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015), influencers (Delisle & Parmentier, 2016), microcelebrities (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017; Usher, 2018), among others.

In the same way product/service brands are strategically managed, the same applies to human brands (Thomson, 2006). Similarly to a product/service, a human brand is co-created by the individual along other stakeholders to represent a set of functional and emotional values promising a particular experience (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Preece & Kerrigan, 2015; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003). The human brand also aims to attain brand equity by designing and implementing strategies beyond those related to identity, positioning, marketing mix and associations to more complex branding elements – such as drivers of brand equity, brand equity measurement, brand expansion and brand reinforcement (Thomson, 2006). A human brand differs, albeit, from a product/service brand in that the talents of well-known personas provide equity credentials to establish and extend product brands (Lieb, 2013). However, the biggest difference between product/service brand and a human brand is that, even if consumers can develop different types of relationships with brands (Fournier, 1998), human brands facilitate trusting and committed relationships which are difficult to be developed with non-human brands (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). As human brands can interact directly with consumers and establish emotional bonds with consumers (Saboo, Kumar, & Ramani, 2016), they tend to expect similar emotions, cognition, and behaviours from human brands as they interact with their friends and partners (Cole & Leets, 1999). This ability to create close relationships with customers through the attribution of uniquely human characteristics and features to nonhuman entities – anthropomorphism (Epley, Waytz, & Cacioppo, 2007) – has been a marketing practice for more than a century as brand anthropomorphism leads to brand personalization, which makes it warmer, closely related to consumers, and, similar to people, capable of developing authentic bonds (Malone & Fiske, 2013; Portal, Abratt, & Bendixen, 2018). In turn, consumers with a high attachment to human brands can produce greater consumer attachment and loyalty to product brands, which means that human brands can complement product brands (Loroz & Braig, 2015), opening the doors for endorsements opportunities and other forms of persuasion which encourage consumption through human brands serving as idealized consumers and commodity exhibitors (Holmes & Redmond, 2014).

Before advancing, it is necessary to clearly identify and explain the key differences between personal brand and human brand. In personal branding, the focus is on the individual and the personal brand is the result of branding strategies individuals applies on themselves to advance professionally by attaining better employment or income (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Lysova, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). Therefore, branding strategies related to brand identity, positioning, and image as well as marketing mix adaptations are applied to the target audience (Khedher, 2014; Kucharska & Mikołajczak, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). This target audience is, in the personal branding context, potential employers or clients and the individual has full agency in the decisions pertaining to their personal brand (Khedher, 2014; Kucharska & Mikołajczak, 2018; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015). Contrarily, in the human branding context, and because a human brand is a united identity of the individual and the persona, the focus is on the persona (associated with brand value offerings) rather than on the individual per se (Dion & Arnould, 2016). The objective is then to manage the brand through branding strategies directed towards the persona in order to achieve, grow and sustain brand equity (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). In the case of human brands, the consumers are now the target and the individual's level of authority in brand decisions varies as the brand is no longer constructed alone but co-constructed with multiple stakeholders (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Thomson, 2006). The dual nature of the human brand, which comprises the individual and the persona, is not recognize in the personal brand (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). In other words, a human brand represents a combination of a person and a commercialized entity sold as a product in the marketplace (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019) while a personal brand solely represents a set of characteristics of an individual (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020).

This duality of the human brand and the relationship between the two inseparable and interdependent elements (the individual and the persona) can be explained by theory of the king's two bodies (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). This refers to a medieval legal theory that summarizes how a king can be both a mortal human being who will die and a legal concept that sustains after the king's death – the king lives on in another person's body (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). The theory defines two different bodies: the physical, natural body, subject to mortality and the vehicle on which relationships with the people rest; and the public persona, the political body or soul, which is immortal and hence superior to the body natural as it can be transferred to another body on death (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). These notions can be transposed to the human brand context, being the individual and the persona respectively (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

The main premise of the king's two bodies theory is that the physical and the political body (the public persona) are not independent but united as one single body which requires both entities to be complete and persevere (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). These two elements are inseparably interdependent because without the political body, the physical body has no identity in the public eye, and without the body natural, the political body cannot connect with constituents (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). Nonetheless, some tension usually emerges from this connection as the physical body strives for dominance and operates with humans' self-interest-seeking characteristic and contrarily, the political body can also work against the body natural as in an extreme situation of survival of the kingship, the king may be dethroned (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). Following Kantorowicz (1957), Fournier and Eckhardt (2019) argue that these ideas can be used to understand the nature, process, and management of human brands. They conceptualize the physical body as the individual him/herself, the political body as the persona and the agglomeration of the two as the human brand (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

2.2.1.3.3.1. Types of branded individuals

For clarifying recurrent concepts such as celebrity and icon, (Scheidt, Gelhard and Henseler (2020) provided a visibility-based explanation. The individual first starts with a personal brand and, through the brand transformation process mentioned before, becomes a human brand, where celebrity brands are included (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). If the branded individual is then able to continuously stand out from the growing number of commoditized celebrities in a long period of time, one becomes an icon (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020).

According to Thomson (2006), a celebrity can be conceptualized as a human brand, one of the many operationalizations of the broader brand concept. Defined as "part of the social elite who engage in the public relations machine of television and movie roles, special event appearances and talk show and gossip magazine placements" (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015, p. 687), celebrities' lives and actions, public or private, create brands (including brand identities, images, features, personalities) which, when professionally managed, can create brand equity (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Thomson, 2006). In order words, their performances on- and offstage, off- and online, public or private, can be considered marketing and branding exercises (Centeno & Wang, 2016). Consequently, by being an idealized consumer and a commodity vessel, human brand identities have the ability to product brands through endorsements and persuasions by giving personality qualities to inanimate brands (Holmes & Redmond, 2014).

Even though there are countless definitions of celebrity, such as merely being famous (Epstein, 2005; Furedi, 2010), the person who is well-known for one's well-knownness (Boorstin, 2012; Epstein, 2005), the few, known by the many (Banister & Cocker, 2014), the result of great good luck (Milner, 2010), the ones celebrated not for doing, but for being (Banister & Cocker, 2014); the cornerstone of this concept is fame. Regardless of the source of this fame, whether it derives from entertainment, science, politics, sports, religion or a close association with other celebrities (Boorstin, 1961), celebrities become high-profile, well-known personas (Driessens, 2013; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020) "whose name has attention-getting, interest-riveting and profit-generating value" (Rein, Kottler, & Stoller, 1987, p. 15) because their abilities are identified by a consumer base as distinct from others (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). However, with the replacement of the notion of celebrity for various other abstract term, such as “heroes”, “stars”, “superstars”, “television personalities” or “idols” (Epstein, 2005; Holmes & Redmond, 2006), it is difficult to define how many numbers of audience or fans can make people become celebrities (Hu, 2021). In addition, a distinction can be made between those who achieved celebrity status originated from talent or accomplishments, those who present an ascribed status based on bloodline or family relationships, and those who with an attributed celebrity manufactured by media publicity alone (Furedi, 2010; Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer, & Daza-LeTouze, 2011; Lindridge & Eagar, 2015; Milner, 2010; Rojek, 2001; Rojek, 2014; Turner, 2004). Therefore, celebrity, more than a “bright line that separates individuals”, can be seen as a “set of circulated strategies and practices that place fame on a continuum” (Marwick & Boyd, 2011, p. 140).

The term celebrity derives from the Latin term “*celebrem/celebritas/celebre*” and from the French *celebre*, which mean the act, ritual, or ceremony of celebrating something (Drake & Miah, 2010). In the fourteenth century, it began to signify the notion of being famous, and by the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, with the influence of individualism, fame and heroism (McClelland, 1989), it indicated a person of fame, becoming the descriptive noun of a celebrity (Drake & Miah, 2010; Singh & Pandey, 2017). Throughout the years, scholars have associated the emergence of celebrity with print media industrialisation, branding individual identity and its appropriation, as well as with the acquisition of glamour or notoriety (Mole, 2008; Rojek, 2001). Until recent, there was a difference between the term star and celebrity as, for some, the term star was reserved for film performers whose personae maintained an aura based on uniqueness and distance, while television performers were often described by the more lowly or common term celebrity due to their accessibility and perceived connection to the mundane (Grindstaff & Murray, 2015). Recently, though, as social media started to compete against the monopoly of the traditional media (television, radio, and newspapers) for that scarce resource that is public attention, a need for constant renewal originated a rapid turnover of celebrities in the media (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). As the more people have acquired a status symbol, the less distinctive it is and the less status it confers on its holders (Milner, 2010; Rotaru, Nitulescu, & Rudolf, 2010); hence, the star favourability eroding substantially over time (Luo, Chen, Han, & Park, 2010). In other words, the celebrity status is no longer exclusively reserved for actors, singers, and sports figures (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015), but also a place for many different fields, including science, politics, business, haute cuisine (Gamson, 2011; McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002). With this shift in the celebrity environment, appears the idea of micro-celebrities, which are mid brand transformation process and seek to grow their personal brand into a celebrity status, usually with the help of social media (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017).

Yet, one might wonder how a celebrity is constructed. Through narrative, i.e., stories appearing in the mainstream media, which causes reactions and/or appeals to fans and end-consumers, a celebrity is constructed (Escalas, 2004; Fournier, 2010; Gabler, 2001). These narratives aim to present celebrities as extraordinary or special, on account of their talents, while simultaneously, ordinary and similar to everyone (Dyer, 1998). In the film industry, for example, Hollywood and related agencies have been controlling the narrative of film stars since the birth of the Hollywood star system in the 1920s (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015; Luo, Chen, Han, & Park, 2010; Schroeder, 2005). These entities manage the celebrities' promotion, portraits, press releases and fan clubs, as well as information about their professional and public lives in newspapers, magazines, interviews and clips, to ensure an appealing storytelling that contributes to the construction of celebrity (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). Nowadays, talent agencies also participate in this process, not only managing celebrities in the entertainment industry but also in other industries in the same manner (McDonald, 2000; Thomson, 2006). By placing the narrative at the centre of the celebrity construction process, celebrities are produced not only but the talent agencies and media industries but also by the audience (Dyer, 2004), who are kept in suspense, wondering, and amazed by the spectacle (Brownlie & Hewer, 2011) in the continuous saga of instability of the celebrity life (Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer, & Daza-LeTouze, 2011).

As such, celebrities become admired and represent inspirational figures and comparative referents, especially for young consumers, who borrow from them to build their identity (Boon & Lomore, 2001; Escalas & Bettman, 2003). Additionally, celebrities can also represent high standards of achievement to which consumers aspire, sometimes even being considered heroes or gods (Bromnick & Swallow, 1999; Escalas & Bettman, 2003; O'Guinn, 1991). The more definable and marketable the celebrity's personality is, the more public attention a celebrity receives and so the greater potential value will the celebrity have present (Boorstin, 1961; Eng & Jarvis, 2020; Rindova, Pollock, & Hayward, 2006). In other words, like products, celebrities attain their value from consumers' abilities to identify them and differentiate them from others ((Eng & Jarvis, 2020)). As celebrities draw cultural meanings from their on- and off-stage performances which allow them to develop strong and positive connections with consumers (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2018; Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009), companies try to take advantage of it by forming brand associations in the form of celebrity endorsements (Johns & English, 2016). For example, a compassionate celebrity can result in the attribute of compassion being linked to the brand – creating an associative link (Klein, 1991; McCracken, 1989). Celebrities are a frequent presence in promotional campaigns (Pringle H. , 2004) because they are able to capture the audience's attention (Misra & Beatty, 1990) and break through advertising clutter (Magini, Honeycutt, & Cross, 2008); they rapidly increase brand awareness (Lee & Thorson, 2008), brand recognition (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983) and enhance memory of the brand (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Kamins, 1990); and ultimately contributing toward a positive perception of the product or brand (Misra & Beatty, 1990) as well as to the brand's competitive position (Kamen, Azhari, & Kragh, 1975; Till, 1998). Notwithstanding, a celebrity brand is more than a celebrity endorser, as while the former is a person paid to use his or her recognition to promote a product by appearing in an advertisement, the latter may be perceived as having more control of his or her relationship with the product (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; McCracken, 1989). Thus, a celebrity brand is no longer limited to simple endorsements as they can encompass a range of products and services, effectively operating as businesses and now encompassing a whole lifestyle, as it is the case of Gwyneth Paltrow or Donald Trump (Heawood, 2014). Donald Trump, for example, created his brand in the business and real estate world and later developed brand extensions; some related to his core skills and reputation (such as professional business attire) and others outside his initially chosen genre – such as marketed bottled water, luggage, a fragrance, mattresses, and vodka (Kiley, 2007; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Pringle, 2004). Therefore, some argue that like a corporate brand, a celebrity brand represents more than just a product, several product lines represent brand values that are transmitted through an association reinforcement process (Aaker, 2004; Preece, 2015). In addition, celebrity brands are also leveraging their socio-cultural value to migrate into other spheres such as politics, making use of their increasingly powerful, mediatised and globalised reputation to generate political and ideological values, whether through charity work, political campaigns or media appearances (Driessens, 2012; O'Guinn, 1991; Preece, 2015).

The epitome of the potential of a human brand is Oprah Winfrey (Loroz & Braig, 2015). Oprah Winfrey has played different roles, such as television star, media mogul, billionaire, humanitarian, philanthropist, tastemaker; and a single mention by her is enough to launch a product or book to overnight success (Loroz & Braig, 2015; Neff & Halliday, 2008; Quintanilla, 2009). Her success has also been recognized several times, having been considered the world's most powerful celebrity of 2013 by Forbes (Pomerantz, 2013) and one of Time's 100 most influential people of the twentieth century (Peck, 2008). The definition of celebrity proposed by Alexander (2010, p. 324) best summarizes the concept: "iconic form of collective representation structured by the interplay of surface and depth" where "the surface is an aesthetic structure whose sensuous qualities command attention and compel attachment" and where "the depth projects the sacred and profane binaries that structure meaning even in postmodern societies".

Last but not least, an icon is the legitimate cultural symbol of personal achievement and societal values (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Contrarily to celebrities who own the symbolic meanings associated with their private and public selves for a period of time, icons experience a convergence and transformation of cultural meanings across time, reflecting wider cultural concerns and the changes in society (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). Icons are also able to stand out from the crowd of an increasing number of celebrities (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020).

2.2.2. Strategic brand management model

As mentioned before, a human brand can, like any other brand, be strategically managed (Thomson, 2006). Strategic brand management is a process which designs and implements marketing programs and activities to build, measure, and manage brand equity (Legendre & Coderre, 2018). However, there is still no consensus on a model devised particularly for human brands (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). Therefore, in this chapter, Keller's (2013) model will be used as the cornerstone for the exploration of relevant concepts. This model was deemed the right choice as it is a well-established reference and one of the most cited models in the marketing-related scientific community (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016; de Oliveira, Silveira, & Luce, 2015; Çifci, et al., 2016); it presents a rigorous theoretical support and a holistic approach which other models lack (Burmann, Jost-Benz, & Riley, 2009; Theurer, Tumasjan, Welpe, & Lievens, 2018); it imparts a unique step-by-step building and integrating approach for the brand management process from the customer's perspective (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020); it clearly defines the strategic differences between personal brands (steps 1 and 2) and human (steps 1 - 4) brands; and the author himself has stated that the model can be used to manage a branded individual (although with some key differences from product/service brands)(Keller, 2013; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020).

The model itself consists of four major steps for brand management, which are: identify and establish brand positioning and values; plan and establish brand marketing programs; measure and interpret brand performance; grow and sustain brand equity (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). The first step advises to start the branding efforts by establishment of brand positioning and brand values, encompassing the identification of both points of parity and difference between competitors, the core brand associations, and the brand mantra (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). The selection of brand elements, like the name, and the definition of the marketing mix should follow the first step (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). The third step includes the creation of a brand equity measurement system, incorporating customers' responses such as purchase intention, likelihood to recommend, attachment, engagement, and loyalty (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). The final step refers to the adjustment of brand strategies over time, across national boundaries, and within multiple market segments (other complementary topics such as social responsibility, brand expansion, revitalization, and brand reinforcement strategies are also covered) (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020).

The four steps of strategic brand management model of Keller (2013) will be discussed at length below.

2.2.2.1. Step 1: Identify and establish brand positioning and values

To create a successful brand for an individual, it is first necessary to understand the inner workings of celebrity's consumer appeal (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Even if the majority of the literature on marketing (Hackley & Hackley, 2015; Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015), celebrity (Marshall, 1997; Schickel, 1985), celebrity endorsement (Erdogan, 1999; McCracken, 1989) and stardom (Dyer, 1998; King, 1991) defends that consumers are attracted to celebrities for what they are and for what they represent in society as semiotic symbols, that is not always the case as some consumers are interested in what they actually do as performers and who they are as human beings (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Thus, each celebrity can be consumed in highly complex and diverse way by offering each individual consumer a different personal attraction based on one's intrinsic interests and desires (Brown, Stevens, & Maclaran, 1999; Lovell, 1999). This personal(ised) attraction, which captures one's attention and elicits a range of emotional responses (curiosity, interest, disgust, empathy, envy, sexual attraction, friendship or even love) (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012), is conceived by four individual constituents (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). These four constituents of a celebrity's consumer appeal (which can function alone or in symbiosis with each other) are: the performer; the private person; the tangible possession; and the social link (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019).

The celebrity as a performer pertains to what the celebrity actually does, what one is supposedly famous for and the public media image and gossip surrounding (Geraghty, 2000). As usually every celebrity is first and foremost a performer of some kind (i.e., an actor, an athlete, a musician, a model, a media personality or a public figure) (Barbas, 2001), the interest of any given consumer is awakened by either a creative performance (i.e., a screen or stage acting character, a song or album or a TV appearance) or a media report (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). The continuous celebrity's appeal to the individual consumer, which may vary in nature and intensity of personal situational and enduring interest, depends on the enjoyment provided by the celebrity's creative performances (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012) and/or following one's media appearances, news reports and gossip (Eagar & Lindridge, 2014; Hills, 2016). Once the individual consumer values celebrities as creative performers and as real-living human beings rather than as personified cultural archetypes (Krämer & Lovell, 1999; Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019), the celebrity's personal appeal as the performer to the individual consumer is influenced by different factors (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). These factors are: the quality of the celebrity's creative work and performances (e.g., an actor's films and portrayed characters or a musician's records and live shows); the quality of the celebrity's talent and skills as a performer (e.g., an actor's acting skills or a musician's virtuosity with a musical instrument); and the celebrity's personality and behaviour presented in the media (e.g., TV appearances, interviews, media reports and gossip) (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). The quality assessment of a celebrity's performance skills and talent is based on the consumer's personal interests, background knowledge and expertise and hence, subjective (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Gossip in the form of gossip magazines and tabloids can also play a role as a celebrity can to appeal to consumers primarily as a subject they can gossip about with friends, colleagues and neighbours (Gabler, 1998; Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). By using celebrities as a safe target to talk about behind their back without risking any potential repercussions, some consumers are able to forget about their own situation by looking down at the publicised mishaps, failures and wrongdoings of celebrities with schadenfreude – the pleasure derived from another person's misfortune (Hermes, 2006; Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). And yet, such stories are used by talent agencies and management to leverage negotiations for their clients' future projects and salaries (Epstein E. J., 2012).

The second constituent of a celebrity's consumer appeal – the celebrity as a private person – refers to what kind of person the celebrity really is (or perceived to be) privately, when not performing a character on screen or stage, or appearing publicly in the media (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). In other words, more than being attracted to the celebrity for what they do, a consumer can also be attracted to who they are as a real-living human being in the same way one would be attracted in everyday life to any other person, with a unique face, physical appearance, personality, intellect, personal interests, values, beliefs, political views and, of course, sex appeal

(Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012; Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Even though little is known about how a celebrity appeals to and is consumed by the consumer as a real-living human being, it is possible to affirm that consumers would consume and relate to the celebrity as the real private person underneath the public image in the media, as fans (and consumers in general) often crave to meet the admired celebrity in person and even to be given backstage access to one's private life to learn more (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). However, a celebrity may simultaneously appeal to other consumers as a figure of pity or contempt because some consumers seek backstage access into a celebrity's private life to expose hidden truths about the real person and to gain from it a cathartic experience that makes them feel better about themselves (Hermes, 2006). The consumer can, through the process of getting to know the real private person, see the admired and unreachable celebrity as an accessible equal, and possibly as a role model, as a friend or even as a potential love-interest and ideal partner (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). However, as consumers are highly unlikely to ever meet their favourite celebrities in person, the celebrity's consumer appeal constituent of the private person is a paradox, where the consumer, incapable of meeting in person, constructs his or her own personal image of the celebrity to be like as a private person in daily life outside the media spotlight (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). The consumer then internalises the private image through a personal selective intertextual reading of interviews and media reports, private photos taken by other consumers with the celebrity and stories narrated from those select few that either have met or really know the celebrity personally (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012). This recently internalised image of the private celebrity is subconsciously blended with the consumer's personal values, desires, hopes and dreams, and then projected back onto the celebrity – reinitiating this cycle – the continuous process of introjection and projection (Hills, 2016; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012).

Because consumers are often only able to consume and admire the celebrity's creative works and performances as the performer in person at the right time and place, the celebrity as a tangible possession comes as a solution to the intangible nature of a celebrity's creative performances and refers to how the celebrity becomes accessible and tangible to the consumer through products (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Products like CD, DVD or digital download can be purchased by the consumers to have the possibility to listen to their favourite recorded music or to watch their favourite film wherever, to enjoy repeatedly what otherwise would only be a once-off temporary experience or even inaccessible or unavailable in their home region, as the celebrity neither lives nor performs in those areas (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). In the same way, a t-shirt obtained at the live show of a rock/pop band can represent the same meaning as a t-shirt obtained at a tourist destination, which allow consumers to mark their presence as one of the chosen ones who were able to be there (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). The ability to take possession of the celebrity's creative works and performances also allows the consumer to add a touch of immortality to the celebrity and – like a museum curator – keep the celebrity as the performer alive even after a music band has broken up, a celebrity has retired from the stage or even passed away (Eagar & Lindridge, 2014; Kendall, 2008; Radford & Bloch, 2012). It also allows the new generations, who never had the chance to see the celebrity in the flesh, to enjoy the celebrity's creative performances (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Other types of products such as photos, posters, t-shirts and, especially, personalised items like hand-signed autographs and personal artefacts, which the celebrity has previously owned or personally used like film/stage costumes and props (Newman, Diesendruck, & Bloom, 2011; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012) can act as proxies to make the illusive celebrity as the private person symbolically accessible and a part of one's everyday life (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019).

Finally, the celebrity as a social link refers to how the celebrity serves as a source and site for social interaction between like-minded consumers (Hewer & Hamilton, 2012). As the creative work of the celebrity as the performer is usually known, consumed and admired or disliked by more than just one consumer, a certain appeal of the celebrity provides the consumers with an opportunity to meet and even form social bonds with other consumers that share the same interests (Henry & Caldwell, 2007; Hills, 2016). This stems from the social identity theory, which explains that the self-categorization into a group serves a self-definitional role that helps individuals make sense of the world (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). In addition, as people seek to differentiate themselves from others in social contexts, they join entities that have a strong "similarity" to their own actual or ideal self and also enhance their self-esteem (Carlson, Donavan, & Cumiskey, 2009; Fink, Parker, Brett, & Higgins, 2009; Leary & Tangney, 2012; Madrigal & Chen, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Consequently, in fan or anti-fan communities (whether offline as traditional fan-clubs or online as fan-sites and fan forums), many consumers not only enjoy or criticise a celebrity's performances and creative work in the social company of like-minded consumers (Kanai, 2015; O'Guinn, 1991), but also negotiate their personal polysemic meanings of the celebrity and his/her creative outputs with the proper meanings championed by the fan community's official canon (Hills, 2002). Moreover, a celebrity's appeal could for some consumers derive from the type of people they expect to be followers of the performer and creative performances, as a consumer may pursue integration with one's peers, whose social approval and acceptance they seek (Banister & Cocker, 2014).

To conclude, celebrities are complex human beings with a personal polysemic, multi-constitutional consumer appeal who may be interesting to some but not all consumers (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). A celebrity can appeal to an individual consumer when the former has something special to offer (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). If the individual consumer experiences certain unfulfilled desires, he/she starts looking for something that promises to satisfy those personal desires (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). As all consumers are different, some can become captivated by the celebrity as a creative performer, while others are attracted by celebrity's beauty and/or personality as a private person, etc (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019). Once the suitable celebrity, with the right alluring characteristics has been found, the consumer experiences a strong emotional attachment or repugnance towards the celebrity and may become a fan or anti-fan while feeling mostly indifference towards many other equally talented, attractive, and interesting celebrities (Wohlfeil, Patterson, & Gould, 2019).

Taking into consideration this explanation of the celebrity's consumer appeal, the first step of the strategic brand management model – identify and establish brand positioning and values – will be divided into the main topics of human brand conceptualization, cocreation, and positioning.

2.2.2.1.1. Brand Conceptualization

In the establishment of individuals as brands, it is necessary to keep in mind the interdependent relationship between the person and the brand (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). The process should then focus on the qualities that make a human brand a person instead of those that make them a brand (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Attributes such as authenticity (representation of the true self) and personality (individual strengths and weaknesses, values, skills, expertise, and attributes) are understood to represent the crucial ingredients for human brands (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). This conceptualization section will therefore be divided into authenticity and personality, which will later be followed by identity, as it a partial consequence of the former two "ingredients".

2.2.2.1.1.1. Authenticity

The need for authenticity is intrinsic in consumers (Belk & Costa, 1998; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003; Gilmour & Pine, 2007; Holt, 1997; Kozinets, 2001; Leigh, Peters, & Shelton, 2006; Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). The concept of authenticity generally refers to what is genuine, unique, real, and true (Arnould & Price, 2000; Bendix, 1992; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006; Van Leeuwen, 2001) and many different definitions have been proposed. In the marketing literature, authenticity is identified as the centre of the brand identity, the brand's essence or DNA which distils what the brand represents, what promises to offer the consumer and what differentiates it from its competitors (Aaker, 1996; Beverland, 2006; Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003; Kapferer, 2001; Keller, 2008). In the psychology literature, the most used definition states that authenticity is the "unobstructed operation of one's true, or core, self in one's daily enterprise" (Kernis, 2003, p. 1), being true to oneself, to one's true identity through thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Moulard, Raggio, & Folse, 2016; Rogers, 1959; Van Leeuwen, 2001). Authenticity can also be viewed as an evaluation, formed by a consumer based on what is experienced, a "socially constructed interpretation of the essence of what is observed rather than properties inherent in an object" (Beverland M. B., 2006; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Rose & Wood, 2005).

In line with authenticity appears brand authenticity, defined as "a subjective evaluation of genuineness ascribed to a brand by consumers" (Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, & Farrelly, 2014, p. 1091) or, applied to the brand of a celebrity, as "the perception that a celebrity behaves according to his or her true self" (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015, p. 175). This concept can also be defined in terms of product or brand's heritage and connections to the past in the context of history and/or retro brands (Alexander, 2009; Balmer, 2011; Beverland, 2005; Beverland, Lindgreen, & Vink, 2008; Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003; Chronis & Hampton, 2008; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Munoz, Wood, & Solomon, 2006).The authenticity of a brand is evaluated through factual and spatiotemporal links with the world and whether the brand physically resembles what it is supposed to do in terms of context (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Leigh, Peters, & Shelton, 2006). In the context of Schau and Muñiz's (2007) study on the Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers brand community, authenticity was yet described in a different way – as the tension felt between greatness and normalcy – and further explained that Tom Petty's authenticity emerges from the notion that he appears to be a normal person who happens to have the extraordinary ability to play music (Schau & Muñiz, 2007).

The conceptualization of authenticity originated from the self-determination theory, which focuses on human motivation and personality and proposes that intrinsically motivated behaviour is "authentic in the fullest sense of those terms" (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 74). This intrinsically motivated and authentic behaviour (characterized by the participation in an activity for its inherent satisfaction) contrasts with the extrinsically motivated behaviour originated from external sources (e.g., inherently inauthentic behaviours due to peer pressure, rewards, or punishment), which results in an outcome other than inherent gratification, often a reward (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In turn, intrinsic motivation is characterized by the participation in an activity for its inherent satisfaction of three innate psychological needs that are essential for optimal functioning: autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Autonomy (i.e., the need to perceive origin of source of one's own behaviours), relatedness (i.e., the need to feel connected with others), and competence (i.e., the need to influence one's outcomes and surroundings) can thus be considered prerequisites for the authenticity of celebrities (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Even if few scales have been developed to measure the dispositional authenticity of individuals, the most used scale is the Authenticity Inventory (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Some components of the Authenticity Inventory may be applicable to celebrity brands but not to other types of brands, as the scale focuses on individuals (Ilicic & Webster, 2016). The Authenticity Inventory covers four separate but interrelated components – awareness, unbiased processing, behaviour, and relational orientation – which may be pertinent to celebrity brand managers in identifying strengths to highlight in positioning and weaknesses to adjust, or use, to reposition the celebrity brand (Ilicic & Webster, 2016). The first, awareness, refers to understanding one's motives, feelings, and desires as authentic individuals are aware of and accept multiple aspects of the self (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). The component unbiased processing refers to the ability to distinguish both positive and negative aspects of oneself without rejecting or misrepresenting information relevant to the self (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Behaviour concerns acting in a way that is consistent with one's values and not acting fake to acquire rewards or avoid punishment (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Lastly, relational orientation consists of being open, sincere, and honest in close relationships with others (Kernis & Goldman, 2006).

Considering that "the true self is a private entity that may or may not be reflected in one's behaviour" (Schlegel & Hicks, 2011, p. 990), it is impossible for a person to know with absolute certainty whether another individual is authentic because one's true self is unobservable to others (and one's true motivations) (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Howbeit, as individuals have an innate desire to understand why things happen, especially those with negative connotations (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Gendolla & Koller, 2001; Tamborini, et al., 2018; Weiner, 2018), they gather available information to infer casual explanations for behaviours or events (Heider, 1982) – attribution theory (Asch, 1946; Jones & Davis, 1965). Hence, the definition of authenticity – "socially constructed interpretation of the essence of what is observed rather than properties inherent in an object" (Beverland M. B., 2006; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Rose & Wood, 2005) – and of celebrity authenticity – "the perception that a celebrity behaves according to his or her true self" (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015, p. 175). The attribution theory (Asch, 1946; Jones & Davis, 1965) takes into consideration the reasons for an individual's behaviour and whether it is attributed to intrinsic motivations (i.e., their true self) or extrinsic pressures (e.g. endorsing a product based on a hefty endorsement fee) (Hsu & McDonald, 2002; Kelley, 1973; Ritter, Barker, & Scharp, 2020; Zimmermann & Papa, 2020). The audience tends to attribute the behaviour to one's disposition or character (an internal attribution) if the behaviour is unique to that individual (consensus); is similar across different situations (consistency); and is similar across different stimuli or entities (distinctiveness) (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). In the context of celebrities though, consumers find it difficult to distinguish between consistency (similar behaviour across different situations) and distinctiveness (similar reaction to various stimuli/entities), as the situations and the stimuli/entities are dynamically interwoven (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Therefore, to describe the antecedents of how consumers evaluate celebrity authenticity, the two factors of consistency and distinctiveness (which is similar behaviour across situations and similar behaviour in reaction to different stimuli/entities) can be collapsed into stability (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). The main components of human brands which contribute to consumers' perceptions of a celebrity's authenticity (behaviour associated with internal dispositions) are now two: rarity – the behaviour unique to a specific individual – and stability – stable behaviour over time (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015).

Rarity can be defined as the degree to which the celebrity is seen as uncommon and one's characteristics are not easily copied and sets him/her apart from others (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Rarity is closely associated with the augmentation principle, which states that actions that involve costs, risks, or sacrifices (i.e., nonconforming behaviours) are more likely to be attributed to the person than to external causes (Kelley, 1973; Smith & Hunt, 1978). For that reason, rarity leads to perceived authenticity because those who "go against the grain" and do not conform to the norm (i.e., are rare or uncommon), which is challenging since social pressures lead most to conform to the norm, will be perceived as behaving according to their true self – intrinsically motivated (Anton, 2001; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Vannini & Franzese, 2008).

This element is composed by three dimensions: talent, discretion, and originality (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Talent can be described as the perception that the celebrity demonstrates a special and rare skill or ability that enabled him/her to earn fame in one's chosen field (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Discretion can be defined as the perception that a celebrity is inconspicuous, focused on one's professional endeavours and appears publicly rarely compared to other celebrities (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Discretion goes hand in hand with the branding literature that suggests that ubiquity and over commercialization reduces a brand's perceived authenticity (Gilmour

& Pine, 2007). Additionally, the more discretion one keeps, the more control over available information one has, thus, improving the perception of authenticity (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Lastly, originality can be seen as the perception that a celebrity thinks or acts in an independent, creative, or individual manner, as when considering artwork, for example, authenticity is determined by recognizing the different and unusual and the more unusual the artist, the more perceived authenticity and greater the value of one's work (Fine, 2003; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015).

Alongside rarity, stability is the degree to which the celebrity is perceived as unwavering, firm, and steadfast in one's words, actions, principles, and one's mental and physical characteristics (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). In other words, if the individual displays over time similar behaviour in various situations and similar behaviour in response to distinct stimuli/units, then that person is perceived to be stable over time, authentic (true to oneself) and that behaviour is unique to him/her (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). This idea of stability assumes that an individual's true self and personality is static, as well as one's fundamental characteristics, and thus, a person should act in accordance to one's stable, latent traits, exhibiting stability (Gergen, 1991; Kelley, 1973; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 1994; Schlegel, Vess, & Arndt, 2012; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997). According to attribution theory, when the perception that one's behaviours are stable, those behaviours are attributed to one's internal motivations as opposed to external pressures (Kelley, 1973).

Stability is also composed by three dimensions: consistency, candidness, and morality (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Consistency can be characterized as the perception that the celebrity's personality and characteristics have not changed over time and contexts (Diehl, Jacobs, & Hastings, 2006; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997). Candidness refers to the perception that what the celebrity states is consistent with how the celebrity feels, considering if a celebrity's words and expressions reflect one's true inner-self or an attempt to craft an image in the public's eye (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Finally, morality is defined as the perception that the celebrity shows strong values and principles and does not drift away from one's fundamental ideals and standards when convenient (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Taylor, 1991).

These two antecedents used in determining celebrity authenticity (rarity and stability) are equally influenced by the age of the audience as younger people tend to value rarity, whereas older adults tend to value stability (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). According to the aging stability theory (Glenn, 1980), one's personality, including attitudes, values, and beliefs, becomes more stable with age and the novelty of the "rapid succession of new experiences" which "challenge existing schema, attitudes and adaptation patterns and thus lead to change" (Caspi & Roberts, 2001, p. 51) decreases and self-perceptions become more fixed (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Moreover, the step path theory (Raynor & E., 1983) further supports this idea by affirming that younger people focus more on future potential, while older people focus more on accomplishments of the past (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). The fixation on striving, getting ahead and standing out characteristic of young people decreases as people age (Zuckerman, Eysenck, & Eysenck, 1978), along with the idea of growth and novelty (Caspi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015).

In line with the concepts of rarity and stability, the act a celebrity downplaying commercial motives can also be relevant for the celebrity's authenticity (Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012). Once human brands are susceptible to market forces and need to be profitable (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015), a conflict between authenticity and the pressure to conform to the desire of others may arise (Heidegger, 1996). When consumers perceive a celebrity's motivation as negative (e.g. be primarily motivated by money when choosing to endorse a product), brand evaluations reduce (Moore, Mowen, & Reardon, 1994; Tripp, Jensen, & Carlson, 1994) and consumers may view the celebrity as cynical and inauthentic (Bergkvist, Hjalmarson, & Mägi, 2016; Silvera & Benedikte, 2004). Contrarily, when a celebrity's actions signal intrinsic motivations, such as developing a product representative of beliefs, interests, and passions, or making a contribution to society, brand evaluations are more positive and perceptions of celebrity authenticity are heightened, which will have a positive effect upon consumer attitudes and intentions (Holt, 2002; Kadirov, Varey, & Wooliscroft, 2014; Ruth & Simonin, 2006; Speed & Thompson, 2000).

Authenticity can be beneficial for both the brand and the consumer. When the true self is expressed as a type of subjective authenticity, people feel better, achieve social and psychological well-being and are more successful in achieving life goals (Womick, Foltz, & King, 2019). Furthermore, autonomous individuals tend to be open to experience, endorse their own behaviours, and offer greater honesty in their interactions (Hodgins & Knee, 2002) as their behaviours are an expression of the self and integrated values (Ryan & Deci, 2002). While celebrities perform, transmit and negotiate their authenticity with the audience (Preece, 2015), by intertwining it into the brand narrative through time (Thomson, 2006), the consumers, by admiring celebrities who they feel are authentic and similar to them in a real or desired manner, seek authentic brands that can help them to authenticate themselves (Schembri, 2009; Womick, Foltz, & King, 2019) and avoid inauthentic brands to protect their desired self (Lee, Motion, & Conroy, 2009). Therefore, more than creating loyalty or entertaining (Kucharska, Confente, & Brunetti, 2020), this relationship "serves consumers as a form of self-expression for brands that represent a genuine expression of inner personal truth" (Beverland M. B., 2005, p. 461). Authentic brands are associated with numerous favourable outcomes such as positive responses to a brand (Morhart, Malar, Guevremont, Girardin, & Grohmann, 2015), enhanced emotional attachment towards the brand, increased word of mouth and higher likelihood of brand choice and purchase (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016; Morhart, Malar, Guevremont, Girardin, & Grohmann, 2015; Moulard, Raggio, & Folse, 2016; Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, & Farrelly, 2014; Thomson, 2006), enhances celebrity trustworthiness (Ilicic & Webster, 2016), and overall brand success (Audrezet, de Kerviler, & Moulard, 2018; Mills & Robson, 2019).

2.2.2.1.1.2. Personality

Regarding the personality of human brands, some argue that celebrities are only appealing because of their charisma and presence (Turner, 2014), while others believe that it is not that simple, as it is related to brand personality literature (Aaker J. L., 1997).

The concept of charisma, which in Ancient Greece denoted a divine gift and exceptionality, has been proposed as the core component of a celebrity (Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997). Today, charisma is seen as a normal part of a variety of subjects such as marketing (Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997), public relations (Bromley, 1993) or leadership (Groves, 2002). In the organizational leadership literature, for instance, charisma is used to refer to "leaders who by force of their personal abilities are capable of having profound and extraordinary effects on followers" (House, 1976, p. 2). These charismatic leaders exhibit elements essential to their identification, such as: vision to changes (as opposed to preservation of status quo), persuasiveness (prophecy or advocacy), willingness to take personal risks, expertise in the use of unconventional or extraordinary means to surpass the existing order, unconventionality and revolutionary (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). A charismatic leader can be described by a specific set of personal characteristics, such as extremely high levels of self-confidence, dominance, and a strong conviction in the moral righteousness of one's beliefs (House, 1976). Consequently, charisma operates both as a set of dispositional attributions by followers and as a constellation of interrelated behaviours manifested by leaders (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). This concept of charisma as a multi-dimensional cognitive-affective phenomenon (Jayakody, 2008) is often used to describe leaders but can also be applied to anyone (including celebrities), as every human can be described within a certain constellation of attributes that constitute the concept of charisma (Verčič & Verčič, 2011).

Nevertheless, some believe that once a brand can be defined by several dimensions, among them brand personality (Kondor, Takács, & Takács, 2018), the personality of a human brand can also be explained by the brand personality literature (Kakitek, 2018). Since the 1950s, brands are thought to have personality characteristics (Fournier, 1998; Freling & Forbes, 2005; Gardner & Levy, 1955; Keller, 2003) as marketers noticed that in mature markets, the non-product-based features of the brand started to become of great importance in consumer's buying decisions (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). Brand personality is thus, a dimension or a facet of brand identity relating to traits of human personality that can be attributed to the brand (Kapferer, 1997).

Although human personality and brand personality may overlap in certain areas, it is crucial to differentiate the two concepts so as to apply brand personality to an individual (Kakitek, 2018)[6]. Human personality can be defined as a set of relatively stable and general dynamic, emotional and affective characteristics of an individual's way of being and reacting to situations (Bloch, et al., 1997). These traits are difficult to change or shape as they are internally caused (based on one's upbringing and heredity), long-lasting and relatively stable over one's life rather than temporary (Chaplin, John, & Goldberg, 1988). The human personality is comprised of five innate human characteristics – extraversion, agreeability, openness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability – which also constitute the 'Big Five' human personality structure (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Goldberg, 1981; Norman, 1963). On the other hand, brand personality is "the set of human characteristics associated

[6] It might be seen as circulatory reasoning to consider the personality of branded individuals and then apply brand personality literature to them; however, as consumers tend to ascribe human-like characteristics to brands (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007) and as individuals can be considered human brands (Thomson, 2006), it is possible to approach the personality of celebrity as a manufactured construct rather than a human construct (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015).

with the brand" (Aaker J. L., 1997, p. 347), a "dynamic amalgamation of unique attributes (i.e. brand adjectives) working together to create an overall personality for a brand" (Carlson & Donavan, 2013, p. 196). Contrarily to human personality, brand personality is a state (Carlson & Donavan, 2013), which is brief and caused externally to be a part of brand identity (Aaker, 1997; Chaplin, John, & Goldberg, 1988). It has been suggested that brand personality is more complex than human personality because the perception of the latter is formed and influenced by any direct or indirect contact between the consumers and the brand, while the perception of the former is inferred based on the individual (Pihl, 2013).

As consumers associate distinctive and relatively enduring characteristics with a specific brand (Aaker J. L., 1997), marketing strategies are often used to helps consumers form a relationship with a specific brand (Aaker J. L., 1997). The right fit between the personality of a brand and an individual can trigger a long-lasting relationship of loyalty (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2003), because consumers generally choose brands which exhibit a personality consistent with their own self-concept, an ideal self (Malhotra, 1981), or specific dimension of the self (Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993). To clarify and measure the concept of brand personality, Aaker (1997) proposed her brand personality scale which, instead of treating brand personality as a unidimensional construct, isolates distinct dimensions and consequently highlights the different types of brand personalities and the multiple ways in which brand personality can influence consumer preferences (Aaker J. L., 1997). Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale is comprised of five dimensions – sophistication, sincerity, competence, excitement, and ruggedness – on the account of being rooted on the "Big Five" human personality structure of psychology (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Goldberg, 1981; Norman, 1963). Each dimension will now be explained in detail.

The first dimension of brand personality is sophistication (Aaker J. L., 1997). A sophisticated brand (which may be a human brand) is perceived as glamorous, charming, romantic or with class (Kakitek, 2018; Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). This dimension, even if not equal, may be close to physical attractiveness, since it correlates almost entirely with the notions of desirability to date or marry (Cunningham, Barbee, & Pike, 1990). Physical attractiveness also promotes the attribution of desirable personality characteristics (such as friendliness and interestingness) and likeableness to more attractive individuals (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972; Hamermesh & Biddle, 1994). In addition, a substantial body of literature shows a positive effect of physically attractive celebrities on advertising effectiveness (Baker & Churchill, 1977; Kahle & Homer, 1985).

Sincerity, the second dimension of brand personality (Aaker J. L., 1997), embodies the idea of being down-to-earth, honest, wholesomeness, and cheerfulness (Kakitek, 2018; Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). Considering sincerity as a sub-dimension of trust (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990), trust is usually developed when individuals perceive celebrities as sincere, developing in turn, a positive effect towards them and perceiving them as appealing (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Sung & Kim, 2010). On the contrary, when consumers perceive a marketing agent as insincere, with a hidden agenda underlying their behaviour (e.g., a salesperson offering a compliment to a potential customer before purchase), the effects of insincerity are resisted (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000).

Another dimension of brand personality is competence (Aaker J. L., 1997), which includes traits such as being reliable, intelligent, and successful (Mæhle & Shneor, 2009). Associated with the effective capacity to get one's own way (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007), people's judgements fall into the area of competence (Aaker J. L., 1997). As brands perceived as competent and able to fulfil consumers' needs prompt more attachment than brands perceived as incompetent (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Thomson, 2006), those perceived as competent lead to more attachment (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015).

Linked to the notions of energy, daringness, spiritedness, imagination, contemporariness, and activity (Kakitek, 2018; Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015), excitement is also a dimension of brand personality (Aaker J. L., 1997). Excitement can be a characteristic that people value in human brands, as research shows that it is one of the most desired characteristics on mate selection (Buss & Barnes, 1986) and can contribute to unique experiences and interesting interactions (Li, Bailey, Kenrick, & Linsenmeier, 2002).

Lastly, brand personality also includes the dimension of ruggedness (Aaker J. L., 1997), which refers to notions of toughness, strength, masculinity, and toughness (Kakitek, 2018; Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015), as well as an indicative of a strict personality (Mæhle & Shneor, 2009). Yet, this dimension has not proven valid as no evidence was found in Spain and Japan (Aaker, Benet-Martinez, & Garolera, 2001), having been replaced by the culture-specific dimensions of passion and peacefulness, respectively (Aaker, Benet-Martinez, & Garolera, 2001). The dimension of ruggedness can also be replaced for one that is resemblant in content – rudeness – which follows the original notions of a tough, strong, and strict personality (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). Rudeness relates to the insensitive behaviour enacted by a person who displays a lack of regard for others (Pearson & Porath, 2005; Porath & Erez, 2007). Those who witness rudeness – verbal or nonverbal actions which may violate of norms of mutual respect (e.g., sexist comments, racial slurs) (Porath, Macinnis, & Folkes, 2010) – are affected when others are treated unfairly and may punish perpetrators (Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1986; O'Gorman, Wilson, & Miller, 2005).

The consumer categorizes these different brand personality dimensions in a two-step process (Bem & Funder, 1978; Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015; Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2001; Macrae, Bodenhausen, & Milne, 1995; Reinhard, Messner, & Sporer, 2006). First, the consumer encounters a target person (branded individual) within a social interaction episode and categorizes him/her according to one's salient characteristics or attributes (e.g., sophistication, sincerity, or rudeness) (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2001; Macrae, Bodenhausen, & Milne, 1995). Only after does the consumer rate the relevance of those attributes depending on the context and on the field the human brand belongs to (Reinhard, Messner, & Sporer, 2006). In the political world, for example, the appeal of politicians depends on how much their personalities fit in within the context (Bem & Funder, 1978). Therefore, when considering the personality of a branded individual, a balance must be achieved between the values the individual exhibits and the values expected in the field of work

(Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013), since personality is a crucial tool in the communication of one's values (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015).

2.2.2.1.2. Brand Cocreation

The brand cocreation topic includes the development of the identity and narrative along with different stakeholders, which will be explained next.

2.2.2.1.2.1. Identity and Stakeholders

Conventional brands (e.g., Apple, Nike, or Polo) represent a product, service or concept that is clearly distinguished or differentiated from the competition (Eng & Jarvis, 2020; Pluntz & Pras, 2020b). This uniqueness of a brand and source of its value (Pluntz & Pras, 2020b) is brand identity, which can be approached as "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain" (Aaker D. A., 1996, p. 68). Contrarily, as human brands directly represent individuals rather than organizations (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), they already have a true identity, an irreducible core described as a veridical identity (Rojek, 2001). This identity, which is "an ongoing process" (Hall S. , 1997, p. 608), "formed through unconscious processes over time, rather than being innate in consciousness at birth" (Hall S. , 1997, p. 608), could be defined as the unique associations intrinsically attached to a branded individual by various means (Aaker, 1996; Pluntz & Pras, 2020b). Some elements vital to the construction of a human brand identity are authenticity, credibility (Curnutt, 1999), and imagination (Appadurai, 1990; Hall, 1997). Imagination is required in the three major streams of thought: the idea of images (especially those mechanically produced); the notion of an imagined community; and the constructed landscape of aspirations reflected through images (Appadurai, 1990). The formation of the human brand identity relies on acquisition processes (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015; Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013) of professional (specific and authentic) identity attributes (Ilicic & Webster, 2016; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012), acquired inside a field; and media-related attributes, acquired outside that field (which fuel the branded individual's fame)(Parmentier & Fischer, 2012; Pluntz & Pras, 2020b).

The analysis of professional-related attributes of human brand identity (Dion & Arnould, 2016; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012; Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013) is best conducted through the concept of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1983/1986), as it assembles embodied know-how, talent and skills and represents long-lasting dispositions of the individual – the incorporated norms of behaviour associated to a field of practice (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Pluntz & Pras, 2020b). This know-how or talent can be an innate ability – natural time-invariant aptitude that seem to spring from genetic lottery (Menger, 2014) – and/or an acquired ability (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022). If it is an acquired ability, which is not innate but can be unconscious in nature and require a personal investment not measurable through time (Pluntz & Pras, 2020b), the skill results from a time-variant process of improving through experience and interaction between the genetic capital and the environment (Menger, 2014; Towse, 2006). When this development is incorporated into a system (e.g., through a school programme), cultural capital takes an institutionalised form (Pluntz & Pras, 2020b). In short, talent can be defined as the complex of abilities which are mostly innate but can also be influenced by the environments surrounding the individual (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, & González-Cruz, 2013; Menger, 2014). The concept of cultural capital encompasses two fundamental traits: expertise and creativity (Pluntz & Pras, 2020b), which may vary in importance according to the field. For example, technical expertise is one of the key elements for athletes to gain professional capital and fuel their cultural capital (Parmentier & Fischer, 2012). As for the identities of gastronomy chefs, attributes that carry cultural capital related to technical expertise are as important as attributes related to an alchemical expertise, creativity, and artistic sensibility (Dion & Arnould, 2016).

However, while some human brands use expertise, creativity, and other skills to differentiate themselves from other branded individuals, and thus stand out by adopting behaviours which add to their social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984; Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013), others survive in their field by simply conforming and adapting themselves to existing practices and expectations (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013). The concept of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1983/1986) in the context of conforming and adapting to the status quo, is in line with the concept of cultural relevance (Danesi, 2006). Cultural relevance is the degree of fit between a human brand identity and the space/set of collective social meanings which links consumers in a shared language and interpretation of experience (Danesi, 2006; Fournier, Solomon, & Englis, 2008; Muniz, Norris, & Fine, 2014). As the human brand identity also depends on how the professional attributes resonate with a given social, cultural and temporal context (Fournier & Alvarez, 2019; Mainemelis, Nolas, & Tsirogianni, 2016), contextual updates of identity attributes (e.g., acquiring a culturally relevant technical competence which renews expertise) can be required from time to time to maintain or reinforce cultural capital, and hence continue to fit in (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013). These media-related attributes, which are acquired outside a specific field, work hand in hand with the concepts of popularity and fame. Popularity can be defined as the level of appreciation or recognition by other people, both closely linked to acceptance in a group and to the preference toward a certain individual (Cillessen & Marks, 2011). This concept can be approached from three different directions: popularity as a matter of prevalence and frequency resulting from a collective choice; popularity as a genre, as an intrinsic characteristic of an object, person, or idea (e.g., popular music); and popularity as ownership, something which comes from or belongs to the people (e.g., popular culture) (Giroux, 2019). In the context of human brands, popularity refers to a social preference (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022). As for fame, it pertains to the continual presence of an individual and one's career in the market (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022). Still, it is relevant to point out that popularity and fame refer to different dimensions of well-known-ness (Giles, 2000) and that there can be a popular person who is not famous and a famous person who is not popular (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022).

Nevertheless, rather than created in isolation, brands identities are cocreated through a complex set of social relationships and collaborative processes established among multiple interrelated stakeholders (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Michel, 2017; Von Wallpach, Hemetsberger, &

Espersen, 2017). The construction of a human brand identity can then be considered the collective, collaborative, and performative outcome of the social co-creation process involving multiple providers of identity (Merz, He, & Vargo, 2009; vonWallpach, Voyer, Kastanakis, & Mühlbacher, 2017) – the branded individual (the human brand being its own marketing manager) and the surrounding stakeholders within the market that have a stake in the activities that make up a business (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). This interrelationship of co-creation and inevitable brand meaning transfer effects, which can be beneficial as well as damaging for the parties involved (Parmentier & Fischer, 2012; Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015), can be seen in a wide range of areas, such as between businesspeople or politicians and their organizations, athletes "fraternizing with figures from the entertainment world" (Parmentier & Fischer, 2012, p. 116), photographers and agencies and fashion models, employees and companies, etc (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020).

The co-creation of a human brand identity can be explained by the structuration theory, the stakeholder theory, and the actor-network theory. The structuration theory explains how social systems are created and reproduced through the engagement of structure and agents' behaviours – individuals, groups, or organisations (Giddens, 1984). This theory argues that, as neither structure nor agents have primacy, and both exist in varying levels of continuous engagement, the agents exist and interact within a structure drawing upon rules and resources, which are indicative of generalised procedures and methodologies that agents possess as knowledge (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). Therefore, the structure of a human brand (for example, a musician) can be understood through the interactions and knowledge between agents (producers, managers, agents, publicists, and the entire machinery of the music industry), who work with and sometimes even force the branded individual to construct and perform the persona (Auslander, 2004; Lindridge & Eagar, 2015; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Consequently, agents' behaviours are not only determined by the structure that they exist within but are also constantly recreated and adapted through differing time periods (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). In addition, agents within the structure can influence the agency of a human brand, through an ongoing negotiation between the various agents within the structure (Turner, 2004). An agent's ability to influence the structure reflects their ability to mobilise power, through the ownership of material and organisational capabilities (Giddens, 1984; Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). This ownership allows the agent to exercise power within the structure through signification, where a term or symbol is used to communicate or challenge a particular meaning (Giddens, 1984), or through legitimation and sanctioning, where other agents power and influence is used to offer an individual or group acceptance and endorsement (Giddens, 1984; Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). Also, as the rules and resources that form the structure are not static and can be created, changed or combined in different ways by different agents over time, a human brand at the height of one's fame would exhibit sufficient levels of material and organisational capabilities to determine one's self and image, simply because the celebrity status provides power and resources within the structure (Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer, & Daza-LeTouze, 2011; Lindridge & Eagar, 2015; Schroeder, 2005).

The stakeholder theory explains how a business, in this case, an identity co-creation process is a set of interrelationships among groups who have a stake in the activities that make up a business and are interested in creating value for their varying objectives (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Freeman, 1984). In this context, the entertainment and advertising industries as well as other organizations profit and benefit from interviews, performances, and social media interactions of human brands (Ballantyne & Aitken, 2007). In the same way, the branded individuals as stakeholders (Schroeder, 2005) can receive the biggest gains, both financially and in terms of their intangible image and reputation (Centeno & Wang, 2016). Hence, the ownerships, connection, and interactions of these stakeholders result to co-creations of human brand identities because each group's motivations and gains differ as a balanced centricity with key actors (Gummesson, 2008). At last, the actor-network theory explaining how a social project such as a human brand identity is a collaboration of a social assemblage of a web of actors both humans (i.e., branded individuals, consumers, fans, and other spectators) and non-humans including organizations and service entities (i.e., media outfits and commercial firms) (Latour, 1988). The successful co-creation of human brand identities relies on the continuous translation of social interaction (Callon & Latour, 1992) and participation of both human and nonhuman actor forces (Callon, 1986; Law, 1992) in order to lead heterogeneous networks (people, organizations, agents, machines, and other objects) towards a common project (Law, 1991). All in all, it is possible to apply to all intervenient parties the hybrid term of stakeholder-actor as it refers to the combined functions of a stakeholder who can affect and is affected (Freeman, 1984) by the objectives of the human brand, and an agent who is not strictly a stakeholder but a more sociological sense having the agency according to structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) and actor-network theory (Latour, 1988).

The stakeholders who participate in the construction of the human brand identity can be divided into external stakeholders (e.g. the general public and critics) and internal stakeholders (e.g. professional agents and peer institutions), who are those who manage the human brand and confer social recognition on them (i.e. legitimacy) (Pluntz & Pras, 2020a; Preece & Kerrigan, 2015; Schroeder, 2005). Notwithstanding, the stakeholders who participate in the construction of the human brand identity can be categorized as focal stakeholder-actor, primary stakeholder-actor, and instrumental stakeholder (Centeno & Wang, 2016). The focal stakeholder-actor is the branded individual who actively co-creates one's brand as an active agent of the self (Schroeder, 2005). Through their social influence among the public and other actors, human brands as stakeholders can gain control of their human brand's identity resources and gain social and economic benefits (Centeno & Wang, 2016). When human brand identities are successful both socially and economically over time, they satisfy the individuals themselves, consumers, and the industry actors who have stakes in the cocreated identity as a resource (Centeno & Wang, 2016). The primary stakeholders are consumers who see human brands as an integral part of their lives (Centeno & Wang, 2016). Consumers willingly and ubiquitously form opinions, reactions and participate, being the most expressive, free, and active stakeholders in the co-creation process (Centeno & Wang, 2016). Hence, those who express enthusiasm and willingness towards the brand are value creators and coproducers for the brand (Schau, Muñiz, & Arnould, 2009). Their motivations may include intentional social actions such as partaking in a group, and individual motivations determined by attitudes, behaviours, and emotions rooted in subjective norms and social identity (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2002). As for instrumental stakeholders, it refers to those who have business interests in human brands (such as television networks, the press, advertisers, talent management) and act as act as infomediaries (sources and channels which facilitate the co-creation process), guiding the mediation between consumer – human brand identity co-creation, and among other stakeholders (Centeno & Wang, 2016).

It is also relevant to point out that stakeholders may change at each career stage, with key stakeholders opening barriers and giving access to more internal social recognition (Preece & Kerrigan, 2015). An artist as a human brand, for example, starts as an emerging artist and is socially recognized and legitimized by local agents such as art schools; then, mid-career artists are legitimized by gatekeepers (critics and dealers); and finally, established artists are socially recognized by museums and auction houses giving them access to popular recognition (Preece & Kerrigan, 2015). As stakeholders vary throughout the individual's career and play different active roles in branding processes (Pera, Occhiocupo, & Clarke, 2016), they might vary in their expectations when collaborating with a brand (Jones R. , 2005), in their power and resources provided (Mäläskä, Saraniemi, & Tähtinen, 2011) and in their backgrounds and norms (Hillebrand, Driessen, & Koll, 2015). Independently of the career stage, the presence of stakeholders is inevitable as they seek the brands' value-creating capacity (Fyrberg & Jüriado, 2009) and in exchange provide resources – material, financial, technological, and immaterial (knowledge, skills, reputation, legitimacy) – which enable the brands to develop (Gyrd-Jones & Kornum, 2013; Mäläskä, Saraniemi, & Tähtinen, 2011). By providing wide range of brand activities (e.g., word-of-mouth marketing, endorsements and other forms of brand promotion, market intelligence, idea generation, product development, and network management) (Mäläskä, Saraniemi, & Tähtinen, 2011), the stakeholders and their actions, interactions, engagements and endorsements, shape directly (a partner or official collaborator) or indirectly (influencing other stakeholders' perceptions, decisions and behaviours) human brands (Jones, 2005; Vallaster & Von Wallpach, 2013). On top of providing branding resources and conduct branding activities, stakeholders also discursively negotiate and co-create brand meanings (Gregory, 2007; Vallaster & Von Wallpach, 2013), which are constantly challenged and reinterpreted as parties interact (Michel, 2017; Von Wallpach, Hemetsberger, & Espersen, 2017). This complex interplay of exchange and influence provided by multiple stakeholders requires that, in order to be successful, stakeholders' roles need to be "complementary" rather than "similar", i.e., for value to be co-created, all parties must bring different things to the table and work with each other instead of against (Gyrd-Jones & Kornum, 2013).

Among the many resources provided by the stakeholders to the branded individuals is legitimacy, which can be allocated to a human brand in the same way it can be allocated to a product-brand (Dion, 2013; Handelman & Arnold, 1999; Suchman, 1995; Weber, 1971/1995). Legitimacy, or social acceptability, stems from cultural and normative institutions (Scott, 2008), and can function as a social fitness indicator, “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity (e.g., human brand) are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574). Human brand legitimacy is then a sociological attribute through which a human brand is perceived as matching an (professional) identity inscribed in a socially constructed system (Dion, 2013; Suchman, 1995; Weber, 1971/1995) and allocated by different agents (Elsbach & Sutton, 1992). Artists, for example, particularly need to obtain legitimacy from multiple stakeholders to exist socially, and in doing so become multifaceted human brands (Muniz, Norris, & Fine, 2014; Preece & Kerrigan, 2015). Institutional agents and other stakeholders who withhold symbolic capital and are considered gatekeepers of cultural fields of practice (Cattani, Ferriani, & Allison, 2014) recognize the human brand’s talents and skills, which carry a cultural, social, and economic worth, and choose to participate in the co-creation process, providing the legitimacy necessary to affect the evolution of the field, and thus identify a branded individual as an insider or as an outsider (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Pluntz & Pras, 2020a). Even if uncommon, this relationship can be mutual or reciprocal, as exemplified by the case of the artist Picasso and his agents (Muniz, Norris, & Fine, 2014). Picasso built a strong human brand identity for himself by successfully managing the complex interactions between the various constituencies in the art field, and consequently building his reputation in a collaborative manner (Muniz, Norris, & Fine, 2014). By doing so, his human brand’s prestige and the work he produced also legitimized his stakeholders (Muniz, Norris, & Fine, 2014). This mutual recognition is associated with social capital, which can be defined as the “aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu, 1983/1986, p. 21; De Verdalle, 2014; Lizé, Naudier, & Sofio, 2014). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that even if internal stakeholders will influence the economic and critical performance of human brands through their power and the legitimacy that they confer on them (Delmestri, Montanari, & Usai, 2005), a human brand with a good economic or critical performance will also be noticed by the best-placed internal stakeholders in the market who will offer their services and the benefits (Naudier, 2014). When human brands are backed by powerful and prestigious stakeholders, they go forward professionally and gain in human brand recognition (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013).

As mentioned above, legitimacy can be allocated by different agent types, which may be either inside the professional field of practice (professional legitimacy) or outside the professional field of practice (Bourdieu, 1983). Additionally, three types of legitimacy can be attributed to the human brand: specific legitimacy, bourgeois legitimacy, and popular legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1983). Specific legitimacy is the social recognition granted by internal members of the industry (thus being professional legitimacy) (Bourdieu, 1983). This professional legitimacy can be specific – if granted by economic and cultural agents who interact with the human brand in the production or creation of work (e.g., the legitimacy conferred by a prestigious agency to a fashion model that will provide him/her with high status job opportunities) (Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013) – or institutional – legitimacy conferred by institutional agents who deliver recognition through a process of consecration (the act of bestowing distinctions worthy of admiration and respect, such as awards and prizes) (Allen & Lincoln, 2004; Bourdieu & Delsaut, 1975; Pluntz & Pras, 2020a). Increased professional (specific and/or institutional) legitimacy allows the human brand to evolve towards an identity and enjoying greater social recognition, which brings full membership of the human brand within its field of practice (Pluntz & Pras, 2020a). Legitimacy ascribed from outside the field of practice can be distinguish between the bourgeois legitimacy – the social recognition bestowed by the critics (the dominant fraction of the dominant class, who lays down the legitimate definition of what is aesthetically, ethically and artistically desirable) (Bourdieu, 1983; Holbrook, 1999), and the popular legitimacy, which is the social recognition bestowed by the general public and according to the ordinary consumer's taste (Bourdieu, 1983).

To conclude the topic of identity and its co-creation with stakeholders, it is also important to note the reflexivity of human brand identities (Centeno & Wang, 2016). As, for example, expertise may be culturally valued and considered legitimate by one stakeholder, while another will see creativity as more culturally valuable and legitimate (Pluntz & Pras, 2020b), the varying images of co-created human brand identities become dynamic and morph depending on the context, such as stage performances, product category nature, and creative design employed (Schroeder, 2005). This reflexivity relies on the sociocultural norms and acceptable behaviours that the individual is able to showcase a priori to the production of meanings in the context that calls for reflexivity (Schroeder, 2005). As a result, a reflexive identity's ability to utilize depends upon the social legitimacy the identities carry (Centeno & Wang, 2016). An example of this reflexivity mechanism is how human brands vary in a multiple endorsement paradigm, depending on product brand and commercial design (Centeno & Wang, 2016). Thus, brand identities are reflexive and contextual, but at the same time, remain stable, as they only adapt to the extent that fits the individual's range of constructed human identities (Centeno & Wang, 2016).

2.2.2.1.2.2. Narrative and Stakeholders

Brand identity is present in traditional brands and branded individuals alike, with the sole different that human brands have a veridical identity deriving from the person they represent (Rojek, 2001). However, consumers have very little to no chance of personally interacting with the branded individual, and consequently know one's true identity, due to the direct limitations of physical barriers (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). Accordingly, the consumer's perceptions of a human brand's persona will likely constitute most, if not the totality, of a consumer's experience with a human brand (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). These personas are created through narratives (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016), which are defined as the consumption of a human brand's story through which the story receiver interprets it in a causal story-like structure (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). Essentially, narratives conveying the persona to consumers are deployed by stakeholders to communicate with the consumers (Eng & Jarvis, 2020) and to create the human brand (Centeno & Wang, 2016). Thus, a relationship between a consumer and a branded individual can be perceived more accurately as a relationship between the consumer and the human brand (Luo, Chen, Han, & Park, 2010). When the narrative stops or is no longer captivating, the brand ceases to be celebrated and its value fades (Gabler, 2001). If the narratives continue to be told indefinitely though, brands can become immortal even after the death of the individuals they represent, as it is the case of Elvis Presley, whose brand lives on through his narratives and brand extensions featuring his persona (Eng & Jarvis, 2020).

These narratives, also called storyteller narratives (van Laer, de Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014), emerge from a variety of stakeholders, such as marketing practitioners, the branded individuals themselves, the media and the consumers (Centeno & Wang, 2016). The marketing practitioners include the individual's team of agents, managers, publicists and those responsible for the marketing of affiliated organizations the individual represents or interacts with (for example, film studios, sports leagues or music labels) or product brands for which the human brand serves as influencer or paid endorser (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). The media also acts as a source of external brand narratives as media businesses (such as news outlets, tabloids, paparazzi, etc) are bound to the demands of their customers (Gamson, 1994) and aim to engage their target audiences by dramatizing human brand events into narrative structures (Gamson, 1994; Lippman, 1922). Moreover, social media has also provided human brands with a controllable distribution channel for their narratives, which also acts as a channel where consumers can share (i.e., gossip, tweet, post, etc.) their own human brand narratives with other consumers (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). As narratives are created by the branded individual (and one's team) and then delivered by stakeholders (e.g., media) to the consumers, it is possible to include the audience as a stakeholder involved in the creation and distribution of human brand narratives (Dyer, 2004). The consumers of these storyteller narratives are not simply passive receivers of information (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), they are "creative story builders who do not record the world but create" (Escalas, 2004, p. 169) a story receiver narrative (van Laer, de Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014), as they received and interpreted them in a causal story-like structure with a beginning, middle and end, where goals lead to actions that ultimately lead to outcomes (Aron, Mashek, & Aron, 2004; Escalas, 2004). It is then possible to define human brand narrative as the consumption of a human brand's story through which the story receiver interprets it in a causal story-like structure (Eng & Jarvis, 2020).

Before further exploring the concept of narrative, it is imperative to clarify some of its aspects. Although used interchangeably in the narratology literature, a distinction is often made between story and discourse (Shankar, Elliott, & Goulding, 2001; Stern, Thompson, & Arnould, 1998; Woodside, Sood, & Miller, 2008). Story stands for universal meaning, while discourse is associated with the particular and narrative is the umbrella term for both story and discourse (Glibkowski, McGinnis, Gillespie, & Schommer, 2014). In other words, the story is reflected by "whats" and "whys" (the "why" represent the purpose or cause) while specific context or discourse is represented by "how", "when", "where" and "who" (McGinnis & Glibkowski, 2019). These two elements of narrative hence work hand in hand with the brand narrative dimensions: time (date of creation), place (city or country), stage of life (particular life situation), gender (male or female), passage (oldest–youngest), character (branded individual), know-how (processes) and material (natural or technological) (Floch, 2000; McCracken, 1993; Oswald, 2012; Stern, 1995; Veg-Sala & Roux, 2014). The universally understood underdog story – commonly utilized to designate the act of overcoming odds to succeed (Kim, et al., 2008; Paharia, Keinan, Avery, & Schor, 2011) – can be used as a clear and straightforward example, as it is the universal cause-and-effect relationship (Glibkowski, McGinnis, Gillespie, & Schommer, 2014). The "what" corresponds to the main variables (i.e. overcoming obstacles and success) and the why corresponds to the causal path (explaining why overcoming obstacles leads to success) (McGinnis & Glibkowski, 2019). The discourse is how the story plays itself out in a specific context with unique characters, setting, time and other contextual factors (McGinnis & Glibkowski, 2019).

The narratives conveying a human brand's persona can be classified into two categories: professional persona narratives and personal persona narratives (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). Professional narratives are stories of the individual's social character, talent or achievements in one's professional occupation (e.g., an actor performing in a play, a musician playing guitar in concert or an athlete in the Olympics) (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). As such, consumers are familiar with the exchange of monetary resources for the consumption of the human brand's professional work (e.g. movie tickets, athletic tickets and music albums) (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). On the other hand, personal persona narratives are recognized as a description of events featuring the individual's personal life and one's social character while away from one's primary occupation (e.g., an actor getting married, taking their child to school or on a vacation) (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). As personal narratives reflect more closely events that likely occur in a consumer's communal interpersonal relationships (e.g. dating, going to the supermarket and vacationing) (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), these narratives develop stronger feelings of closeness (i.e. the primary factor in brand attachment) (Mills, Clark, Ford, & Johnson, 2004)[7]. In addition, because the primary intention of many personal narratives, created by some institutions (e.g., media), is to craft a story that is perceived by consumers as an accurate telling of the individual's veridical identity (Dyer, 1979), personal narratives are perceived as relatable and identifiable stories featuring an empathetic side of the branded individual's life (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). Thus, these narratives result in a higher realism and in the creation an illusion of intimacy, in which consumers feel they truly know the human brand (as an interpersonal partner) (Schickel, 1985), and in higher levels of transportation and perceptions of closeness than professional narratives, due to their relevance and prominence (Green & Brock, 2000).

When developing the narratives of a human brand, the multitude of stakeholders take into consideration some key aspects. First, all integrated narrative elements must create a continuous and evolving story of the self through a selective reconstruction of the autobiographical past and a

[7] As anthropomorphized brands automatically encourage consumer goals to have a successful social interaction, consumers follow of behaviours from their interpersonal relationships (Aggarwal & Mcgill, 2012). Two types of relationship norms existing on a continuum can be identified: exchange relationship norms and communal relationship norms (Clark & Mills, 1979). Exchange relationship norms are rules of behaviour that govern relationships where benefits are given with the expectation of receiving a return benefit as repayment (Clark & Mills, 1979). Communal relationship norms are rules of behaviour that govern relationships where benefits are altruistically given in response to a genuine altruistic concern for the need of the other relationship partner (Clark & Mills, 1979). Professional narratives are likely to activate lower levels of communal relationship norms because they are perceived to more closely mimic exchange relationships, while personal narratives are likely to activate higher levels of communal relationship norms because they more closely mimic altruistic relationships (Aggarwal, 2004). Consumers also generally save communal relationships for partners who are most important to them (Mills & Clark, 1982), which makes those relationships higher in brand prominence due to their rarity relative to exchange relationships (Eng & Jarvis, 2020).

narrative anticipation of the imagined future (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020), in order to explain how the person came to be and where his or her life may be going (McAdams, 2011). This idea is closely related to the narrative identity theory – how an internalized and evolving story of the self is a feature of human selfhood, which begins to emerge when the adolescent or young-adult individual assumes the guise of one's own storyteller and provides a person's life with some semblance of unity, purpose, and meaning (McAdams, 2011; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Secondly, a vibrant brand should have a universal life story, with which consumers can identify throughout the years, as they grow and evolve through life's varied contexts (McAdams, 2001). This underlying story model must be clear, consistent, and context independent (so as to become timeless) and the "why" (which is the connection between all "whats" and represents the overall brand meaning) (Stern, Thompson, & Arnould, 1998) must guide the actions (i.e., "hows") of the main actors and consumers (Glibkowski, McGinnis, Gillespie, & Schommer, 2014). Finally, when developing narratives, the stakeholders must consider the source of the human brand's fame as consumer perceptions of how one rises to fame may be one factor that influences attachment (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). One's source of fame can be classified into achieved or attributed (Rojek, 2001). Achieved human brand narratives are stories in which the consumer perceives that the source of the branded individual's fame is achieved through skill or talent (e.g., athletic, acting, singing, modelling, etc) (Rojek, 2001). Conversely, attributed human brand narratives are stories in which the consumer perceives that the source of the branded individual's fame is attributed to them by the news or social media (i.e. fame despite an absence of skill or talent) (Boorstin, 1961; Rojek, 2001). Those who are perceived to have achieved their fame are believed to have stronger and longer-lasting star power than those who are "famous for being famous" (Gamson, 1994). Even if human brands with attributed narratives can be considered inferior to human brands with achieved narratives (referred to as human brands of pseudo-events) (Boorstin D. J., 1961), perceptions of inferiority may not be aligned with attachment or consumption behaviour (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). YouTubers, for example, can be more influential than traditional achieved human brands due to their perceived relatability, candidness and authenticity (Ault, 2014; O'Neil-Hart & Blumenstein, 2016).

Efficient narratives, the process of telling stories (Richardson, 2000; Ungar, Genette, Lewin, & Harari, 1980) which makes the consumption experience more meaningful (Polkinghorne, 1988), deconstruct brand ideologies and lead consumers to become more aware of the history and of various elements of the brand (Avery, Paharia, Keinan, & Schor, 2010), brand meanings (Diamond, et al., 2009), and brand biography (Avery, Paharia, Keinan, & Schor, 2010). In turn, a rich brand experience enables consumers to immerse themselves in a narrative story world, to experience durable emotional, cognitive and behavioural effects – narrative transportation theory (Gerrig, 1993) – and to strengthen their relationship with the brand (Hollenbeck, Peters, & Zinkhan, 2008; Narsey & Russell, 2013). Moreover, as storytelling is central to memory and its ability to elicit memories and associations, and brand knowledge is created through associative learning, narratives can be used to nurture and promote brands associations made by consumers through their experiences with human brands (Jones, Sethna, & Özdemir, 2013; Keller, 1993; Nakos & Brouthers, 2002; Ochoa &

Lorimer, 2017; Schroeder, 2005; Zaltman, 2003). The meaning attached to these associations from storyteller narratives and story receiver narratives (Escalas & Bettman, 2017; McCracken, 1989) form a close self-human brand relationship, as perceived by the consumer (Fournier, 1998). Brand attachment is then created when the consumer perceives positive brand valence, relevance, and salience (Park, Eisingerich, & Park, 2013) in the admiration for an individual's professional exploits (that is, their "professional" narrative) and in the consumption of narratives about individuals' personal lives (their "personal" narratives) (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). As brand attachment is predictive of intention to execute difficult behaviours such as purchase behaviour, brand purchase share and need share, brand attachment is considered the "ultimate destination for brand relationships" (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010, p. 2). The two indicators of attachment are: self-brand distance and brand prominence (i.e., salience) (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010). Consumers have a close human brand relationship when they have positive, highly relevant, and personally meaningful memories about a brand (Park, Eisingerich, & Park, 2013) and a self-brand connection is made when a consumer includes the brand as part of their self-concept (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). Therefore, human brand attachment can be defined as the level of closeness to a celebrity brand perceived by a consumer (Eng & Jarvis, 2020; Park, Eisingerich, & Park, 2013).

To conclude, successful human brands immerse consumers by crafting narratives that feature imaginable events, causal and chronological in nature, consistent across all narrative platforms (Eng & Jarvis, 2020) and which make the human brand identifiable and empathic with personal narratives featuring the celebrity brand's personal life (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). These brands remain authentic through time and usually avoid contradictions as it likely breaks the immersion of the customer (Eng & Jarvis, 2020). Furthermore, all stakeholders assess the potential impact of the human brand's narratives on their organization and strategies as when transgressions happen, both sides' brands reputations can be harmed (Aaker, Fournier, & Brassel, 2004). Also, firms should consider developing narrative messages with human brands (e.g., tall tale, anti-hero, street-cred, etc) rather than endorsement messages because narrative processing creates more lasting attitude and belief changes than analytical processing (Appel & Richter, 2007).

2.2.2.1.3. Brand Positioning

Brand positioning is a key concept in this first step of identifying and establishing brand positioning and values (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). Positioning refers to how companies create their brands, make strategies for their plans and expand their relations with costumers (Shafiee, Gheidi, Khorrami, & Asadollah, 2020). Brand position thus means how the brand is understood in regards with the presence of other rival brands (Lin L. Y., 2010). Positioning strategies are the focal point of perceptions and choices of costumers and, when done effectively, have the ability of making powerful brands (Trout & Ries, 1986). In relation to human brands with long careers, who may sometimes become imprisoned in the image of past characters, actions and communication, a repositioning towards a new identity may be necessary (Johns & English, 2016; Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). This repositioning professional human brands may be attempted through incongruent work (i.e., incongruent brand extensions) (Pluntz & Pras, 2020a), but, if not done correctly, these incongruent extensions run the risk of being poorly received (e.g., by the critics), thus leading to "roller-coaster rides" for these human brands, independently of their economic performance (Mainemelis, Nolas, & Tsirogianni, 2016). This was the case of J. K. Rowling, successful author of young adult Harry Potter series, who decided to write adult fiction under a male pseudonym (Robert Galbraith) after receiving a positive reception by the public but mixed reviews from critics (Pluntz & Pras, 2020a; Rowling, 2012).

The concept of brand positioning is closely related to differentiation, with most scholars emphasizing that the branded individual should differ from everybody else and neglect the points of parity (Chen, 2013; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). However, others defend the contrary, i.e., points of differentiation from other competitors (e.g., the amount and the quality of their field-specific cultural and social capital) must be identified, as well as points of parity that are visibly fitting in with the expectations of the field in which the human brand is competing (Close, Moulard, & Monroe, 2011; Parmentier, Fischer, & Reuber, 2013). Furthermore, the differentiation from others does not automatically have to have positive, as brand transgressions (such as the refusal to comply with societal conventions or scandals – topic explained later in the chapter) can conduct to attention and differentiation (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). This differentiation, which can be referred to as brand distinctiveness – the combination of measures that indicate the uniqueness and superiority of a brand in the marketplace (Aaker, 1996; Wong & Merrilees, 2007) – can be achieved through the positioning of the brand by projecting an image to customers who see the unique values offered to them (Wong & Merrilees, 2008). To sustain this brand distinctiveness, a clear brand vision, a concrete basis of the desired image built on unique values is required when continuously designing brand-based strategies (De Chernatony, 2001; Hatch & Schultz, 2001; Kucharska & Mikołajczak, 2018; Urde, 1994; Urde, 1999).

The positioning of a brand is always conducted with the goal of achieving the best brand performance possible, being brand performance the level of successful a brand detains in the market (Wong & Merrilees, 2008). Brand awareness, reputation and loyalty were suggested as essentials in the performance of a brand (Chaudhuri, 2002; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Reid, 2002; Wong & Merrilees, 2007). In turn, brand knowledge derives from brand awareness and brand image, and as it represents the aggregated knowledge that consumers have about a brand, it relates directly to brand equity (Keller, 1993; Keller, 2001; Keller, 1993). Brand awareness is a necessary condition to establish knowledge structures which also reflects consumers' ability to recall or recognize the brand (Keller, 1993). Through awareness, a human brand is associated with a relevant set of consumers (Aaker D. A., 1991). As for brand image, it includes the set of all associations that a consumer has with a certain brand (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995; Newman, 1957).

Similar to the consumption of hedonic products or experience goods, the consumption of human brands also tends to generate emotions such as joy, fun, and pleasure (Vorderer, Klimmt, & Ritterfeld, 2004). The sole difference is that consumers can only asset its benefits after having consumed the offering (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021), which means they may face substantial uncertainty about the utility they might gain, before entering the consumption experience (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021). In response to this problem, human brand images, along with identification and differentiation functions of human brands, can be used to reduce consumers' uncertainty prior to consumption (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021). Brand image can be understood as a multitude of interrelated subjective perceptions and existing associations held in the memory of consumers about a brand (Keller, 1993; Patterson, 1999), which, all together created brand preferences, which in turn, are prerequisites for brand success (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). The brand associations mentioned above can fall into different categories, but most associations are classified as attributes, which can vary in favourability, strength, and uniqueness (Keller, 1993). Furthermore, in general, these attributes pertain to how consumers perceive product characteristics, whether linked to the product itself or not (Keller, 1993). Product-related attributes involve technical or physical parts of the product, which directly determine its performance (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021; Keller, 1993). In the context of human brands, these attributes mainly reflect a performance-based component of brand image (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021). Performance-based attributes are characteristics that can be assigned to a human brand based on one's activities, which prompt the development of a human brand (Rosen, 1981). Non-product-related attributes also can influence brand images, although they relate merely indirectly to measurable performance components – correspond to popularity-based features (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021), which determine the human brand's brand image and one's ability to build consumption capital (Adler, 1985; Adler, 2006).

In relation to the development of favourable human brand images, two main approaches can be considered: a distinctive brand image built on talent and performance (Rosen, 1981); or a distinctive brand image centred on popularity (Adler, 1985; Adler, 2006). According to Rosen (1981), talent and performance ensure a distinctive brand image because consumers generally prefer human brands that rank at the top of their field, prompting disproportional demand for highly ranked human brands (Krueger, 2005). Due to the imperfect substitutability of talent, the performance-based attributes of a human brand (e.g., talent, expertise) lead to the development of a superior human brand image (Rosen, 1981). In other words, for consumers, an athlete's or artist's strong performance cannot be substituted for by a greater quantity of mediocre performances (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021; Rosen, 1981). In these hierarchy-driven markets (commonly are referred to as "winner-take-all" markets) (Frank & Cook, 1995), consumers rarely are satisfied with the second-best option and concentrate their demand on the brand that offers the best performance (Rosen, 1981). This nonlinear relationship in the ranking of human brands reflects performance considerations (Rosen, 1981) where small differences in talent at the top of the distribution can translate into large differences in revenue (Krueger, 2005), and can be exemplified by the reason why a boxing match between the eighth and ninth ranked fighters does not provide the same utility as a match between the first and second ranked boxers (Frank & Cook, 1995). Contrastingly, Adler (1985; 2006) uses the theory of consumption capital (Stigler & Becker, 1977) to affirm that, beyond disparities in measurable performance, rankings hang on popularity levels, determined by accumulated consumption capital. In this context, consumption capital indicates the capital stock of previous consumption, which determines the utility of current consumption (Adler, 1985; Adler, 2006). In other words, consumers collect knowledge about a human brand from their temporally prior consumption and every additional consumption experience refers back to previous knowledge and increases existing knowledge, which eventually becomes human brand's popularity (Adler, 1985; Adler, 2006). Additionally, this consumption capital can be raised through interactions with like-minded others and media coverage on human brands (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021). Economically, the accumulation of consumer capital arises from cognitive and social forms of positive network externalities, such that the marginal utility of each new consumption experience of a human brand depends not just on its talent, but on the size of the network (Franck & Nüesch, 2012). Even though this intellection offers an alternative explanation to the nonlinear correlation between the ranking of human brands and their positive brand images, research evidence to support it is scarcer than research supporting Rosen's (1981) performance-based approach (Franck & Nüesch, 2008; Garcia-del-Barrio & Pujol, 2007; Lehmann & Schulze, 2008).

In any case, the success of human brands driven by performance and popularity can be applied to branded individuals of innumerable sectors and industries such as politicians, managers, and academic researchers (Azoulay, Graff Zivin, & Wang, 2010; Baranchuk, MacDonald, & Yang, 2011; Lazear & Rosen, 1981), athletes and artists (Allison, 1986; Hutter, 1996; Seaman, 2003; Throsby, 2001) in different industries like the motion picture industry (Bagella & Becchetti, 1999; De Vany & Walls, 1999) or in the music industry (Chung & Cox, 1994; Giles, 2006; Hamlen, 1991; Hamlen, 1994). This success can in part be explained by the direct impact both brand value and brand image have on the monetary, measurable, market value of human brands (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021). Considering both the original and acquired brand images of human brands through a traditional product brand lens, consumers are willing to pay a considerable price premium for strong brands – i.e., higher ranking brands in provided utility and with favourable brand images (Aaker J. L., 1997).

2.2.2.2. Step 2: Plan and implement brand marketing programs

The second step – plan and implement brand marketing programs – mainly comprises the creation and development of the marketing mix (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). However, as most literature aligns with the definition of human brands relying on marketing communication efforts (Thomson, 2006), this step pertains mostly to communications (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). The only exception is price, on which it has been found that consumers are willing to pay a premium price for celebrity owned brands (Singh & Pandey, 2017).

Marketing communications promote the brand by establishing a dialog and building relationships with consumers (Keller, 2013). In the context of branded individuals, visibility is indispensable to marketing communications, as "you need to get noticed" (Gander, 2014, p. 101). This visibility can be labelled as on-field visibility or off-field visibility (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). On-field visibility is attained in the original field of practice and profession of the branded individual (for instance, awards and honours conferred by peers in the field) (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Off-field visibility is attained outside of the professional field (for example, through mainstream media) (Parmentier & Fischer, 2012). Furthermore, marketing communications can also occur offline (through a physical presence/footprint) and/or online (through a digital presence/footprint such as social media) (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). As the offline and online brand identities are seamlessly integrated, both mediums cocreate the experience of identity together through a transmedia model of storytelling and story-world construction (Elwell, 2014). Through this transmedia model, human brands (and respective stakeholders) can develop stories that build brand meaning by integrating different story elements dispersed across multiple media platforms in an episodic format and co-created by the audience's interaction (Elwell, 2014).

A major portion of these online marketing communications occurs on social media platforms, which rise has profoundly changed the way businesses interact (Lo, Yu, & Chen, 2020). By principle, social media and other collaborative/professional networks serve the purpose of building relationships between people by providing an unlimited digital environment in which individuals can freely create content and communicate with vast audiences (Jacobson, 2020; Kim & Kim, 2023). Once users started to quickly obtain different kinds of information through their contacts (followers) and started voluntarily sharing information (Lo & Peng, 2022; Osatuyi, 2013; Zhang, 2015), social media evolved from a network tool to the main source of receiving information (Westerman, Spence, & Van Der Heide, 2013). In this context of information-seeking supremacy, a brand which provides the most useful information can acquire a reputation relatively easily, such as creating electronic word-of-mouth (King S. B., 2014), and retain consumers with a higher brand identification, brand trust, and community commitment (Kim, Sung, & Kang, 2014). Social media thus provide ordinary users the unique opportunity to gain a reputation and be an influential brand, regardless of age, location, business or other factors (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017; Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997), eventually transforming from a former "nobody" to a "somebody" with an effective voice in the market by utilizing a social platform (Booth & Matic, 2011). Those social media users who have an enormous base of followers on social media platforms can even be considered social media celebrities (Bakshy, Hofman, Mason, & Watts, 2011). Although an enormous base of followers can be a goal for many, social media can also be used to provide knowledge about a person, build one's image for the sake of recruiters, friends and acquaintances and ultimately leveraging the power of social media as recruitment tools (e.g., LinkedIn or GoldenLine) (Jacobson, 2020; Mathys, Burmester, & Clement, 2016). Fundamentally, the value of a successful personal brand on social media refers to various meanings and can be the relative utility to its customers (Ducoffe, 1995; Sheth & Uslay, 2007), such as information, entertainment, and excitement (Ducoffe, 1995).

Social media is not restricted to personal brands though, as human brands (e.g., celebrities) leverage social media as an interactive arena whereby they engage with fans and as a marketing channel for promoting newly released music or movies and advertising media appearances (Jin, 2018; Johns & English, 2016). Initially, human brands used social media as a platform to present their particular brand image in a more controlled and personal way and increase the connection with the audience (Johns & English, 2016). Since these platforms give human brands the opportunity to provide a detailed, intentional and controlled post to their audience, while simultaneously appearing casual and conversational, human brands moved away from the journalist-written piece in a magazine or newspaper, where the human brand has little to no control over the content included in the formal piece of writing (Johns & English, 2016). In addition, social media enables human brands to have an audience composed of almost exclusively of fans (who choose to follow him/her), which contrasts with a magazine or newspaper article – read by people with little to no awareness or interest on the branded individual (Johns & English, 2016). In sum, social media allows human brands to position themselves in a more approachable way, as "just another peer or friend" (Greenwood, 2013, p. 224) of consumers, who in turn, have the opportunity to personally converse with the celebrity (Johns & English, 2016). Acting as a "virtual glue" (Simmons, 2008, p. 305) that bonds and unites consumers within an increasingly fragmented and dislocated world (Castells, 2001; Simmons, 2008), social media thus aggregates communities of like-minded people, overcoming traditional geo-demographic segmentation characteristics and linking consumers who share a passion for a product, activity or even for a particular human brand (Hamilton & Hewer, 2010; Pace, Fratocchi, & Cocciola, 2007).

However, as the influence of human brands extends far beyond the traditional domain of the entertainment sector of society (Choi & Berger, 2009), companies realised the public's infatuation with social media and its marketing potential (Burns, 2009). In a similar way to connecting with the human brand disguised as a real person doing identity work online ("just another peer or friend") (Greenwood, 2013, p. 224), the conversation in social media provides buyers and potential buyers the ability to connect with the brand (Johns & English, 2016). Moreover, in the context of human brand endorsers, through the use of social media, companies can use sponsorship requirements to include conversation between the branded individual and the customers (Johns & English, 2016). For instance, a soda brand with an endorser could require him/her to do a series of online chats during the promotional period, therefore connecting the fans to the branded individual and reinforcing the brand image of the soda, connected back to the branded individual (Johns & English, 2016). These human brands that partner with companies in endorsement activities are sometimes celebrities but can also be social media influencers.

With the shift from passive receivers to proactive generators/distributors of market information, individuals became key in the proliferation of user-generated content on social media (Wang C. L., 2021). Through the interactive features on social media which enable some users to build extensive networks to influence others, social media influencers appeared, acting as opinion leaders to a sizable network of followers (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). In addition, micro-influencers have also emerged in the last few years – social media influencers with a small but highly loyal number of followers (10 – 50 thousand followers) (Venkateshi, 2020). Influencer-marketing has thus transformed into a long-term strategy pursuing consistent partnerships and deeper involvements (Burns, 2020; Robertson, 2020). Contrasting with traditional human brands, social media influencers (also called online celebrities) attain public influence online rather than transferring their celebrity status from offline to online (Jin & Phua, 2014; Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020; Stever & Lawson, 2013). Moreover, online celebrities, whose all or most of value creation and benefit converting process is accomplished on the internet (i.e., advertisement, e-commerce) (Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020), are closer and more accessible to social networking users (Hwang & Zhang, 2018). As online celebrities are seen as “normal people” who became famous on online social networks (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017), they can have a closer relationship with their followers, be more aware of their follower groups’ preferences and thus, transmit content to more targeted consumers (Hwang & Zhang, 2018; Liu, Qu, & Zhao, 2017).

To conclude, social media is nowadays a key tool for marketing communications of branded individuals. The autonomy and mutual communication provided by social media enables the individual to develop closer relationships with the audience (Utz, 2009). These relationships can be, in turn, utilized by companies through the form of online endorsements or other brand extensions (Booth & Matic, 2011; Gannon & Prothero, 2018; Keel & Nataraajan, 2012).

2.2.2.3. Step 3: Measure and interpret brand performance

In the third step – measure and interpret brand performance – it is mandatory to know what to track, how to do it, and how to interpret the results for securing brand performance (Keller, 2013). From a strategic point of view, brand equity must be studied as to enhance marketing efficiency (Keller, 1993). This marketing efficiency is necessary not only for the branded individual him/herself but also in the context of endorsements and brand extensions, as human brands are a significant tool for effective marketing communications (Chen & Chung, 2017). The variety of meanings human brands hold to the eyes of the consumers (McCracken, 1989) are frequently used in endorsements to help cut through the existing clutter in the marketplace, attract attention and differentiate a specific brand from existing ones (Singh & Banerjee, 2017; Singh & Banerjee, 2018). Therefore, for human brands, building brand equity is an essential means of transferring their influence into economic performance (Mazodier & Merunka, 2012; Sirgy, Lee, Johar, & Tidwell, 2008). An example of this transference of influence into economic performance is the case of Oprah Winfrey, whose recommendation of a product or book would lead to its overnight success, due to her large group of loyal fans (Loroz & Braig, 2015). Other example is how online celebrities’ recommendations of products enhances customers’ confidence, particularly in products that customers lack the tangible experience of using products perceived as high risks online purchases (Galbraith & Kolesar, 2000; Wiley, 2014).

Brand equity can be defined as the differential effect of brand knowledge (which includes awareness and image) on consumer response to the brand’s marketing (Keller, 1993). In other words, a set of assets (or liabilities) consisting of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, brand loyalty and other proprietary assets (Aaker, 1991; Aaker, 1991; Aaker, 1992) which occur “when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong and unique brand associations in memory” (Keller, 1993, p. 1). Brand equity includes five primary dimensions – brand image, brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty (Keller, 1993). This crucial indicator of the brand's social value (Keller, 1993) can also be applied to human brands as, similarly to product brands, branded individuals can display the same characteristics that constitute a brand, including establishing awareness and image in the minds of consumers (Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020; Seno & Lukas, 2007). Three main dimensions can be identified: consumer's response to marketing, differential effect, and brand knowledge (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Oostrom, 2021). The first dimension, consumer's response to marketing, indicates the favourability of the reactions (i.e., perceptions, preferences, or behaviours) toward the brand, thus resembling the extent to which the features and characteristics of a branded individual are appealing (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Oostrom, 2021). The second dimension, differential effect, refers to the extent to which the product stands out compared to the competition (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Oostrom, 2021). In the context of branded individuals, this brand differentiation concerns the perceived superior benefits associated with the person's work (Evans, 2017; Gorbatov, Khapova, & Oostrom, 2021). At last, brand knowledge, implies the descriptive and evaluative brand-related information that is stored in one's memory (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Oostrom, 2021).

However, two main elements can be identified in brand equity (in the context of branded individuals), professional equity and celebrity equity (Parmentier & Fischer, 2010). Professional equity is built in the original field of practice by the individual's ability to perform well within one's profession and by the formation of upward social networks within the profession to achieve more visibility (Parmentier & Fischer, 2010; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012). Professional equity also provides a basis for forming celebrity equity (Ghuman, Parmar, & Mann). Celebrity equity, earned outside the original field, is built by cultivating an authentic personality which arouses curiosity among those consumers who are unaware of the individual's profession, in order to develop profession spanning networks and to seize prospects of attaining visibility beyond the original field of practice (Parmentier & Fischer, 2010; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012). Celebrity equity also helps marketers in the selection of the appropriated human brand to endorse and bring awareness to the product endorsed because an individual whose visibility transcends the boundary of the profession is ideal (Ghuman, Parmar, & Mann; Parmentier & Fischer, 2010).

In addition, brand equity can be approached from two perspectives: a financial perspective and a consumer (customer) perspective (Gorbatov, Khapova, & Oostrom, 2021). From a financial perspective, brand equity is the value of the brand which similarly to the concept of financial equity, refers to the difference between the value of assets and the value of liabilities (Simon & Sullivan, 1993). On the other hand, from the customer perspective, brand equity is a brand's value (Hoeffler & Keller, 2003; Schultz, 2016), which resides in being familiar with a brand and holding "favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory" (Keller, 1993, p. 2). This customer-based brand equity can be considered as a "part of the attraction to – or repulsion from – a particular product [...] generated by the 'non-objective' part of the product offering and not by the product attributes per se" (Keller & Lehmann, 2006, p. 754). In conclusion, human brand equity can be defined as both a financial asset and as a set of favourable associations and behaviours (Seno & Lukas, 2007), comprising both a financial and consumer-based perspective.

In the past, different measurable quantities, such as the price of artworks, record sales or online downloads of a musician's work, career earnings, on and off-screen appearances, the number of endorsement contracts, or the annual rankings in the Forbes's list of celebrities, have been used to measure human branding activities and its successful (Luo, Chen, Han, & Park, 2010; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Yet, these measures do not offer reliable information about the comparative human brand equity of different individuals (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020). Other sources of human brand equity have also been studied, such as charisma (Verčič & Verčič, 2011), star power and level of stardom (Lewis & Yoon, 2016), market popularity (Mathys, Burmester, & Clement, 2016), "person-brand capital" source - based on the notions of cultural capital (Delisle & Parmentier, 2016) and market value (Hofmann, Schnittka, Johnen, & Kottemann, 2021). However, as most of the research focuses on the role of human brands as endorsers rather than an understanding of the human brand itself (Mathys, Burmester, & Clement, 2016), there is no real brand equity measurement in practice, which considers all human brands as multidimensional constructs and reflects the multi-stakeholder approach to cocreate the human brands in a collective act (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020).

2.2.2.3.1. Brand Attachment

Even though there is no consensus on how to measure human brand equity, the most commonly measured source of brand equity is human brand attachment (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). As consumers develop deep relationships with some brands (Aaker, Fournier, & Brassel, 2004; Fournier, 1998) and may even feel emotionally attached, experiencing love and passion (Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2013; Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005), brand attachment describes the strength of the bond connecting the consumer with the brand (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). Attachment can refer to a person's affectionate bond with another and a goal-corrected control system to achieve security (Bowlby, 1969). This attachment system regulates human behaviour to achieve and maintain one's proximity to a target (Kim & Kim, 2023). When an individual acquires the attachment to a certain partner, they can attain high levels of intimacy, commitment, satisfaction and stability in the relationship, as well as shape one's thoughts, feelings and self-expectations (Collins & Read, 1990; Kim & Kim, 2023).

As according to the relationship perspective, consumers interact with brands in a humanlike way, fostering identification, and creating an enduring emotional connection (Fournier, 1998), human brands are especially prone to inducing a strong level of emotional attachment from consumers (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Delbaere, McQuarrie, & Phillips, 2011; Puzakova, Kwak, & Rocereto, 2013; Thomson, 2006). Humanizing a brand through a distinct brand personality provides opportunities for building consumer-brand relationships (Swaminathan, Stilley, & Ahluwalia, 2008), which can develop into emotional brand attachment – the emotional bond between a consumer and a brand, comprising feelings of affection, connection, and passion (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). Emotional brand attachment occurs through consumer identification with self-concept (Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011) and those consumers who are emotionally attached to a brand will be more loyal (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010), more forgiving (Schmalz & Orth, 2012), and willing to pay more for the brand (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005).

Attachment, which was defined as a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings" (Bowlby, 1969, p. 194) and later extended to human brands as "the intensity of a person's target-specific emotional bond with a human brand" (Thomson, 2006, p. 105) can be explained by the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Bowlby, 1982). The attachment theory lays the foundation for idol attachment, which can be defined as the intensity of an individual's target-specific emotional bond with a human brand (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). In other words, a consumer can establish "a target-specific emotional bond with a human brand" (Thomson, 2006, p. 105), perceiving the brand relationship as special and irreplaceable while feeling appreciated, empowered, and autonomous from a strong attachment to a human brand (Thomson, 2006). This consumers' attachment can lead to successful marketing outcomes (Duffy D. L., 2005), as it might, for example, lead consumers to become worshippers, imitate the individual's appearance and be more willing to purchase or continue purchasing the human brand's related products such as music albums (Raviv, Bar-Tal, Raviv, & Ben-Horin, 1996; Wang, Chen, Yang, & Farn, 2009). Consequently, a consumer's idol attachment is positively connected to his/her level of obsession in terms of seeking physical and psychological closeness and security from the branded individual (Thomson, 2006; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005).

The consumers' attachment to human brands has three antecedents – three innate psychological needs that are essential for optimal functioning: autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Thomson, 2006). Autonomy appertains to the consumer's sense of agency and freedom with respect to his/her choices, behaviour, and expression (Loroz & Braig, 2015). In other words, autonomy is "a person's need to feel that his/her activities are self-chosen, self-governed, and self-endorsed" (Thomson, 2006, p. 106). By promoting this feeling of self-determination and independence, human brands and other relationship partners develop strong attachments (Huang, Lin, & Phau, 2015; Loroz & Braig, 2015). Relatedness encapsulates the consumer's feelings of closeness or connectedness to others (Deci & Ryan, 2000), including a sense of belonging to a social group and avoiding social isolation or loneliness (Austin & Vancouver, 1996; Deci & Ryan, 2000). When the need for relatedness is satisfied and high levels of relatedness in a relationship are attained, feelings of attachment and love can be achieved (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) since the customer feels "connected with and cared for by another" (LaGuardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000, p. 368). Homophily, the feeling of relatedness derived from similar values, preferences, memories, experiences, backgrounds, interests, beliefs, personal characteristics, and feelings among relationship partners (Brembeck & Howell, 1952; Chu & Kim, 2011; Kim & Kim, 2023), can be key in the context of branded individuals. These perceptions of a common background and social appeal can lead to the formation of attachment among consumers (Cole & Leets, 1999). Lastly, competence (i.e., need to affect one's outcomes and surroundings) (Huang, Lin, & Phau, 2015) concerns the consumer's sense of accomplishment, effectiveness, and skill (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Competence can also be related to the universal value of achievement according to social standards, reflecting that a person is successful, capable, and influential (Schwartz, 1994). When these fundamental human needs are fulfilled (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Schwartz, 1994), the emotional security required to create intense attachments is provided (Deci & Ryan, 2000; LaGuardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000), along with high levels of intrinsic motivation, which relate to favourable outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Overall, autonomy and relatedness were found to be key determinants of attachment strength while competence was not a significant predictor, as human brands need only to avoid degrading the competence of consumers in order for attachments to form (Thomson, 2006). Nevertheless, competence can still play a central role if the branded individual so chooses, as it was for Oprah Winfrey previously mentioned. The television star and media mogul has consistently urged her audience members to take responsibility for their own happiness – living one's best life – fostering feelings of both competence and autonomy in consumers (Lofton, 2011; Loroz & Braig, 2015; Sellers, 2010). Additionally, it is probable that Oprah's fans also experience a sense of relatedness both because of her long-time daily presence as well as her willingness to share aspects of her personal life (Loroz & Braig, 2015).

However, it is equally relevant to understand the characteristics of the other relationship partner – the branded individual – who the partner is and what qualities attract others to him/her (Loroz & Braig, 2015). In other words, the strength of any attachment that forms should also depend upon the likability and personality of the human brand or other relationship partner (Loroz & Braig, 2015), as for a human brand attachment to form, "the consumer must be minimally attracted in some way to the human brand, whether socially or in some other manner" (Thomson, 2006, p. 116). Although this appeal may be partially physical – physically attractive people can be perceived to be integral, intelligent and sociable (Baker & Churchill, 1977; Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972; Dipboye, Arvey, & Terpstra, 1977), enhance advertising effectiveness (Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani, & Longo, 1991) and also increase the likability of the endorser, the product evaluation and opinion agreement (Joseph, 1982), as well as attain higher attraction (Cole & Leets, 1999; Thomson, 2006) – it is not sufficient to foster attachment strength (Loroz & Braig, 2015). As a result, brand personality appeal has been used to capture the moderating influence of attractiveness on attachment and consequently, the extent to which a brand's personality leads to favourable attitudes and purchase intentions (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011). Brand personality appeal is comprised of three dimensions: favourability, originality, and clarity (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011).

The first dimension, favourability, indicates the positive regard for the brand's traits and personality (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011), as favourable brands are perceived as having attributes and offering benefits that consumers believe will satisfy their needs and wants (Keller, 1993). The same applies for branded individuals since consumers who have positive feelings towards a human brand's personality or character traits, they are more likely to experience beneficial connections to the brand that result in strong relationships (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011). The second dimension – originality – refers to the extent to which the brand personality is considered novel or distinct from others in the category (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011). Human brands, like any brand that offers distinct attributes or occupies a unique position in the marketplace, has a competitive advantage over other brands because it is less likely to suffer from the interference effects of many similar brands occupying a crowded space (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011; Keller, 1993; Loroz & Braig, 2015). Finally, clarity indicates the extent to which the brand's personality is apparent and recognizable to consumers (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011). In the same way brand personalities that are clear should easily come to mind when a consumer thinks about or sees the brand, human brand personalities that are high in clarity are more likely to generate positive (or negative) brand attitudes (and consequent attachments), thus having an impact on consumer evaluations of the brand (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2011). Once more resorting the Oprah Winfrey example, the Oprah brand has explicitly differentiated itself from competitors by not focusing on dysfunction or scandal (Lorando, 1994) and by focusing essentially all marketing and media activities on the "living one's best life" mantra (Peck, 2008; Sellers, 2010). In conclusion, while autonomy, relatedness, and competence serve as antecedents of the strength of consumers' attachment to human brands (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020), brand appeal, consistent focus, and longevity are effective moderators in the relationship between these antecedents and the outcomes of human brand attachment, including the dimensions of favourability, originality, and clarity (Loroz & Braig, 2015; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020).

The human brand attachment process (Eng & Jarvis, 2020) is closely linked to the narrative transportation theory (Gerrig, 1993; Green & Brock, 2000). The narrative transportation theory explains the phenomenon of "getting lost in a book", where a reader is so absorbed in a story that he/she becomes temporarily unaware of one's surroundings (Gerrig, 1993; Green & Brock, 2000). In other words, narrative transportation is a psychological process, whereby a consumer ventures mentally to a narrative world by some means of transportation (i.e., the text) and by performing certain cognitive and emotional actions (e.g., imagining the story, characters, and sceneries), one travels some distance away from one's daily life, even becoming temporarily inaccessible, only to return home after some time again (Gerrig, 1993), somewhat changed by the experience of the journey (Green, Brock, & G., 2004). In the human brand attachment process, the consumer perceives and interprets the human brand narrative associations carried by the branded individual's persona (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), consequently being transported to the branded individual's world (van Laer, de Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014). It is in this transported state where the consumer not only becomes immersed in the narrative world but also experiences interpersonal-like relationship norms and then a close connection to the branded individual (Aggarwal, 2004; Park, Eisingerich, & Park, 2013). In allowing the consumer to immerse oneself into exciting narrative worlds, where one could experience a different self and engage with fictional characters like real friends, the narrative transportation process provides the consumer with a temporary means of escape (Batat & Wohlfeil, 2009). The consumer's interest in the admired branded individual can hence be interpreted as 'losing' oneself into the factual melodramatic narrative presented by various media texts (Argo, Zhui, & Dahl, 2008). Thus, the consumer might sympathize, empathize or even identify with the admired individual like a media character (Cohen, 2001; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2008).

The human brand attachment process and narrative transportation theory go hand in hand with self-concept and self-expansion theory. Self-concept is defined as a person's perception of oneself and consists of multiple dimensions (Sirgy, 1986). The actual self reflects how people view themselves and refers to the perceived reality of oneself (Lazzari, Fioravanti, & Gough, 1978). The ideal self relates to what a person aspires to become such as ideals (Lazzari, Fioravanti, & Gough, 1978). As for the self-expansion theory, it suggests that people have an inherent motivation to incorporate others (e.g., idols) into their conception of “self” (Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011; Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010). In a context of consumption, when a brand reflects how consumers see themselves, actual self-congruence is increased, whereas when a brand resonates with consumers' idealized view of themselves, ideal self-congruence is increased (Guèvremont, 2021). This congruence also applies to human brands, since the more an entity (e.g., idol) is included in the self, higher the positive impact of brand identity self-congruence on brand attitude (Kressmann, et al., 2006) and closer the emotional bond – emotional brand attachment (Hung, 2014; Koo, Cho, & Kim, 2014; Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011; Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005; Zhou, Zhang, Su, & Zhou, 2012). The ideal self is also fuelled by brands because consumers look for inspiration in the brands they consume (Swaminathan, Stilley, & Ahluwalia, 2008) and can be influenced by aspirational brands and brands which reflect a higher status or image (Escalas & Bettman, 2003; Hollenbeck & Kaikati, 2012; Ward & Dahl, 2014)[8].

The human brand attachment process, along with all the adjacent constructs, allow therefore to understand the behaviour of young people with a high level of human brand attachment who, for instance, may repeatedly purchase their idols’ music products and/or may imitate such branded individuals, by copying their dress, hairstyle, speech, voice and any other social behavioural patterns to achieve more intimate proximity to them and maintain a parasocial relationship (Raviv, Bar-Tal, Raviv, & Ben-Horin, 1996; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). This parasocial relationship is created by the continuous process of introjection and projection (Gould, 1993), where the consumer internalizes the human brand persona through media narratives, loads it with one's own thoughts, feelings, fantasies, values, and meanings, and then projects the created personal impression back onto the human brand, internalizing it again (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012). This continuous process allows for the feelings of knowing the branded individual like a close friend, whose career and life choices are empathetically followed in the same way as that of a fictional media character in an ongoing melodramatic narrative (Gould, 1993; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012).

The phenomenon of parasocial relationships (or interactions), the experienced feeling of knowing the branded individual personally, including one’s thoughts, feelings, personality and way of life (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012), are perceived interpersonal relationships which sporadically can deepen over time with repeated viewings and become strong enough to elicit

[8] The literature on the subject has proposed that brand identification with a consumer's actual self is more important than with his ideal self, as consumers prefer realistic images reflecting who they are rather than images that are difficult to achieve (Back, et al., 2010; Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011).

an emotional feeling within the fan of “personal friendship” or even “love” towards the adored branded individual (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012). Parasocial relationships are frequently associated with adolescents (Giles & Maltby, 2004) and the elderly (Chory-Assad & Yanen, 2005; Rubin, Pearse, & Powell, 1985), but other drivers of this illusion of intimacy (Giles D. C., 2002) can also be identified, such as loneliness and companionship (McQuail, Blumler, & Brown, 1972), perceived realism and attraction (Rubin & Perse, 1987) and homophily (i.e., the tendency for individuals to bond with others who are similar) (Turner J. R., 1993). Although term itself has been loaded with largely negative connotations in both academic and popular literature (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012), celebrity adoration is seen as a normal part of the process of identity development for in childhood and adolescence (Greene & Adams-Price, 1990; Yue & Cheung, 2000), as the adoration of one or more idols or role models allows children and young adults to form attachments with them (called secondary attachments) (Erikson, 1968), which perform several important functions, including social and emotional ones (Greene & Adams-Price, 1990). These secondary attachments to human brands are generally referred to as parasocial relationships, which are based on one-way interaction, with the consumer feeling as if the branded individual is their friend or colleague (Giles, 2002; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Tukachinsky, 2010). This phenomenon appears in everyone’s lives, even if to different extents and it is not exclusive of young people, as it is not an uncommon phenomenon among adults, and may even dominate their lives (Giles, 2000). In addition to secondary attachments, parasocial relationships provide a cathartic experience for the lonely and socially isolated, but otherwise “mentally normal” people (Horton & Wohl, 1956), as it restores their emotional well-being in times of psychological distress through a compensatory emotional attachment to a particular human brand, who is “readily available as an object of love” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 223).

These parasocial relationships morph into pathological and dangerous behaviour on those rare occasions when it progresses into fanatical obsession and an absolute defiance of reality (Leets, de Becker, & Giles, 1995). It is, thus, relevant to distinguish the three stages of celebrity worship (obsession with a person in the public eye) (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002) on a continuum to classify people who are obsessed with human brands: entertainment/social, intense-personal, and borderline pathological (Maltby, McCutcheon, Ashe, & Houran, 2001). At the minimum level, entertainment/social implies that the consumer has a social level of interest in the branded individuals, including watching, reading, and learning about them (Maltby, McCutcheon, Ashe, & Houran, 2001). At a mid-level – intense-personal – the person has more intensive and compulsive feelings toward the branded individual and usually demonstrates this in the company of friends or other fans (Maltby, McCutcheon, Ashe, & Houran, 2001). The final and highest level of worship, which is the borderline pathological, denotes that the person feels he/she has a special bond with the branded individual and is willing to do anything for them (Maltby, McCutcheon, Ashe, & Houran, 2001). At this end of the spectrum, these individuals can try to obtain closeness with the branded individual by collecting one’s personal objects (Houran, Navik, & Zerrusen, 2005) and can even present symptoms of erotomania – a type of delusional disorder in which a person believes that another person is in love with him/her (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002).

This phenomenon of parasocial relationships can be seen as valuable in several different ways as consumers may show their admiration and adoration in various ways, and these can result in many favourable behaviours for the branded individuals and their stakeholders, such as good word-of-mouth, repurchase intention, negative information counter-argumentation and so forth (Ahluwalia, Burnkrant, & Unnava, 2000; Banister & Cocker, 2014; Bush, Martin, & Bush, 2004), besides the consumers' value in affective and financial investments (Huang & Huang, 2016). However, even consumers in the highest level of consumer loyalty – "ultimate loyalty" (Oliver, 1997, p. 392), "committed buyer" (Aaker D. A., 1991, p. 41), the devoted customer (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004) – can move back or forth to different loyalty levels and even when a consumer has reached the highest level of loyalty to a brand, no one can guarantee that they will stay in that position forever (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004). This dynamic nature of such loyalty and its dynamic process between consumers and brands may thus evolve constantly and contribute the brand equity (Aaker D. A., 1991).

In conclusion, parasocial relationships and the narrative transportation theory can explain how and why consumers often develop and experience the feeling of knowing the branded individual personally, including his/her private thoughts, feelings, personality and way of life, despite having actually never met the real person (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012). This experienced bond of emotional closeness, which at times be strong enough to elicit a feeling of personal friendship or even love within the consumer (Barbas, 2001), emerges from the consumption of narratives (work related or not) and express itself in a parasocial relationship (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2012). In addition, it also explains why consumers may sometimes feel enormously disappointed when, after much anticipation, actually meet the adored branded individual in person and he/she turns out to be a different person in private life or just doesn't correspond to the (perhaps unrealistic) imaginary person that the consumer has created in one's own mind (Gross, 2005).

Attachment, the commitment to the relationship (Kiesler, 1971), is a desirable quality for consumer-brand relationships because strong consumer-brand relationships (which are satisfying, trusting and committed) (Fournier, 1998; Thomson, 2006) can have various positive brand-related outcomes, both behavioural and attitudinal (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). This meaningful relationship between the brand and the consumer (and consequent oneself) can help build more substantial brand equity (Escalas, 2004; Kemp, Childers, & Williams, 2012) as individuals "incorporate the brand into their self-concept" – brand self-connection (Escalas & Bettman, 2005, p. 379).

In part, the emotional attachment between a consumer and a brand can predict behaviours which are difficult to accomplish because they require individual resources such as time, money, or motivation (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010). As individuals are motivated to maintain a coherent self-view and consistency between beliefs and actions – self-consistency theory (Festinger, 1957), consumers stalwartly attached to a brand are determined to invest efforts and resources to maintain their attachment and exhibit brand-consistent behaviour (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010; Schmitt, 2012). Consequently, these consumers will adopt behaviours that reinforce their self-concept, such as those directly fostered by the brand (Guèvremont, 2021), hence increasing purchase intention (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021) and willingness to pay (Huang & Huang, 2016; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). On the other hand, brand-related attitudinal outcomes can also result from attachment, such as brand loyalty (consumers' commitment to continue buying preferred products or services in the future) (Oliver, 1999), commitment, satisfaction and trust (Huang, Lin, & Phau, 2015; Thomson, 2006; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005), as well as brand forgiveness in the face of transgressions (Pullig, Netemeyer, & Biswas, 2006). The brand forgiveness resulting from brand attachment consists in the tendency consumers hold to counterargue negative information, positively interpret ambiguous information and selectively attend to positive information, in order to remain intimate with the brand (Jain & Maheswaran, 2000). This brand forgiveness can also translate into the willingness to make personal sacrifices to maintain their relationships with brands (van Lange, et al., 1997), even when facing marketplace failures, negative information about the brand or improbable events (Kim & Kim, 2023), as for example, sports fans betting against the odds of their favourite teams (Babad, 1987).

In turn, the outcomes of strong brand attachments help consumers to embrace brand extensions with positive evaluations (Walsh & Williams, 2017), even when the extension has a comparatively poor fit with the core brand, because attachment posits an influence during the categorization process (Loken, 2006), allowing for a highly effective transfer of meaning from the human brand to the extension (Thomson, 2006). Nevertheless, consumers with a high level of attachment to a human brand (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002), and who possess more knowledge about the integrity and symbolism of the brand than consumers with weak connections do (Thomson, 2006), can sometimes perceive the creation of a brand extension as unauthentic, illegitimate and as a way to profit from one's attachment (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Along with promoting products and services as brand extensions, strong brand attachments allow human brands to also promote messages and ideas (Brooks, 2021), such as Oprah Winfrey in influencing people's motivation and appreciation of reading (Gerc, 2003), David Beckham promoting sports and increasing teenagers interest and motivation in sports and physical activities (Depta, 2015; Dix, Phau, & Pougnet, 2010) and celebrity chefs influencing people's eating and cooking habits (Smith, 2008).

2.2.2.4. Step 4: Grow and sustain brand equity

Comprising the subjects most studied among researchers and practitioners, this last step evaluates the management over time of the brand and brand equity across geographic boundaries, cultures and markets (Keller, 2013; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). Brand extensions, activism and philanthropy, brand evolution, brand transgressions and internationalization will be the main aspects explained in the next section.

2.2.2.4.1. Brand Extensions

Professional branded individuals, such as chefs, sportspeople, singers, film directors, actors, CEOs, politicians or even marketing academics (Gamson, 2011), gain celebrity influence as their exposure grows (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). As celebrities are human brands (Parmentier M. A., 2010), their performances, on and off stage, create brand identities, associations, images, features and personalities (Chuang & Ding, 2013; Close, Moulard, & Monroe, 2011; Dion & Arnould, 2016; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012), which can generate brand equity when professionally managed (Centeno & Wang, 2016; Thomson, 2006). Thereby, these managers can aid branded individuals in their careers (e.g., playing key roles in the success of the multimillion-dollar media and entertainment industry) (Thomson, 2006), as well as managing secondary projects. These secondary projects, which can be endorsement deals and/or business ventures, such as new products or product lines launched under their names (commercially known as celebrity-branded products) (McGlone, 2016), can be considered brand extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019). In general terms, these brand extensions consist of extending their personas through the launch of products under their own brand names to profit from their fame (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020) and can range from David Beckham's Bodywear line to Jamie Oliver's books and cookware (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). These secondary endeavours can be paramount as it can be the main source of income for many human brands and can generate more earnings from self-branded business ventures than from their professional careers (e.g., Justin Timberlake and Sean "Diddy" Combs) (Casserly, 2011; Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019; Walsh & Williams, 2017).

Before developing this topic further, it is necessary to define the concept of brand extension. Brand extensions are strategic which tools brands can use to sustain a competitive advantage in the marketplace and increase their market share and profits (Aaker & Keller, 1990). By leveraging a brand's name recognition and image to enter new markets, brand extensions allow brands to extend into different product categories (Aaker & Keller, 1990). In the branding literature however, there is no consensus on the exact definition of brand extension. While "some researchers view new product introductions in similar product categories as line extensions and those in dissimilar product categories as brand extensions" (Luo, Chen, Han, & Park, 2010, p. 2), others refer to new products with branded components as composite brand extensions (Park, Jun, & Schocker, 1996), and yet others refer to new products in both the same and different product categories as brand extensions (Loken & John, 1993). In the movie industry, for example, movie sequels can be conceptualized as brand extensions of the original movies (Sood & Drèze, 2006). As an individual (including a celebrity) can also be a brand (Allport, 1937; Cohen, 2014; Fournier, 2010; Hirschman, 1987; Thomson, 2006), and the competition in the evermore crowded entertainment industry intensifies, celebrities now offer named brand extensions to differentiate themselves from their peers (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). In today's media world, celebrities build their brand equity and name recognition through fame and then cash in on this influence by linking their brand to marketable products or services, which can be in and out of their respective genres and may or may not fit the celebrity's overall brand image (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Pappas, 1999). Most of these brand extensions are celebrity endorsements, an alliance between human brands and product brands (Elberse & Verleun, 2012), since the celebrity's credibility has a positive influence on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions – particularly when there is consistency or matching between celebrity characteristics and product brand attributes (Fleck, Korchia, & Le Roy, 2012; Kamins, 1990; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Till & Busler, 2000) – as well as on brand equity, including brand awareness, brand associations, brand quality and brand loyalty (Dwivedi, Johnson, & Mcdonald, 2015; Spry, Pappu, & Cornwell, 2011). Furthermore, the attitudes consumers' have towards the human brand can also be influenced by the brand endorsed (Doss, 2011; Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta, 2010; Um, 2013). For instance, when the athlete LeBron James endorsed the Gatorade brand, not only did the LeBron James's brand influenced perceptions of the Gatorade brand but the Gatorade brand also influenced perceptions of the LeBron James brand (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015).

Most related research has focused on celebrities – those who benefit from public recognition (McCracken, 1989) – and celebrity endorsers, i.e., "any individual who enjoys public recognition, and then uses this recognition on behalf of another product by appearing with it in an advertisement" (McCracken, 1989, p. 310). These endorsement opportunities are valuable for both the branded individual and the endorsed brand. For branded individuals, who forge meaningful connections with their fans by first engaging with consumers through their main professional career and then by adding other types of branding activities (Eng & Jarvis, 2020; Keller, 2020), it provides a chance for the latter stage. Additionally, endorsements partnerships can be very lucrative sources of income for celebrities, as is estimated that Tiger Woods grossed per year around $23 to $30 million from endorsements prior to his brand transgression (Rovell, 2010). As for the endorsed brand, which believes that celebrity capital goes beyond merely social and symbolic capital (Driessens, 2013), leverages the celebrity's positive associations and uses one's status to enhance the product's position in the marketplace (Loroz & Braig, 2015). An endorsement strategy can result in higher brand awareness (Kelting & Rice, 2013) and increased attitudes and behavioural intentions (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Carrillat, d'Astous, & Lazure, 2013), among other outcomes.

Even if very present in today's highly competitive world, the use of celebrity endorsers and agents of persuasion in marketing communication dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century (Erdogan, 1999; Sherman, 1985), when Pope Leo XIII and Thomas Edison endorsed *Vin Mariani*, a potent mix of Bordeaux wine and cocaine (Feldman E. , 2007). Since then, the use of celebrities in advertisements has only increased (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Mishra, 2015). In the late 1970s, 17% of advertisements featured celebrities and during the 1980s, it reached one-fifth of all US advertisements (Motavalli, 1988) and about one-sixth of ads globally (Shimp, 2010). Today, although 25% of all advertising features a celebrity in general (Shimp, 2003), the prevalence of celebrity endorsement in advertising differs across countries (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017). In fact, celebrities are present in 5% of advertisements in Canada, 12% in the United Kingdom, 10% in the United States and 40% in South Korea and Japan (Schimmelpfennig & Hunt, 2020). In addition, celebrity endorsement also varies by product category, being more ubiquitous in the apparel category (32% of total US ads) than in personal care and household products – 14% and 4% respectively (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017).

The companies of today recognize the potential of celebrities as they are among the most attractive individuals to endorse products, brands and even political campaigns (Knoll & Matthes, 2017; Prakash, 2020). This trend can be exemplified by George Clooney with Nespresso, Justin Bieber with Calvin Klein and Serena Williams with Nike (Shimul, Barber, & Abedin, 2020), as well as with Nike spending over $2.4 billion on celebrity endorsers in 2011 alone (Cendrowski, 2012). Moreover, the notion of celebrity endorsement is much broader today as, for example, a single social media post may represent an endorsement from a celebrity, as it is the case of the singer Selena Gomez posting pictures of herself with Coca-Cola, Pantene, and Louis Vuitton on Twitter (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017), while reportedly charging up to $550,000 per social media post (Heine, 2016).

Celebrity endorsements take multiple forms, such as explicit endorsement ("I recommend this product"), implicit endorsement ("I use this product"), and co-present endorsement ("I merely appear with this product") (McCracken, 1989). Although most research focuses on celebrity-brand associations within traditional advertising contexts (a human brand explicitly endorses a brand), associations between human brands and other brands started to be formed outside the traditional endorsement process (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017), in response to the negative cognitive responses and impair consumers' persuasion of paid celebrity endorsements (Friestad & Wright, 1994; Moore, Mowen, & Reardon, 1994). These less-known forms of endorsement are particularly demonstrable with the practice of product placement – the integration of brands within the content of entertainment programmes instead of promoting the brand during the advertising breaks (Russell, 2002). The explosion of product placement, particularly in movies or TV series, generated many associations between celebrities as characters and the brands that appear, as implicit endorsement, in the content of the entertainment vehicle (Balasubramanian, 1994; Russell, 2002). Concurrently to movies or TV series, product placement has also been mushrooming in social media. Such platforms fuel a sense of interactive relationship and closeness, where audiences can communicate directly with celebrities (or seemingly so) and ultimately establishing trust (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017). By increasing their social media presence and followings, celebrities and their private lives are increasingly visible to the public in such platforms, allowing them to provide information about themselves and their lives directly to consumers, including the brands they might consume or use in their real lives (Jin & Phua, 2014; Stever & Lawson, 2013). These widely broadcasted displays of consumption can potentially cause endorsement-like effects on how consumers view human brands and other associated brands (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017). These social media celebrity endorsements, which can represent hybrid forms of explicit endorsement, implicit endorsement, and co-present endorsement (McCracken, 1989; Mishra, 2015), generated a new type of online advertising – native advertising – and new category of human brands – the social media influencer – blurring the line between anonymous and celebrity[9].

[9] Native advertising, which is online advertising embedded in a website or social media feeds in the form of "editorial" content (Lee, Chen, & Lee, 2022), began to be used by advertisers to reach their target consumers on social media platforms (Perrin, 2019). This new type of online advertising, also called sponsored content, is viewed as less disturbing compared to other forms of online advertising (e.g., banner ads, popup ads) (Kim, Choi, & Kim, 2019) and heavily relies on the collaboration between brands and influencers to design native advertisements that mirror the influencers' everyday posts (Mediakix, 2020).

Social media influencers, also called micro-celebrities, are individual users who have gathered a large number of followers on their social media accounts through active online activities (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). These human brands are often considered as experts in a specific niche or field, such as travel, food, beauty, fashion, interior design and healthy lifestyles (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017), and collaborate with brands that match their areas of specialization (Berryman & Kavka, 2017; Breves, Liebers, Abt, & Kunze, 2019), frequently functioning as credible peers, and thus opinion leaders who influence their followers with the brands and products they advertise (Lou & Yuan, 2019). By being more relatable and authentic than traditional celebrity endorsers (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Schouten, Janssen, & Verspaget, 2020; Taillon, Mueller, Kowalczyk, & Jones, 2020; Yuan & Lou, 2020), these individuals achieve fame through web-based technologies (Senft, 2008) and consequent followers' appreciation, association and aspiration (Fietkiewicz, Dorsch, Scheibe, Zimmer, & Stock, 2018), sometimes even surpassing the influence of traditional celebrities (such as models, actors/actresses and singers) on social media (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019).

Social media influencers operate as intermediaries between advertisers and customers (van Driel & Dumitrica, 2021). Usually, influencers are efficient at producing and distributing content as well as interacting with followers, and substantial proportions of the content produced may not include endorsements (Carpenter, Shelton, & Schroeder, 2022). These micro-celebrities persuade many of their followers that "they know the person behind the feed" (van Driel & Dumitrica, 2021, p. 11), through their rich and multimodal narration of their everyday lives, while also cultivating connectedness with their followers through responses, acknowledgements, and public appreciation (Carpenter, Shelton, & Schroeder, 2022). Later, they collaborate with various brands and deliver marketing messages through native advertising, harmoniously blending advertising with other content they post in order to be perceived as a genuine and organic product post uploaded by the microcelebrity (Boerman, Willemsen, & Van Der Aa, 2017; Kim & Kim, 2020). This new form of online advertising requires the careful integration of sponsored messages depending on the form and style of the content present in the platform, whether is a blog post, Instagram post or YouTube video (Campbell & Marks, 2015; Harms, Bijmolt, & Hoekstra, 2017; Wojdynski, 2016b; Wojdynski, 2016a). As most social media influencers present paid posts in the form of editorial opinion or use carefully created photographs to capture a product in-used, many users may not recognize the content as paid advertising (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Therefore, this type of marketing is akin to electronic word-of mouth marketing ("any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company [...]" (Hennig-Thurau, Kevin, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004, p. 39) but does not exclusively involve explicit recommendations or mentions (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). In the same way word-of mouth marketing drives potential consumers to new product pages (Green H. , 2008), native advertising also effectively reaches out to consumers, increases brand awareness and generates leads by using search engines (Manic, 2015), as well as it encourages user conversation and recommendations about advertised brands (electronic word-of mouth marketing), which leads to positive attitudes toward brands and increase purchase intentions (Chu & Kim, 2018; Johnson, Potocki, & Veldhuis, 2019; Purnawirawan, Eisend, De Pelsmacker, & Dens, 2015).

The effectiveness of native advertising relies on the seamless cohesion between the media context and the embedded advertising content (Kim, Choi, & Kim, 2019), which can be explained by the schema theory (Anderson R. C., 1984). Schemas, which reduce the efforts required to understand new information (Halkias, 2015), are the cognitive structures used to organize a person's understanding of the specific field, such as patterns, relationships and categories based on their previous experience and socialization (Anderson R. C., 1984). Thus, when Information fits one's schema, it is more likely to be accepted while information that does not fit into one's schema is repeatedly analysed before determining whether to accept or reject it (Anderson, 1984; Halkias, 2015; Lee, Chen, & Lee, 2022). In other words, while native advertising blends in with the media context and is often difficult to be recognized as advertising, hence being more likely to be accepted because it fits into one's existing schema (Stoltman, 1991), incongruent advertisement (such as banner ads on online news sites) strains additional cognitive efforts to process and increases ad annoyance and rejection (Lewis & Porter, 2010; Tutaj & Van Reijmersdal, 2012).

In addition to the cognitive structures of consumers, explained by the schema theory (Anderson R. C., 1984), interactivity also plays a major role in native advertising. As one major advantage of social media branding, opinion leaders are able to interact directly with followers on a regular basis (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). Consequently, the more interactive a human brand is, more engagement will generate, which subsequently engenders higher affinity and trust (Van Noort, Voorveld, & Van Reijmersdal, 2012). These outcomes are predicted by one's social presence (Beldad, De Jong, & Steehouder, 2010), which can be measured by some indicators of interactivity and engagement (such as the numbers of followers, followings, shares, likes and comments), as it can attributed to one's active engagement, openness to audiences and the popularity in the online community (Van Der Heide & Lim, 2016). Once consumers feel more comfortable in interacting with an online source when they feel that an actual human is present at the other end (Shen, 2012), influencers are perceived to be real, which in turn maybe create a stronger emotion of (benign) envy and consequent urge to have what influencers have (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). Benign envy, the desire to acquire the possessions and status of what others have, with no hostile feelings (Parrott & Smith, 1993), when combined with affinity for the envied source can result in a motivating desire to resemble the source rather than hostility to take the envied possession away (Lange & Crusius, 2015). In other words, when consumers perceive someone to be likeable and identifiable – characteristically closer to who they are (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2007) – consumers consequently think of their possessions as something attainable and develop envy and the motivation to have equivalent achievements and/or possessions (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). All in all, envy thus can enhance the desire for the object affiliated the influencer (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). Influencers are more often in this situation than traditional celebrities because consumers usually regard the latter as distant superior individuals with an unattainable status, sparking less motivation to imitate them (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997).

Practitioners, when in the search for the human brand which can best endorse a product or service, can struggle to find the right "individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (McCracken, 1989, p. 310). Thereby, a substantial part of the literature on human brand extensions focuses on how endorsements function and how to best select celebrities (Erdogan, 1999). Explaining the effective image transfer for the selection and proper use of the celebrity, the four main frameworks are (in chronological order): the Source Credibility Model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; McGuire, 1968), the Source Attractiveness Model (McGuire, 1985), the Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989), and the Product Match-Up Hypothesis (Kamins M. A., 1990; Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989). The first two models – the Source Credibility Model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; McGuire, 1968) and the Source Attractiveness Model (McGuire, 1985) – accrue from the social influence theory/source effect theory, which reveals that the various features of a perceived communication source may have a positive outcome on message receptivity (Erdogan, 1999; Mishra, 2015).

The Source Credibility Model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; McGuire, 1968) yields that the credibility of a source is the extent to which it is perceived as having expertise about the communication topic and can be trusted to provide an objective opinion on the topic (Ohanian, 1990). In the case of human brands, the effectiveness of a message depends on the perceived level of expertise and trustworthiness of an endorser (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Ohanian, 1991), as consumers' perception of an endorser's expertise and trustworthiness influences the advertising message's effectiveness (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977; Hovland & Weiss, 1951). In this context, expertise refers to the extent to which the endorser is perceived as an authentic source of information by the advertising target audience (Erdogan, 1999), that is, having an acceptable level of experience and knowledge that makes one's endorsement of a product and/or brand credible (Mishra, 2015). The process of a credible source (human brand) influencing beliefs, attitudes, and/or behaviour through information is called internalization, which occurs when the receivers accept a source influence on the bases of the source's personal attitude and the value structures (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001). Thereby, a source recognized as highly credible is more effective and persuasive than a less credible one, leading to a more positive change of attitude towards the brand or product and consequent change in behaviour (Erdogan, 1999). As for trustworthiness, when human brands successfully build warm and personable relationships with their audiences, they will be perceived as more trustworthy (Silvera & Austad, 2004). Thus, trustworthiness – the degree to how honest, reliable, dependable, believable, and with integrity the source is perceived to be (Ohanian, 1990) – is a major element of source credibility (Friedman & Friedman, 1978). Nevertheless, trustworthiness

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In conclusion, although micro-celebrities can differ to some extent from traditional celebrities, theoretical models present in the celebrity endorser literature remain applicable, even if with some adjustments for the emerging use of social media and role of social media influencers (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016; Voorveld, 2019). Moreover, while marketers strive to find the most effective micro-celebrities who can successfully promote their brands, social media influencers seek to act strategically to maintain their audience's loyalty while also remaining attractive to advertisers, balancing both parties' expectations and simultaneously work solely with brands that align with their online persona (Audrezet, de Kerviler, & Moulard, 2018; Duffy, 2016). Furthermore, regulations to force social media influencers to identify sponsored content have been put in place across the board but many influencers still do not adhere to the guidelines and walk the narrow line of integrating their own original content within advertising content (Evans, Phua, Lim, & Jun, 2017; Taillon, Mueller, Kowalczyk, & Jones, 2020).

is not necessarily associated with the intention to buy the endorsed brand – purchase intention (Ohanian, 1991). Moreover, as more “expert” celebrities are more persuasive (Aaker, Batra, & Myers, 1992) and increase purchase intention (Ohanian, 1991) the consumers’ perceptions of the celebrity’s level of expertise is more relevant than the actual level of the celebrity’s expertise (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; Ohanian, 1991). There are also other restricting conditions to the source credibility model such as if consumers have a positive predisposition toward an advertising message, a less-credible source can be more persuasive than a more credible source (Erdogan, 1999; Harmon & Coney, 1982; Sternthal, Dholakia, & Leavitt, 1978).

The second model, the Source Attractiveness Model (McGuire, 1985), adds a third element – attractiveness – arguing that the physical appeal of a celebrity has a positive and significant effect on attitude toward ad, advertiser believability and credibility (Kamins, 1990; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Liu, Huang, & Minghua, 2007; Till & Busler, 1998; Till & Busler, 2000) and on the overall effectiveness of the advertising message (Baker & Churchill, 1977; Debevec & Kernan, 1984) and purchase intentions (Friedman, Termini, & Washington, 1976). Although there is still some ambiguity regarding the definition of this construct, the physical appeal refers to facial and physical attractiveness, model attractiveness, sexiness, and likeability (Ohanian, 1990). Although extensive research has been done on the topic, there is no consensus regarding some aspects of this model. For example, while it is agreed that endorser’s physical attractiveness positively impacts attitudes (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983), such as brand recall and attitude towards the brand (Kahle & Homer, 1985), and persuasion even when consumers are highly involved (Cacioppo & Petty, 1980), other research on purchase intentions is inconclusive and suggests that is even though physical attractiveness generates positive feelings toward advertising and products, those positive feelings do not translate into actual purchase intent (Cabalero, Lumpkin, & Madden, 1989; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983; Till & Busler, 2000). Furthermore, researches on whether or not the gender of the endorser affects attitudes were inconclusive, as some find that attractive females improve attitudes more than attractive males (Debevec & Kernan, 1984), while others find that males’ intent to purchase is higher with male endorsers and females’ intent to purchase is higher with female endorsers (Cabalero, Lumpkin, & Madden, 1989) while yet other find that neither attitudes nor intent to purchase are affected by the endorser’s gender (Petroshius & Crocker, 1989).

As these first two models, which are based on expertise, trustworthiness, and physical attractiveness only, have been criticized on several grounds (Bower & Landreth, 2001; Erdogan, 1999) and do not consider other characteristics of the source – such as the role of match or mismatch of the human brand personality with the product’s/brand’s personality or the role of branded individual as the message medium (McCracken, 1989) – the two remaining models were created to direct some focus on the congruence between brand personality and celebrity personality (Mishra, 2015).

The Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989) suggests that the celebrity endorsement process is a typical example of a more general process of meaning transfer and describes how celebrities add value to a specific brand/product, by transferring the cultural association with their work to the endorsed brand (McCracken, 1989). As for the brand, it gains meaning from their association with elements of popular culture (celebrities and their symbolic power (McCracken, 1989). This meaning, which is in turn adopted by the consumers and thus become value (McCracken G. , 1986), can differ in utility to its customers (Ducoffe, 1995; Sheth & Uslay, 2007), ranging from information, to entertainment, or excitement (Ducoffe, 1995). This conventional path for the flow of cultural meanings from the culturally constituted world to the consumers presents three different stages: the creation of celebrity image; the transfer of cultural meanings from celebrity to the product, and the transfer of meanings from product to the consumers (McCracken, 1989). The brand image, which reflects the overall “perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory” (Keller, 1993, p. 3), is then continually transferred between celebrities, brands and consumers as an extensive set of associations (positive and culturally desirable traits); and essentially celebrities act as signals that when tied to a brand, create a positive attitude towards the brand (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989) and a distinct meaning for the endorsed brand (McCracken, 1989) and ultimately influence advertising awareness and brand image (Bergkvist, Hjalmarson, & Mägi, 2016; Ducoffe, 1995; Hung, 2014; Kamen, Azhari, & Kragh, 1975; Sheth & Uslay, 2007; Till & Shimp, 1998), and consumers’ purchase intentions (Bush, Martin, & Bush, 2004; Ohanian, 1991). Fundamentally, celebrity endorsements are believed to generate a greater likelihood of customers’ valuing and choosing the endorsed brand (Hackley & Hackley, 2015; Heath, McCarthy, & Mothersbaugh, 1994; Kahle & Homer, 1985).

This process of transfer and later storage of brand associations – any benefit or attribute that an individual may link to a brand) (Keller, 1993) – in human memory can be explained by the associative network theory (Anderson, 1983; Collins & Loftus, 1975; Martindale, 1991; Srull & Wyer, 1989). This theory states that brand knowledge is stored in our memory as different pieces of information (nodes), which are connected in memory to form a complex associative network and can require stimulation via the process of activation to access its stored memory (Anderson, 1983; Collins & Loftus, 1975; Martindale, 1991; Srull & Wyer, 1989). As consumers learn through associations between two events (Plotnik & Kouyomdijan, 2012) and store information about celebrities in their minds in the form of nodes based on the associations linked with them (McCracken, 1989), the process of endorsement creates positive associative links between the brand being endorsed and the celebrity, transferring favourable perceptions (Ilicic & Webster, 2015; Till & Shimp, 1998; Till B. , 1998). Thereby, a transfer of attributes takes place from the celebrities to the brands – with the endorser forming a symbolic meaning with the product that consumers can acquire through purchase and consumption of the product (McCracken, 1989) – and vice-versa as well, from the brands to the celebrities (Arsena, Silvera, & Pandelaere, 2014). To conclude, according to this model which approaches cultural value as an integral antecedent to perceived credibility (Batra & Homer, 2004), firms or agencies must make sure that the branded individual selected to represent their brands conveys the right meaning and that there is a congruence between spokesperson personality and brand personality, in order to facilitate meaning and affects transfer from one to the other (Kamins &

Gupta, 1994; Lynch & Schuler, 1994; Misra & Beatty, 1990)[10]. When applying this model to social media influencers, the issue of meaning transfer becomes more salient but differs from the traditional rule (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). As their cultural value is not similar to the plethora of cultural meanings traditional celebrities drawn from what they have created in mainstream media, these micro-influencers' symbolic value is inherent in their social media presence and in all the posts of lifestyle, public appearance, visited locations, etc (Abidin, 2016; Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019).

At last, the final model – the Product Match-Up Hypothesis (Kamins M. A., 1990; Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989) – focuses on how the fit between the human brand's image and endorsed brand affects advertising attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchase intent (Kamins, 1990; Misra & Beatty, 1990). Although research has used many terms interchangeably, such as congruence (Fleck & Quester, 2007; Misra & Beatty, 1990), consistency (Walker, Langmeyer, & Langmeyer, 1992), match-up (Bower & Landreth, 2001), fit or match (Kamins & Gupta, 1994), the subject remains the same – evaluating the fit between a brand and another entity: a new product category, another brand, an event, or an individual (Fleck & Quester, 2007). Used in various domains of marketing literature such as brand extension, sponsoring, co-branding, and celebrity endorsement (Mishra, 2015), the match-up hypothesis is built on the tenet that for a brand extension to be successful, there must be a "fit" between the parent brand and the brand extension (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; DelVecchio, 2000). In other words, it is believed that a good match-up between the product and the endorser makes an advertisement more persuasive and also brings benefits to celebrities (Erdogan, 1999; Kamins M. A., 1990; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989; Wright, 2016). The congruence between the branded individual and the brand, or perceived fit, can be defined as how "the highly relevant characteristics of the spokesperson are consistent with the highly relevant attributes of the brand" (Misra & Beatty, 1990, p. 161), how a consumer perceives the brand extension as consistent with or similar to the parent or established brand (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Thus, fit can be described as a measure of the degree of similarity or relevance between a brand extension and the parent brand (Aaker & Keller, 1990).

Since consumers are the key elements in the evaluation of fit between branded individuals and the brands, it is necessary to understand, how consumers evaluate brand extensions. This is possible through the categorization theory (Rosch, 1975), which provides valuable insights into how consumers process, evaluate and judge brand extensions (Bhat & Reddy, 2001). The cognitive process of categorization allows for the recognition, comprehension and differentiation of distinct objects and ideas as well as placement into categories in an effort to receive and process new information (Diamantopoulos, Smith, & Grime, 2005; Rosch, 1975). Consumers then use the information provided by the extension, as well as previously stored categories of information (organized based on pre-existing beliefs, past judgments), to find similarities in attributes and

[10] Although most brands involved in celebrity endorsements are product brands or service brands, celebrities also frequently appear in destination advertisements or serve as destination ambassadors (Zhang, Gordon, Buhalis, & Ding, 2018). Consistent with the Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989), an associative connection between the celebrities and destination brands can be established through celebrities' works, allowing for the transfer of celebrities' positive image to the recognized destination brands in the mind of the public – potential tourists (Kim & Chen, 2020; Kim, Choe, & Petrick, 2018).

consequently make new judgments on the brand extension, finding it the right mental category to be stored in (Boush & Loken, 1991). The categorization theory (Rosch, 1975) thus assumes that consumers classify products and services into cognitive categories and store them in memory so that new information can be received and processed (Rosch, 1975). In addition to the categorization theory (Rosch, 1975), it is also necessary to take into consideration that analytic and holistic thinking consumers weight information on extensions differently (Allman, Hewett, & Kaur, 2019; Ng, 2010). While analytic thinking consumers may perceive objects as independent of others and categorize them based on their own features, holistic thinking consumers may emphasize the interrelations between them (Allman, Hewett, & Kaur, 2019; Ng, 2010). Contrasting with holistic thinkers, analytic thinkers are stricter when evaluating fit and they would be more likely to accept brand extensions when they perceive enough cues that lead to fit (Allman, Hewett, & Kaur, 2019). Therefore, perceptions of fit differ as a function of thinking styles (Allman, Hewett, & Kaur, 2019; Kim & Park, 2019; Shavitt & Barnes, 2019). As the perceived fit between the parent brand and the brand extension affects the evaluation of the extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; Völckner & Sattler, 2006), it can also be used as a predictor of brand extension success (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Völckner & Sattler, 2006).

Based on the stimuli of congruence, the literature on congruence in the celebrity endorsement domain can be categorized into three streams: attractiveness-based, expertise-based, and image-based (Mishra, 2015). Attractiveness-based congruence refers to how, for example, when endorsing products are meant to enhance attractiveness of consumers, physically attractive endorsers are more effective than using a less-attractive ones (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Liu, Huang, & Minghua, 2007). Expertise-based congruence occurs when, for instance, human brands endorse products that are related to their professions, as being perceived as having expertise for that product increases the endorsement effectiveness (Mishra, 2015; Till & Busler, 1998; Till & Busler, 2000). Finally, image-based congruence alludes to the match between perceived human brand associations and perceived brand/product associations (Misra & Beatty, 1990). In other words, the higher the perceived fit between the human brand's image and the endorsed brand, the more persuasive the human brand and the ad will be (Erdogan, 1999; Kamins & Gupta, 1994). In addition, the benefits of good fit also spill over to the human brand, as it increases the one's believability and attractiveness (Kamins & Gupta, 1994).

Concomitantly to the categorization of the stimuli of congruence into three streams, the cognitive and analytical measure of congruence between two objects or entities (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021) can be classified into two different dimensions: image fit and product category fit (Bhat & Reddy, 1997). As for the dimension of image fit, it relates to the perception of similarity between the extension and the parent brand's initial image (Bhat & Reddy, 1997). The dimension of product category fit concerns the perception of similarity between the product category of the parent brand and that of the extension (Bhat & Reddy, 1997). Similar to this category may be the measure of the so-called "general" fit (Aaker & Keller, 1990), because a good product category fit would produce the belief that the brand's expertise in the product category of the parent brand helps create the extension and provides the credibility necessary for the transfer of positive evaluations from the parent brand to the extension (Bhat & Reddy, 2001; Zwilling & Fruchter, 2013). Although different studies have endeavoured to pinpoint the characteristics of products or services most suited to using endorsers, the findings are inconclusive (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). While some argue that using celebrity endorsers is appropriate when purchases entail high social or psychological risk (Atkin & Block, 1983; Kamins M. A., 1989; Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989), or products/services are status symbols (Packard, 2007), others state that when products are inexpensive, low-involvement, and undifferentiated, celebrity endorsers influence consumers (Callcott & Phillips, 1996). Furthermore, when evaluating the relations between the type of product, endorser ethnicity, and the product's country of origin, research suggests that for utilitarian products, consumers have more favourable responses when the endorser's ethnicity has low fit with the product's country of origin compared to when it has high fit (Ryu, Park, & Feick, 2006). For hedonic products, on the other hand, consumers have more favourable responses when the endorser's ethnicity matches their own, regardless of the product's country of origin (Ryu, Park, & Feick, 2006).

Independently of the inconclusive results from different studies, the literature is unanimous on the idea of fit as a predictor of purchase intention (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019). According to the Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989), when perceived fit is high, consumers will automatically transfer any positive associations and attitudes from the brand to the brand extension, resulting in positive evaluations and feelings about the brand extension (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; DelVecchio, 2000; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020; Yeung & Wyer, 2005). In this process, consumers fundamentally base their concepts of fit on the brand's core values (DelVecchio, 2000) and their understanding of the context as without the proper knowledge and experience in the industry, the consumer will question the ability of the celebrity to make the extension (Till & Busler, 2000).

However, when there is no apparent fit between the extension and the parent brand (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Park, Milberg, & Lawson, 1991), an incongruity between the endorser and the product induces unpleasant feelings toward the advertising and negatively impacts the endorser's credibility (Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955). Viewed as contradicting the initial identity of the human brand producing it (Johns & English, 2016), an incongruent brand extension can vary in impact, depending on the level of the extension's performance (Drinkwater & Uncles, 2007; John, Loken, & Joiner, 1998; Loken & John, 1993; Swaminathan, Fox, & Reddy, 2001). Hence, when communicating a brand extension, it is key to install "explanatory links" that connect the brand to its extension in order achieve higher perceived fit and suppress negative attitudes from a brand extension with "bad fit" with the right information (Bridges, Keller, & Sood, 2000). Nevertheless, the inverse effect can also occur, because changes of course often characterize human brand trajectories with their ups and downs, especially in cultural fields (Pluntz & Pras, 2020a). In the dynamic careers of film directors, for example, the intrinsic need for creative renewal is seen as essential (Mainemelis, Nolas, & Tsirogianni, 2016), as creative individuals (e.g., Pablo Picasso) may be imitated by others and must thus frequently innovate to stay ahead of their epigones (Muniz, Norris, & Fine, 2014). This situation is clear in cases of experiential products (such as films), where consumers favour dissimilar film-sequels (in terms of genre) from the initial film, so as to avoid experiential “satiation” (Sood & Drèze, 2006). In the context of gastronomy chefs, the idea of human brands constantly striving for innovation in order to maintain their artistic personae is also present, as chefs experiment and create new dishes because that is what is expected from them (Dion & Arnould, 2016).

In addition to incongruence as a symptom of the artistic persona’s creative renewal, a lack of perceived fit between the human brand and the brand extension can also occur when the branded individual’s image has changed due to a change in physical appearance; a decline in professional accomplishments; or due to immoral behaviour/ involvement in criminal activities (Klebba & Unger, 1983; Till & Shimp, 1998). Moreover, the lack of perceived fit can create the additional problem of the branded individual eclipsing the brand (Evans R. B., 1988). The phenomenon of eclipsing arises when there is a poor match between the attachment to the brand and attachment to the human brand and the branded individual evokes stronger attachments than the focal brand (Thomson, 2006). This happening is partially driven by the content of the endorsement-based advertisement which encourage viewers to focus on the human brand rather than the brand, while ads without celebrities encourage viewers to focus on the brand and on product/service features (Mehta, 1994).

Although most research points to perceived fit as a vital requirement for the success of a brand extension, it does not explain how some cases of brand extensions are successful without the expected congruence and outside the human brand’s chosen industry. One of these cases is how, in 1975, the movie director Francis Ford Coppola purchased a winery in Napa Valley to develop and distribute his own self-branded wines (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Despite the lack of apparent connection (low perceived fit) between wine and films, this brand extension was a success because perceived fit may have been previously established with the celebrity as the original brand, i.e., if a celebrity’s public status sells the product, perceived fit towards the extension may be irrelevant (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Another example of a successful brand extension with reduced perceived fit is how John Elway, a former Denver Broncos’ football player, extended his brand into a chain of steakhouses in Colorado in the USA (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). Having acquired the “western way of life” and being known as the “The Duke of Denver”, the former athlete was able to extend his brand outside his core genres (even if low perceived fit was generated) (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). Therefore, not only the celebrity’s fit in a particular product category but also the authenticity of the offering contributes to the success of the brand extension (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021), as “consumers who feel good about a core brand may evaluate its extension favorably, even if the extension is highly dissimilar to the core” (Yeung & Wyer, 2005, p. 495). Introduced as a complement to when fit measurements may fall short, brand extension authenticity represents the underlying link of the extension to the parent brand (Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012), particularly relevant to human brands due to the compelling cultural meanings they carry (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2018; Ilicic & Webster, 2016; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). Even if apparently similar to image fit dimension, which assesses perceptions about the brand extension fitting the idea and image of the parent brand and conveying the same impressions (Bhat & Reddy, 1997), the construct of brand extension authenticity is broader in scope, comprising perceptions of quality similarity, cultural associations and the link to the parent brand's origin, trajectory and legacy, as well as the motives behind the extension (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021).

As brand extension authenticity functions outside the cognitive construct of fit and relies on the perception of one being true to oneself in the relationships with consumers (Ilicic & Webster, 2016; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015), brand extension authenticity is emotional and is hence verified when it captures and preserves the uniqueness of the parent brand's identity (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). For a brand extension to be authentic, it must retain concentrate the meanings of the parent brand, by showing its "true self" fostering the brand standards, heritage, and essence and avoiding brand misuse (Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012). It must also retain the consumers' perceptions of brand extension legitimacy along four dimensions: "maintaining brand standards, honoring brand heritage, preserving the brand essence and avoiding brand exploitation" (Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012, p. 967). Contrastingly, an inauthentic brand extension may dilute said meanings or be in opposition to what the celebrity brand really stands for (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021; Osorio, Centeno-Velázquez, López-Pérez, & Castillo, 2021). A brand extension may be perceived as authentic or inauthentic regardless of its perception of fit, reinforcing the conceptual difference between both constructs (Prados-Peña & del-Barrio-Garcia, 2018; Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012).

As depicted by the Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989), authentic brand extensions allow for an effortless and automatic transfer of positive affect from the parent brand to the extension when consumers previously hold positive feelings, regardless of the level of fit (Kim & Park, 2019; Yeung & Wyer, 2005). The greater the degree of the extension's authenticity relative to the parent brand, the stronger the transfer of positive affect to the product offering (Prados-Peña & del-Barrio-Garcia, 2018; Thomson, 2006). In turn, and despite the concentration of the symbolic meanings of the parent brand, these authentic brand extensions create a sense of attachment between celebrity and the extension (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Furthermore, as the brand extension authenticity evaluation process relies more on self-brand identification than in objective inferences, consumers will likely accept brand extensions when they perceive congruency, regardless of their habitual thinking style, since authentic brand extensions are congruent by definition (Allman, Hewett, & Kaur, 2019). Thus, the authenticity of a brand extension also affects consumers' perceptions and drives acceptance (Boisvert & Ashill, 2018; Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012).

In closing, authentic brand extensions must manifest legitimacy, project the parent brand's standards and essence and not a mere commercial opportunity (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). Moreover, as consumers expect authenticity in celebrity brand extensions and reject those perceived as inauthentic (Ayers, 2020), authenticity would expectedly complement fit as a predictor of brand extension success (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021).

In an attempt to incorporate all these different models, the marketing literature has present different mechanisms. Some support the idea that the persuasiveness of a message's source depends on the audience's trust in the endorser and related perceptions of the one's credibility on the subject (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008; Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). One's source credibility, i.e., one's "positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message" (Ohanian, 1990, p. 41), is composed of three constituents. These characteristics, which are trustworthiness – brand evaluations are more positive when an endorser is perceived as motivated by product quality than as solely financially motivated (Bergkvist, Hjalmarson, & Mägi, 2016), attractiveness (Baker & Churchill, 1977; Chaiken, 1979; Kahle & Homer, 1985), and perceived expertise (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000; Ohanian, 1991; Pornpitakpan, 2003), all together drive the impact of celebrities on the endorsed brands (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008). However, perceived credibility is malleable, because meaning continually moves between brands, celebrities and consumers as perceptions of the human brands themselves also change as a function of their associations with brands instead of being a unidirectional flow of meaning or association transfers (McCracken, 1989). Moreover, one's credibility and likability may also decrease as the number of products a celebrity endorses increases (Tripp, Jensen, & Carlson, 1994).

Other literature suggests various adaptations around the elements of attractiveness (Erdogan, 1999; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Till & Busler, 2000), likeability (McGuire, 1985; Reinhard, Messner, & Sporer, 2006; Reinhard & Messner, 2009) and similarity/congruency (Aaker, Brumbaugh, & Grier, 2000; Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016; Choi & Rifon, 2012; Kamins, 1990; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Kapitan & Silvera, 2016). Taking into consideration the different variations, the TEARS model was brought forward by (Shimp, 2003). This model included five key dimensions: trustworthiness (T); expertise (E) or knowledge; (physical) attractiveness (A); admiration and respect (R); and empathy or similarity (S) (Shimp, 2003). This model's line of thought is that, in the context of brand extensions, human brands must prompt trustworthiness (as it influences the perception of product reliability); must retain expertise or knowledge about the product/brand category; must be physically attractive (as attractive individuals grip more attention in advertisements); must be admired and respected by the consumers; as well as liked by those similar to them - empathy or similarity (Shimp, 2003). In addition, other individual variables that moderate advertising processing and influence consumers must be taken into consideration, such as previous product/category knowledge((Keel & Nataraajan, 2012), worship or attachment to human brands (Hung, 2014; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Thomson, 2006), consumer personality (Roy, Jain, & Rana, 2013), brand experience (Knoll, Matthes, Münch, & Ostermann, 2017) and the influence of the consumers' age – in comparison to previous generations, millennials (or Generation Y) display different patterns of response behaviour towards celebrity endorsements (McCormick, 2016).

Traditionally, companies employ every year large sums of resources into hiring human brands to endorse their products and brands (Lee & Thorson, 2008), whether endorsing a brand through the use of a product/service or through testimonials in advertising (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001; Till, 1998). In order to achieve an effective and successful marketing campaign, it is necessary to define marketing communication strategies that support other marketing mix elements (such as product design, branding, packaging, and distribution channel decisions) (Mishra, 2015). Celebrity endorsements have thus been one of the most preferred marketing communication strategies (Mishra, 2015) inasmuch as the attachment of distinctive personality characteristics to the brands promotes brand identity differentiation and can make brands more desirable to consumers (Aaker J. L., 1997). When consumers believe the celebrity actually uses the endorsed product, sales may increase significantly simply due to the association to the human brand (Creswell J. , 2008). Once print and TV advertisements featuring celebrity endorsers experience high popularity among both consumers and brand managers (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008), the majority of the literature examines how celebrity endorsements affect advertising attitude, brand attitude, intent to purchase, and/or stock value (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). However, and despite the lucrative nature of endorsements – e.g., reports suggest Selena Gomez can earn upwards of $800,000 per social media post (Appel, Grewal, Hadi, & Stephen, 2020) – human brands are extending their brands beyond endorsements.

Against the backdrop of today's competitive and globalized world, the concept of celebrity has been expanding. While in the past, celebrities were usually understood as individuals who are known to the public because of their accomplishments in areas (such as sports, entertainment, arts, or business), the growing phenomenon of social media has created a plethora of self-made celebrities – also called internet, online, cyber, or micro celebrities (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018). These internet celebrities have thus turned into social media influencers in their specialized areas, leveraging their influence and revenues through brand endorsements in the format of messages posted on the social media, photos, video clips, or online live streaming (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018). This explosion in the number of celebrities available allowed small businesses to afford celebrity endorsement, which was previously an exclusive privilege of big brands (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Along with this boom of celebrities, the fandom propelled by celebrity's agents, endorsed brands, and media has been rising in the contemporary consumer culture (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Fandom, or fan culture, is the association of individuals who share the similar stronger emotional attachment and tight bonds with their favourite celebrities (Leets, de Becker, & Giles, 1995) and subsequently share identifiable customs, attitudes, and behaviours (Liang & Shen, 2016). This growing phenomenon of fandom has led to the appearance of the fan economy, the economic, income generating behaviour resultant of the relationship between fans and their favourite celebrities (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Through individual and organized activities, these fans support a branded individual through the direct consumption of activities (such as, attending a concert, watching a movie, and buying mementos), as well as indirect support via the consumption of celebrity-endorsed products (Jia, King, & Zhang, 2018). These same fans can sometimes also share and create user-generated content in the form of text, images, and videos on social media to support their idol and appreciate their idols' achievements (Jia, King, & Zhang, 2018).

In this setting, and particularly in the celebrity saturated entertainment industry, more and more individuals are not only becoming brand collaborators, trying to successfully recreate the economic value of an endorsed brand like the basketball player Michael Jordan with Nike's Air Jordan brand or the artist Takashi Murakami with Louis Vuitton (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020), but also starting their own business, without collaborating with big brands (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). In addition to increase and diversify their revenue sources (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020), human brands are more able to protect their names, personas, and images by becoming their own enterprises (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013), as well as introducing brand extensions (such as products) protected by marketing techniques such as trademarking and licensing (Towle, 2003). Such brand extensions, also called celebrity-owned brands[11], are brands exclusively identified by a well-known celebrity name (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013) which can be in product categories that are close to their original source of fame, as well as in completely new categories, ranging from the mundane to the luxurious (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). These brands have been rapidly increasing both in number and size with some celebrities are generating more income from these endeavours than from their professional careers (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015). For instance, the world's youngest self-made billionaire Kylie Jenner achieved her billionaire status when her brand Kylie Cosmetics reached $630 million in revenue two years after launch (Bova, 2018; Kroll, 2019). Similarly, Victoria Beckham's brand – Victoria by Victoria Beckham – generated over $40 million in sales in 2018 (Hipwell, 2018), expanding to cosmetics – Victoria Beckham Beauty – the following year (Brown A. , 2019). As per male examples, there are Sean Combs, an American rapper who launched his own line of clothing and perfume, opened a restaurant, and has a major equity stake in a television network (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020) and Andy Murray – British professional tennis player who backed multiple start-ups in recent years (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Human brand extensions are hence common across different professions, including athletes, musicians, movie stars, talk show hosts, and television actors such as Donald Trump; Jennifer Lopez; Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen; Martha Stewart (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013); Cindy Crawford; Michael Jordan (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012); Cristiano Ronaldo; Elle McPherson; Gwyneth Paltrow (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021; Passport, 2021), etc. The product type of such brand extensions varies from luxury goods to fashion, home goods, athletic products, wellness-related products or food products (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021; Passport, 2021), with some portfolios comprising clothing lines and apparel, wineries, vineyards, hotels, restaurants, cosmetics, accessories, household goods and even nonfungible tokens (NFTs) (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021; Passport, 2021; Singh & Pandey, 2017). Yet, the most popular human brand extensions to date are the namesake celebrity fragrances

[11] In an attempt to avoid confusion, it is convenient to clarify the correlation between celebrity brand and celebrity brand extensions, also called celebrity-owned brands. As previously mentioned, celebrity brands are a particular and prominent type of human brand (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Centeno & Wang, 2016; Chae & Lee, 2013; Huang & Huang, 2016; Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020; Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020) which are defined by high-profile, well-known individuals who create equity and profit from their fame (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Celebrity brand extensions are one of the ways to create equity and profit from said fame, for example, through the launch of new product lines with their own brand names (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019). However, some articles also refer to celebrity brand as the products individuals launch to create equity and profit from one's fame (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021). Thus, as to avoid confusion, the first definitions of the concepts will be the ones used henceforward.

(Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Moreover, these human brand business ventures are worldwide. The Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bundchen, for example, joined forces with a shoemaker company to release her own line of affordable flip-flops, which was a success both in Brazil and abroad (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). This phenomenon has also been verified across different Asian countries like China, Japan, South Korea and India, where popular actors, social media influencers, and others capitalize on their popularity through the ownership of various businesses such as entertainment and e-commerce businesses, restaurants, coffee shops, and fashion stores, competitive sports, fitness, and even solar projects (Choi, 2018; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020; Waldmeir, 2011). Nevertheless, although some ventures are successful and very profitable, other may crash, as it was the case of Jennifer Lopez and her restaurant and fashion line, or the case of Han Han, one of the most popular bloggers in China whose franchised restaurants closed three years after opening (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

At the core of these successful business ventures are consumers, who increase the intention to purchase products associated with celebrities because they often want to be like them – e.g., by wearing what they wear or doing what they do (Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, & Owusu-Frimpong, 2019). One industry which swiftly understood the potential of human brand extensions was the retail industry. In an effort to increase differentiation from other retailers and consequently boost profits, retailers are collaborating with celebrities to develop exclusive celebrity-branded products (Casey, 2006; McGlone, 2016). These co-branded offerings, which appeal to a number of demographics and are able to disrupt the traditional endorsement narratives, are considered the future of retail (Ayers, 2020; Moliner-Velázquez, Fuente-Blasco, & Gil-Saura, 2019a; Morrison, 2019). While Macy's department stores, for instance, featured American celebrities and their product lines in its television advertising campaign to entice consumers to shop during the holiday season and ultimately change consumers' perceptions of the retailer (Eckberg, 2007), Sears partnered with the Kardashian sisters to launch a clothing line and improve its business with the junior market (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Comparably, Kohls closed a deal with Jennifer Lopez to exclusively distributed her products (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021) and the American retailer Target has also been following the same profitable differentiation strategy, by collaborating with Zac Posen, Giada De Laurentiis and Chrissy Teigen (Target, 2019).

Celebrity-owned brands and consequent celebrity branded products are thus a growing phenomenon in the market, with eight of the top ten individuals featured in the list of highest-paid celebrities of 2020 involved in some type of business venture (O'Malley-Greenburg & Lafranco, 2020). Once celebrities are considered human brands (Parmentier M. A., 2010) and are understood as a product, a thing that is produced and can be consumed, worshipped, and adored (Cashmore & Parker, 2003), it is possible to extend the reasoning from branding theory to the celebrity branding context, classifying celebrity-branded products as brand extensions or even line extensions (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). In other words, if celebrities are brands, the products/services launched under their name and image can be theorised as (celebrity) brand extensions (Dall'Olmo, Pina, & Bravo, 2013; Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Kennedy, Baxter, &

Kulczynski, 2021; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019; Walsh & Williams, 2017) and other products/services later launched which add variety to the existing product line or category for the sake of reaching more customers and enticing existing customers with new options can be considered line extensions (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). Celebrities are therefore (human) brands "themselves who offer brand extensions" (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013, p. 212), and expand their brand to new categories through celebrity-branded products (Dens & De Pelsmacker, 2010). For example, while the winery launched by the filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola is considered a brand extension, the release of one of his new films is considered a line extension (Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021).

As aforementioned, both endorsements and celebrity branded products can be considered brand extensions. However, the key difference between the two is that while the former simply consists of promoting the third-party brand in exchange for payment; the latter consists of a product which likely has the celebrity's investment and frequently one's name as well (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; McCracken, 1989). In addition, it is also believed that the branded individual holds more control over the offering when launching one's own products than with third party endorsements (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013), which in turn, can explain why celebrity brand extensions trigger a wider sentiment of authenticity in consumers than celebrity endorsements (Ayers, 2020). In fact, it is believed that "most 'intimate' of relationships between the stars and brands are ownership, where celebrities actually develop and market their own products" (Pringle & Binet, 2005, p. 206). To some human brands, this intimate relationship between celebrities and brands can even be an inevitability. Although in an initially phase consumers are interested in the entertainment provided by celebrities and their social presence, this interest continuously grows towards an intense form of worship and they eventually demand much more from those branded individuals (Ang & Chan, 2016; McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002). In a setting of intense competition for every role celebrities can play, an inability to maintain consistency in meeting such consumer expectations has a tendency to affect the life cycle of a celebrity (Bader, 2012). Therefore, in order to sustain their popularity in the industry, diversification arises as the strategy to extend fame (Riley, 2008), whether within the profession (by taking different roles) or outside the profession, by venturing into other business models, including moving away from endorsing a brand and towards owning a brand (Singh & Pandey, 2017).

In addition to allowing human brands to stay connected with the consumers, brand extensions also have other advantages such as profitable business model and efficiency (Singh & Pandey, 2017). As a brand extension strategy consists of using an established brand name to launch new products (Keller, 2007), it decreases the costs of introducing new brand names and holds a higher probability of success because consumers transfer their perceptions and attitudes from the original brand to the extension (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Völckner & Sattler, 2006). Since transfers of meaning occur, the meaning transfer model (McCracken, 1989) and its principles are also applicable to human brand extensions because these offerings can be considered a "self-endorsement" (Walsh & Williams, 2017). Even though this model was initially conceptualized for celebrity endorsements, the transfer of different cultural meanings remains the same three-stage process: human brands acquire and establish meanings based on the roles they play in consumer culture; these roles affect the branded individual's image; the meaning is then transferred to the product through marketing activities which are connect the branded individual to the extension; and lastly, the consumers extract the meanings from the products and into their lives upon consumption (Knoll & Matthes, 2017; Miller & Allen, 2012; Pluntz & Pras, 2020a; Zamudio, 2016). The main difference in this process is that, as celebrities develop and market their own products, either by licensing agreements or by forming their own corporations, intimate relationships with consumers in the form of possession are created (Pringle & Binet, 2005). Moreover, once brand extensions are fundamentally self-endorsements with celebrities promoting their own products as progenic high investment endorsements (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018), such products concomitantly act as a promotional brand-building and relation-fostering tool for the same human brands (Olenski, 2018; Pringle & Binet, 2005).

Notwithstanding advantages such as the potential astonishing financial rewards and publicity opportunities driven by the tremendous media coverage that celebrities receive (McGlone, 2016), the brand extension business model may be riskier than endorsing third parties (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). A strictly commercial approach, for instance, may come across as opportunism (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021; Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013) and alter previous beliefs about the brand (John, Loken, & Joiner, 1998). Furthermore, once brand equity is developed over time through the implementation of different branding activities (e.g., brand extensions), failure would imply a loss of equity (Boisvert & Ashill, 2018), even for brands with a positive brand affect (Veloutsou, Chatzipanagiotou, & Christodoulides, 2020). Apart from the factors previously mentioned, others may come into play when determining the success of a human brand extension. Authenticity, which is a key aspect throughout the lifecycle of a human brand, remains vital in human brand extensions as consumers may see the authenticity of a celebrity differently, depending on whether they are endorsing a third-party brand or promoting their own (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Consumers may experience more authenticity from a human brand when a branded individual creates one's own product/service brand because the outcome is more likely a representation of one's true self, exhibiting one's desires and endeavours instead of other's ideals (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016). Moreover, the association of a celebrity as an owner adds a uniqueness and exclusivity to the brand because, contrarily to endorsed brands, the individual will not change periodically (Tripp, Jensen, & Carlson, 1994).

Along with authenticity, another factor which may also influence the response from consumers and consequent success of a human brand extension is its product typology (Batra & Sinha, 2000; Mitchell & Balabanis, 2021; Moliner-Velázquez, Fuente-Blasco, Servera-Francés, & Gil-Saura, 2019b). By evaluating the products' utilitarian features and hedonic attributes (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000), consumers tend to map and distinguish the relative hedonic or utilitarian nature of products (Mano & Oliver, 1993). While utilitarian products are characterized by a functional or instrumental value and are meant to be helpful, practical and necessary; hedonic products are mostly characterized by an experiential value (e.g., fun, pleasure, excitement) and must be exciting, delightful and enjoyable (Chen, Lee, & Yap, 2016; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Once human brand extensions offer excitement and pleasure through their symbolism for all product types (Miller & Allen, 2012), the effect of celebrities' endorsement may not perform as well for a utilitarian product (i.e., a vacuum cleaner) compared with a hedonic product (Friedman & Friedman, 1979). In addition, products with higher social risks – as it is the case of hedonic products, which carry some social risk because they are fun, experiential and value expressive (Day & Stafford, 1997) – can be more successful with a celebrity endorsement (Friedman & Friedman, 1979). As for the consumers, they tend to respect and trust more celebrities' recommendations for fun services than in the case of utilitarian services – in which the trust level is significantly lower (Stafford, Stafford, & Day, 2002) – and they also are willing to pay more over time for hedonic products but more in money for utilitarian products (Okada, 2005). Lastly, young consumers (18 to 25 years old) only approve emotional advertisements for hedonic products, as they prefer rational advertisements for utilitarian products (Drolet, Williams, & Lau-Gesk, 2007). Nevertheless, products/services nowadays offer a combination of hedonic and functional features, reshaping this dichotomy of functional and hedonic into a continuum where the usage and consumption motives of a product determine its perceptions as primarily hedonic or functional (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2009; Osorio, Centeno, Cambra-Fierro, & Castillo, 2021). As the celebrity self-endorsement in their namesake offerings infuse their essence into the product and transforms them into carriers of symbolic identities, the consumers of today generally prefer products that provide emotional benefits, whether hedonic or functional (Coelho, Bairrada, & Coelho, 2020; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2009; McCracken, 1989).

However, and more than authenticity, product typology or other factors, the involvement of a branded individual in a human brand extension might be the ultimate success indicator of a human brand extension. In the management literature, the concept of employee engagement implies an individual's involvement, satisfaction, and enthusiasm for their work (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002), in which engagement refers to the individual's behavioural investment in terms of one's physical, cognitive, and emotional energy regarding one's work (Kahn, 1990). In the same way employees can be invested in their work, celebrities can also be invested in brands (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021). Celebrity investment can thus be defined as a branded individual's level of physical, cognitive, and emotional devotion to a brand (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021). This involvement in one's commercial endeavours may vary in intensity, in levels of physical, cognitive, and emotional devotion, and in functional area - design, production, advertising, public relations, etc (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021). It may also have an effect on a celebrity's perceived authenticity as well as in attitudes, purchase intent, sales, and longevity of the brand (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021).

Some branded individuals are hardly involved, using license partners to translate what they believe is the celebrity's style into a range of products to sell under their celebrity brand (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021), which may closely resemble an endorsement – payment for an image transfer (Seno & Lukas, 2007). In such situations, the brand extension represents solely a physical investment, as such branded individuals are not expected to have designed the product, contributed to the creative process, nor be dedicated to the brand for an extended period (Russell & Rasolofoarison, 2017). This low level of investment is exemplified by the case of pop singer Jessica Simpson, whose clothing lines were design and manufactured by Tarrant Apparel Group, who in turn, translated her style into clothing that she held the right to veto (Agins, 2005). Once the pop singer failed to wear her own clothing line and hence presented a lack of involvement in marketing activities, Tarrant Apparel Group filled for a $100 million breach of contract lawsuit (DeCarlo, 2006a; DeCarlo, 2006a). Nevertheless, other branded individuals are highly involved in their brand extensions (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021). This was the case of former Spice Girl singer Victoria Beckham and her fragrance and luxury fashion line, which has been reported that she designs herself (Karimzadeh, 2008). The socialite and entrepreneur Kylie Jenner can also be considered highly invested in her brand extensions as she not only promotes her brand Kylie Cosmetics through her social media accounts but also designs each individual product – colour and scent used – and ultimately defines brands trends – what is selling well (Dodson, 2017). Since a branded individual needs to exhibit intrinsic motivation (involvement and dedication to an activity for inherent satisfaction) to be perceived as authentic (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and thus have a high level of investment (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021), many use their own names to create the brand names (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Nonetheless, and even though their name appears on all advertising, products and packaging (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012), the perception of the branded individual having ownership of the brand can be merely a perception (Pringle & Binet, 2005). Theses depictions of higher levels of emotional and cognitive devotion (comparing with an endorsement) are often used to mislead consumers as branded individuals use licensees to create products and then be perceived has having higher levels of investment in their brand than actual investment (Kennedy, Baxter, & Kulczynski, 2021).

However, once involvement is defined as a function of an individual and product's characteristics and situational factors, and thus does not constitute a relationship (Warrington & Shim, 2000), some argue that attachment is in fact an outcome of involvement (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Consequently, when there is high involvement, there is high attachment, and vice-versa (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). As aforementioned, the strength of attachment – "the intensity of a person's target-specific emotional bond with a human brand" (Thomson, 2006, p. 105) – may vary to the point of being associated with intense feelings such as connection, affection, love, and passion (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Such attachment can differ when a human-brand merely endorses a product as opposed to launching and owning a product because the degree of attachment can predict a consumer's commitment to a brand, as it involves strong feelings about the brand and the brand's relationship to self (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). Nevertheless, and concurrently to the attachment between consumer and brand, it also exists an attachment between the human brand (endorser) and the (endorsed) brand (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Thomas & Fowler, 2016). As the level of involvement between the endorser and product could vary from mere advertising to using or creating the product (Thomas & Fowler, 2016), so can the attachment of an endorsement vary with an endorser endorsing the product versus an endorser launching and owning the product (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Therefore, this degree of attachment can be categorised into low, medium, and high (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). When a human brand (e.g., a celebrity or CEO) is selected to endorse a product or service as a one-off endorsement with no further commitment, a low degree of attachment takes place (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). A medium degree of attachment occurs when a human brand is associated with a particular cause, initiative or a brand exclusively and for a significantly longer duration than a one-off endorsement (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018)[12]. Finally, a high degree of perceived attachment between the human brand and the product exists when one launches a product or service under one's own name (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018).

Building on these ideas and considering attachment on a spectrum, it is possible to classify endorsers and endorsement situations on the basis of their degree of attachment (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). The endorsers can be categorized into four types of endorsers – typical consumer, expert, celebrity, and CEO (Friedman, Termini, & Washington, 1976). A typical consumer is a real person, a consumer who would normally consume that product and would not be portrayed by an actor (Friedman, Termini, & Washington, 1976). An expert is someone recognised as an authority on the product endorsed whose expertise, as the result of special knowledge or training, is superior to that acquired by regular consumers (Friedman, Termini, & Washington, 1976). As aforementioned, a celebrity can be described as a famous, physically attractive and glamorous person, such as movie stars, sportspeople and fashion models (Friedman, Termini, & Washington, 1976; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Lastly, CEOs are high profile figureheads for their organisations who possess relevant product and managerial expertise (Friedman, Termini, & Washington, 1976; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Although the two last types of endorsers enjoy public recognition and are professionally managed like brands (Bendisch, Larsen, & Trueman, 2013) – thus being the most popular and frequently used types of endorser (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018) – the distinguishing characteristic between them is the glamour aspect, majorly prevalent in celebrities (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018).

As for the type of endorsement, it can be categorized into three types: traditional endorsement, spokesperson and progenic (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). A traditional type of endorsement, as previously explained in detail, is the situation where celebrities or CEOs help the product by getting attention, penetrating the commercial clutter, greater purchase intention, and create greater impact on attitude change (Atkin & Block, 1983; Erdogan, 1999; Ilicic, Kulczynski, & Baxter, 2016; Till, 1998). This type of endorsement is hallmarked by a low degree of perceived attachment between the endorser and the product-brand because of its temporary state of

[12] The key differentiator point between the low and medium degrees of perceived attachment is that, while in a low degree of attachment, the human brand endorses multiple brands as dissimilar products, in the medium degree of attachment, the human brand endorses a single product exclusively for a long period of time (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018).

commitment – it is common for the former to be replaced as well as endorse multiple brands and product categories at any given point in time (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). The second endorsement type – spokesperson – can be defined as “an endorser (celebrity or CEO) who has spent a significant amount of time in exclusively promoting a brand, company or cause” (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018, p. 244). The unique impact a spokesperson has on consumers’ attitudes and purchase intentions is a consequence of a spokesperson's perceived loyalty to the brand combined with one’s perceived credibility (Ohanian, 1991). The “spokesperson” type of endorsement can be considered as having a medium degree of attachment between the endorser and associated products because spokespersons have not launched the brands they promote and also because spokespersons are usually associated with the organisation or brand for a longer duration than endorsers, giving consumers the impression of being sincere or loyal to the promoted brand (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018)[13]. Finally, the progenic endorsement (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018) describes endorsements where branded individuals launch and endorse their own products (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018; Walsh & Williams, 2017). Deriving from the word “progeny”, which refers to something that is the product of something else; a descendant or the descendants of a person; off-spring (Cambridge), a progenic brand is defined as “the product or service launched by an endorser under their own name, and which derives its brand equity from association with the endorser” (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018, p. 244). Therefore, this brand incorporates not only brand characteristics such as brand name, brand image, and brand identity, but also characteristics from the parent-brand – the branded individual’ human brand – hence resembling a sub-brand or a product of brand extension to a certain degree of a human brand (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). As the launch of a said progenic brand represents a commitment which goes beyond endorsement and the branded individual is, either directly or indirectly, responsible for the success of the progenic brand, the progenic type of endorsement has the highest degree of attachment between the endorser and the product-brand (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018).

Combining the different types of endorsers with the different type of endorsements aforementioned, six paramount situations of endorsements can be categorised (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). The first endorsement situation – celebrity endorsed brands – are brands exclusively endorsed by celebrities and therefore, their main contribution to the brands’ equity is their glamorous characteristic (i.e., attractiveness and likeability) (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018), lending their image to brands (Fleck, Korchia, & Le Roy, 2012). Some often-endorsed products in this situation are beauty products, fragrances, apparel, among other products as they can easily be endorsed by another human brand with similar attractiveness characteristic in the case of brand transgressions (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). The second endorsement situation – CEO endorsed brands –

[13] Since the roles of endorser, spokesperson and even brand ambassador can sometimes be seen as interchangeable, it is necessary to define the latter. Brand ambassadors can be described as closely brand involved brand community members, who become brand evangelists and may later become spokespersons (Hickman & Ward, 2013; Ind, Iglesias, & Schultz, 2013; Keller, 2001; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Brand ambassadors can thus be employees who act as an interface between the brand's internal and external environment (Black & Veloutsou, 2017; Harris & de Chernatony, 2001; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018).

are brands that are only endorsed by CEOs (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018), whose perceived expertise is consistently related to a positive intention by respondents to purchase the product (Ohanian, 1991; Till & Busler, 1998). As CEOs are more likely to use the product endorsed (Ohanian, 1991), they create value for their companies and are usually representative of the companies they endorse, and vice-versa (Bendisch, Larsen, & Trueman, 2013). The endorsement situation – celebrity spokesperson brands – occurs when, through an established credible image derived from wide recognition and popularity, a celebrity has a greater impact on attitude change and purchase intention than does a non-celebrity and thus become a spokesperson (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Even though the longevity of a person's role as spokesperson for a brand can increase the attachment between the spokesperson and brand (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018), as the branded individual has neither started nor founded the brand, one can still be replaced at a later point in time (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). This third endorsement situation is then considered the medium degree of attachment between the endorser and product (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). The fourth endorsement situation – CEO spokesperson brands – refers to the common situation of the company president being a spokesperson for a company and thus a source of communication (Frieden, 1984). Although the CEO has a higher level of perceived status and prestige than an unidentified spokesperson, one can latter move on to another company and easily promote another product of a similar category, due to the expertise and knowledge one possesses (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Therefore, this situation too is considered of medium degree of attachment between the endorser and product (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). The fifth endorsement situation – fused progenic brands – refers to the product-brands launched by glamorous human-brands reflect the attractiveness characteristic of these endorsers (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). These brands have a high degree of attachment between the progenic brand and the associated human brand because the former brand usually retain the endorser' name as well as being launched and managed by the same branded individual (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). These brands are named "fused" due to their nature of infusing the essence of the human brand into the product for one's fans (even if they are aware of the lack of involvement from the branded individual in the actual production of the brand) (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). Some examples of fused progenic brands are *Sugarpova*, the candy brand launched by Maria Sharapova or David Beckham's range of apparel – which both mirror the branded individuals' attractive and likeable personalities (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). In closing, the last situation encompasses progenic brands which are launched and owned by CEOs – e.g., Dick Smith's products and Ben and Jerry ice-creams are CEO progenic brands which were launched by Dick Smith, Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). These brands have a high degree of attachment between them and the CEOs because not only do they retain the endorsers' names but were also launched by and are a representation of their personalities (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018).

In conjunction with the different types of endorsers and with the different type of endorsements previously mentioned, it is also possible to identify three different branding strategies for celebrity products: celebrity mono-branding, co-branded celebrity products, and noncelebrity-branded products (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Today, many celebrity-branded products use celebrity mono-branding – the brand only carries the name of the celebrity (or a variant of the celebrity's name) and the manufacturer does not directly associate itself with the brand (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012) – as it is the case of *dVb*, which stands for David and Victoria Beckham (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Human brand extensions may use celebrity mono-branding when the provider brand (e.g., manufacturer) intends to use the celebrity image to extend its reach to a target market base in which does not have a high brand equity and recognition, thus not benefiting the product or the celebrity (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). This can be exemplified by how the cosmetic company Elizabeth Arden produces and markets Britney Spears' fragrances without noticeably presenting its brand on packaging or advertising (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). While the Elizabeth Arden brand and its "Red Door" logo and spas, appeals to a mature demographic segment through a conservative image (Kron, 1984), the Britney Spears brand appeals to a younger demographic segment through a popular and sensual appeal with occasionally some immature and reckless behaviour (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Due to the lack of perceived fit between the two brands and the possible confusion and damage both brands would suffer in their respective target markets if they openly collaborated, both brands use celebrity mono-branding to leverage the other to extend its own brand (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). The Britney Spears brand leverages the brand Elizabeth Arden's capabilities, relationships, and distribution system to expand the brand into a new category, and meanwhile the Elizabeth Arden leverages the Britney Spears to appeal to sell to different consumers (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012).

Nonetheless, celebrity mono-branding is not the only branding strategy considered in a celebrity product context, as celebrity-own brands can appear in collaboration with another brand or even not appear at all (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). The second branding strategy – co-branding – consists of a brand alliance in which two brands appear on a single product or service and equally benefit from the combined efforts (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). This strategy can be more beneficial than other branding strategies since the combination of two complementary brands into one product increases the value and benefits of the co-branded product than of a mono-branded product (Helmig, Huber, & Leeflang, 2008; Park, Jun, & Schocker, 1996; Rao, 1997; Rao & Ruekert, 1994). Co-branding strategies can create positive or negative spillover effects (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). When one relatively neutral and unknown brand is paired up with a well-known high-quality brand (which infuses positive feelings), perceptions, attitudes and consumer evaluations of the former are increased, which now also elicits positive feelings (Fang & Mishra, 2002; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Voss & Tansuhaj, 1999; Washburn, Till, & Priluck, 2004; Washburn, Till, & Priluck, 2000). Yet, a co-branding strategy with the brands with poor fit can have more risk because as consumers tend to more favourably assess partner brands with greater product category fit and brand image fit, the better attribute profile products co-branded with complementary brands tend to have, in comparison with products co-branded with noncomplementary brands (Park, Jun, & Schocker, 1996; Simonin & Ruth, 1998). This relationship between brand fit and consumers' evaluations is even so nonlinear as moderately incongruent brands can generate more positive evaluations than congruent or highly incongruent brands when consumers are highly involved in the decision making (Walchli, 2007). Furthermore, brands with a lack of personality – necessary to increase trust, brand affect, and thus build brand loyalty – can improve by with a brand that is superior on that aspect (Lau & Phau, 2007; Sung & Kim, 2010). Once celebrities have rather well-defined personalities, they are often the ideal partners for (provider) brands which lack personality and look to improve consumers' attitudes, such as a manufacturer or a retailer (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Some examples of co-branding in the context of celebrity marketing are the collaboration of signature sneaker brand Air Jordan with Nike and Michael Jordan (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020); how Nike produces and markets a line of golf products branded TW for Tiger Woods (in which both brands are prominently displayed); how Adidas produces and markets a line of casual clothing and shoes branded David Beckham; how Sears was the exclusive retailer to rapper LL Cool J's clothing; as well as Kohl's exclusive distributor to reality television star Lauren Conrad's apparel (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012).

Co-created celebrity products can also carry significant risk because if one of the brands suffers from negative perceptions, the second brand will also suffer (Helmig, Huber, & Leeflang, 2008). Due to the human nature and position in the public eye of celebrities, as well as difficulties in aligning the goals of two distinct stakeholders (Helmig, Huber, & Leeflang, 2008), negative publicity is more likely to be generated by human brands than inanimate brands (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). As some celebrities' behaviour can be unreliable, thus hampering the management of celebrity co-branding activities, noncelebrity-branded products may sometimes be the solution (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Noncelebrity branding consists of the use of noncelebrity-branded products, celebrity products which are neither branded with the celebrity's name nor with an existing manufacturer's brand, to not automatically capitalize on an immediate association (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Even if examples of human brands which choose not to overtly leverage one's brand name are not as abundant as with mono-branding or co-branding, branding a broad appeal product without one's name may be more beneficial when celebrities have a narrow audience or a limited appeal (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). The greatest example of a noncelebrity-branded product is the energy drink *Crunk!!*, which was cocreated by rapper Lil' Jon (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Although his name is not featured on the can of the energy drink, he has an album called "Crunk Juice" and has promoted the energy by taking cases of it to clubs, shows, and bars (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). As the product category of energy drinks is so distant from Lil' Jon's initial area of fame and expertise, branding the product with his name is not an ideal strategy to generate positive evaluations (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). As a consequence, consumers who are fans of Lil' Jon will associate the noncelebrity-branded product with the human brand due to the overlap with his album's name while other consumers, who may have a neutral or negative perception, are less likely to associate the noncelebrity-branded product to the human brand due to the absence of his brand name (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Other examples of noncelebrity branding are more pervasive in the restaurant industry, such as Steven Spielberg's submarine-themed restaurant called *Dive!*, Arnold Schwarzenegger's Austrian restaurant called *Schatzi*, Jennifer Lopez's Cuban restaurant called

Madre's, and Eva Longoria's partnership with celebrity chef Todd English to open the restaurant *Beso* (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012).

To conclude, when branded individuals initiate a new business venture, whether a third-party endorsement or a celebrity-own brand, their celebrity capital can be exploited through different means (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Thereby, branded individuals can play different roles, such as endorser, influencer, executive, entrepreneur, and investor (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). When starting a new business venture, individuals who enjoys public recognition can use this influence by appearing in advertisement or public relationship events to endorse the product and thus reveal their association with the business (McGuire, 1985; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Some reasons for using this most popular form of celebrity marketing (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020) are to help advertisements stand out (Erdogan, 1999), to make advertising believable (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989), to generate publicity and attention for the brand (Biswas, Hussain, & O'Donnell, 2009), to produce better brand recall or recognition (Friedman & Friedman, 1979), to influence consumer perceptions of the brand (Keller, 2008), to reposition an older product (Kaikati, 1987), to build trust with current and potential customers, and attract new customers (Blecken, 2009), to increase the consumer's purchase intent (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983), among others.

A branded individual takes on the role of celebrity influencer when not only endorses a business but also communicates with fans (today, in social media) to express one's personal feeling and thoughts (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020), thus having the power to influence perceptions of a specific target audience or medium (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). In the past, before the rise of social media, fans gathered information about their idols through newspapers, magazines, radio, television programs, among others (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Today however, social media provides a direct platform which directly connects idols and fans, enabling the expansion of an avid fan base and enormously impacting the celebrity-fan dynamics (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Once social media creates an illusion of a direct connection between the two parties, the fans engage in the idol's life and consequently identify themselves with the branded individual, accept one's deeds, and nurture the same ideas and lifestyle as that of their idol, eventually even feeling a sense of entitlement and even possession of the human brand (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). An example of an ideal celebrity influencer is Lady Gaga, whose influence over her fans reaches all levels of the celebrity worship continuum (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). The singer has the ability to take control and stamp her indelible mark on endorsed products, as for example by naming her fan base "Little Monsters" and later launching her own social network, which provides another channel to build her brand and an online community for her fans (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

Another role branded individuals can play is the role of celebrity executive (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). In addition to endorse products as spokesperson and brand ambassador, many celebrities today are invited to create signature product lines with their names associated (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Whether through mono-branding or co-branding, when a branded individual agrees to use one's name for product branding, it implies that one plays an executive role in the brand to assure the product's quality, performance, style, and function as more than an endorser

(Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Moreover, companies are also intensifying their offers to use celebrities' talent for branding initiatives by offering titles which were previously set aside for top executives (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). By giving celebrities titles such as "creative director" to shape the brand's image and the type of products that are developed by the company, and in turn use their names for branding ventures, the branded individual is playing an executive's role (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Some examples of celebrities playing an executive role are the case of Puma appointed the singer Robyn Rihanna Fenty as a creative director for the popular Fenty x Puma collection, or the contract signed between Diet Coke and the fashion designer Marc Jacobs, who received the designation of a creative director, to design its soda cans as part of its 30th anniversary celebration campaign (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

Today, and despite frequently appearing as brand endorsers or creative directors, celebrities are also engaging in entrepreneurial roles as owners in the ventures (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). As the most intimate of relationships between the celebrities and brands is ownership (Pringle & Binet, 2005), more and more celebrities are developing and marketing their own products (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020), hence the rise of the celebrity entrepreneurship phenomenon (Hunter, 2010). Defined as individuals who are known for their and take part in owning and running a venture (Hunter, 2010), celebrity entrepreneurs differ from celebrity executives in the sense that celebrity executives do not fully engage in the business venture by providing leadership, establishing, guiding, and assessing the overall direction of the corporation, as celebrity entrepreneurs do (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020)[14]. The American actress Jessica Alba, for example, founded the Honest Company, while the very popular American talk show host Oprah Winfrey, created the Oprah Winfrey Network and served as the chairman, chief executive, and chief creative officer of the cable television channel (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

Last but not least, some celebrities decide to only be an investor, without managing, being involved, endorsing the self-owned business nor adopting the celebrity branding strategy (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Thereby, the public is not aware of the branded individual's personal investment in the venture unless it is revealed by the media (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). The sectors which are often chosen by celebrities to start their ventures are the fashion sector or the restaurant sector (Bruner, 2017; Morris, 2015), as did the American actor Robert De Niro, co-founder of the Nobu restaurant group (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Recently, however, celebrities have also fervently devoted themselves to the development of venture capital businesses (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). The famous rapper Nas, for example, saw high returns on his investment fund – *QueensBridge Venture Partners* – whose recent start-up investment, Ring, was acquired by Amazon (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Likewise, the American actor Ashton Kutcher, also collaborated with partners and founded A-Grade Investments to invest in technology start-up companies, later witnessing high return from investments on companies such as Uber and Airbnb (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

[14] As the celebrity's involvement in the entrepreneurial enterprise is greater than an endorsement and one's decisions normally directly affects the positioning of the business, becoming a celebrity entrepreneur can be more challenging than becoming an endorser (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Moreover, customers may also have some reservations regarding the product's quality because the celebrity business venture is new to the market (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

To conclude this topic, it is relevant to understand the impact of human brand extensions on the brands and companies which engage in such ventures. Although branded individuals nowadays can choose between third party endorsements and starting their own brands, its impact remains immutable as celebrities can help advertisements stand out (Erdogan, 1999), enter new markets (Blecken, 2009; Sherman, 1985) and spark consumer's shopping interests (Loroz & Braig, 2015). Celebrities naturally raise attention and bring prestige to brands, significantly and positively impacting consumers' attitudes and behavioural intentions towards the endorsed brand (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008; Atkin & Block, 1983; Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016; Carrillat, d'Astous, & Lazure, 2013; Eisend & Langner, 2010; Erdogan, 1999; Hung, 2014; Kamins, 1990), as well as encouraging the brand's believability, credibility, recall and brand awareness (Erdogan, 1999; Kelting & Rice, 2013; Tom, et al., 1992). As the consumer's perception of celebrity's attributes, social representation and social image influences the effectiveness of an advertising message (Bauer, Sauer, & Exler, 2005; Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer, & Schmitt; Hsu & McDonald, 2002; La Ferle & Choi, 2005; Miller & Laczniak, 2011; Rossiter & Smidts, 2012), the transfer of human brand meanings (including one's personality, credibility, values, feelings, performance, and physical appearance) (Jain & Roy, 2016) to the endorsed brand results in an increase in brand loyalty (Chung, Derdenger, & Srinivasan, 2013; Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer, & Daza-LeTouze, 2011; Martin, 1996; McCracken, 1989) – which, in turn, is a pertinent driver of purchase intention (Aw & Labrecque, 2020; Das, 2014; Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Newell, 2002; Lin, Lobo, & Leckie, 2017; Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020; Lutz, MacKenzie, & Belch, 1983; Ohanian, 1991; Pradhan, Duraipandian, & Sethi, 2016). Successively, and once brand loyalty and possible celebrity attachment and worship have a favourable impact on consumption behaviours (Aw & Labrecque, 2020; Huang, Lin, & Phau, 2015; Ilicic & Webster, 2011), such as purchase intention towards the endorsed product (Aw & Labrecque, 2020; Das, 2014; Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Newell, 2002; Lin, Lobo, & Leckie, 2017; Liu, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020; Lutz, MacKenzie, & Belch, 1983; Ohanian, 1991; Pradhan, Duraipandian, & Sethi, 2016); willingness to pay, brand equity (Spry, Pappu, & Cornwell, 2011), and brand perceptions are enhanced while sales increase (Chung, Derdenger, & Srinivasan, 2013; McCormick, 2016). This phenomenon has occurred, for example, when Chanel's perfume sales increased by 30% after a campaign featuring the Australian actress Nicole Kidman (Creswell, 2003), or when Nike saw their market share of golf balls increase from 1% to 3.9% in eight months, after Tiger Woods' endorsement of the same product (Grange, 2001). The rise in brand perceptions, sales and overall brand performance (Biswas, Biswas, & Das, 2006; Chung, Derdenger, & Srinivasan, 2013; Gilal, Paul, Gilal, & Gilal, 2020; McCormick, 2016) through celebrity endorsers thus generates high cash flow expectations (Russell, Mahar, & Drewniak, 2005) and abnormal positive stock returns (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Mathur, Mathur, & Rangan, 1997). Yet, the branded individual's involvement in undesirable events can have an impact on such stock returns, for the reason that its effects are moderated by one's perceived culpability or accountability, i.e., the greater (lower) the perceived culpability of the individual involved in an undesirable event, the lower (greater) the stock return

(Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Louie, Kulik, & Jacobson, 2001; Mathur, Mathur, & Rangan, 1997; Russell, Mahar, & Drewniak, 2005).

2.2.2.4.2. Activism and Philanthropy

While celebrities were, in the past, commonly perceived as individuals who were known to the masses due to popularity and fame from their achievements in different areas (such as sports, entertainment, or business), their role has been progressively metamorphosing (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). Today, many celebrities from across the world are trying to position themselves as moral actors by taking part in activism and philanthropy (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021).

Activism, which can be defined as the activity of working to achieve political or social change (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021), has been practiced by numerous celebrities who advocate for various causes and taking a stand on, often controversial, socio-political issues (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). Some examples of celebrities drawing their power and influence from their own brand appeal in an attempt to transform society are comedian and television host Ellen DeGeneres, athlete Colin Kaepernick, or actress Julia Roberts (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). Another example which marked the turning point of celebrities getting political was when the actress Meryl Streep targeted the then U.S president-elect Donald Trump in her acceptance speech at the Golden Globe Awards in 2017 (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). This form of activism has also expanded to social media and micro-blogging platforms (e.g., Twitter) in recent years, allowing human brands to enjoy the mass appeal and the freedom to communicate one's un-inhibited opinions (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). Celebrity activism can be considered the equivalent to corporate social responsibility as the engagement in cause-related initiatives can transform the branded individual's image (Duvall S. , 2015; Duvall & Heckemeyer, 2018)[15].

As for philanthropy, it consists of "the synergistic use of organizational core competencies and resources to address key stakeholders' interests to achieve both organizational and social benefits" (McAlister & Ferrell, 2002, p. 690). In parallel to activism, a company's strategic involvement in socially responsible initiatives can also positively mould consumer attitudes towards organizational brands (Baalbaki & Guzmán, 2016; Guzmán & Davis, 2017; Husted & Allen, 2007). Accordingly, many celebrities are involved in charitable work or even create their own foundations. During the Haiti disaster, for example, many artists such as Madonna, Bono, Wyclef Jean, and Jay-Z raised over $57 million through a "telethon" viewed by more than 160 million people worldwide (Sandberg, 2010). Former basketball star "Magic" Johnson has a foundation with the mission of fighting HIV/AIDS (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Television host David Letterman created a foundation called the American Foundation for Courtesy and Grooming (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). Actor Leonardo DiCaprio founded, in 1998, a foundation that carries his name, with the goal of protecting the world's

[15] Corporate brands often partner up with celebrity activists in order to engage in activism (Grazzini, Acuti, Mazzoli, Petruzzellis, & Korschun, 2020; Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021; Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020; Sibai, Mimoun, & Boukis, 2021). Nike, for example, signed a multi-year deal with the activist athlete Colin Kaepernick after he revolted against racism and social injustice at an NFL game (Jain, Jajodia, Sharma, & Singh, 2020). The human brand also endorsed the "Black Lives Matter" cause for the same brand (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021).

last wild places (Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019), while actor Brad Pitt founded the “Make it Right Foundation” (Fuqua, 2011). Lastly, some celebrities have also been associated with the United Nations (UN), such as actress Emma Watson, nominated in 2014 United Nation’s Goodwill Ambassador (Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019), and actress Angelina Jolie, former United Nation’s Goodwill Ambassador, who has focused international attention on her cause by visiting refugee camps, donating money, and adopting several children (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Wilson, 2014).

Whether as endorsers or influencers, celebrities have the power to influence consumer behaviour through their brand appeal in a variety of areas (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021), such as commercial products (Branchik & Chowdhury, 2017; Pease & Brewer, 2008), societal improvement efforts (Thrall, et al., 2008), political causes (Austin, Van de Vord, Pinkleton, & Epstein, 2008) and health issues, like HIV/AIDS (Brown & Basil, 1995). Thereby, celebrities are frequently used to promote political organizations, issues, brands, or social causes (Carlson & Donavan, 2017), in order to boost visibility, gain and hold the attention of consumers (Brockington & Henson, 2015; Erdogan, 1999). Younger people and those less involved in particular causes or politics, for example, are more likely to seek information from non-traditional sources – e.g., celebrities (Baum & Jamison, 2006; Hollander, 2005).

When celebrities are associated to social marketing messages, which do not supply the consumer with a tangible product, there is still an exchange relationship, where the traditional exchange between brands and consumers is replaced by a relational exchange (Safari & Albaum, 2019; Schartel Dunn & Nisbett, 2020). According to the relational exchange theory (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987), the development of relationships between companies and customers increases the likelihood of purchase intentions and strengthens commitment from customers to stay loyal to the brand (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). Thus, celebrities can gain leverage by directly interacting with consumers and building an emotional connection (Saboo, Kumar, & Ramani, 2016), hence satisfying the human existence’s fundamental need to develop relationships (Schartel Dunn & Nisbett, 2020). One way to develop such relationships is through the consumer’s identification with a brand (Schartel Dunn & Nisbett, 2020). Once activist celebrities are guided by a purpose and signal a set of values they believe in (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021; Papista & Krystallis, 2013; Vredenburg, Kapitan, Spry, & Kemper, 2020), “it is through the identification process that celebrity endorsements achieve their effectiveness” (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989, p. 5) because identification indicates the listener identifies similarities between themselves and the speaker, i.e., the celebrity (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst, 2005; Carlson & Donavan, 2017). This identification with the message source can thus be enough to inspire behaviour change because when the consumer has the desire to perceive themselves as similar or aligned with a desired celebrity endorser, it is likely their behaviour will change (Schartel Dunn & Nisbett, 2020). Although identification is often associated with perceived similarity, heuristic cues, such as race, sex and age of the celebrity, can also play a part in the process (Branchik & Chowdhury, 2017; Feicke & Higie, 1992; Jones, 2010). Moreover, in the same way it is relevant in brand extensions, the connection the celebrity has to the issue being promoted affects its effectiveness (Carlson & Donavan, 2017; Till &

Busler, 2000) and the targeted audience (Choi & Rifon, 2012). In addition, geographic or community identity characteristics are also key as the more similar an audience perceives the source to be, the more likely the audience members will be persuaded by that non-traditional source – thus celebrities with ties to the community endorsing an idea are seen as more similar than disaffiliated celebrities (Schartel Dunn & Nisbett, 2017). For instance, celebrities like Paul Rudd, Jason Sudeikis, Rob Riggle, Eric Stonestreet, and David Koechner, annually support the community they are closely tied to by annually hosting a philanthropic event ("Big Slick"), whose profits revert to a Kansas City children's hospital (Schartel Dunn & Nisbett, 2020).

Such alignment between the human brand and the charity or cause can be considered a co-branding partnership (Ilicic & Webster, 2013; Seno & Lukas, 2007), as the perceived belongingness or similarity between both parties enables the development of an associative link between them (McSweeney & Bierley, 1984; Till & Nowak, 2000). According to the previously explained associative network theory (Anderson, 1983; Collins & Loftus, 1975; Martindale, 1991; Srull & Wyer, 1989), the initially dissociated charity and human brand nodes are connected through the co-branding process, which activates memory retrieval for both nodes simultaneously.

Once fit between both parties enables the spreading activation of associations in consumer memory, generates greater meaning transfer between them both, counteracts egoistic attributions to both parties' motives, and increases brand credibility (Bigne, Curras-Pérez, & Aldas-Manzano, 2012), the literature on celebrity endorsement, co-branding, cause-brand, and brand-non-profit partnerships recognizes the key role of fit in the effectiveness of such co-branding partnerships (Batra & Homer, 2004; Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2006; Dickinson & Barker, 2007; Dickinson & Heath, 2006; Gupta & Pirsch, 2006; Ilicic & Webster, 2013; Kamins, 1990)(Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Lynch & Schuler, 1994; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Till & Busler, 1998; Till & Busler, 2000; Till, Stanley, & Priluck, 2008; Trimble & Rifon, 2006). In addition, cause-related marketing literature identified cause-brand fit results in positive brand image (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999), brand credibility (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2006) and product purchase intention (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2006; Gupta & Pirsch, 2006), while brand-non-profit alliances research finds positive spill-over effects in terms of positive affect (Dickinson & Barker, 2007). Nevertheless, a high degree of fit between a company and a cause can generate more consumer scepticism if consumers perceive that the company is exploiting rather than helping the cause (Barone, Norman, & Miyazaki, 2007).

In short, a celebrity-charity alliance is a beneficial and reciprocal relationship because it affects the charitable brand's equity, while the charitable brand can also influence the human brand's equity (Seno & Lukas, 2007). This can, however, lead to some brands engage in philanthropy for egoistic reasons rather than altruism (Ilicic & Baxter, 2014). The concept of strategic philanthropy has consequently risen to define the philanthropic activity that is not exclusively due to altruistic intentions of a brand (Babiak, Mills, Tainsky, & Juracich, 2012) but that is the synergistic use of a brand's resources to achieve both organisational and social benefits (Dickinson & Barker, 2007; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Saiia, Carroll, & Buchholtz, 2003; Waddock & Post, 1995). This concept thus presents both a dual objective and dual outcome which is the improvement of brand image (i.e., marketized philanthropy) – egoistic motive (Robert, 2013) – and the advancement of society, through the support of a social cause – altruistic motive (Babiak, Mills, Tainsky, & Juracich, 2012; Lee, Motion, & Conroy, 2009). Although most research has been focusing on understanding strategic philanthropy in a corporate and brand alliance context (Dickinson & Barker, 2007), said concept (and its principles) can be applied to individuals (Babiak, Mills, Tainsky, & Juracich, 2012), not only professional athletes (Babiak, Mills, Tainsky, & Juracich, 2012), but to celebrities in general (Ilicic & Baxter, 2014). When considering, for example, an athlete and a charity in a co-branding alliance (celebrity-charity alignment), the athlete (and consequently, the team and league) may receive a financial, political, social capital benefit to themselves and their brand or image, the charity may increase image building and donation intention, and the society at large may also receive social benefits, such as perceived social responsibility or philanthropy (Babiak, Mills, Tainsky, & Juracich, 2012; Ilicic & Baxter, 2014).

Nonetheless, the engagement of human brands (and brands in general) in activism and philanthropy can be considered a "double-edged sword" (Sibai, Mimoun, & Boukis, 2021), as it often generates mixed reactions which can have implications for brand equity (Bhagwat, Warren, Beck, & Watson, 2020; Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020; Park & Jiang, 2020). Controversy is frequently a common denominator in these situations, not only because of the opinions endorsed by celebrities and brands (Bhagwat, Warren, Beck, & Watson, 2020; Vredenburg, Kapitan, Spry, & Kemper, 2020) and one's stance on the advocated cause (Mukherjee & Althuizen, 2020), but also due to the perceived importance of one's role and responsibility concerning socio-political causes (Sappington, Keum, & Hoffman, 2019). Some argue that the amalgamation of media consumption, celebrities, and philanthropy has originated "*charitainment*", which can be counter-productive because the "marketization of philanthropy depoliticizes the relationship between the market and the negative impacts it has on human well-being, thereby making philanthropy less likely to catalyze substantive social change" (Nickel & Eikenberry, 2009, p. 974). Furthermore, as celebrities are the embodiment of wealth (Dieter & Kumar, 2008), their involvement with and support of non-profits may be seen as contradictory (Littler, 2008). This partnership can therefore be perceived as a self-serving and egoistic form of self-promotion and publicity for the branded individual and one's human brand (Samman, McAuliffe, & MacLachlan, 2009). In turn, some critics thus view celebrity activism as an uninformed (Ilicic & Baxter, 2014), unproductive and substance lacking civic engagement (Hunting & Hinck, 2017). In addition, consumers are increasingly more sceptical of the social responsibility of organisations (e.g., charities) and consequently question more usage of funds of such charitable organisations (Bricknell, 2011). This high level of scepticism can result in lower levels of brand equity, increased vulnerability to negative information about the brand, and defaming of the brand through negative word-of-mouth (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

In this intricate scenario, the literature on celebrity activism follows this dualistic tendency with mixed evidence regarding celebrity effectiveness in political advocacy (Thrall, et al., 2008; Tsaliki, Frangonikolopoulos, & Huliaras, 2011). While some consumers may perceive brand socio-political activism as a signal of the brand's commitment to ethical and social reforms (Wieser, Hemetsberger, & Luedicke, 2019) and the perception of authenticity can significantly strengthen brand equity (Vredenburg, Kapitan, Spry, & Kemper, 2020), others may see it as a form of corporate hypocrisy (Eilert & Cherup, 2020; Moorman, 2020; Sobande, 2019; Vredenburg, Kapitan, Spry, & Kemper, 2020). Similarly, while some have criticized celebrities' political engagement (Weiskel, 2005), others have praised their activist discourse (Wheeler, 2012). This difference in perspective may be due to the multiple factors which interplay to determine the effect of celebrities' political involvement, such as an individual attachment with the celebrity, credibility, and the perceived fit between the celebrity and the political ideologies (Nisbett & DeWalt, 2016). In parallel with the celebrity endorsement and brand extension literature, in a context of human brand activism, consumers also expect celebrities to have some expertise about the product they are endorsing – which is, in this case, a cause or idea (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008). Lastly, it was also found that celebrity activism is often considered as more suitable for issues of lower importance (Becker, 2013); it was also found that although consumers respect celebrities that exhibit genuine or long-term commitment to causes, they tend to prefer celebrities who do not seek publicity for those causes (Samman, McAuliffe, & MacLachlan, 2009).

As for the outcomes of celebrity activism, it can differ according to how the public perceives the celebrity's actions as genuine or a gimmick (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). A branded individual may be considered a hypocrite when the consumers recognize a gap between what the individual claims versus how one actually behaves (Van de Ven, 2008) and when the consumers understand the celebrity's actions as driven by image promotional motives (Arli, Grace, Palmer, & Pham, 2017; Carlos & Lewis, 2018; Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021). Moreover, as that perceptions of the hypocrisy of corporate actions can impact negative emotions, affecting consumers' attitudes and behaviours (Zhigang, Lei, & Xintao, 2020), the same can occur in the case of an activist celebrity perceived as a hypocrite (Jain, Sharma, & Behl, 2021).

2.2.2.4.3. Brand Evolution

Throughout the evolution of a human brand, human brand equity is unstable and susceptible to less controllable erosion processes, increasing the difficulty of managing a human brand in the long run (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020). As a considerable portion of the human brand is created by the market and not by the branded individual alone (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015), the popularity of a human brand mirrors one given moment in time, thereby being necessary for branded individuals to have the ability to adapt to differing times and cultural fields (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). Professional musicians evolve has human brands, for example, by operating in a complex scenario of balancing between art and commerce throughout their careers (Bradshaw, McDonagh, & Marshall, 2006). If a human brand can successfully and continuously stand out from the crowd of an increasing number of celebrities (Scheidt, Gelhard, & Henseler, 2020) and experience a convergence and transformation of cultural meanings while reflecting wider cultural concerns and the changes in society, the human brand may then morph into an icon (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015). An example of continual human brand reinterpretation is the musician David Bowie who continuously renegotiated his human brand (and previous versions of his brand – e.g., his alter ego Ziggy Stardust) with various agents, such as the media, fans, record companies and the music industry (Lindridge & Eagar, 2015).

If the icon status is reached, such celebrities – also called “heroes” (Bromnick & Swallow, 1999; Escalas & Bettman, 2003) – can retire and disappear from the spotlight without compromising their appeal, or even increase their appeal, sometimes even more than when they were performing (Shuart, 2007). As icons are different from “normal” celebrities, because while an icon/hero is the “one who succeeds” while celebrities are just “famous persons” with no condition of high performance required (Shuart, 2007, p. 128), this increase in the appeal over time may not be within reach for all celebrities, who may be either successful or unsuccessful individuals (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). It is also worth noting that such dilution or enhancement of appeal may depend on the field of the human brand and consequent evolution of appeal over time according to the industry (e.g., music, sport, cinema industry) (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). An athlete, for instance, whose physical abilities, performance and consequent appeal generally decrease over time, may be more dependent on one’s performance than a human brand in the music and cinema industry as performance may not erode but rather remain stable or even increase with experience (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). The appeal of some icons can even endure beyond the individual’s death, with the market of dead celebrities (also called “delebs”) expanding in size (D’Rozario, 2016). Forbes began its annual ranking of the post-mortem earnings of the top-earning dead celebrities in 2001, which list includes artists like Michael Jackson (Osorio, Centeno, & Cambra-Fierro, 2020).

It is, however, important to take into consideration the interdependent relationship between the person and the brand in the process of brand evolution (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). When assessing the life cycle of American television personality and businesswoman Martha Stewart’s human brand, Fournier and Eckhardt (2019) identified four aspects of the person which can present challenges to one’s brand management – mortality, hubris, unpredictability, and social embeddedness (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Although this was a case study focused on Martha Stewart and her brand, their conclusions are applicable to human brands in general, as it is closely associated to the theory of the king’s two bodies (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957), which explains the inseparable and interdependent relationship between the two elements – the individual and the persona (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957).

The first, and most obvious aspect, is one’s mortality since the human in human brand is mortal and will die one day (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). For managers in charge of the human brand, mortality is seen as a source of brand risk which requires preparation, not only for the inevitable eventuality of one’s passing but also for the negative effects on brand value imposed by the dependency on the individual (Dion & Arnould, 2011; Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). For instance, when human brands are associated with or are a part of a publicly quoted company (as it was the case of Martha Stewart), strict legal requirements require the disclosure of risk factors such as the loss of people prominently connected to the brand because the eventual loss of such individuals is viewed as a critical source of information influencing stock valuations (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). In an attempt to deemphasizing Martha Stewart from her own brand extensions like her “Martha Stewart

Living" magazine, several measures were taken, as for example, shifting the emphasis on the cover of the magazine title with font sizes (giving more emphasis to "Living" and less to "Martha Stewart"); removing Martha Stewart from the cover images and replacing her with season-relevant photographs (such as garden benches and summer drinks); changing editorials to impersonal topics (such as global warming); and featuring new and up-and-coming individuals (and consequent ones' human brands) to add information and value through their expertise on specific domains – e.g., Marc Morrone on pet keeping (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019)[16].

Although strategies which systematically reduce dependencies on the individual behind the brand are widely accepted, they also represent a direct violation of the king's two bodies theory (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957), as the branded individual cannot be completely removed from the integrated human brand system because one is what connects the brand with the public (Herbst, 2003) and contributes much of the brand's value (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Thereby, the management of mortality risk through the separation of human and brand to privilege the brand destroys the very value on which the brand lies (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

The second aspect – hubris (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019) – can be defined as an exaggerated and delusional sense of pride, self-confidence, infallibility, and imperviousness which inevitably leads to one's downfall and ruin (Payne, 1960). Emphasized throughout the centuries in religion, philosophy, and literature, the tragic flaw of hubris, which can hypothetically occur to all mortals (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019), is difficult to manage because the affected individual loses touch with reality and displays an incapability to assess risks or learn from one's mistakes (Hayward & Hambrick, 1997). Although chief executives and others in positions of power and authority may require a sense of pride and self-confidence well above average in order to perform according to their roles, hubris goes well beyond this (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Hubris often takes its shape as perceived invincibility and clouds one's ability to learn from one's mistakes, thus resulting in destructive and reckless decisions fuelled by ego and in determent of the firm or brand's best interests (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kets de Vries, 1990). Once hubris will always prioritize the person over the brand, the individual will hold too much power and render the relationship between the two elements chronically out of balance (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957).

Both mortality and hubris can cause imbalance between the person and the brand, the situation in which the influence of the person or the brand is out of proportion in relation to the other (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). Even if some imbalance is to be expected (due to the complexities of the human condition) and can be tolerated in the short run (Kantorowicz, 1957), imbalance fundamentally serves as a mediator between mortality/ hubris and brand risk, and when it is persistent and unattended, it will erode person-brand value (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957).

[16] The last measure can be seen as the a strategy associated with the "king's two bodies" theory where the baton is passed to qualified heirs to the throne (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Kantorowicz, 1957). As such, this new generation of expert "heirs" would be trained not only to learn the "DNA" of the brand (Brady, 2000) but also to be capable of acting in Stewart's absence in line with the beliefs, tastes, and values of Stewart herself (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

Unpredictability, the third aspect, refers to when the branded individual, sometimes unintentionally, send signals which do not lead to a predictable perception (Bem & Allen, 1974), i.e., does not act "on brand" (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). This misalignment between expectation and reality can pose its own risks resulting from one's actions, especially if the individual presents an image that directly contradicts that of one's managed brand (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012). However, and contrarily to the imbalance resulting from mortality and hubris, which is always harmful to brand value if left unchecked, unpredictability can be beneficial to the human brand (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Unpredictability, which is a fundamental quality of being human, can add an essential sense of authenticity (and consequent humanity) to the brand – even more indispensable today as authenticity is considered the most rare and coveted asset in the contemporary branding landscape (Beverland, 2009). By disclosing natural meaning signals through unpredictable actions and thus revealing the authentic individual behind the managed brand, the human brand is strengthen rather than diluted (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Meyers, 2009). Although it may be difficult to managing the unpredictability of a human brand, this aspect can even be considered a fundamental advantage of human brands as said brands can grant authenticity through inconsistency in a way that inanimate brands cannot (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). In fact, even if inconsistencies reveal negative and damaging traits when human brands talk "off script", consumers can still embraced them as positive due to the insight they provide (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019; Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, & Farrelly, 2014). Moreover, this blurring of boundaries between the private and public and the authentic individual and the public persona can elevate the human brand to a potent ideological symbol (Turner, 2004). Contrasting with the previous best-practice advice for brand consistency which saw it as antithetical to the notion of a well-run brand (Aaker D. , 1996), unpredictability can consequently be recognize as not just a fundamental quality of human brands but also a foundational source of their strength (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

Finally, the fourth and last aspect is social embeddedness (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Once human brands (and especially celebrities) are, in part, defined by the people who provide testimonies or revelations about them (Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997), social embeddedness can be defined as the dependence of a phenomenon on its environment (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). In other words, the human brand (and consequently, one's meaning) is dependent on the testimonies or revelations of the group of people who know the "human" behind the brand – whether they belong to the entourage, family, co-workers, friends from the inner circle or to the media (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). As such meaning and casual manifestations of human brands are innately socially embedded in a web of relationships which the branded individual cannot control, escape, or ignore, one is partially dependent on one's relationships for meaning (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019)[17]. These inside information on "celebrities' private lives attract greater public interest than their professional lives"

[17] Although similar to the process of cocreation fuelled by social groups (Diamond, et al., 2009), from the human brand's point of view, this social embeddedness is part and parcel of the individual itself, enmeshed as one is in personal relationships with family, co-workers, friends, and the entourage (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Social embeddedness, therefore, goes further than simple cocreation because the "others" participating in the meaning creation process are parties with behind-the-scenes insights and not anonymous others (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

(Turner, 2004, p. 4) and can be so powerful and addictive (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002) that created and fuel complete industries (e.g., some media outlets, paparazzi) whose aim is to refine and propagate intimate details to the public (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). In this meaning manufacture process, between the human brand and the media/public is the critical role of the entourage (Rein, Kotler, & Stoller, 1997) and the inner circle, thus being as involved in the human brand project as the managers of the brand (Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer, & Daza-LeTouze, 2011; Meyers, 2009).

In parallel with unpredictability, social embeddedness can also be both a risk factor and a strength driver for human brands (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). When a branded individual is largely defined by others through social embeddedness, the resulting perception of seeing the individual through others' eyes generates a lasting and desirable illusion of intimacy (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). Such illusion of intimacy between the audience and the celebrity is the cornerstone to the fascination with celebrities (Schickel, 1985). As a result, intimate disclosures, even if inconsistent, negative, instable, or unfavourable, strengthen relationships (Im, Lee, Taylor, & D'Orazio, 2008), and release of sensitive or conflicted brand information can be an effective tool for audience engagement (McQuarrie, Miller, & Phillips, 2013), as the inside look is essential to the consumers' insatiable hunger for an intimate view backstage (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019). This dynamic thus allows the human brand to either aggravate or manage risks (and thus, gain or lose power) through one's personal affiliations and particularly, through how the brand is depicted by others with a backstage view (Fournier & Eckhardt, 2019).

2.2.2.4.4. Brand Transgressions

Transgressions, which are infringements of the implicit or explicit rules directing relationship performance and evaluation (Aaker, Fournier, & Brassel, 2004; Metts, 1994) are not restricted to interpersonal relationships. When such transgressions are violations of consumer-brand relationship-relevant norms, a brand transgression occurs (Steinman, 2012). In the context of human brands, a brand transgression is usually committed when the branded individual is involved in scandals, illegal acts, or morally depreciable events, such as extramarital affairs (Zhou & Whitla, 2013), domestic violence (Clarke J. , 2016), stories featuring nudity, emotional turmoil, extramarital affairs, break-ups, gossip, sex, etc (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). As "scandals are ubiquitous social phenomena with unique salience and singular dramatic intensity" (Adut, 2005, p. 213), paired with an enhanced and mass-media-fuelled visibility, human brands (e.g., celebrities) are more exposed to the risk of becoming embroiled in scandal than ordinary individuals (Driessens, 2013).

According to most of the research on the topic, brand transgressions can damage both the human brand and the brand of the products or organizations associated to the human brand (Bartz, Molchanov, & Stork, 2013; Mowen & Brown, 1981). Initially, transgressions have adverse effects on consumers and trigger negative public responses, acting run counter to acceptable moral behaviour and threatening human brands' reputations (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013; Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). While both consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards a human brand decline (Um, 2013), this fallout can also have negative spill over effects on any affiliated brand or company (Campbell & Warren, 2012; Till & Shimp, 1998), as consumers blame both the individual and any other parties involved for the transgression, even if it is by mere association (Byun & Dass, 2015; White, Goddard, & Wilbur, 2009). Therefore, when a transgressions is committed by a human brand, all parties involved can experience a hindering in attitudes and intentions from consumers (Bartz, Molchanov, & Stork, 2013; Carrillat, d'Astous, & Lazure, 2013; Kennedy, Baxter, & Ilicic, 2019; Kulczynski, Ilicic, & Baxter, 2016; Thomas & Fowler, 2016; Um N. H., 2013; Um & Kim, 2016). In the case of athletes, for instance, negative information encompassing an athlete's off-field behaviour (e.g., criminal charges) impact one's brand (Sassenberg, 2015), but also related event brands (Doyle, Pentecost, & Funk, 2014), and other associated team, sport, and sponsor brands (Chien, Kelly, & Weeks, 2016). One of the most notorious cases of human brand transgression and its impact was when Gillette and Gatorade parted ways with their endorser, the golfer Tiger Woods, after a cheating scandal (Knittel & Stango, 2014; Shimul, Barber, & Abedin, 2020). Although Gillette and Gatorade both attempted to distance themselves from Tiger Woods to mitigate perceptions of being associated or potentially championing negative behaviours, the previous association between all parties damaged the endorsed brands' image and reputation (Knittel & Stango, 2014; Shimul, Barber, & Abedin, 2020).

However, consumers response to brand transgressions is rarely congruent as, for example, when rumours emerged related to the philandering of the world famous athlete Cristiano Ronaldo, neither his brand or any associated brands were negatively affected – neither fans nor sponsors displayed their dissatisfaction (Lane, 2019; Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). Moreover, research on the topic is ambiguous because while some contend that job performance transgressions – e.g., an athlete accused of doping – have stronger negative effects on consumers than transgressions not related to job performance – i.e., an athlete accused of fraud (Kunkel, Doyle, & Na, 2020; Lee & Kwak, 2016), others disaccord and argue that unfavourable information concerning an immoral event produces greater negative spill over effects than unfavourable information related to the incompetence of a branded individual (Votola & Unnava, 2006), as consumers regard morality-related negative information and moral failings as ingrained in the bad character of the individual whereas the lack of ability can stem from other factors (Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). Therefore, while negative media communications can influence a company's desire to be associated with a particular human brand, its negative effects on one's brand image and on the endorsed brand or company are unclear (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020), as consumer support for the human brand can vary on different factors such as the type of transgression or even the individual oneself (Davies & Slater, 2015; White, Goddard, & Wilbur, 2009).

Such uncertainty in consumer reactions to human brand transgressions can have at its core the different ethical ideologies held by each consumer (Hunt & Vitell, 1986; Reidenbach & Robin, 1988). The two main dimensions of moral ideology, which influence consumers' moral and ethical judgments (Hunt & Vitell, 1986; Reidenbach & Robin, 1988; Rest, 1988), are idealism and relativism (Barnett, Bass, & Brown, 1994; Forsyth, 1980; Schlenker & Forsyth, 1977). Consumers who adhere to idealism believe everyone should follow a strict deontological code and meet an absolute level of moral conduct – hence, every moral actions should only have positive consequences (Forsyth, 1980). On the other hand, consumers who adhere to relativism reject moral absolutes and follow a teleological philosophy where they apply relative standards for morality based on specific situations (Forsyth, 1980; Schlenker & Forsyth, 1977). Therefore, and contrasting with highly idealistic consumers, highly relativistic consumers can be more open to forgiving the actions of transgressing human brands, since they believe that negative consequences do not inevitably arise from immoral action (Forsyth & Pope, 1984). This teleological approach allows consumers to apply different forms of moral reasoning when facing the dilemma of assessing a particularly favoured celebrity implicated in a negative event (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013; Thomson, 2006). Thus consumers can evaluate "misbehaving" human brands with a "different yardstick", depending on the moral reasoning process accorded to one's perceived image (Aaker, Fournier, & Brassel, 2004; Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013; Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). In response to the dilemma, which causes cognitive tension or dissonance between their human brand attachment to the transgressor[18] and their own moral compass and beliefs (Baumeister, 2010; Fong & Wyer, 2012; Thomson, 2006), some consumers opt to minimize this moral conflict and resume to support the celebrity with moral reasoning ((Bandura, 1999)), while others choose not to and are less willing to forgive (Lee & Kwak, 2016) – in extreme cases, consumers can even engage in the phenomenon of cancel culture[19].

[18] Depending on the context, consumers with an intense attachment and commitment toward the celebrity may not be able to simply look at one's collapse in order to defend their own moral beliefs(Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). In such cases similar to idolatry (Houran, Navik, & Zerrusen, 2005), fandom (Leets, de Becker, & Giles, 1995), and celebrity worship (Dietz, et al., 1991), these consumers choose to not believe and actively ignore the negative event or information, presenting instead an obstinate conviction about the issue (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989). This behaviour is in line with the standard conduct of consumers who connect a brand to their own ego and attempt to forgive the wrongdoings of the brand by adopting a protective position when encountering negative information in order to preserve the relationship (Aaker, Fournier, & Brassel, 2004).

[19] The expanding phenomenon of cancel culture can be described as the "collective desire by consumers to withdraw support of those individuals and brands in power, perceived to be involved in objectionable behaviour or activities through the use of social media" (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022, p. 2). Initially born in 2017 from social media conversations prompted by the #MeToo movement in the U.S.A., this phenomenon has spread worldwide its goal of demanding greater accountability from public figures (Bouvier & Machin, 2021). In a scenario where a growing number of consumers expect brands to make a positive difference (Townsend, 2018), an increasing number of human brands (Ng E. , 2020) have experienced the process of consumers rejecting and ignoring them, or publicly opposing their views or actions and depriving them of time and attention – sometimes, even the ability to make a living (Goldsbrough, 2020).

Encompassing both past or present activities or behaviours deemed controversial and unacceptable by the public, the reasons for cancellation can vary (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Although similar in some aspects, cancel culture goes beyond traditional boycotts or discontinuing purchase of products to include online public shaming of the individual or brand (Hahn & Albert, 2017; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Similarly, cancel culture also goes beyond other forms of consumer activism in its rapid content circulation via digital platforms, resulting in rapid large-scale responses to acts deemed problematic, and consequent empowerment of marginalized groups, including consumers (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). While temporary outcomes of the cancellation of a (human) brand comprise online public shame and criticism, persistent and permanent consequences include loss of revenue, cancelled contracts, tarnished reputations and damage to the established brand positioning (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Some key examples of this public shaming of powerful and otherwise invincible members of society who were found guilty of heinous acts (e.g., rape and sexual assault) are the cases of Hollywood media mogul Harvey Weinstein and actors Bill Cosby and Kevin Spacey (Romano, 2020).

Once the process of cancelling is a relationship between three main stakeholders – the consumer, the human brand, and the (other possibly involved) brand (e.g., endorsed brands) – the concept of power is at its core (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Power can be described as asymmetric control over valued resources in social relations, thus being hierarchical, as one person has more control over a valued resource than another person or persons (Rucker, Hu, & Galinsky, 2014). Power can be both a social and a psychological construct (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). From the social perspective, power is describes as a relation among social actors to capture the relative state of dependence between two parties (Bruins, 1999; Lines, 2007). This power can rise from five different sources – reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert power (French & Raven, 1959) – which, in turn, can be categorized into two coercive (reward and coercion) and noncoercive bases (referent, expert, and legitimate) (Blois & Hopkinson, 2013; Wilson, 2018). Since power (as a social construct) involves a relation (comparison or interaction) between parties (Rucker, Galinsky, & Dubois, 2012), and consumers (in a consumer cancel relationship) do not compare with other consumers as to who should be cancelled or not, this perspective on power is not relevant in the context of consumer cancel culture (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Moreover, Being moral reasoning the automatic process of producing an intuitive judgment (self-biased tendency) and then gathering the information which supports one's pre-existing attitudes and beliefs (Kunda, 1990), two key processes are particularly noteworthy – moral rationalization and moral decoupling (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013). Moral rationalization can be defined as "the process of reconstructing immoral actions as less immoral to maintain support for an immoral actor" (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013, p. 1168). In other words, consumers (fuelled by the intuition and emotion they have toward the celebrity) downplay the seriousness of the transgression (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). Once the immoral act is rationalized as being less immoral and is hence justified, they will no longer criticize said particular action (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). As for moral decoupling, it consists of "a psychological separation process by which consumers selectively dissociate judgment of morality from the judgment of performance" (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013, p. 1169), i.e., separating one's behaviour from the admiration for one's performance, which is easier to achieve when bad behaviour is not directly linked to the performance domain (Davies & Slater, 2015; Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). Moral decoupling was present, for example, when the

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as this individualistic behaviour emerges from other consumers adopting a similar response or contributing because of their own perspective and they cannot exert referent, expert, legitimate or reward power on the targeted party, consumers ability to cancel targets relies solely on coercion on social media (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). From a psychological perspective, power can be defined as a perception of asymmetric control in relation to the other (Jiang, Zhan, & Rucker, 2014; Rucker, Galinsky, & Dubois, 2012). The perceived power of cancel culture can therefore have psychological effects on consumers, making them feel confident and optimistic and feel as if they are in greater control of their environment while also making them process information less than when they have less power (Rucker, Hu, & Galinsky, 2014). This lessened ability to process information intensifies with increasing negative information, as it tends to generate greater psychological arousal and to expand and propagate at an exponential rate (Wang & Kim, 2020). The resulting perceived sense of power can hence manifest itself in being self-oriented, less likely to take others' perspectives and in assertive consumer behaviours (Jiang, Zhan, & Rucker, 2014).

In addition to power, it is also necessary to comprehend how consumers judge others and consumers' attachment styles. In order to guide the consumers' interactions with and decisions about brands and other people (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Kervyn, Fiske, & Malone, 2012), the consumers separate their judgments of others into two dimensions of social perception – also called power dimensions – warmth and competence (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015; Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). On one hand, warmth can be described one's intentions towards and relationships with others – encompassing cooperativeness and respectfulness (Fragale, Overbeck, & Neale, 2011), being friendly, well-intentioned, trustworthy, good-natured (Kervyn, Fiske, & Malone, 2012) and sincere (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015) – and as taking actions in the best interests of the public (e.g., socially-responsible corporate actions and support of social programs) (Fournier & Alvarez, 2012, p. 182). On the other hand, competence is depicted as one's ability or capability (Fournier & Alvarez, 2012), as being competent, confident, capable, efficient, intelligent, skilful (Kervyn, Fiske, & Malone, 2012), reliable and successful (Lunardo, Gergaud, & Livat, 2015). As for attachment styles, which are reflective of individuals' personalities and inherent behaviour, they can be either avoidant, anxious or secure (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022; Thomson, Whelan, & Johnson, 2012). While the anxiety aspect refers to the extent to which one's view of self is positive or negative, the avoidance aspect is based on the extent to which a view of others is positive or negative (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2018). These attachment styles (anxious and avoidant) are key in understanding consumer cancel culture as they are indicative of negative attachment in a relationship and thus affect consumers' interpretations of and expectations regarding interpersonal situations (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022).

The process of cancelling therefore occur as follows: the consumers experience a negative episode with a (human) brand and measure the seriousness of the event against their existing relationship with the same (human) brand (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). When consumers perceive a lack of power dimensions (warmth and competence) in the (human) brand, consumers experience a decrease in their attachment and behave unfavourably toward the other party (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). While consumers with a secure attachment style usually react with a decline in attachment and loyalty; anxious and avoidant consumers who perceive a power asymmetry make use of their only power (coercion on social media) to cancel the (human) brand in order to prevent further attachment distress or to avoid any resulting impact (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). This action can result in extreme outcomes, such as loss of financial contracts and complete withdrawal of support (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022), not only for the targeted brand but also for any affiliated brands (Wang & Kim, 2020).

Two separate examples which clearly illustrate this phenomenon of cancellation are the cases of talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres and of actress and comedian Roseanne Barr (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Consumers cancelled Ellen DeGeneres when her perceived lack of warmth toward her employees questioned and undermined her competence as a kind and capable host (Saldanha, Mulye, & Rahman, 2022). Although not cancelled, her television show ratings plummeted to an all-time low (Frazer-Carroll, 2020). As for Roseanne Barr, her controversial statements lead the television network which produced and broadcasted her sitcom to completely cancel the project and pull it off-air (Romano, 2020).

(at the time) U.S. President Bill Clinton and film director Roman Polanski continued to perform in their corresponding professional fields, despite some career setbacks experienced due to sex scandals (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020).

In this intricate scenario of ambivalence, the consumers, and the public in general, often expect an apology – a request to which branded individuals frequently yield after a transgression has been committed (Hu, Cotton, Zhang, & Jia, 2019; Shimul, Barber, & Abedin, 2020). Several reasons can lead branded individuals to apologise for a brand transgression (Cerulo & Ruane, 2014). An apology not only can provide reassurance to the public that the action will not be recurred (Gold & Weiner, 2000), but it can also elicit empathy for the perpetrator, especially when one provides a rationale for the transgression (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997). Moreover, one's reaction to the repercussions of a transgression can have a direct influence on consumer forgiveness (Hu, Cotton, Zhang, & Jia, 2019). Accepting and expressing regret for unethical behaviours through apologies is an effective way to build consumer forgiveness as consumers tend to be forgiving of a human brand if one seeks forgiveness through apology instead of denying the accusation (Choi & Chung, 2013; Kelso & Gracyalny, 2020; Sandlin & Gracyalny, 2018). In addition, religiosity is also linked consumers' propensity to forgive (Lutjen, Silton, & Flannelly, 2012). As religiosity contributes to an individual's ability to forgive (Arli & Tjiptono, 2014), and forgiveness is a critical element in religious practice (Arli & Tjiptono, 2014), individuals who are increasingly religious will be more inclined to forgive unethical behaviours (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Rye, et al., 2000). It is yet necessary to note that although a well-placed apology can partly reinstate faith and trust in the human brand (Boyd, 2011), an apology may not be a universal solution for cases in which the brand damage is extreme and irreparable – as it occurred with the athlete Lance Armstrong and his doping controversy (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015).

Despite much of the research perceiving human brand transgressions solely as negative event, a miscalculation, or a mistake, some acknowledge its benefits (Bartz, Molchanov, & Stork, 2013) and recognize that committing transgressions does not inevitably destabilize a human brand but that it can, in fact, strengthen it (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). Given the extremely publicised nature of transgressions committed by celebrities (Bartz, Molchanov, & Stork, 2013), negative mentions can contribute to the visibility as, for examples, artists such as Damien Hirst, Hermann Nitsch, Maurizio Cattelan, Gino De Dominicis, Andres Serrano, and Gunther Von Hagens leverage the public's reactions to their artworks to gain news coverage for their exhibitions and oeuvres (Angelini, Castellani, & Pattitoni, 2022). Although negative implications can still arise from these frowned upon behaviours (Erdogan, 1999), consumers seek to understand what motivated the offending party to behave in such a way (Wong & Weiner, 1981).

Other examples of this scandalmongering promotional strategy are, for example, the singers Madonna and later, Lady Gaga, who have consistently throughout their careers use the media's eagerness for the drama of scandal and revelation to orchestrate public interest in their projects (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). The model Kate Moss also swayed the drug use scandal she was involved in 2005 to her advantage, as "there is nothing like a bit of scandal to boost your star rating"

(Grant, 2006, p. 236). Although her apparently scandalized endorse partners Burberry and Chanel initially sundered with her, both brands quickly signed her on to more lucrative deals later when media attention dissipated (Acevedo, Warren, & Wray-Bliss, 2009). Some argue that this could have even been a strategy as the endorsed brands in fact desired the theatrics around the scandal and the subsequent media's discussion of the termination of endorsement deals and potential embarrassment to the brands, which names were repeatedly mentioned (Behr & Beeler-Norrholm, 2006). Even in the aforementioned infamous case of Tiger Woods, who lost his endorsement deals with Gillette and Gatorade, unforeseen benefits still rose from the situation (Davie, King, & Leonard, 2010). The athlete's extramarital scandal added a human aspect to his formerly unattainable perfect persona of machinelike consistence, reshaping him into a person capable of erring, of giving in to temptation and consequently more relatable to consumers (Davie, King, & Leonard, 2010).

Once the public's support for several human brands kept constant or even increased after a transgression, such support may vary depending on the human brand's image (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013). Therefore, branded individuals who build their human brands on one's irreverence to social conventions and who, like the athlete Charles Barkley in his Nike commercial, proudly state that there are not role models (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020) – also called "bad boys" – may be granted carte blanche due to different moral reasoning process used, where performance is stressed more highly than other aspects (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013; Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020)[20]. As a result, consumers may overlook some celebrities' moral failings, and not hold them up to one standard of normative behaviour, forasmuch as they remain successful on other dimensions (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). Furthermore, as the meaning transfer process conveys desired qualities and meanings correlated with the human brand to the endorsed brand, which in turn, pass to the consumer (Erdogan, 1999; McCracken, 1989), these beneficial effects of scandal and brand transgression can also be transferred to any endorsed brand (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015).

Nevertheless, this "license to scandalize" granted by the consumers is not without its boundaries, as not all scandal comes without consequences – sometimes as extreme as ending one's career, particularly when the scandal impacts everyday life (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). The English entertainer and television personality Michael Barrymore, for example, saw his career come to an abrupt end when a man attending his drug-fuelled house party was found dead in his swimming pool (Williams & Head, 2011). In order to be advantageous to the human brand, scandals must hence remain in the grey area of transgressive and seemingly immoral stories (Mills, Patterson,

[20] In addition to representing themselves, human brands can also be representative of their culture or region (Centeno & Wang, 2016). As a consequence, such perception of a "bad boy" human brand may vary according to the country and local culture. In some Asian countries such as South Korea, for example, where society and culture are heavily influenced by Confucian ideological beliefs (Chang, Jang, Lee, Lee, & Chang, 2017), consumers label celebrities as "good boys" or "bad boys" (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). The majority of consumers' preferred choice in entertainment, sports and politics is often positive "good boy" role models, who are categorized based on good education, family background and humility (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020). However, the popularity of human brands who exhibit more maverick idiosyncrasies has risen, even in Confucian countries (Nagaike, 2012; Paek, 2005). Such increase could be explained by the impact which such human brands have on consumers; as the "bad boys" can be the personification of the nonconformist, honest and innovative behaviour against the herd mentality of others (Chang & Sproule, 2013), consumers may feel a sense of second-hand satisfaction or catharsis, as if speaking out on their behalf (Lee, Chang, & Einwiller, 2020).

& Quinn, 2015) that concurrently are ephemeral events, mostly fabricated by the media, with "little or no bearing on the material factors and processes that shape social or political life" (Thompson J. B., 2000, p. 234). Only in such circumstances can the public drama allow the human brand to orchestrate and manipulate the received media coverage (Gamson, 1994; Jacobs, 2005; Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015; Press & Williams, 2005), in order to reflexively continue the ongoing act of fictional creation which the construction of a celebrity, while presenting oneself to the target demographic in a digestible format (Boorstin D. , 1992). These protagonists, who inhabit a media-constructed landscape of story, myth and make-believe (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015), therefore become vessels through which consumers vicariously live bad behaviours, especially when the dominant moral sensibilities of the wider public are offended (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). In other words, celebrities "function not simply as role models or as sites of emulation, but as harbingers of transformation and escape with which to re-enchant our daily lives" (Hewer & Hamilton, 2012, p. 416).

With this context of possibilities in mind, Mills, Patterson, & Quinn (2015) identified three categories of prominent manifestations scandalous activity which can result in positive outcomes to the human brand: scandalous affairs and the pre-existing celebrity; sex tape scandals and the celebrity revival; and *celebritizing* notoriety (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). The first type of interaction – scandalous affairs and the pre-existing celebrity – occurs when a pre-existing celebrity becomes associated with a relatively common or illicit event (e.g., adultery, shoplifting, etc), which, in turn, is considered scandalous and media-worthy (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). The defining example of this type of interaction is the 1962 Taylor-Burton affair (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). This unprecedented scandal occurred when the acclaimed, for both her professional skills/work and consumer appeal (Doty, 2012), actress Elizabeth Taylor initiated an affair with the also married actor Richard Burton (whilst married to her fourth husband) – marking the beginning of today's celebrity culture (Cashmore, 2006). When the affair became public in 1962, both Taylor and Burton experienced a media-frenzy of unmatched levels of intrusion in their everyday and private lives – they even received an anonymous open letter which was allegedly from the Vatican and said relationship was publicly ridiculed by US government officials (Doty, 2012). The public (and consequently the consumers) not only become more interested in one's private life rather than in one's performance abilities but also struggled to rationalise or decouple Elizabeth Taylor's private life from her film work (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013). Once consumers did not consider the scandal as isolated from the human brand narrative, the actress's previously endeared public image and status swiftly evaporated (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). Although the scandal and the pre-existing celebrity is one of the most frequently encountered types of celebrity-scandal interaction, according to the authors (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015), other more recent and relevant examples are the actress Winona Ryder's shoplifting incident (Cashmore, 2006) or the actor Mel Gibson's drink-driving and antisemitic public paroxysms (Rojek, 2012).

Sex-tape scandals and the celebrity revival – the second type of celebrity-scandal interaction – occurs when a minor or declining celebrity becomes involved in an illicit event, which consequently, elevates one's profile due to the resulting increased levels of media exposure and public interest (Kurzman, et al., 2007; Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). In this type of celebrity-scandal interaction, one of the most common scandals is the sex-tape scandal, where sexual activities are recorded and later (whether intentionally or unintentionally) released to the public (Delaney, 2008). Among the many examples of celebrities who have been associated with this type of scandal and have successfully recaptured and even surpassed the celebrity status gathered during earlier careers stages (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015), the most relevant ones are the actress Pamela Anderson, the socialite and media personality Kim Kardashian and the socialite and heiress to the Hilton Hotel chain Paris Hilton (Delaney, 2008). In the case of Paris Hilton, theretofore portrayed by the tabloids as a typical young Hollywood air-headed socialite (Ferris & Stein, 2010), her intimate video was released online days before the premiere of her new reality television show "The Simple Life" (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). The resulting public interest and media exposure attracted 13 million viewers to the opening episode of the reality television show (Cashmore, 2006). Throughout the years, Paris Hilton has been able to leverage this momentum to expand her "bad girl" brand personality (Chang-Kredl, 2008, p. 221), creating human brand extensions such as further television reality shows, appearances in movies, the publishing of two memoirs, fragrances, music albums and singles, and even started a career as a *disc jockey* (DJ) in nightclubs (Polak, 2008). This template has then been copied and adapted by a multitude of young female socialites who desire to achieve the same level of celebrity superstardom (Milner, 2010).

The third and final type of scandal – *celebritizing* notoriety – occurs when an anonymous member of the general public attains the celebrity status after being involved in a dubious or controversial event (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). Although the rarest type of celebrity-scandal formation, *celebritizing* notoriety can precipitously convert an individual into a celebrity (Rojek, 2001). An illustrative example of this celebrity-scandal interaction is Ronald Biggs, an English petty criminal who, along with other accomplices, planned and executed the "Great Train Robbery" of 1963, stealing £2.6 million from a Royal Mail train before being arrested a month later (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015). Although sentenced to 15 months, he escaped a year later and exiled himself in Brazil, only to return to Britain in 2001 to face justice (Penfold-Mounce, 2009). Due to the media's romanticization of his criminal endeavours, Ronald Biggs was considered an international celebrity, allowing him to profit from his fame by charging money to share his stories, adventures and remarkable ability to evade justice (Liljas, 2013). Moreover, the media's romanticized discourse about Ronald Biggs created an international cult-like following, whose supports included the singer Mick Jagger and the members of the band *Sex Pistols* (Prinz, 2014).

In conclusion, although scandal and human brand transgressions are often discarded as a frivolous topic, its potentiality in the in the star-making system is not to be underestimated (Mills, Patterson, & Quinn, 2015).

2.2.2.4.5. Internationalization

Globalization has been, since the mid-twentieth century, blurring frontiers and connecting humanity across the globe (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). This increasingly global world and economy is hence also present in the branding, and in human branding in particular. Assisted by the media and Internet, popular culture today knows no boundaries and integrates different cultures through transnational communication, transmitting unique global cultural norms, values, and lifestyles (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). In this context where every country's popular culture has a chance to reach a global audience, human brands play a key role in consumption patterns and in modern popular culture overall (Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020). Once the audience base is no longer limited by national boundaries and is now international and expanding across the globe, the influence, appeal and market value of human brands and respective brand extensions can lead to multi-million-dollar industry (Keel & Nataraajan, 2012; Teng, Su, Liao, & Wei, 2020).

Although research on the internationalization and management of human brands across geographic boundaries, cultures, and markets is nearly inexistent, one article explored the internationalization strategy of the Gordon Ramsay human brand (Jones, 2009). Gordon Ramsay is an internationally renowned British celebrity chef and television personality, known for both his television programs and restaurants – thus being considered a global celebrity chef (Jones, 2009).

Gordon Ramsay, through his company Gordon Ramsay Holdings Ltd (GRH), operates in the highly competitive fine-dining segment of the restaurant industry, where clients purchase an experience instead of a simple service related to food and drinks (Jones, 2009; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005). Aiming to mitigate risk and increasingly grow, GRH opened low (e.g., pubs) and mid-priced restaurants in the United Kingdom, in addition to the expansion of the business overseas (Jones, 2009). This internationalization strategy of GRH stands on two main factors: Gordon Ramsay's television career; and GRH's partnership with Blackstone (Jones, 2009). The first key element of the internationalization strategy is Gordon Ramsay's television career, which started in 2004, with television programs such as *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares* and Hell's Kitchen (Jones, 2009). In the following years, Ramsay appeared in the US versions of the same programs as well as in different formats and programs (e.g., *The F-Word*), while also being occasionally featured in popular shows such as *The Tonight Show* in the US and *Top Gear* in the UK (Jones, 2009). His television programs, such as *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares* and *Hell's Kitchen*, were later sold to more than one hundred countries worldwide, continuing to be successful not only in the eastern world (e.g., Brazil, Finland, Benelux) but also across Asia and in the Middle East (Pursell, 2007). Such worldwide exposure to the Gordon Ramsay brand allowed him not to only be one of the most famous and recognized names in the culinary world but also to leverage his brand beyond restaurants – cookbooks, DVDs, cookery school, etc (Jones, 2009).

The second key element of the internationalization strategy is GRH's partnership with the private equity firm Blackstone, a dominant force in the global hotel industry at the time (Jones, 2009). This longstanding strategic relationship, which started in 2001 when Blackstone hired Ramsay to re-open the restaurant at the London's *Claridge's Hotel*, constitutes the financial cornerstone of the

GRH internationalization strategy, as the hotelier's resources were used to finance the opening of a new restaurant in exchange for a percent of the revenue stream (Afiya, 2005; Jones, 2009). Only later would GRH take partial ownership of each new restaurant venture with its partner – except in two restaurants where GRH pays Blackstone rent but retains all profits (Huddart, 2006). This strategy partnership granted GRH, a small organization short of critical resources (e.g., capital) or capabilities (e.g., international site search and selection), the opportunity to economize in search costs for the appropriate locations which would house the new overseas establishments (Jones, 2009). Those costs were instead supported by the Blackstone hotelier, which has the capabilities to make locational decisions based on rigorous fact-based analysis of current and forecasted market conditions (Jones, 2009). This successful business model combining a trusted high-end hotelier and a GRH fine-dining establishment was also valuable for Blackstone as customers of, for instance, a Hilton Hotel would also be a customer of a GRH restaurant (Jones, 2009). Due to both the growth in the upscale hotel sector (which increased the demand for fine-dining establishments within hospitality facilities) and Blackstone's hotel expansion strategy, both Blackstone's and Gordon Ramsay's brands became complementors (Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1995; Jones, 2009). This partnership has continue to grow over the years, especially in emerging markets such as China, where not only the rise of tourism and business travel, but also the efforts of global hospitality organizations (e.g., Intercontinental Hotels Group, Starwood, Marriot, Hilton) combined with the international recognition of the Gordon Ramsay brand as the Western concept of fine-dining allowed the expansion of operations in these countries and regions (Jones M. , 2007; Jones M. T., 2009).

In conclusion, even though little research has been done on the internationalization of human brands, Gordon Ramsay has proved that his aggressive internationalization approach of leveraging his home market's critical resources and capabilities, branded reputation, and strategic relationships to grow overseas can be successful – GRH restaurants have gained several Michelin stars abroad (Jones, 2009).

3. Case study Presentation

Cristina Ferreira, born on the 9th of September 1977 in São Sebastião da Pedreira, Lisbon, grew up in Malveira, Mafra, Portugal. Aiming to be a journalist, she studied Communication Sciences but later became a television host on one of Portugal's private television networks, firstly reporting on reality shows. Shortly afterwards, she had her big break when she began co-hosting what would soon become the biggest morning show in the country – "Você na TV". Concurrently to her soaring television career, as she soon had the opportunity to host a panoply of successful prime time television programmes, Cristina Ferreira also spread out across a range of different projects in the media sphere, such as an online blog, a lifestyle magazine, etc. Today, in addition to her television career and other projects (including her social media platforms with millions of followers), Cristina Ferreira is also TVI's Entertainment and Fiction Director, shareholder of Media Capital (owner of TVI) and was recently appointed Executive Director for the parent company's digital brand. Year after year, Cristina Ferreira has also been recognised with multiple awards and accolades regarding her career, her notoriety, and her influence in the country.

Taking this trajectory into account, Cristina Ferreira is the ideal subject of analysis to research both the topics of individuals as brands and individual career management, as she is not only an individual with a long and accomplished career, which surpasses the boundaries of the employing organisations, but also one of the largest and most impactful celebrities in Portugal. Moreover, due to Cristina Ferreira's level of commercial success and reach, her case allows for the comparison of theory built on other international celebrities at the same level, even if on a different scale. And yet, her not being an international celebrity but restrained to Portugal facilitates the gathering of dada and information.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Research approach

The choice of the research paradigm is one of the most focal stages when conducting a research project (Creswell, 2009; Jonker & Pennink, 2010; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009), as it can be defined as the belief system which affects the researcher's perception of the world and acts as a foundation for the entire research process (Jonker & Pennink, 2010), serving as a conceptual framework within which the researcher operates (Sobh & Perry, 2006).

Research paradigms are often categorised according to three main philosophical dimensions – ontology, epistemology and methodology (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009; Sobh & Perry, 2006). While ontology refers to reality and the researcher's perception of it (Sobh & Perry, 2006), epistemology concerns the interaction between the reality and researcher (Sobh & Perry, 2006), as well as the perception of how knowledge should be understood and put into practice (Wahyuni, 2012). Lastly, methodology refers to the methods and techniques used to retrieve knowledge from reality (Sobh & Perry, 2006; Wahyuni, 2012). Although easily bemused, research methodology and research methods are not synonymous, once the former proposes a theoretical model to guide research within a certain paradigm, while the latter refers to the practical side of the research, including the different procedures, tools and techniques employed to implement the methodology (Wahyuni, 2012).

Since the planning of a research project depends on its context and its complexity, it is crucial to select the methodological approach which best suits the project – whether it is quantitative, qualitative, or mixed (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2005). While the quantitative methodological approach aims to test objective theories by examining the relationships between variables through statistical procedures (Creswell, 2014), the qualitative methodological approach seeks to understand a particular phenomenon within a specific context (Golafshani, 2003). As for the mixed methodological approach, it consists in merging quantitative and qualitative data into a single research study (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, it is also crucial to decide on the type of methodology that best suits the research process, taking into account the context of a given paradigm (Wahyuni, 2012), considering four distinct paradigms – positivism, constructivism, realism and the critical theory paradigm (Sobh & Perry, 2006).

The positivist paradigm, underpinned by quantitative methodology, argues that by using statistical tests to investigate the same factual problem, different researchers will obtain the same result, thus assuming that reality can be measured as long as the researcher remains objective (Sobh & Perry, 2006; Wahyuni, 2012). Conversely, the constructivist paradigm is grounded in individuals' perceptions of a given social setting, resorting to the interactions with those being studied (Wahyuni, 2012). Along with the critical theory paradigm, the constructivist paradigm is supported by the idea that individuals belonging to the analysed reality should be the forces studied in the research (Sobh & Perry, 2006), thus using qualitative data collected through interactions and observation of the social setting in focus (Creswell, 2014; Wahyuni, 2012). Thirdly, the realist paradigm, which relies on a mixed methodology, seeks to understand the problem of the question (Creswell, 2014; Wahyuni, 2012), triangulating multiple sources to enable the full comprehension of reality to the researcher (Sobh & Perry, 2006). Taking this into consideration, this research project will follow a constructivist paradigm, employing a qualitative methodological approach, as it aims to understand a certain phenomenon in a specific context (Golafshani, 2003), thus enabling the use of existing literature to relate it to the context observed in the research (Flick, 2009).

As for the research design, which fulfils the function of action plan for the conversion of the research question into a research project (Robson, 2002), it must comprise clear objectives and the sources from which data will be collected while also considering inevitable constraints and limitations (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Therefore, the present research project is exploratory in nature – as exploratory studies aim to unveil new insights and evaluate phenomena in a different and innovative way (Robson, 2002) – and descriptive – as it seeks to "to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations" (Robson, 2002, p. 59).

In addition, as this research project aims to analyse and understand a specific subject through the observation of an existing phenomenon within a specific context (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2005; Mariotto, Zanni, & Moraes, 2014) – the career and human brand of Cristina Ferreira – a case study is the design chosen for this work. To undertake this type of research, which allows for the exploration of a particular issue (Yin, 2003) while also allowing to retain the holistic characteristics of real events (Yin, 1984), large amounts of information must be collected, from which conclusions must be drawn (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2005). Moreover, this collected information must be analysed in a continuous process as it is generated, and it is also important to collect documental information, as it can be useful to verify and ensure reliable information about the case in question (Yin, 1984). Therefore, in this case study, all information and data were collected from interviews with Cristina Ferreira, as well as articles related to Cristina Ferreira.

A qualitative study also entails a thematic analysis, which is characterised by a method of identifying, organising and analysing patterns of themes in a given data set (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, & Bristow, 2019). Once a thematic analysis can include a range of sub-types – it can take on inductive versus deductive/theory-based data coding and analysis; it can consist of an experimental versus a critical orientation towards the data; and it can have an essentialist versus constructionist theoretical perspective – this approach must be specific as it allows accessibility and flexibility in analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Thus, this research project adopts a deductive approach to coding and analysis, with coding being a manual coding of the data, due to the highly complex and heavily nuanced information gathered.

Throughout the analysis of the data collected, multiple codes were identified and then organised into the two themes of this research project – "Individuals as Brands" and "Career Self-management". Such organization followed the structure of the literature review previously presented, including Keller's (2013) "Strategic Brand Management" model which guided the codes concerning human brand data. The codes and categories are the following:

- Individuals as Brands:

- Background and Personal Brand
    - Brand Personality and Brand Identity
    - Authenticity
    - Persona
    - Narrative
    - Stakeholders
    - Marketing-Mix, Positioning, and Social Media
    - Attachment
    - Brand Extensions
    - Activism and Philanthropy
    - Brand Reinvention
    - Public Exposure vs. Private Life
    - Hubris
    - Brand Transgressions
- Individual Career Management:
    - Career Exploration
    - Decision-making
    - ICM personality

4.2. Research procedures

In order to create a theorical foundation for this work, the source-neutral abstract and citation database Scopus was used to gather scientific literature regarding the expanding subjects in question. Firstly, a search with the keywords “personal brand” and “human brand” was conducted, which lead to 418 results. Following a skim reading of these 418 documents, 109 were selected as relevant to be utilized in this research project. Afterwards, a second search with the keyword “celebrity brand” was conducted, for the purpose of covering the research related to this topic but with different terminology – since research on branded individuals is fairly recent and extremely underdeveloped, the literature is dispersed across different terminology. From this second search, 74 articles were employed in the literature review. Secondly, as the literature on individual career management is more condensed and synthesised than the literature on branded individuals, a search for systematic literature reviews was carried out, resulting in 5 articles deemed the most suitable for this research project.

Building on this theorical foundation, a set of research questions was then developed, so as to guide the empirical study. Once the research questions were fundamentally interrogations querying “why” and “how”, the data collection method chosen was the case study, since it is an empirical investigation which explores a contemporary phenomenon in depth and in a real context (Yin, 2015). The following step of this research project, the data collection stage, took place between March 2023 and June 2023. Although most data were collected from online materials, from interviews and news articles available online, a considerable portion of the data was also collected offline, from the autobiographical book of this case study's target. Yet, the selection criteria for both types of sources was identical – the evidence had to be derived from credible sources and also had to add relevant findings on the topic – as it was alike for the termination of the data collection process – when the saturation point had been achieved. The data analysis process was carried out alongside the data collection process, following the previously mentioned and explained procedures in the research approach.

5. Results

5.1. Personal Brand

5.1.1. Background and Personal Brand

Growing up an only child, Cristina Ferreira spent a considerable amount of time watching television, so much so that she believed she knew the television personality Manuel Luís Goucha, without ever meeting him – parasocial relationship (Alvim, 2014).

Cristina Ferreira regards her career as “nothing (…) planned, not even television” (GQPortugal, 2018). As she wanted to pursue journalism, she majored in Communication Sciences but, during her internship at RTP (which started in May of 2000), she quickly understood that that career path would be too serious for her (GQPortugal, 2018). During this phase of her career, and according to Dina Aguiar – journalist and anchor for the public broadcaster who supervised Cristina Ferreira’s internship –, Cristina Ferreira already possessed some characteristics of her future human brand – such as “a great willingness to learn” and her sense of humour – but also some differences – as “maybe today she’s a bit more elated” and, at the time, “her manner would be calmer and, in a larger newsroom, she wouldn’t express herself in the same way” because “when people are starting out they tend to be more reserved” (Bernardino, 2020a). After this internship, and due to a lack of employment in the field, Cristina Ferreira applied for a position as a Portuguese and History teacher in a public school on the outskirts of Lisbon (GQPortugal, 2018). In her book (Ferreira, 2016), Cristina Ferreira explained that, during these two years as a public-school teacher, she taught History to a class deemed problematic and also explained how she managed to win them over (Ferreira, 2016). While still a teacher, Cristina Ferreira enrolled in a training course for television hosts, in which the teachers would often warn the students that “If, out of all of you, one stays, it’s luck” (GQPortugal, 2018). The training course’s academic coordinator and television hostess Júlia Pinheiro (who, at the time, also held executive duties at TVI) recalls her student Cristina Ferreira as “very twangy, very lively, with an incredible spark, she was easily recognisable, as well as very quick-witted”, with an “enormous ability to handle issues live” (Bernardino, 2020a).

5.1.2. Human Brand Transformation Process – Stage 1 – training course for television hosts (realization of a potentially desirable future and adoption of a new social role connected to a new set of stakeholders and a new self-conception)

Cristina Ferreira began her television career by doing live television broadcasts on Manuel Luís Goucha’s television show “Olá Portugal”, while he was on vacation and replaced by the television hostess Teresa Guilherme (Ferreira, 2016). Teresa Guilherme took a liking to Cristina Ferreira’s work, suggesting her as live reporter for the new season of the reality show “Big Brother” (Ferreira, 2016). While on the new season of this reality show as a reporter, Cristina Ferreira did the casting to host the Portuguese version of the show “Fear Factor” (Ferreira, 2016). Although she did not get the position, she was hired to replace her co-worker Leonor Poeiras on the morning show "Diário da Manhã" – her colleague who was casted for the show "Fear Factor" (Ferreira, 2016). During her tenure on the television show "Diário da Manhã", the television hostess Júlia Pinheiro accompanied her work on a daily basis and later appointed her to the morning show "Você na TV" (Ferreira, 2016). Those who worked alongside her and behind the cameras, during her early years in TVI, remember her "as one of the most creative and hard-working ones and committed to doing things differently and more boldly", as "she was always trying to find another angle, another way of looking at things" and "even the most normal reportage always started from a less obvious perspective" (Bernardino, 2020a).

5.1.3. Human Brand Transformation Process – Stage 2 - "Você na TV" (early signs of positive feedback from the surrounding context)

On the 13th of September 2004, Cristina Ferreira began co-hosting the morning show "Você na TV" with the highly established television personality Manuel Luís Goucha (Bernardino, 2020b; TVI, 2015). This duo would, in a short period of time, not only defeat SIC's unshakeable victory until then but would also take the lead in the morning time slot for 14 uninterrupted years (Bernardino, 2020a). Such a feat would only be disrupted by Cristina herself, when she left TVI for SIC (Bernardino, 2020a).

5.1.4. Human Brand Transformation Process – Stage 3 – (the human brand, as a unify entity, emerges from the individual oneself as one is conscious of their identity cocreation process and shared meaning conveyed through the brand)

Cristina Ferreira often affirms that her human brand was not deliberately created (Garcia, 2017; Alvim, 2014), she only focused on taking the opportunities given to her and her brand began to gain recognition (Garcia, 2017). In addition, Cristina Ferreira also stated that she only realized the widespread existence of her brand when those surrounding her started commentating on it (Garcia, 2017) – in an interview, Cristina Ferreira shared that one of her friends and television director told her "You managed to build outside television a project as strong or even stronger than television itself" (Canha, 2016). Such lack of awareness may be due to the novelty of such case in Portugal as, according to the television hostess Júlia Pinheiro (Garcia, 2017), Cristina Ferreira was the first public figure to ever become a human brand in the country, further adding that although television hosts who had business ventures were not something new, "the declination of a person as a product is the first time it has happened" (Garcia, 2017).

The "explosion" of the human brand Cristina Ferreira (the beginning of brand extensions such as clothing and the blog) coincided with both, the moment in her career she made her debut as a solo television show host (Alvim, 2014), and also with the global economic recession of 2008

(Garcia, 2017). Despite all brand extensions and projects, Cristina Ferreira reaffirms that she is first and foremost a television hostess (Garcia, 2017).

5.2. **Human Brand**

5.2.1. Step 1: Identify and establish brand positioning and values

5.2.1.1. Brand Personality and Brand Identity

In the *Executiva*'s article (Canha, 2016) the human brand Cristina Ferreira has been described as follows: "Cristina has a legion of admirers, she is admired for her spontaneity, humility and also for her beauty" (Canha, 2016). Corroborating and adding further, others have described her as "a humble, hard-working person", "very amicable, who has a great ability to relate to people" through her authenticity (TVI, 2015). Reinforcing the idea of down-to-earthness, Cristina Ferreira frequently mentions that she returns to her "roots" every day, where she lives (DiárioEconómico, 2015). The Forbes article on Cristina Ferreira (Garcia, 2017) has also noted that her brand's associations with a "hard-working life and ubiquitous high spirits", as well as her epithet "*Saloia da Malveira*" (i.e., "Malveira's country girl"), "narrow the gap between the stars and the ordinary person" (Garcia, 2017). Reinforcing her characteristic of being an hardworking ordinary person, Cristina Ferreira has presented herself as "just a girl", aiming to grow and be happy while fearlessly embracing new challenges (Ferreira, 2021), which is in line with her remark on success – "It is said that anything I touch turns to gold, but my secret is to work hard" (Canha, 2016).

In addition to these characteristics, one can also describe Cristina Ferreira's brand as distinct and unconventional – through the life stories told in her book (Ferreira, 2016) and also through her first WebSummit speech (2021), where she defined as one of her rules "Forget all the Rules", justifying that there are no rules of success, as success is, in her opinion, doing what one desires to do (Ferreira, 2021). This human brand can also be defined as self-assured (Canha, 2016) and tenacious – "I believe I can write my own destiny, step by step" (Ferreira, 2021); "A step backwards can be just an 'if'" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 116) – irreverent but principled – "Formality does not matter. What matters are the handshakes given with conviction" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 100) – and creative and visionary – exemplified by her assessment of daytime television shows, saying that "everything has been invented" but that "not everything is wrapped up", concluding that "it's the wrapping that makes the difference in daytime television shows" (GQPortugal, 2018).

In conclusion, the human brand "Cristina Ferreira", often correlated to fashion and lifestyle (Alvim, 2014), and who has openly assumed to have a "prevalent marketeer and management side" to her (DiárioEconómico, 2015), can be summarised, according to the television hostess Júlia Pinheiro, as the "combination of approachability with something inspirational" (Garcia, 2017).

5.2.1.2. Authenticity

Authenticity is a key element of the human brand "Cristina Ferreira", as she constantly "puts truth in everything" she does (DiárioEconómico, 2015), because "I've never been able to lie"

(FamaSpot, 2019) and “there is no point in pretending, if you are you and if you say exactly and truthfully why, people will understand” (FamaSpot, 2019). Moreover, the downplay of financial interests in her career and actions can also add authenticity to her human brand, since she often shares that she only works for passion and never for money (Ferreira, 2021). Through her career, Cristina Ferreira has been consistent in her actions (Garcia, 2017). Such consistency, which is prized by their stakeholders (Garcia, 2017), may, in part, be explained by Cristina Ferreira’s blocking approach to external interferences – “the others are just the others” (Ferreira, 2021).

5.2.1.3. Persona

Cristina Ferreira’s persona began to be constructed when she was still a Portuguese and History middle school teacher. The persona (which she now exhibits as a television personality) arose from the necessity to create and test communication strategies that would capture the attention of her first audience – middle school students (FamaSpot, 2019). Alongside her distinctive communication strategies, her persona already had present other key aspects of her future human brand, such as her unconventionality (e.g., wearing red varnish shoes, using slang common of students…) but also of her irreverence – e.g., allowing students to break dress code rules such as wearing headwear indoors (GQPortugal, 2018). This “first audience” not only allowed her to perfect her persona by constructing features but also by not including her own natural features, such as her shyness, which she considered as a hindrance to a television career (GQPortugal, 2018).
Cristina Ferreira recognizes the differences between herself and her energetic, joyful, expansive and loud persona (Alvim, 2014), as she oftentimes explains “there are two voice tones”, “a quieter one, which is this one, when I’m in conversation” and “then there’s the other one, the one from television, which I can’t control” (FamaSpot, 2019). Furthermore, she adds that “it is only when the television camera comes on that I am the Cristina the public knows” because “outside of it, I am completely different” (GQPortugal, 2018).

In the wake of this dichotomy, Cristina Ferreira also mentions that she is aware of how difficult such reversibility of “on-air and off-air” can be difficult for her audience to understand, leading her to confess that “I only feel Cristina at home” (FamaSpot, 2019). Regarding the intricate and delicate relationship between the human brand, the persona and the branded individual, Cristina Ferreira concluded: “I am not just what people see on TV, of course. I am what people see. I am the understanding of what people make of what they see. I am the understanding of what people make of what they read about me. And then, there is me” (DiárioEconómico, 2015).

5.2.1.4. Narrative

Since, due to the direct limitations of physical barriers (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), the consumer’s perceptions of a human brand’s persona will likely constitute most, if not the totality, of a consumer’s experience with a human brand (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), narratives are key in human brands, as to convey such personas (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016). The first narrative of Cristina Ferreira is the human brand’s professionalism and purposefulness, as shown by statements such as “We all watch television, as long as it's good" (Estúdio12, 2018). Moreover, she has explained how much she values and strives for a very professional and calculated presentation to the public of everything she does (DiárioEconómico, 2015), often using surprise as a strategy – "You know that secrecy is the best weapon that we have in the business world" (Estúdio12, 2018) and "that is a trademark of mine" (DiárioEconómico, 2015) because "I don't do anything that has no surprise" (DiárioEconómico, 2015). Such narrative also adds "a very strong marketeer and management aspect" to her human brand, which she regularly recognizes (DiárioEconómico, 2015).

Another relevant narrative of Cristina Ferreira's human brand is her atypical and unparalleled personal and professional trajectory. For some, this narrative can be aspirational and a reference, not only due to the television industry, which according to Cristina Ferreira "to produce television is also playing dress up as princesses", "wearing dresses, jewellery, hairstyles and make-up" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 104), but also due to her own perspective of her journey – "Destiny is often fulfilled in wishful thinking" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 153), "Our choices dictate what will happen next" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 124), and "it proved that willpower can help good fortune and that it is not the where one starts that conditions one's goals" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 93).

In line with this narrative, Cristina Ferreira is also seen as someone close and similar to the public and the everyday person – a "television professional who is very aware of the public and who works unabashedly for the public" (Estúdio12, 2018) because, according to her, she was, for many years, "public" (Estúdio12, 2018). Nevertheless, such narrative has also developed some opposition, being often epithet "*Saloia da Malveira*" (i.e., "Malveira's country girl") – as Malveira is her hometown (FamaSpot, 2019). In this context, and answering to the question "Why do you think there is such a stigma towards what is more middlebrow?" (FamaSpot, 2019), Cristina Ferreira explained: "Because it is not easy to accept that a young woman can come from nothing, in an environment where people supposedly live off friends, acquaintances and opportunities created by those around. And I suddenly came from a place, possibly unknown to most, and I get there, I impose myself and I manage to grow, without any problems of saying where I came from, and that's not always easy, let alone being a woman. And she's cute, 'how did she manage to do this? Did she not have to do anything else to get here?'", concluding "some can, through hard work, get there. Only through hard work" (FamaSpot, 2019). In other occasions, Cristina Ferreira had shared her stance on this issue of being accused of having achieved success through sexual favours, saying that "as long as women do not realise that one can come up in life 'vertically', there will always be room for mediocrity" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 170). Thereby, this narrative can also be regarded as a clear demonstration of a post-feminist sensibility that is based on the romanticised idea of female empowerment and places its emphasis on individualism (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020). Thus, this human brand also communicates the idea that that women can have and be it all, a successful television personality and businesswoman, who publishes books and owns a magazine while also having "the looks and the power" by being considering several times, both "sexiest woman in Portugal" and the country's most influential woman (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020).

5.2.1.5. Stakeholders

Cristina Ferreira recognizes the importance of other stakeholders in the construction and maintenance of her human brand, not only in the television industry – "Television is made of people. Full stop." (GQPortugal, 2018) – but in general, listing her "outstanding team" along other reasons for her success, such as "self-confidence, perseverance, hard work" (Canha, 2016). Furthermore, Cristina Ferreira shares that, more that fundamental for everything to run smoothly, she also highlights her team's capacity to confront her with different opinions and perspectives – "I need them to say, from time to time: 'Wait, this may not be exactly so.' And to be able to offer other insights" (Garcia, 2017). Be that as it may, this symbiosis between her and her team has evolved throughout the years: once Cristina Ferreira admits she demands "perfection" from herself, being highly hands-on and overanalysing "everything, to the tiniest detail" (FamaSpot, 2019) However, she adds that lately, she has been learning to give more space to her team – "I have loosened up a bit and I have, gradually, been leaving space for those around me to do things without me being there to control them" (FamaSpot, 2019).

Cristina Ferreira also recognized the influence media (and the tabloids, in particular) have in the construction and maintenance of her (human) brand. Over the course of her career, her media exposure (which results in news reports about her every day) has led her to restrict what she feels and thinks – "I already say a lot but I would like to express and have more opinions because I know that" anything she says "will be picked up by the press and they will turn the entire thing around" (Renascença, 2023). Cristina Ferreira goes further an exemplifies by saying "I, who blogged every day, even about myself, have stopped doing it" (Renascença, 2023) because, due to the tabloids and the press, "if I write a single sentence on my blog, I know that that sentence will be used to make a news article and that that news item will never correspond to what I meant by that sentence" (FamaSpot, 2019), and "then what people read is always a bit biased" (Renascença, 2023).

5.2.2. Step 2: Plan and implement brand marketing programs

5.2.2.1. Marketing-Mix/Positioning/Social Media

Cristina Ferreira suggests that her success may partially be derivative of her communication style and strategies, since "everything is communication, and maybe that's why things work: because I communicate in a different way from what we are used to in Portugal" (Garcia, 2017).

Nowadays, Cristina Ferreira uses social media as a complement to her communication on television – "I think social media, nowadays, acts mainly as teasers to what we will later exhibit on television" (Estúdio12, 2018) – as she often shows backstage scenes and events which were once off-limits to the public (Estúdio12, 2018). In addition, Cristina Ferreira also adds that she tries to read every direct message her fans send to her, particularly when she moved to another broadcasting television station (Estúdio12, 2018). According to Cristina Ferreira, the main advantage of the usage of social media for her was that the information it conveys supplements the information provided by television ratings, as the latter are a "cold" measure which apprises on how many people watch that television show but not how (GQPortugal, 2018). Thus, social media enables her to access direct and immediate feedback (GQPortugal, 2018), not only relevant in the fast-pacing television industry but also key in the self-regulation process of a self-managed career.

Nevertheless, such access to the public's feedback and opinion can present its own issues. Therefore, Cristina Ferreira has shared that, throughout her career she has learned to not only distinguish between "sheer aggression", constructive criticism and praise, but also to internally balance these three elements in order further evolve, both her brand and her career (GQPortugal, 2018).

5.2.3. Step 3: Measure and interpret brand performance

5.2.3.1. Attachment

In the context of her network station change (from TVI to SIC), Cristina Ferreira said that "we are, and especially the daytime shows are very family oriented" and consequently, "those who watch us won't leave" (GQPortugal, 2018). She further explained how the particularities of daytime shows contributed to the heterogeneity of her audience (and consequent, human brand), saying that "in terms of the public, the morning space is very undervalued", despite "its increasing importance", as the network "would start winning in the morning and then continue to win throughout the day" (GQPortugal, 2018). She further added that "morning programmes are not for people over sixty-five years of age" because "we have hundreds of fans of 15, 18, 20, 25, ladies of 30, 35" of age, in part, also due to technologies that allow viewers to watch the programme later – "And the inexplicable number of people who would told us: 'I watch you at night' because they would come home and, at night, all they would watch was 'Você na TV'", reckoning that, in the context of television watching, "the country's watching schedules are increasingly different" (GQPortugal, 2018). Against this background of different people watching the same television programme, Cristina Ferreira thus concluded that "if you can do a morning show you can do anything in television" (GQPortugal, 2018).

Meanwhile, in the context of her social media, her numbers are impressive: at the time of her podcast interview (Alvim, 2014) in 2014, she had 3 million views per month on her blog and 1.2 million followers on Facebook. Two years later, at the time of the article (Canha, 2016), she had 1.5 million followers on Facebook and was starting to grow on Instagram, with 226 thousand followers. Today, she congregates nearly 1.9 million followers on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/cristinaferreiratv/?locale=pt_PT) and 1.5 million followers on Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/dailycristina/).

5.2.4. Step 4: Grow and sustain brand equity

5.2.4.1. Brand Extensions

Regarding endorsements, Cristina Ferreira has shared that "I don't endorse brands", "I am either that or I don't associate myself at all with it" (TVI, 2015). Concurrently, and in line with her stance on authenticity and downplay of financial motivations, Cristina Ferreira also does not consider any of her brand extensions as businesses, thus preferring the usage of the word "project(s)", because “I didn’t do them for money, but because they bring me profound happiness” (Canha, 2016). Moreover, she explains that “I have things I work on for nothing” and that “there are things I do that are not for making money, but they work out well and I win” (Garcia, 2017).

On the whole, whether an endorsement or a business venture, Cristina Ferreira’s brand extensions are always planned and overseen to the tee by Cristina Ferreira, even if not executed by herself because, although “It is obviously impossible to do everything yourself”, “I am in everything, and no one makes a decision without me having seen it or said yes” (Garcia, 2017). She further justifies that “I would never let someone develop everything for me and then I’d get there, sign and take a few photos and it was done” (TVI, 2015).

Also within the background of brand extensions, Cristina Ferreira said (while talking about her talks “Cristina Talks”) that “I keep changing throughout my life and I keep wanting to do different things” (Renascença, 2023).

In addition to all the different projects (including being brand ambassador for the phone Sony Xperia Z5) (Canha, 2016), by the end of 2013, Cristina Ferreira was also given the opportunity to cumulate her television hostess duties with the position of Director of Non-Informative Contents in the television network TVI, thus being granted the possibility to actively participate in the management and planning of television formats (Ferreira, 2016). Although Cristina Ferreira had long desired to learn more about the exciting “entire production line required prior to delivering the final product” (Ferreira, 2016, p. 191), she has also shared that this new role has not come without its challenges, has it can be hard to conciliate being both a television presenter and a television executive (Alvim, 2014).

5.2.4.1.1. Endorsements

In addition to the aforementioned authenticity regarding endorsements – “I am not the face of things. I either am the things or else it does not make sense to me” (DiárioEconómico, 2015; Alvim, 2014); “I don’t say anything I don’t mean, I don’t do anything I don’t believe in”(Forbes - October 2016) – quality of the product/service is also an important factor for Cristina Ferreira when choosing endorsement deals (DiárioEconómico, 2015). Thus, Cristina Ferreira does not advertise products/services she has not tried or does not know its quality (DiárioEconómico, 2015; Alvim, 2014). When the health insure company Medicare, for example, approached her to be an ambassador for the company – since she was, according to the company’s CEO David Legrant, “a reference, a role model” (Garcia, 2017) – Cristina Ferreira tested the services in secrecy lest they should fail and she would be the one facing backlash – “I think I have built a relationship of trust with people and they believe in what I say” (Garcia, 2017).

5.2.4.1.2. Clothing boutique “Casiraghi Forever”

In 2006, Cristina Ferreira inaugurated her first establishment and brand extension, her clothing shop “Casiraghi Forever” (Garcia, 2017). Possibly inspired by her first job in a clothing/shoes store (Canha, 2016) when she was “still a young girl dreaming of becoming a journalist” (Ferreira, 2016, p. 67), Cristina Ferreira opened her first store in her hometown Malveira in order to promote and develop the region (Garcia, 2017; TVI, 2015). In addition to this store, where she assists clients with their shopping whenever there (Alvim, 2014), she soon after opened another clothing shop in the nearby town of Torres Vedras. Although this second location has since been closed down (Alvim, 2014) – "I have this ease of when things are not going to work out, I immediately stop and go down another path" (DiárioEconómico, 2015) – she has also mentioned the will to open another location in the capital – Lisbon (Garcia, 2017).

5.2.4.1.3. Blog "Daily Cristina"

Often regarded as the first celebrity blog in Portugal (Alvim, 2014), Cristina Ferreira launched her blog "Daily Cristina" in 2013 (TVI, 2015). before launching it, she spent a full year analyse the world's most successful blogs (Canha, 2016).

According to the *Executiva*'s article (Canha, 2016), the launch event was devised and organized by Cristina Ferreira and her team in such a way as to be similar to the premiere of a biographic film (Canha, 2016). The initial aim of the blog was for the public to "get to know me a little better through the texts I write every day for the blog", and while other topics are also addressed (e.g., fashion), "it's my emotions that are there" (TVI, 2015).

The team in charge of running the day-to-day operations, which are "a group of young, cool people, willing to evolve and innovate and show everyone how it's done" (Alvim, 2014), later became an online content management firm which also works with other celebrities and their blogs (Garcia, 2017). This company, partially owned (20%) by Cristina Ferreira (Canha, 2016), grossed 250 000€ in 2015 alone, doubling the previous year's turnover (Garcia, 2017).

According to *Executiva*'s article (Canha, 2016) and the Forbes article (Garcia, 2017), Cristina Ferreira charged at the time, 4500€ per post while other celebrities were offered between 1000€ and 2000€, thus demonstrating Cristina Ferreira's value to the brands (Canha, 2016; Garcia, 2017). Although Cristina Ferreira says that she sometimes might do endorsed posts free of charge, she also explains that "if there is a brand that has built clout as Cristina's, it is obvious that one must pay more" (Garcia, 2017).

Although only blog dada for the year of 2016 is available – the blog had 2.5 million views per month, 351 thousand readers and was anchored on Cristina Ferreira's Facebook page, with 1.5 million followers (Canha, 2016) – according to the Forbes article (Garcia, 2017), the blog had 5 million page views at launch and levelled off at 3 million.

5.2.4.1.4. Perfume "Meu"

In December 2013, Cristina Ferreira embarked on a partnership with the German company LR Health & Beauty (Canha, 2016), which, according to her, would have been the "American Dream", had it taken place in the USA (DiárioEconómico, 2015). In October 2014, the fragrance "Meu" ("mine" in Portuguese) was launched in over thirty countries (DiárioEconómico, 2015) and sold over one hundred thousand units that year in Portugal alone (Canha, 2016). Although the figures from the different sources do not match – the first edition sold out in one day, the second edition sold out in six hours and the third edition sold out in three hours (TVI, 2015); the first edition of five thousand units sold out in three hours, the second edition of seven thousand units sold out in twenty four hours and the third edition of fifteen thousand units sold out in twenty six hours (Canha, 2016) – both sources agree that the product impressively sold out thrice (Canha, 2016; TVI, 2015).

When asked the secret to her fragrance's success, Cristina Ferreira shares that she believes it is her passion and involvement – "I think it is because people really feel that I am there" (DiárioEconómico, 2015); in her book "Sentir" (Ferreira, 2016), she even explains how her first school teacher influenced her fragrance – that sets the product apart from the competition, noting that the perfume is so distinct from everything else that consumers can recognize it by its scent – something extremely difficult when fragrances are not classic and well-known brands (DiárioEconómico, 2015). Furthermore, during the production of the fragrance's campaign, she insisted on using a Portuguese team, which was later approached to produce other campaigns for the German company (DiárioEconómico, 2015).

In addition to the products success – "In Portugal, it sold between 5 000 and 6 000 bottles of perfumes per month" (Canha, 2016) – this partnership between Cristina Ferreira and LR Health & Beauty also had an impact on the company, which saw its sales soar, experiencing a growth of 156% in 2014 in the Portuguese market (Canha, 2016) and taking Portugal from 20th to 6th in the number of intra-company sales (DiárioEconómico, 2015). Such success was, according to Cristina Ferreira agent Inês Mendes da Silva, due to consumer attachment – "There are those who like it and those who don't" and "those who like it, they really like it" (Canha, 2016).

In 2016, when the fragrance sold 200 thousand units (Garcia, 2017), Cristina Ferreira became an international ambassador for LR Health & Beauty Systems (Garcia, 2017). Against this background, her agent revealed that "Cristina Ferreira is the first local ambassador of an international brand, LR Health & Beauty, and stands alongside names such as Bruce Willis and Karolina Kurkova, which grants her a very interesting internationalisation" (Canha, 2016).

5.2.4.1.5. Shoe line

As shoes were always one of Cristina Ferreira's passions, she could not refuse the proposal the shoe brand Hush Puppies made her in 2015, to launch a product line under her name – "Hush Puppies by Cristina Ferreira" (DiárioEconómico, 2015). However, after two collections, the project has disassociated itself from the brand Hush Puppies becoming the brand "Cristina" (DiárioEconómico, 2015), "with more elegant and sophisticated lines and more casual footwear for an everyday use" (Canha, 2016). Although both brands are no longer associated (through its name), their partnership remains as the shoes "Cristina" continue to be distributed by Nolive – Portugal's representative of Hush Puppies (Garcia, 2017) – and sold in Hush Puppies stores (Canha, 2016; DiárioEconómico, 2015).

Apart from distribution and the selling points, Cristina Ferreira is involved in everything else as "the criteria for the models chosen is Cristina's personal taste, the way she perceives fashion and what she finds interesting in other women" (Canha, 2016). She is even involved on the production of the shoes, making sure they are produced in Portugal, whilst it may eliminate some costumers due to higher manufacturing cost which reflect on the retail price (DiárioEconómico, 2015).

In *Diário Económico*'s interview (2015), Cristina Ferreira not only revealed that her shoe line was available in 50 stores nationwide, but also shared that "we are also already studying some possibilities at an international level that make me very happy" (DiárioEconómico, 2015) – no information regarding this subject was found.

5.2.4.1.6. Column in "Record" sports newspaper

At the time of the news piece (Canha, 2016), Cristina Ferreira also wrote for an opinion column on the Sunday edition of the Portuguese sports newspaper "Record".

5.2.4.1.7. Magazine "Cristina"

In March 7, 2015, Cristina Ferreira launched her magazine "Cristina", born from a partnership with the Portuguese magazine publishing company *Masemba* (Canha, 2016; TVI, 2015). According to Cristina Ferreira, this was her most challenging project to date as she was aiming to achieve superior quality (in comparison to the Portuguese market) through meaningful stories from the duality of anonymous individuals and celebrities, both present in the magazine (DiárioEconómico, 2015).

Once Cristina Ferreira did not hold a professional license, she could not officially take the position of editor-in-chief, position which was held by Nuno Santiago from the firm *Masemba* (Canha, 2016). Nevertheless, all decisions go through her (Canha, 2016), being a key element throughout process – "I managed to put it all together and I think it's from that mix that I've imposed myself as a brand" (Garcia, 2017). Her magazine "Cristina", whose team for this project consists of 20 journalists, 6 of which are part of the editorial staff – Cristina Ferreira takes charge of the main interview ((Canha, 2016)), has reached and remained as the number one best seller among all women's magazines (Canha, 2016). According to Nuno Santiago from *Masemba* in the Forbes article (Garcia, 2017), the magazine's average readership reaches 275 thousand readers, of whom 20% are men, with newsstand sales close to 60 thousand copies. Furthermore, Moreover, up until the date of the same interview (Garcia, 2017), 19 issues completely sold out and the exclusive issue featuring the television personality Manuel Luís Goucha required a special third edition (Garcia, 2017).

In response to some critics Cristina Ferreira has receive for appearing on two thirds of all magazine covers, she has explained that it is not out of vanity or conceit, but it is rather the positioning intended for the magazine and what her team and her think makes sense for the project (Garcia, 2017). She has also faced criticism for the controversial cover featuring the Portuguese football player Ricardo Quaresma, where he appeared nude covering himself with a portrait of Cristina Ferreira (Ferreira, 2016). In response to such criticism, Cristina Ferreira expressed that "of course everything has a down-side, not everyone is prepared for change" and that "the same novelty that surprises also frightens" but that "the most important is not to stray way from one's path" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 146).

Despite the success of the publication and reaching a leading position within a few months, the partnership (which was revised on an annual basis) between Cristina Ferreira and the magazine publishing company *Masemba* reached an end through mutual agreement after two years of its founding (Durães, 2017). Although no reason for such dissolution of partnership was given to the press, in the following year, news reports surfaced disclosing that Cristina Ferreira initiated a lawsuit against the previous partner-company *Masemba*, seeking compensation of around 76 000€ (Duarte, 2018; VIP, 2018; Vendeira, 2018) – no other follow-up information on the subject was found. In spite of such drawbacks, according to the same sources, Cristina Ferreira established in January 2017 her own publishing company (called "Treze7, Lda"), whose legal activity is the "publishing of magazines and other periodical publications", and has continued to publish her own magazine to this day (Duarte, 2018; VIP, 2018; Vendeira, 2018).

5.2.4.1.8. Books

Cristina Ferreira has published a total of four books throughout her career. In 2013, she first published a cooking book called "Deliciosa Cristina" (Ferreira C. , Deliciosa Cristina, 2013)(i.e., "Delicious Cristina") (Garcia, 2017). Three years later, she published her memoir "Sentir" (i.e., "To Feel") (Ferreira, Sentir, 2016; Vincente, 2016) where she intended to "highlight 39 years of many experiences, dreams, triumphs and defeats" (Vincente, 2016).

Once she disclosed in her book (Ferreira, 2016, p. 53) that English was her "Achilles heel" and her difficulties with the language, in 2018, Cristina Ferreira initiated a partnership with Cambridge Assessment English – Cambridge University to develop her book "Falar (Inglês) é Fácil" (Ferreira C. , 2018)(i.e., "Speaking (English) is Easy"). In addition to providing a number of tips from Cambridge teachers on how to learn English, a chapter on idioms and exercises for readers to practise, the book (Ferreira C. , 2018) also gives insight into how the television personality learned the language (Farinha, 2018). Although such partnership with Cambridge Assessment English – Cambridge University was a worldwide first, all proceeds were donated to an organisation which helps disadvantaged children learn English (Ferreira, 2021; Neves, 2018; NotíciasaoMinuto, 2018).

Lastly, at the end of 2020, Cristina Ferreira released her latest book with the controversial title "Pra Cima de Puta" (Ferreira C. , 2020) – a compendium of insults and disrespectful commentaries from her social media pages (https://www.facebook.com/cristinaferreiratv/?locale=pt_PT; https://www.instagram.com/dailycristina/) created with the intent to be a "an open call for debate and public discussion on gratuitous violence on the Internet and in social media and its consequences" (Marques, 2020). This collection of revile and slander, mostly from when Cristina Ferreira changed television networks – from SIC back to TVI, from which she left two years prior (Marques, 2020) – is accompanied by the contributions of experts on the subject, such as legal experts, philosophers, psychiatrists, sociologists and paediatrician psychiatrists (Farinha, 2020). Notwithstanding all the controversy and mediatic attention the book receive, "due to the incredibly high number of pre-sale orders" (Marques, 2020), the publishing company began printing the second edition even before the first edition of the book reached the market (Marques, 2020). Similarly, to her previous book, Cristina Ferreira also donated all proceeds of the title to a charity "No Bully Portugal", which aims to tackle cyberbullying (Costa, 2021).

5.2.4.1.9. Beauty Product Line "Cristina Vernigel"

Cristina Ferreira entered the beauty industry through her line of gel nail polish "Cristina Vernigel", released in the first half of 2018 (Leão, 2018). Then, in December 2019, Cristina Ferreira added to her beauty product line a portable nail kit for consumers who would like to their nails at a professional level without leaving their homes (Costa M. L., 2019; Salgueiro, 2019). In the following year, during the COVID-19 lockdown months, when beauty centres were closed, Cristina Ferreira launched an online course (certificate of attendance included) composed of individual nail styling lessons covering different techniques (Chaves, 2020).

Later that year, she once again expanded her beauty product line by releasing a new hand, feet and nails care and treatment line produced in Portugal with "100% organic and biodegradable ingredients" (Marketeer, 2020; Salgueiro, 2020). This set of beauty products, developed in conjunction with a cosmetologist team included "deep moisturising lotions, exfoliators, cuticle oils, an anti-ageing hand serum, a repairing balm for dry feet and a nail and cuticle serum" and were available for purchase online (Salgueiro, 2020).

5.2.4.1.10. "Cristina Eyewear" – Eyewear line

In the second half of 2020, Cristina Ferreira collaborated with the Portuguese eyewear company *Optivisão* to develop an original collection of sunglasses and eyeglasses frames (Meios&Publicidade, 2020; Krauss, 2020). According to the *Optivisão* Group CEO André Brodheim, this collection "pledges to boost the concept of versatility and fashion in the Portuguese optics sector" as "*Optivisão*'s identity is closely linked to the values Cristina Ferreira conveys to her audience, and which are reflected in this debut collection focusing on lightness and inspiring a positive attitude" (Meios&Publicidade, 2020).

In the following year, to mark International Women's Day, she released a limited edition of sunglasses (Opticapro, 2021; NotíciasaoMinuto, 2021). Later in that same year, Cristina Ferreira put forward a "premium collection", maintaining her partnership with *Optivisão* (Pereira, 2021).

5.2.4.1.11. Women's underwear collection "Invisible"

In the summer of 2022, following the networks summer party, controversy surrounding Cristina Ferreira arose, numerous articles and news pieces were written about her outfit and whether or not she had worn underwear under her dress (Almeida, 2023; Simões R. , 2022a; Simões C. , 2022b). In response to the media frenzy, Cristina Ferreira launched her own underwear brand – "Invisible" – in which each order contained three compartments, supposedly for three pieces of underwear, but when it was delivered to the customer there were only two pieces because "the third underwear was Invisible, which was the one I (did not) wear to the gala" (Almeida, 2023). Although this product was only a part of the full line that would be in stores in September that year (Oliveira, 2022), all pre-orders sold out within one hour (Almeida, 2023). According to Cristina Ferreira, this underwear line (and thus this initial product) is intended to broaden mindsets and boost women's self-esteem (Oliveira, 2022), as "It follows this line: freedom, the freedom for each one of us to wear whatever we want or not wear anything at all", concluding that "each woman is free to decide for herself, about her body" (Simões C. , 2022b) and that this line of underwear can be worn "whenever she wants, however she wants, and it's nobody's business" (Simões C. , 2022b).

5.2.4.2. Activism and Philanthropy

Although Cristina Ferreira recognizes the power to impact consumers and society she conquered throughout her career, she argues that her power does not compare to the power of a President of the Portuguese Parliament, and also recognizes that her power comes with the responsibility of "helping others to evolve, to grow and to not be afraid" and of communicating positive messages (GQPortugal, 2018). Cristina Ferreira further considers that one of celebrities' duties is to show people that there are different realities (Estúdio12, 2018). Furthermore, she explains that her growing responsibility conditions what she says and does because it can influence others (GQPortugal, 2018).

Over the course of her career, Cristina Ferreira was appointed, in 2014, ambassadress of "Portugal Sou Eu", an initiative from the Portuguese Government to boost and promote the national supply and Portuguese Products (PortugalSouEu, 2014); and, in 2017, initiated a partnership with Azores Regional Tourism Board – "Turismo dos Açores" (VisitAzores, 2017). Along with donating to charity the proceeds of her books "Falar (Inglês) é Fácil" (i.e., "Speaking (English) is Easy") (Ferreira, 2021) and "Pra Cima de Puta" (ARTV, 2023), the television personality has also donated to charity the profits from her fragrance (Wong & Lopes, 2019). Moreover, Cristina Ferreira also started a petition "against hatred and gratuitous aggression on the internet", petition which gathered 50 thousand signatures, and which led to her being invited to the discussion in Parliament (ARTV, 2023).

In addition to the previous initiatives previously mentioned, Cristina Ferreira has also indirectly promoted various causes such as LGBT rights and domestic violence – particularly in her magazine, as well as bringing out the human side of politics, for example, with the Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa (Ferreira, 2021) – and also women empowerment, advising her fans to face their fears, to overcome their weaknesses and to "use your voice", because "more important than the tone of your voice, is what you say, how you use your voice" (Ferreira, 2021). In recent years, she has reenforced her on women empowerment and the balance between professional and personal life by saying "I exist beyond my son and my son exists beyond me" and "this is a message I like to convey because there are a lot of people who focus on their children's lives and forget about their own" (FamaSpot, 2019). Particularly regarding women empowerment in the business world, Cristina Ferreira has also shared how she felt in her first meeting of the board of directors as shareholder and the social pressure she felt, in terms of formal appearance and decision-making, later concluding that “if you are a woman, you don’t have to be a man” and that in order to be professional, she did not have to conform to what is expected of a male executive (Ferreira, 2021).

5.2.4.3. Brand Evolution

5.2.4.3.1. Brand Reinvention

According to TVI’s reportage (2015), Cristina Ferreira “is always reinventing herself”, as she “risks reinventing herself and treading new paths”, which creates a situation where “there is never one Cristina like another” (TVI, 2015). Such reinvention combines two of her “rules” – “think outside of the box”((JornalDas8, 2022)) and “to be successful, you have to know your audience” (Ferreira, 2021) – as she is always very attentive to what is being done outside Portugal, in order to be the first to do it in the country, and thus having more impact on consumers but also taking more risks (Estúdio12, 2018). She also specifies that, in order to keep up with what is done internationally in the television industry, she enjoys going to trade fairs to browse content made abroad, which then prompts new ideas (Estúdio12, 2018).

As Cristina Ferreira is aware of the volatility of a career in television – “Television is tough. Television is very ungrateful. Television throws you away. And not everybody is always ready for it” (GQPortugal, 2018), she that her reinvention in future may exclusively involve being behind backstage – “I could easily go off air and just work on the production of TV shows” (Estúdio12, 2018) – or not even in the industry at all – as she often answers to the question “What if your career is over tomorrow and you have to start again?” in the following way: “I’ll start again. How? I’ll sell steaks but I promise you I’ll be the best steak seller in the country” (Ferreira, 2021). As for her brand extensions, according to the Forbes article (Garcia, 2017), “Cristina confesses that she is not considering consolidating her products in a single company - although she will not rule out doing so in the future, for business evaluation purposes” (Garcia, 2017).

5.2.4.3.2. Balance between public exposure (persona) and private life (branded individual)

Throughout her career, Cristina Ferreira has kept her private life way from the public eye, as “I have never given them more than myself and my professional life” (DiárioEconómico, 2015). This is reflected in not only in her online activity – although the public thought her blog was going to be a quasi-reality-show of her life, she kept her personal life way and only posted her thoughts and feelings (Alvim, 2014); in her book, she shares that it is only out of respect for the “10% of the Portuguese population” who follow her that “I keep sharing moments from my holidays, from the places I’ve been or the emotions I’ve lived” but that also does not share “anything that is truly personal” (Ferreira, 2016, p. 167) – but also in giving interviews – she explains she rarely gives few long-format interviews, because “I think it should be that way” (DiárioEconómico, 2015).
This attitude towards interviews may be in line with her perspective of careers in the television industry: as she explained in (Alvim, 2014), in this industry, few people remain on television for long and even those who are able to prevail enjoy a fickle and unpredictable career, strew with ups and downs. Therefore, Cristina Ferreira has concluded that, after a successful year, she has to, “just like

a cat", "hide" in order to later reappear and thus maintain herself (Alvim, 2014). Besides her perspectives on careers in the television industry, the mediatic exposure Cristina Ferreira is exposed to on a daily basis also has some bearing on her approach to interviews, as she explained in her GQ Portugal interview (2018):

> *"I'm giving you an interview today, it's the first one I've given to GQ. I haven't spoken to anyone else and I'm in the news every day. Why is that? Because today everything is replicated. One of your quotes on Instagram can be a news article or a cover on some tabloid. And you can't control that. I manage it how I see fit, speaking as often as I think I should. I cannot control anything else. And that is something social media has imposed on us all. I can't do anything else but to continue my path, managing it in the way that I see best and hoping that people don't get fed up with me, or else I will have to understand that there is a reinvention that needs to be done." (GQPortugal, 2018).*

Such continuous and strenuous present on the spotlight, and consequent external and internal pressures that may come with it, can also have its toll on the branded individual behind the human brand, as Cristina Ferreira has stated that "I cannot fail" (DiárioEconómico, 2015) and that "sometimes holding on to what you've achieved is harder than reaching it" (Chaves F. , 2023). She has also affirmed that, due to her constant presence in the public eye, and the responsibility she understands is adjacent to it, "makes you ponder over everything you do", and "it's like you're constantly checking yourself", resulting in "you can only feel confident at home" because "I can only be 'Cristina' at home these days, and that's hard to cope with" (FamaSpot, 2019). Cristina Ferreira has even gone so far as to say that "I even have moments when I think that my life choice has taken more out from me than it has given me" (DiárioEconómico, 2015).

5.2.4.3.3. Hubris

Cristina Ferreira commonly references her "rule" to prevent hubris – "Never forget where you came from" (Ferreira, 2021) – further explaining that she returns to her "roots" every day, the place where she lives (DiárioEconómico, 2015). In accordance with her "rule", she has also said that "the day I become a fool, call me to my senses, because there are moments when we become fools and we are not aware of it", "and I haven't needed it yet because every day the 'land' pulls me back in", because "I know where I came from" and "and I know that it is there that I exist, that I want to return every day" (FamaSpot, 2019). In her book "Sentir" (Ferreira, 2016), she mentions that the only time she was less down to earth, "life put her to the test" and she had a car accident, from where she escaped unscathed but with a different perspective on her recent hubris (Ferreira, 2016, p. 192).

Within the context of her network stations change to SIC, she has also reported that, although some expected her to be the solution to all the company's problems, she countered that she was not going to be their "saviour", explaining that she was going to work alongside them, as a team, to turn around the situation – "I have always said: I am no saviour whatsoever. I'm not going there to be the one who wins. But I can help and I can help with what I know, and I can only do what I know." (GQPortugal, 2018).

5.2.4.4. Brand Transgressions

Although Cristina Ferreira has not faced many large-scale brand transgressions over the course of her career, she recognizes the power and positive impact of a minor scandal, as she gave the example of how the regular participation of the writer Paula Bobone (which was often invited to commentate tabloid news) on the morning show “Você na TV” would generate criticism on the television show’s social media pages (Alvim, 2014). According to Cristina Ferreira, despite the increase in social media criticism from the audience, those moments of the morning show would create spikes in audience viewership measures, leading her to conclude that when Paula Bobone was on air, “everybody is there watching, always” (Alvim, 2014).

Cristina Ferreira’s most impactful and large-scale scandal was however when she moved from her long-time television network TVI to its competitor SIC, only to return to TVI two years later. The first move (to SIC) was motivated by the desire to seek new challenges, as according to her, she did not enjoy the safety and security of guaranteed (audience measurement) wins – “Nobody leaves a place where they are completely happy; and there I felt it was already the end of the line for me” (Estúdio12, 2018). According to herself, she did not seek advice from anyone, including her family, as she felt that was a decision she had to make by herself, “and a decision was reached during the first meeting” – she shared (Estúdio12, 2018). Furthermore, “when I accepted the offer, two days later, I had my first 15 television shows written”, “because I knew exactly what I wanted” and “I have written down several ideas since the first year I started doing television” (Estúdio12, 2018).

Despite the fact that numerous news articles and opinion pieces were written about her pay check from the television network – controversy to which Cristina Ferreira parried by explaining: “and let’s not delude ourselves, a company only pays you what it thinks it will earn from you” and “nobody stays in a company where they earn more than what they deliver” (Estúdio12, 2018) – the majority of the public perceived this change with astonishment and curiosity “because she had a successful morning show and many did not understand why she was leaving a place where she was doing well” (Almeida, 2023). Additionally, she also added that “when I accepted the offer, I didn’t know how much I was going to get paid” (Estúdio12, 2018).

The public was not the only party who fiercely reacted to it as, with the announcement of the move alone, on the 23rd of August 2018, the stock of Impresa (the group which controls SIC) rose by 3% (VIP, 2019) and overall skyrocketed 54 % in 2019, mainly because SIC managed to snatch the leadership in ratings from TVI shortly after hiring the Cristina Ferreira (JornaldeNegócios, 2020). Part of this success was due to the “O Programa da Cristina”, a morning talk show which aired from programme that aired from the 7th of January 2019 to the 17th of July 2020 (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020). This daily television show (from 10am to 1pm) hosted by Cristina Ferreira, followed a traditional American talk show model – designed to reach an audience of the masses – was able to revitalise the morning slot and intensify the links between the various television slots (from morning to late night television), creating continuity and bringing entertainment and information ever closer together (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020). The goal of reaching an audience of the masses was also possible due to the use of social media, by sustaining and strengthening the empathetic adherence of its audience and by strengthening communication with them, creating an extra sense of intimacy between the consumer and the human brand (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020). Simple actions such as the posting on social media of photos and short videos simultaneously with the television show, not only allowed the public to interact with the day's themes and participants/interviewees (through comments and likes), but also boosted the show's audience who could not watch it live, thus expanding the limits of live television (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020).

Such format proved to be successful on different levels. On its debut, the show gathered 653 thousand viewers (one of those viewers was even the President of the Portuguese Republic, who phoned in to wish the programme good luck), and a share of 35.8% (against TVI's 24.7%) thus standing out from the competition immediately (Baptista, Silva, & Ferreira, 2020; Ferreira A. , 2019). The following day's share gap was even greater, with 38.8% versus TVI's 19.4%, appealing to more 274 thousand viewers than the rival network (Ferreira A. , 2019). Such a boost in viewership later translates into an increase in revenue from advertising (one of many sources of income for television networks), at first in the morning slot and then throughout the day (Ferreira A. , 2019).

Apart from the show's impact on the ratings, "O Programa da Cristina" also doubled the average of daily phone calls to the show's daily cash prize contest, thus increasing revenue from phone-in competitions, also an increasingly relevant source of income for television networks (Ferreira A. , 2019). Lastly, Cristina Ferreira and her television show also added an notoriety and media exposure to the network, thus attracting the investors' attention to the company (Ferreira A. , 2019).

However, two years later, on the 17th of July, Cristina Ferreira returned to TVI, the network from where she had left to join SIC. The shockwaves went far beyond the world of television (Bernardino, 2020b). On the 20th of July, both companies Impresa and Media Capital (which own SIC and TVI, respectively) saw their shares plummet at utterly different rates in the first few hours (4% and 9%, respectively), a far cry from the behaviour experienced years before (Bernardino, 2020b).

Following this "abrupt and surprising" departure (as SIC called it), the network demanded her, one month later, the payment of 20.202.501,21€ for the breach of contract, loss of revenue in phone-in competitions, advertising, sponsorship and marketing campaigns – demand to which Cristina Ferreira swiftly contested and refused to pay (Bernardino, 2020b). After a month and a half's absence from television, and days before officially returning to TVI, Cristina Ferreira surgically selected when and how to respond to public and covert accusations of ambition or a thirst for power – through her social media, formal communications, her magazine and her blog (Bernardino, 2020b). She then explained the many reasons that motivated her move back to TVI. Firstly, she argued that she moved to SIC in search of having "more effective responsibilities in the entertainment area" (which is why she also took on the role of executive consultant for television development), and that "did not go as expected", "the project was not what she imagined" because she "was never invited to any meetings related to her functions" (DiáriodeNotícias, 2020). Apart from this, according to press reports, her move to TVI was also motivated by the fact that she was promised the (undelivered) opportunity to host a major entertainment format in which she would welcome international stars (Bernardino, 2020b) . Secondly, she also felt her professionalism and attention to deal, characteristic of her (human brand), was often being disregarded – "television has to be a spotless showpiece, in its details, and sometimes that's overlooked" and "I thought they weren't valuing it anymore, so I had to leave" (Santos, 2020). Lastly, Cristina Ferreira also explained that there was also a sentimental factor to her network change, adding that "I was very happy at SIC, on that show, but there came a time when I was done, all my people were here" (Santos, 2020). She furthermore explained, regarding TVI's loss of ratings leadership, that "I grew up here, I lived here, it was hard for me to see this house go down" and that she then decided to come back – "If I can help, I'll do everything I can to make it work" (Santos, 2020). Subsequently, the television personality not only returned to the network as Director of Fiction and Entertainment, but also as shareholder (2.5%) of Media Capital, TVI's parent company (Santos, 2020). Regarding her new role as shareholder, she said that "it was an investment made with my money", and that "this is my last professional project" because "I'll be here until the end of my days" to "this company get back to where it ought to be" (DiáriodeNotícias, 2020).

Although in her previous network change, she had said that "And I say this again, because people have to be able to separate what is professional from what is personal" (Estúdio12, 2018), she recognizes that when she move back to TVI "there was a barrier that was broken there, and people stopped trusting me" (Almeida, 2023). Such lack of trust originated animosity towards her, to a point where she later decided to include some of those comments on social media (with "very aggressive language") in her fourth book "Pra Cima de Puta" (Almeida, 2023). She further confided how that period was the hardest to manage because, at the time, she was not on air on a daily basis, and was, therefore, unable to directly and immediately respond to everything that emerged about herself in the media arena (Almeida, 2023). She then concluded that, even if overtime "I got some people back. Have I lost some forever? I have." (Almeida, 2023).

5.3. Individual Career Management

5.3.1. Career Exploration

Career exploration is a considerable component of Cristina Ferreira's career, as she believes that "failure is the first step to success" (JornalDas8, 2022) and that it is necessary to fail in order to understand what does not work and continue to innovate (JornalDas8, 2022). Such approach to experimentation even includes going beyond her preferences, since she has conceded that, although she does not enjoy the rehearsals and repetition associated with soap operas or films – she prefers live television since "my first expression is always the most genuine one" (GQPortugal, 2018) – she "would like to try it just for that, to test myself in something I know I probably wouldn't enjoy that much" (GQPortugal, 2018).

Overall, when it comes to new experiences career-wise, Cristina Ferreira says that "anything that I am passionate about, anything that I feel can make me grow professionally, that adds something to me, I am incapable of saying no" (DiárioEconómico, 2015). One example of openness to new professional experiences is how she decided to host the successful television game show "Apanha Se Puderes" – "I first see where I'm going to jump in, but then I jump in easily" (Estúdio12, 2018) – as she first accepted the proposal because she wanted to do a game show (which she had never done before) and only then worried about facing (and later defeating) the ancient leading television game show "Preço Certo" ("The Price Is Right"), on state-owned network RTP (Estúdio12, 2018).

Concluding, Cristina Ferreira claims that she approaches any television format without any bias or preconceived ideas because "everything that television gives you, you can build it in such a way as to reach others. And if it does, it's for a reason" (GQPortugal, 2018). Nevertheless, she also adds that enjoying her job is not the same as enjoying being immersed in the industry, but, at the end of the day, she has a passion for what she does, and this overcomes any disadvantages the industry might bring – "I don't like the television scene. I love doing television. And when balancing both, the 'I love doing television' has won every time so far. And thus, I continue to do television" (GQPortugal, 2018).

5.3.2. Decision-making

When it comes to decision-making, and questioned "What about when you can't make a decision?", Cristina Ferreira answered that "I always do" (Renascença, 2023), not only because "I don't like to take a long time making decisions" and "I often leave to luck the role of best adviser" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 193), but also because "there is always a left and a right", "and I believe that even if we choose the wrong direction, there is always a way to reach our final destination" since "even dead ends offer an alternative: to go back" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 193). Nonetheless, she also admits she has such easiness when deciding because "perhaps I have yet to go through a truly difficult decision" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 193). An example of decision-making present in her book is the episode in which where there was a mistake on the cover of her magazine "Cristina" because the interviewee did not agree with the choice that was made (Ferreira, 2016). Therefore, she decided to suspend all deliveries albeit the 50 000€ lost because "for the sake of the road we have built it was the only solution" (Ferreira, 2016, p. 141).

5.3.3. ICM personality

Apart from her involvement – "she is always there in every project" (Garcia, 2017) – and secrecy which characterize Cristina Ferreira, the television personality Manuel Luís Goucha also emphasises her management skills – "she is a brilliant person in management", something Cristina Ferreira does not deny, since she has already acknowledged that she truly enjoys the business side of things (Garcia, 2017). In the Forbes article (Garcia, 2017), Lurdes Guerreiro (who was, at the time, director general of the production company Endemol Portugal) highlights as Cristina's great advantage, her enviable ability (uncommon in television hosts) to find solutions on the spot and to bring ideas to the shows. Moreover, Lurdes Guerreiro also points out that "she is always available, answers e-mails and messages immediately, offers ideas constantly, sends YouTube links – an extraordinary asset for any producer" (Garcia, 2017)[21]. Luís Mateus, LR Health & Beauty Systems' country manager, also describes Cristina Ferreira in a similar fashion, depicting her as very creative and always "looking for ways to reach further, to stand out and above all, to surprise" (Garcia, 2017).

Cristina Ferreira also concedes that is a "perfectionist to the extreme" (GQPortugal, 2018), as for example, she recognizes that "I watch myself a lot", "I watch myself a lot to try to understand how I am doing my job or not", "from my end, from the director's end", because "I am very much into controlling and understanding how everyone's work reached the audience" (GQPortugal, 2018). This degree of professionalism and perfectionism is passed, intentionally or not, onto all those who surround her, thus insuring the project's success in the long run – "That's the level of excellence I impose on everybody, which is: we can always do better" (Renascença, 2023).

[21] In the podcast "Prova Oral" (2014), when questioned if she had any help or assistants to support her in terms of daily scheduling and operations, she replied that she does it all by herself and without any physical support, such as appointment diaries.

6. Discussion

6.1. Personal Brand

6.1.1. Background and Personal Brand

During Cristina Ferreira's early career years, as a Journalism student and intern and later as a schoolteacher, her personal brand already exhibited some fundamental characteristics and aspects of her future human brand. By perfecting the tangible (e.g., style and appearance – by wearing her red varnish shoes; communications strategies – by using slang) and intangible (e.g., charisma) dimensions of her personal brand, she was able to create the beginning of the persona "Cristina Ferreira", someone who knew how to adapt her communication style to her audience and who also knew how to differentiate herself from the competition, whether through a combination of performance, behaviour, and/or communication. The formation process of this personal brand was both the true self approach and the consumer-oriented approach as she presented facets of her true self combined with the adaptability of herself to specific audiences, integrating valuable skills and characteristics, such as developing a bond with her students sharing common points of view – e.g., the disregard for the school's dress code rules. Later, when she initiated a training course for television hosts, and then began her first steps in the television industry, Cristina Ferreira brought with her this embryonic version of herself. Nevertheless, the construction process of her personal brand did not halt; it has, in fact, continued to evolve, as shown by Dina Aguiar's comments on her elated and frenzied manner, which was not present during her internship at RTP.

6.1.2. Human Brand Transformation Process

Cristina Ferreira's transformation process from personal brand to human brand commenced when she initiated the training course for television hosts once she realized her potentially desirable future self as a television hostess. This first stage also included her first years in television, working on various reality and morning shows, as she jettisoned her schoolteacher facet and adapted her personal brand for a new field, thus adopting a new self-conception and a new social role connected to a new set of stakeholders – the television network TVI.

During this phase of her career, Cristina Ferreira also began exhibit trats of both a protean career orientation and of a boundaryless career orientation. From a protean career perspective, Cristina Ferreira stayed marketable by going to "television host school" and remoulding her knowledge, skills to fit in a new work environment. Furthermore, she demonstrated to have high levels of both value-driven (making career choices and evaluating career success based on her personal values) and self-directedness (being responsible for and in control of her own career, while adapting to learning and performance demands) – the two components of protean career – thus, being considered to have a protean or transformational career orientation. Such individuals, with a protean or transformational career orientation, display the same characteristics Cristina Ferreira evinced in this stage and throughout her career, such as, flexibility; belief in continuous learning; valuing freedom; striving for intrinsic rewards from work; proactive personality; career authenticity;

openness to experience; and mastery goal orientation (e.g., emphasizing learning and embracing challenge).

On the other hand, from a boundaryless career perspective, Cristina Ferreira also engaged in physical and psychological movement by crossing several organizational, occupational, and industrial barriers, in her change from schoolteacher to television hostess.

The second stage of the human brand transformation process took place when Cristina Ferreira began co-hosting the morning show "Você na TV" with the television personality Manuel Luís Goucha, in 2004. Cristina Ferreira developed a long-lasting close relationship with Manuel Luís Goucha, in which he could even be seen as a mentor to her, even when they no longer worked together – mentorship is often related to a boundaryless career orientation, as aforementioned. It was during her partake in the morning show that her brand saw an increase in audience (the morning show was even the most watched morning show in the country) and the first signs of recognition and establishment of the brand as an authority. Along with a tremendous initial and continual success, Cristina Ferreira started being invited to endorse brands and to develop other projects, side by side with the morning show, thus kicking off the beginning and expansion of the brand's commercialization.

Lastly, the final stage of the transformation process, when the constructed human brand emerges from the person herself, occurred some years after her debut on the morning show "Você na TV", as it is necessary for the individual to become conscious of one's shared meaning and identity cocreation process, and Cristina Ferreira only realized the widespread existence of her brand when those surrounding her commentated on it. When this realization took place, Cristina Ferreira was far in in her successful career, not only solo hosting different television shows, but also launching several brand extensions, such as her blog. Thus, it is possible to conclude that, in the case of Cristina Ferreira, she was already a fully formed human brand before completing the human brand transformation process.

6.2. **Human Brand**

6.2.1. Step 1: Identify and establish brand positioning and values (brand personality and brand identity; authenticity; persona; narrative; stakeholders)

In general, the brand identity and personality of Cristina Ferreira's human brand can be described as concurrently an "everyday" person and as a "one in a million" person. On one hand, she gathers the traits of an anonymous person, by being hardworking, humble, down-to-earth, spontaneous, friendly, and approachable – someone consumers would like to spend time with. On the other hand, she can also be seen as unconventional, cunning, adventurous, venturesome, focused and determined – characteristics consumers might not recognize in themselves, but would like to have. In addition, given her narratives of unostentatious and simple beginnings, Cristina Ferreira's human brand can easily become an aspirational brand for consumers with similar backgrounds, thus being an amalgamation of both the classic underdog story and the "American

Dream" – someone who went from "nothing" to "everything" exclusively through one's wits and hard work.

Furthermore, other two factors add appeal and influence on Cristina Ferreira's human brand. Firstly, as her brand was initially built on professional-related attributes (such as her know-how, talent, and skills as a television host), rather than media-related attributes (e.g., fame and popularity), consumers tend to recognize her success as more acquired through hard work, throughout her career, and less as a "giving" success. Secondly, her characteristic authenticity brings her closer to consumers since her attitudes and actions deconstruct the "distant" relationship between celebrity and anonymity. Consumers read her behaviour has authentic because of its difference to her peers' behaviours, even when her nonconforming behaviours involve costs, risks, or sacrifices – rarity –, and yet, her behaviour remains stable over the course of her career – stability. Moreover, her authenticity is enhanced through her constant downplay of commercial motives, resulting in a consumer's perception of "purity" and "true passion", even when the project is highly successful and profitable.

When it comes to the stakeholders of Cristina Ferreira's human brand, the list in nearly endless – from the television network to her management team and including the audience and even the Portuguese government (due to her social campaigns). Although all these had (and still have) an impact on the development and construction of her human brand, some are particularly worth mentioning. The first in the television network, which not only granted the environment for the human brand to develop and reach a massive audience, but also granted legitimacy, as one of the three main television networks in Portugal. This legitimacy was partially passed to Cristina Ferreira through her work with major television figures, such as Manuel Luís Goucha. Her human brand legitimacy was also, to a limited degree, accorded by institutional agents, through the awards Cristina Ferreira has repeatedly accept from different organizations, such as "Forbes" and "*Executiva*" magazines. Yet, the major source of Cristina Ferreira's human brand legitimacy is the general public who has continuously bestowed her popular legitimacy.

The second relevant stakeholder is the audience, which not only has colossal reactions to Cristina Ferreira's every move (either it is a positive or negative reaction), but mainly continues to adhere to Cristina Ferreira's projects (both inside and outside television). Lastly, a key stakeholder in the construction of the human brand Cristina Ferreira is the tabloid industry. Although Cristina Ferreira has publicly sided against the publications, the tabloids have daily covered her career and private life for almost two decades. Granting that for the individual in cause, this "persecution" may be incredibly damaging on a varied range of levels (e.g., physically, mentally, socially, etc), for both her and her family; this constant appearance under the spotlight brings an incredible amount of exposure to the public (and her consumers) on a daily basis, something that products and services brands are willing to pay large amounts of money for. This relationship with the tabloid industry is then a double-edged sword, which can be difficult to endure but its outcomes depend on one's management.

In conclusion, Cristina Ferreira's human brand has developed a well-rounded brand personality, which includes sophistication, sincerity, competence, excitement, and ruggedness – although ruggedness is considered to be negative in the literature review, in this case, a slight amount of ruggedness can be positive as it comes off to the consumer as authentic and deconstructs the snobbism of the television world, thus closing the gap between the audience and Cristina Ferreira. Such brand personality and identity (which form her persona), transmitted through her narratives throughout the years of public exposure has created both a distinctive positioning, with a unique brand image, and also fame and popularity (popularity as a matter of prevalence and frequency resulting from a collective choice; popularity as a genre, as an intrinsic characteristic person or idea; and popularity as ownership, something which comes from or belongs to the people) – which, in turn, create media related attributes which "feed" her brand personality and identity, creating an endless cycle.

6.2.2. Step 2: Plan and implement brand marketing programs (marketing-mix, positioning and social media)

The planification and implementation of brand marketing programs mainly consists, in this case, of the different television shows Cristina Ferreira has hosted throughout her career which, although excel by communicating differently from the competition (offline visibility), it is not the focus in this work. Nevertheless, part of Cristina Ferreira's brand marketing programs also encompasses her social media, which she approaches as a complement to her television projects and to her brand, in general. In addition to further interacting with her television audience (in a bidirectional way) and the usage of social media as an influencer (online visibility), Cristina Ferreira also uses these platforms to collect the public's feedback – a key stage in the dynamic self-regulation process of Individual Career Management. More than the sheer gathering of input from the audience, Cristina Ferreira has, throughout the years, learned how to filter this data and separate it into three different categories: constructive criticism, compliments and praises, and hateful comments. Such "system" created to categorize this feedback reveal Cristina Ferreira's career self-management faculties – self-knowledge; goal selection, development, and commitment; constant communication with the surrounding environment; career decision behaviours; career decidedness attitudes; and identity clarity.

6.2.3. Step 3: Measure and interpret brand performance (attachment)

The human brand attachment of Cristina Ferreira's consumers is noticeable both online and offline. Through her growing social media numbers, it is possible to understand her impact and dimension of her reach in Portugal. Additionally, her top-rated television shows gather a heterogeneous audience whereby no one is indifferent to her – most people either love her or hate her. Nevertheless, as her agent Inês Mendes da Silva said "There are those who like it and those who don't" and "those who like it, they really like it" (Canha, 2016).

Such attachment may derive from Cristina Ferreira's fulfilling of the three antecedents of consumer's attachment to human brands: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. To start with autonomy, Cristina Ferreira continuously embodies freedom – freedom to choose to be, say and act how she wants to instead of conforming to external pressures. This behaviour of self-determination and independence eventually osmoses to her consumers, hence providing the necessary autonomy for a strong bond between both parties. Secondly, relatedness emerges in this relationship between Cristina Ferreira and consumers due to her continuous presence on television, and consequently, in the consumer's home (even more so in her early years, when she hosted a daily morning show). This presence generated a sense of closeness and connectedness. Furthermore, as a consequence of Cristina Ferreira background, those who share similar values, preferences, memories, experiences, backgrounds, interests, beliefs, and personal characteristics easily developed homophily. Therefore, just like in Oprah Winfrey's case, the television audience "forgets" that their watching a professional at work and start to see her as a family member or as a friend – parasocial relationship. Finally, and similarly to Oprah Winfrey, Cristina Ferreira provides to consumers a sense of (the possibility of) accomplishment, effectiveness, and skill – the ability to influence their surroundings and outcomes. Such competence is transmitted indirectly through her example – of being successful, capable, and influential – but also directly, for example, through her latest brand extension "Cristina Talks", her conference of public-speaking presentations.

6.2.4. Step 4: Grow and sustain brand equity

6.2.4.1. Brand Extensions

Even if Cristina Ferreira's endorsements are bestowed less involvement than her business ventures, her participation is yet incredibly calculated. In addition to her authenticity, which makes sure that her association with a specific product/service is sincere and earnest, her commitment to a relationship with consumers built on trust demonstrates her diligence when choosing an endorsement project and assuring the product/service's quality. Hence, even though these are traditional endorsements endorsed by the (less involved) celebrity, where she plays the role of endorser or influencer (mostly on social media), these remain brand extensions in complete harmony with her human brand.

Conversely, Cristina Ferreira is highly involved in her business ventures, without ever neglecting the quality or authenticity aspects of her projects. In most of her brand extensions, a celebrity mono-branding strategy was opted. Her blog "Daily Cristina", for example, is a progenic brand owned and launched by her, acting as entrepreneur in a project with a celebrity mono-branding strategy – the brand only carries the name (or variant of name). The same applies to her beauty product line "Cristina Vernigel" and her women's underwear collection "Invisible": they both (possibly) follow a celebrity mono-branding strategy (there is a lack of information regarding these brand extensions), and both are also a progenic brand owned and launched by her, who acts as entrepreneur. Her books, for instance are also based on a celebrity mono-branding strategy, as her name leads the book but it is manufactured and distributed by publishing companies – the first book was published with “Objectiva” and “Contraponto” published the remaining books. The one exception regarding these brand extensions is the English language learning book, which was a co-branded celebrity product as it was developed in partnership with Cambridge Assessment English – Cambridge University.

Nevertheless, not all brand extensions are similar. Her clothing boutique “Casiraghi Forever”, for example, follows a non-celebrity-branded product strategy (because it is not branded with Cristina Ferreira’s name nor with a manufacturer/supplier’s name) while also being a progenic brand owned and launched by Cristina Ferreira, where she plays the role of entrepreneur (taking part in the ownership and day-to-day operations). As for her fragrance “Meu”, it was a fused endorsed brand, co-branded with LR Health & Beauty, in which she fulfilled the role of executive (not only associating her human brand but also deciding some product’s aspects such as performance, design, packaging, etc). The same goes for “Cristina Eyewear”, Cristina Ferreira’s sunglasses line co-branded with “*Optivisão*”, resulting in a fused endorsed brand product partially designed by Cristina Ferreira as executive.

Lastly, two brand extensions evolved throughout its life span. This is the case of Cristina Ferreira’s shoe line, a fused endorsed brand which was initially a co-branded celebrity product – “Hush Puppies by Cristina Ferreira” – and later evolved to celebrity mono-branding – being called “Cristina”. In either phase of the project, Cristina Ferreira carried out the role of executive, or even possibly entrepreneur, as she had the possibility to choose to product the product in Portugal (to pinpoint exactly her role, it would be necessary more information). Her magazine, called “Cristina”, also changed over time. The magazine, which is based on a celebrity mono-branding strategy because it uses Cristina Ferreira’s name, initially started as a fused endorsed brand (developed with *Masemba*) but later became a progenic brand relaunched and owned Cristina Ferreira, which remained in her role of entrepreneur throughout.

6.2.4.2. Activism and Philanthropy

Although Cristina Ferreira has been the spokesperson for numerous campaigns several times, where she endorses a cause, an idea, a destination or place as a product/service, her most efficient cause endorsements are executed indirectly, through her behaviour and presence. Her stance on women empowerment, for instance, is distinctly more impactful than purely talking about it because she leads by example, actually pushing barriers through being on the forefront of female television personalities who are also television executives and shareholders.

Outside television, Cristina Ferreira simultaneously pushes for what she believes is right – e.g., opening her boutique in her hometown to boost the area; choosing to produce her shoe line in Portugal, even if it raises the products manufacturing costs; insisting on producing her international fragrance campaign with a Portuguese team, etc. Thereby, these causes are equally upheld, providing equal, if not superior reach to her activism. By endorsing causes in a natural and apparently spontaneous way (e.g., leading by example), such push for change is not only more effective but also more authentic and less tied to organizations or parties, making it a more long-term sustainable form of activism. Despite not associating her with a specific organization or party, Cristina Ferreira can still be a proactive activist, by initiating petitions (e.g., “against hatred and gratuitous aggression on the internet”), also increasing her credibility with consumers, who recognize that her willing to change society, even if in the face of backlash (as it happened with this petition).

As for philanthropy, although with little publicity or information available, Cristina Ferreira has donated to two different charity organizations the proceeds of both her English language learning book and cyberbullying book. Once these philanthropic initiatives (which are co-branding partnerships nevertheless) are kept discrete and do not seek publicity, her relationship with consumers strengthens as they understand she is motivated by altruistic reasons and not “charitainment” nor “corporate social responsibility” of celebrities.

6.2.4.3. Brand Evolution (brand reinvention; balance between public exposure (persona) and private life (branded individual); hubris)

The evolution of a brand largely depends on its reinvention. In human brands, however, this reinvention goes hand in hand with the individual’s personal growth. Much like with anyone else, Cristina Ferreira evolves as an individual, with the only difference being that her growth has an impact on her brand, on her brand extensions and on her career, shifting the projects she decides to do. Furthermore, this development can be influenced by external sources, as it happens with Cristina Ferreira, who draws inspiration from her international peers – before launching her, she analysed the world’s most successful blogs for a year; she goes to television trade fairs to keep up with what is being produced abroad. This behaviour is also a practice common in individual career management, as she maps her surrounding environment for valuable information.

Regarding her division between the public and private sphere, it is increasingly common in most human brands with longer careers. Although it may reduce the brand’s short-term profitability, it may also be necessary to protect the human behind the brand. This can be achieved through, as Cristina Ferreira does, few interviews and few to no details shared about her private life. In addition, this strategy adds a layer of mystery and creating a “vacuum” of available information, inducing curiosity in the consumers’ mind and consequent interest. Such interest can, in turn, protect the brand’s long-term survival. Moreover, it forces consumers to go to one’s work and consume it to “fuel” their relationship, instead of dispersing their attention on third-party products, such as magazine articles and tabloids. Nevertheless, the human brand may, sometimes, overlap the human and make it difficult to have a “normal” life – hence, her confession of “losing more than getting from this”.

Finally, although the perception of hubris can be subjective, there are no evidence that support the continuous accusations of Cristina Ferreira’s hubris. Whether this absence of hubris is due to her strategies (e.g., returning to her roots to stay grounded) or to her personality and character, the reality is that the last phase (Tisis) of the Ancient Greek tragic cycle (Hubris; Atis; Nemesis; Tisis), which represents the punishment and destruction caused by the arrogance, is nowhere to be seen.

6.2.4.4. *Brand Transgressions*

With regard to brand transgressions, Cristina Ferreira's brand transgressions all fall under the category "pre-existing celebrity", since her career was not launched by a scandal, nor was it in decay and then revived by a scandal. Cristina Ferreira is an example of how minor brand transgressions (i.e., events which are barely scandals but still appear in the news circle) can be helpful in generating attention and visibility. Nonetheless, transgressions can depend on an array of variables, making its outcomes difficult to predict and measure, including the impact on the brand's growth and her stakeholders.

6.3. Individual Career Management

Cristina Fereira's career is, in many aspects, a self-managed career. Adding to what has already been mentioned on this, her ability to easily close her store in Torres Vedras and terminate the project (i.e., accepting defeat without demoralizing) is an indicator of her having a protean career orientation. Other indicators are her "extreme perfectionism", continuous learning, and mastery goal orientation, all of which she demands from herself and those working with her; her flexibility (particularly noticeable in her decision-making process); her proactivity and change orientation (e.g., willing to transform any television format given to her); and her openness to experience and inclination for career exploration – e.g., writing a column in a sports newspaper and accepting an executive role in the network, along with being a television host.

Yet, throughout her career, Cristina Ferreira is also always embedded inside an organization (television network), thus making her metier a hybrid career. In Cristina Ferreira's case, her hybrid career is characterized by some traits of traditional career – being part of an organisation (television network), which provides her with upwards mobility (e.g., executive functions), job security and career development programs (e.g., trade fairs attendance) – while simultaneously exhibiting traits of individual career management with both a protean and a boundaryless career orientations – often creating or being involved in projects which, at time, can be "as strong or even stronger than television itself". Additionally, as Cristina Ferreira's brand grows and expands to different markets and industries (e.g., through her brand extensions), she begins to have herself her own organization (i.e., her magazine team, her online content management team, etc), making her an "organization within other organizations" so to speak.

Cristina Ferreira's career evolution can be explained by the Kaleidoscope Career Model, as professional path followed an alpha pattern (i.e., first, challenge, followed by authenticity, followed by balance). Initially, during her first years in television, Cristina Ferreira would accept every opportunity she would get, to advance and get her grip of her surroundings in the industry – for example, accepting the position of Director of Non-Informative Contents. Once she became an established figure in her milieu, she began to orient her career towards authenticity the emergence of her business ventures, such as her magazine or her blog. Following this phase of authenticity, she then began orienting her career towards balance (between work and non-work demands), by leveraging her power (both inside the company and outside) to manage her career and life on her own terms, deciding what she prefers to work on and even considering the possibility of out of the limelight and work exclusively behind the camera, on the production side of the entertainment industry.

In an attempt to integrate both subjects of career management and human brands, the following explanation based on this case is brought forward. Human brands can be visualized as a glass cube, inside of which is the branded individual. This cube, as a whole, is the human brand and the face of the cube which is closer to the audience (i.e., consumers) is the public persona, as a persona is a simplified version of the branded individual. Once individuals are complex beings with diverse sides to them, one's behaviour may vary according to the environment and audience, thus having different personas (e.g., one for professional settings, one for family relationships and settings, etc). Although consumers may get glimpses of the other faces of the cube – the other personas of the branded individual –, the public persona is usually the only one available to the "outside circle" – hence, this side of the cube is always facing the audience.

Since most consumers cannot have the opportunity to experience such persona first hand, their interactions with the branded individual are confined to the narratives, which carry the human brand's identity and personality. These narratives are conveyed through the actions included in both step 2 (i.e., human brand marketing programs) and 4 (i.e., brand extensions and brand evolution) of the strategic brand management model previously explained. As for authenticity, which is the intermediary between the cube and the audience, it can be thought of as how clear and define one's image appears to be to the audience – if a human brand is very authentic, the audience can see clearly inside the cube; if the human brand is not authentic, the image the audience sees appears foggy or obscure. Such authenticity then influences how close to the branded individual the audience feels – human brand attachment.

Next to this glass cube simultaneously exists a triangle (Kaleidoscope Career Model) with three vertices (authenticity, challenge, and balance). Although the authenticity vertex is the closest audience, all three vertices of the triangle are important as, throughout the branded individual's career, the cube continuously moves closer or further from them. Although the cube can come closer to a vertex, it is impossible to reach it because, according to the Kaleidoscope Career Model, all three aspects are simultaneously active, even if changing in preponderance. The position of the cube changes according to two elements: one's personality and the stakeholders. One's personality is the "engine" leading the internal force of the cube, guiding one's experiences, goals and ideas, which will then steer one's career orientations and career. The stakeholders exert, in turn, external forces to the cube (e.g., by providing opportunities and information). In time, the external forces exerted by the stakeholders can also change and influence the characteristics of the cube (e.g., identity) and also how the cube communicates to the outside (including the communications with the audience). The outcome of the internal and external forces to cube is what defines the cubes position at that specific period in time and also, the cube's path, throughout the branded individual's career. Once the branded individual starts to increase in influence in one’s industry, the stakeholders can decrease in power and influence.

7. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research

The aim of this present study was to better understand the phenomenon of individuals as brands, and how their careers evolve throughout time. A study of a qualitative nature was thus carried out, based on a case study of a Portuguese television personality, Cristina Ferreira. Although conditioned by the intrinsic characteristics of case studies, the present study allowed to shed a light on both emerging topics of human brands and individual career management. Firstly, this study's literature review section brought forward an updated abridgement of the main ideas, theories, and frameworks on both topics – individuals as brands (including personal brands and human brands) and the most recent forms of career practiced in today's diverse and complex working environment. Secondly, this study also merged the two distinct areas of management analysed into one case study, which not only approached a case in the particular landscape of the entertainment world, but also in the even more specific context of Portugal.

Nonetheless, as no study is without limitations and is never finished, throughout the process of conducting the present case study, it was possible to identify some limitations. Firstly, since this research was carried out as a single case study, focussing on the characteristics and circumstances of that specific case, the results cannot be generalised, extrapolated nor transferred to any other scenario. Furthermore, the collaboration of Cristina Ferreira (or any other associates of her) was not possible to secure (despite numerous attempts), meaning that all the data was collected from information (interviews, news articles, etc) available to the general public – hence this also being a limitation of this case study.

Regarding future research, it would be interesting to conduct this type of study on a larger scale, analysing a range of human brands simultaneously, perhaps in different industries and with a quantitative or mixed methodology as well. In addition, other studies could also be conducted to determine the impact of a long-term public career on the branded individual's mental health. Although most topics mentioned in this study require extended research due to their novelty, the ones which particularly lack literature are the Kaleidoscope Career Model, human brand reinvention, human brand transgressions and human brand internationalization.

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