

**Digital marketing and personal branding:
how do they affect the job market and
political elections**

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1. Aim and Scope

The following thesis focuses on personal branding and digital marketing topics, analyzing the different perspectives of this research field. This work explores a relatively unexplored topic, meaning the strategic leverage on personal branding through digital marketing theories and practices. In particular, the objective is to identify the key elements shaping the personal branding and to show how they can boost the success of the individuals in different fields of professional development by improving personal reputation. Novelty in this thesis is the multi-dimensional approach of the topic: the first paper analyzes the job market while the second focuses on political elections: the thesis creates a link. The initial part offers an in-depth literature review and an examination of developments in contemporary communication, exploring how personal branding arises as a form of a market-appropriate response. Literature is little at the crossroad between these two areas. In particular, empirical evidences are scarce if not absent.

Two papers are then presented.

The first paper addresses the specific case of university students and recent graduates as a particularly interesting field of research. The aim is to assess the value of personal branding when looking for the initial employment and to identify the main attributes influencing the results. Quantitative methods will be applied. Findings will offer both theoretical and practical insights with regards to the challenges of higher education in trying to write a curricular framework within which marketing professionals can learn how to market and brand themselves effectively. There are not yet empirical studies focusing on personal branding in the digital era and on the way students can consider themselves as products for finding the best job to start their career. There are some studies in the literature referring to the use of rules of companies brands, not yet focusing on the job market, especially in the first job research by students. Theoretical discourse in the strategic marketing field is particularly lively in recent years, thanks to the fresh new blood given especially by digital marketing; there is also a strong interest in personal branding especially in the job market field.

The second paper is focused on the analyses of the personal branding concept as applied to the political environment: the question is on how the digital personal branding strategy may affect the performance of the parties. The phenomenon of Personal Branding, with its link with democracy,

invites for a careful analysis. This study begins by examining parallel developments in contemporary communication and democracy and how personal branding may become the appropriate response to the political need for communication. The idea is to investigate how the reputation and the sentiment on twitter can influence political results. In this study the tweets of Italian politics, considered as personal brands, are analyzed with sentiment analysis using R; the results are compared with other data coming from institutional sources for example political elections, or official surveys.

People and their careers are now marketed as brands with the same rules as products; personal branding offers such an awesome opportunity for self-commodification. The phenomenon needs a deep and searching analysis (Lair, Sullivan and Cheney, 2005) (Lehmann, 2016).

This work aims to understand how you can do personal branding by using the rules of digital marketing. The scope is to assess if the behavior of people who market themselves as a product have better opportunities to find good jobs or to perform in political elections. The most important principles of digital marketing can be applied to people as well as to products; we want to investigate if this phenomenon has an impact on the hiring process or the performance of the election and if such impact is positive or negative. We want to broaden digital marketing rules; the key idea is that you can achieve a strong impact by investing a limited amount of money in your brand by using social media.

2. Literature review

There is currently a strong debate about personal branding even if there is not yet a wide literature because this topic has been inspected mainly by Gurus without an academic approach. The key idea is that you can follow the same branding rules of a company. Personal branding was theorized by Tom Peters' Fast Company article, in which he stated the provocative sentence: "We are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. to be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called You" (Peters, 1997). The principles for creating a "Personal Brand" are described in such a book. More recently you can find advice for building your brand by using the digital marketing tools ("How to Build a Personal Brand". CEOWORLD magazine.

Retrieved August 10, 2017) "Building a profitable personal brand online is not a sprint and something that happens overnight. Don't aim for perfection early on. Instead, allow your brand to

evolve naturally over time and focus on providing massive value and over-deliver to your target audience”.

Information found online provides a digital footprint that implicitly brands people. (Lampel and Bhalla, 2007). Some information is out of the person's control (e.g., what others write about him or her), but much of it is carefully crafted and posted. Even if you are not using branding strategies other people will do for you.

Self-presentation (Goffman, 1959), is the tool that people use to create a brand identity, and for shaping the profile they want to promote. This social performance can be compared to a theatre where within each scene of life, the central actor chooses the appropriate props, and backdrops to project a desired identity to an audience through complex self-negotiations, making adjustments to maintain a consistent identity.

There has been a huge number of popular self-improvement books on the subject (Greene and Elffers, 2000) (Singer, 2012) and you can find tips on Web sites and self-help courses. The idea of personal branding is that all of us have a personal brand, or what Peters defines a sign of distinction’ is first theorized by him. The main problem is that until now there are not many academic studies that analyze this phenomenon.

During the last years, a minor publishing and personal development industry has developed, especially in the USA, tips and advises individuals on how to market and brand themselves. Referring to branding literature you can borrow the rules and apply them to the job market; using web 2.0 tools we can market ourselves as a brand.

In the recruitment world, Self-marketing consists of some activities to make yourself known in the job market, for finding employment (Meister, Jeanne. "Personal Branding in the Future Workplace: A Crucial Skill for Employees and Recruiters Alike". Forbes. Retrieved 2017-09-05). Self-marketing has been used for years by famous people; later on, also other people in business and politicians started using it. In the academic environment, self-marketing is most seen in the support provided by specialists in educational institutions for students looking for their first job or planning a career, while in the HR sector it is part of the tips offered by employment agencies. Self-marketing is also being touted as a crucial activity by an increasing number of self-help gurus. Self-marketing is now an increasing business and a trending topic.

The range of advice now publicly available is serving to democratize the process. The key idea of the research is that the rules of digital marketing can also be applied to the people. Since the new media and all the digital world is becoming the center of marketing, the same rules should be useful also in the job market where personal branding is also observed by recruiters during the selection process (Landau, Phillip (11 December 2013). "Job applications: social media profiles under scrutiny". guardian.co.uk. Retrieved January 20, 2014). We can extend the practices that famous people use to increase their brands; the difference is the audience and the aim, but the results will be in the same direction.

To promote you as a brand you should manage you on the net, using google, and also promote you on social media; especially on LinkedIn if your aim is job research.

While the most published sources refer to 'self-marketing', (Shepherd, 2005b) refer to the marketing of individuals as 'person marketing', and use 'self-marketing' to refer to the recent trending topic whereby consumers determine for themselves the products and brands they buy (pp.395-7). The phrase 'self-marketing' will be used here rather than 'personal marketing', because the latter has connotations of personal selling, which has its own distinct and well-established meaning, and because 'personal marketing' is sometimes used to include the marketing of individuals by others.

In the past the researchers spoke about personal branding and applying the same rules of "marketing" to the personal career; now there is a step forward that is the use of "digital marketing". The main difference is that in the digital era there are lower barriers because the investments can be cheaper. Also, a student can afford a digital marketing strategy.

2.1 Personal Branding

To the extent that marketing is normally used in a variety of unconventional contexts, the debate over the broadening of marketing may be considered to be largely over. Those who resisted the extension of marketing into such diverse fields as politics (Newman and Perloff, 2004), (Lees-Marshment, 2001), education (Litten, Kotler and Fox, 1987), healthcare (Kay, 2007), and places (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993) (Short, 2015), (Kavaratzis, 2009), appear to have lost, and the marketers appear to have won across a wide range of enterprises (Kotler, 1979). Nevertheless, attempts to adopt both the marketing principle and marketing techniques in non-conventional settings is still an open point.

A mix of gurus, job recruitment specialists, and career advisors, that offer practical approaches and job-related advice are currently dealing with self-marketing topics.

We want to match the rules of marketing and especially digital marketing with the research of the job in the creation of the reputation of the individuals.

“Brand management has become more and more important, even essential for running a perspective business. Personal branding is the new trend in the area of brands and brand management where we look at promoting a person and managing every aspect of their public image” (Cohen *et al.*, 2020). They have to identify their unique selling proposition. They then construct a ‘personal brand statement’ around this attribute set. Finally, they create a strategy for making the brand awareness to the outside world. The personal branding strategy follows the same rules.

2.2 Digital Marketing

The definition of Digital marketing according to Kannan: “Digital marketing (also known as data-driven marketing) is an umbrella term for the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the Internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium.” (Financial Times, 2018)

According to the Financial Times, the definition of Digital Marketing is: “The marketing of products or services using digital channels to reach consumers. The key objective is to promote brands through various forms of digital media. Digital marketing extends beyond internet marketing to include channels that do not require the use of the internet. It includes mobile phones (both SMS and MMS), social media marketing, display advertising, search engine marketing, and any other form of digital media.” (Kannan and Li, 2017)

The idea is to analyze the techniques and match to find commonalities; furthermore, we want to test if the people with a good web reputation have better possibilities to find good jobs or to get political consensus. To analyze web reputation, we will use different approaches: we will compare online performances on LinkedIn, Google, and also on the most important social media (Instagram and Facebook).

“The digitization of media represents a phase change in the history of communications”. (Jung, 2009)

The key objectives are:

- Identify Your Unique Selling Point
- Choose Your Digital Channels
- Reach Out
- Engage

All these points are the common key element of digital marketing and personal branding; we want to test if a digital marketing strategy has a high and positive impact on the outcome of personal branding.

As we previously said we consider persons as a brand, so we want to market them using the same rules that we use for products; in the digital era, we need to face the digital marketing challenge. Marketing rules have been already used for personal branding and we want to prove that also digital marketing rules can be used in this field.

Branding rules changed in the digital world, especially with social media as Susan Fournier, (Fournier and Avery, 2011) argues “Technology breakthroughs always affect foundational changes in brand management”. So, if we want to manage people as a brand, we have to use our web profiles as companies and try to use them to promote ourselves. For a better selection process, we should take into consideration also the soft skills that emerge from social profiles and internet presence in general.

The subjects of this research, that have been partially addressed in the past, are mentioned in the following table (Table 1) where the different topics and/or findings of the Thesis are summarized and the main literature references are also mentioned.

TOPIC	CONCEPT/FINDING	LITERATURE
Personal Branding (PB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand applied to person (person as product) • CEOs as intangible assets of a company • Brand Management (develop personal distinction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peters 1997 • Lampel and Bhalla 2007 • Cohen et al. 2020 • Khenler 2019 • Bendish and al. 2013 • Close and al. 2011
From Personal Branding to Self-Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing of individuals by themselves • Use of digital tools Web 2.0, Google... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greene and Effer 2000 • Sheferd 2005b • Singer 2012 • Forbes 2012
Digital Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product marketing applied to people • Digital technologies/channels to reach people • How to develop PB with digital marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kannan and Li, 2017 • Fournier and Avery, 2011
Personal/self Brand development through Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More visibility/huge audience • Rapid dissemination of info • Two ways/one to many communication • Continuous feedbacks to reposition your brand (sentiment analysis) • Low investment • Personal control of the political strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poeppelman and al. 2014 • Karaduman 2013 • Yaqub et al. 2017 • Mazzoleni et al. 2018 • Wicaksono et al. 2017 • Jungherr 2016 • Murthy 2015 • Ceron, Curini et al. 2016 • Jungherr 2016

Table 1 - Topics of the Thesis and related existing literature

Starting from the existing literature the current research work is aimed to develop further the Personal/Self-branding concepts to cover the gaps of the existing studies with the objective to:

- maximize the personal reputation, both in the business and political careers;
- keep continuously updated the reputation using the one to one feedback of the customers/contacts based on sentiment analysis methodologies
- minimize the needed investments thanks to the development of simple and flexible digital tools available in the Social Network community.

3. How digital drivers of Personal Branding affect employability

3.1 Aim of the research project

The study aims to understand if the behavior of people who market themselves as a product has a better opportunity to find appropriate jobs.

We want to broaden digital marketing rules; the key idea is that with social media you can invest in your brand also a small amount of money and have a strong impact.

Theoretical discourse in the strategic marketing field is particularly lively in recent years, thanks to the evolution of the marketing tools supported by digital technologies which are known as digital marketing.

On the other hand, streams such as talent management, entrepreneurial attitude, and culture, personal branding are more and more pushing individuals to perceive themselves exactly as a company or a product to be promoted and looking for a strategic position in the job market, much more than in the past.

This topic is not new: Since the late 1990s, self-marketing and personal branding have become increasingly popular (Montoya, 2002).

However, scientific literature paid little attention to the intersection between these two streams, whilst the new theories and trends in both fields call for a significant rethinking of mainstream “self-marketing” discourse.

Within the personal branding movement, people and their careers are marketed as brands complete with promises of performance, specialized designs, and tag lines for success.

Personal branding offers such an overt invitation to self-commodification; the phenomenon invites a careful and searching analysis (Lair, Sullivan and Cheney, 2005).

The goal of this work is to understand how you can do personal branding using the rules of digital marketing. The most important principles of digital marketing can be applied to people as well as to

products: we want to investigate if this phenomenon as an impact on the hiring process, and if it is positive or negative.

This study aims to create a system that can map innovative competencies to provide a useful tool for the placement activities. Possible variables that can be useful for a perfect matching between Personal Branding and digital marketing are also investigated.

The study addresses the specific case of postgraduate students at MIBE (Master International Business Entrepreneurship), within the University of Pavia, and recent graduates as a particularly interesting field for an empirical investigation. Quantitative methods will be applied. Findings will offer both theoretical and practical insight regards the challenges of higher education in attempting to create a curricular framework within which marketing professionals can learn how to market and brand themselves effectively.

3.2 Research Question

The Research Question is “how much the personal branding within the social media, such as the high number of connections on LinkedIn, Facebook or others can increase the probability to find at least one job opportunity?”

3.3 Literature review

The theoretical challenge of Self Marketing and Personal Branding is the continuing debate started by Kotler and Levy (Kotler and Levy, 1969) on broadening the scope of marketing. In particular, this paper questions the idea of broadening the rules of digital marketing; the idea is to design digital curricula that help to find a good job; especially in line with the expectations. To explain such curricula, a companion paper (Shepherd, 2005b) reports the findings of a study that aims to document how young marketing professionals approach self-marketing and personal branding; the main problem is that no one takes into account the digital part of the process.

Another practical challenge is to design a dashboard to match the skills and the expectations of the candidates, with the requests of the companies. We want to create a double type of segmentation, one with self-evaluation and one with evaluation by professors.

We want to match the rules of marketing and especially digital marketing with the research of the job and in the creation of the reputation of the worker.

Digital marketing is changing the basic rule of traditional marketing and shifting the attention of the company to the customers, the internet, and especially social media helped the company to reduce distances with customers.

The focus of the companies is on the relationship and the interactions with their customers. (Tiago and Veríssimo, 2014)

Companies use social media and the internet to shorten distances with customers, know their needs, interact with them so involved in all the new product development process.

In the personal branding field, we applied the same rules of the companies for branding to the individuals we can apply the same marketing rules to people.

“Follow a strategic self-branding process based on one’s values and competencies, similar to the branding methods of companies and products, but with the understanding that personal branding will change as one’s career advances.” (Rangarajan, Gelb and Vandaveer, 2017)

Reputation and branding rules applied to people have been conceptualized some years ago by Peters (Peters, 1997) now the challenge is studying the effect on the job market.

Company brands are created for a specific aim while personal brands formulate throughout a person’s experience and development. So it’s challenging brand management applied to a single person, but it is important in the job market. Khedher states “personal branding is a strategic signifying practice leading to enhanced graduate ability to market themselves in the competitive job market”. (Khedher, 2019)

There are evidences of personal branding strategies in different fields: in corporate executives. The CEO of companies is considered as an intangible asset as brands. “ CEO brands provide the basis for empirical research into relationships between brand identity, reputation, position, and equity, with implications for personal fame and company fortune” (Bendisch, Larsen and Trueman, 2013). Also, Ph.D. candidates have been investigated: the personal branding approach to understand how the information provided affects the employability and their expected salary, (Close, Moulard and Monroe, 2011). The personal branding strategy applied in the digital world can be applied to a wider audience: even students that are looking for the first job can use digital marketing tools to promote themselves and to find a job position.

“Students need to understand the concept of personal branding and how actions they engage today, especially in social media, can affect their future.” (Johnson, 2017)

The creation of a personal brand in the digital world is linked to social media, digital marketing is a big opportunity for graduates students. Social media are an important tool for developing the

brand: “Linkedin connects professionals and facilitates recruitment and advertising, while Twitter allows the sharing of brief messages.” (Poepelman and Blacksmith, 2014)

Branding strategies are long term projects, and need important financial support; also in personal branding, the economic requirement is high. However, the digital world and the use of social media allows also students to access some digital marketing tools to create their brands.

As Karaduman said: “Social media, with its ideological and technological structure, allows the people to promote themselves as brands in a relatively cheap and efficient manner.” (Karaduman, 2013)

In this research, we investigate the main variable that can affect the employability of the graduate students from Master in International Business and entrepreneurship of the University of Pavia.

3.4 Methodology

The different steps of the methodology are depicted in fig 1.

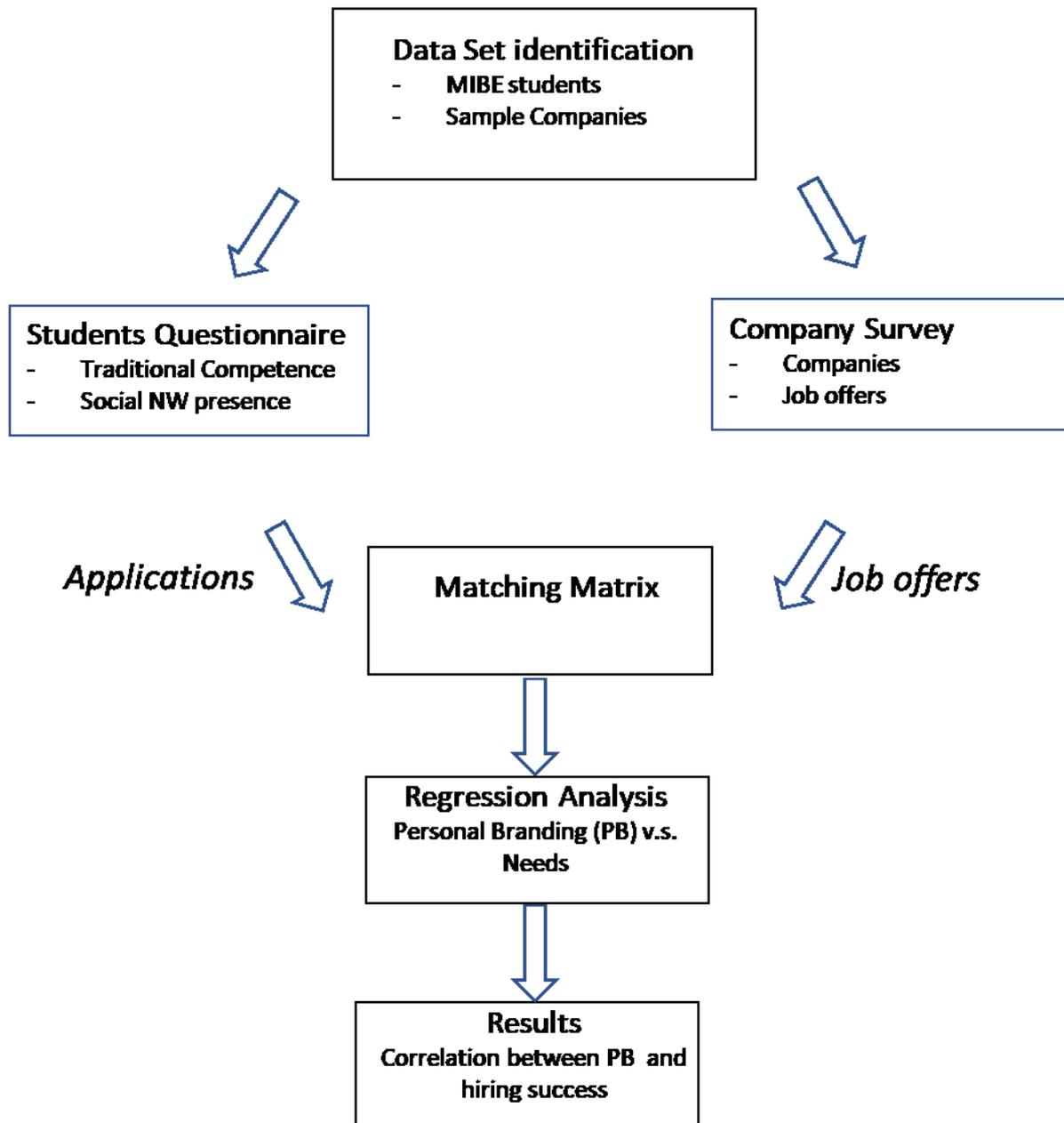


Figure 1 – Methodology of the Study

The reference data set refers to the MIBE postgraduate students at the University of Pavia and a selected set of Companies. The reference years of observation are from 2017 to 2019. The sample is composed of 70% Italian students plus 30% foreigners. The basis of this study is the data of each MIBE student participating in the survey in terms of:

- competences and skills;
- presence in the social networks and Personal Branding;
- willingness to join specific Companies or sectors.
- professional/labor needs of Italian Companies, i.e. the number of employees needed in a certain role or needed skills;

To gather the information we have requested the students to fill in a questionnaire, MIBE Students Questionnaire, with all the information required in terms of their education, skill, and job preferences, as reported in Attachment 1. Such information is complemented by the students' data on the net downloading from LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and other social media plus other content published online. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the LinkedIn contacts made by the MIBE Students that are part of the study. The number of students is in the vertical axis while the horizontal axis shows ranges of LinkedIn

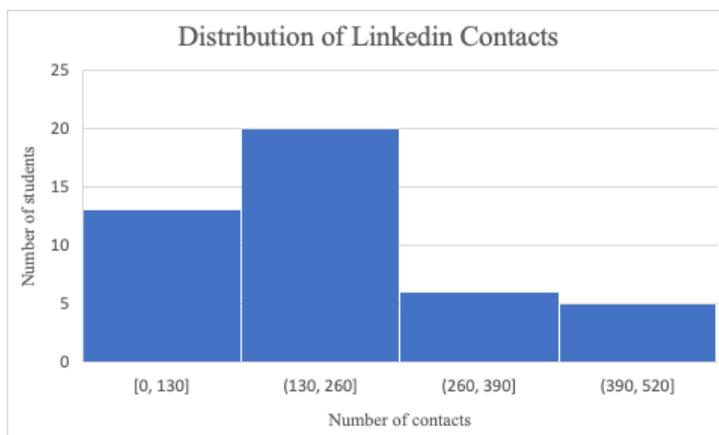


Figure 2– Distribution of LinkedIn contacts

Using the premium version, we have downloaded all the LinkedIn data related to MIBE students, that are our sample, to understand the Personal Branding and to map all the digital strategy of the students. The scope of the study is to analyze which are the main criteria that drive the selection process to success i.e what is the ideal Personal Brand, including competences and skill, that maximize the possibility to find the preferred job.

The choice of the single student, i.e. the application for a specific job to a defined Company, is the “statistic unit”.

Being the choice of the variables one of the starting points of the study we need to identify the most important independent variables.

Independent variables are those related to the Personal brand which includes the competencies such for example average mark, admission test result, professor signaling, academic awards, and other possible data related to digital marketing, such as presence and activity in the social community, that can influence the performance of the student. For example, Fig 3 reports the distribution of the marks achieved in the Master by the MIBE students.

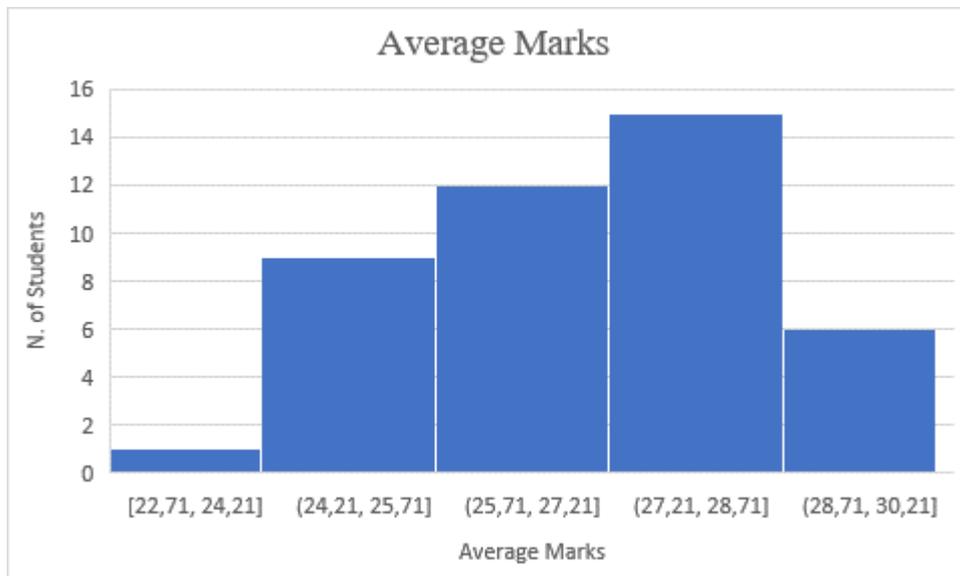


Figure 3 – Average Mark of the MIBE students in their Master

We have created a map of all the competencies and all the skills of the students to understand how we can match the requests of the market.

One important question is whether a high reputation on the web can influence the chance to find a good job, in addition to the traditional attributes related to marks, competence, and skills.

We want to correlate the individual data with data coming from the job market: the number of employees that the market needs in specific jobs, for example, how many job positions are opened in 2017 for a big data scientist, and match these with the skills of the students graduated in the same year.

With the information provided by each participant (name, physical address, and e-mail addresses), we have conducted online searches. When a social networking site profile is not open, we asked the authorization to access the participants' pages.

With this information, we generated a Personal digital brand audit for each participant: for instance, we codified summary information, including the number of search results within the web, Facebook and Instagram activity (e.g., number of friends, posts, pictures), and whether the person owned his or her domain name or participated in a personal blog.

These analyses are a basis of knowledge that can also be evaluated in the future by getting the proper feedback from the involved companies with relevant surveys. The dashboard performance can be evaluated and improved by getting the Companies' feedbacks.

The sample considered in the study is composed of 53 students, so we can have significant results. When the database was properly populated, some descriptive analysis could be applied to understand what the most required skills were; we have created a summary of the skills and the attitude for each candidate. After this analysis, we could understand the driver that is more important for each position. In Fig 4 we have summarized the distribution of the applications of the students to different business sectors. The vertical axis reports the number of students while in the horizontal axis the Industry sectors are reported.

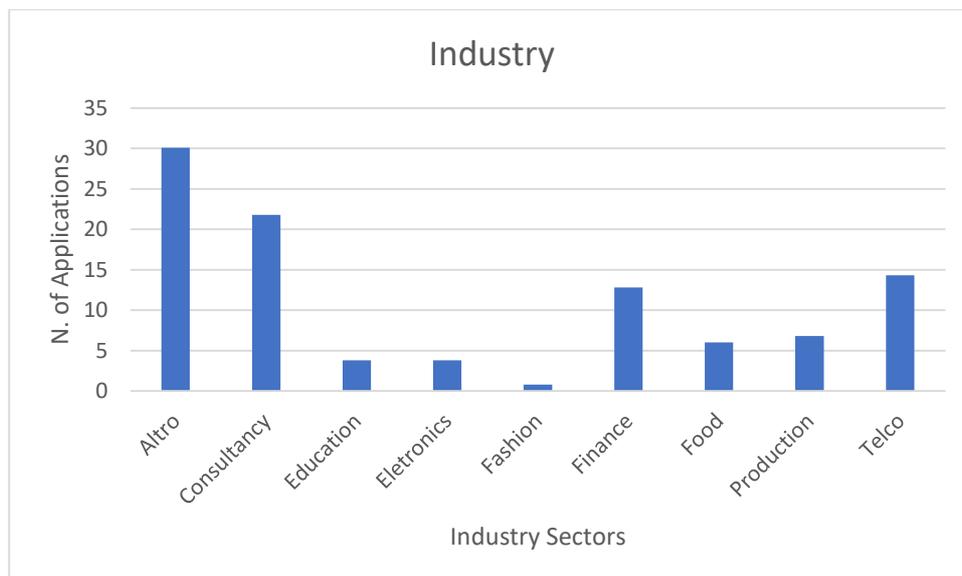


Figure 4 - Students Applications by Industry sector

In Fig 5 the Companies addressed by the student’s applications are shown.

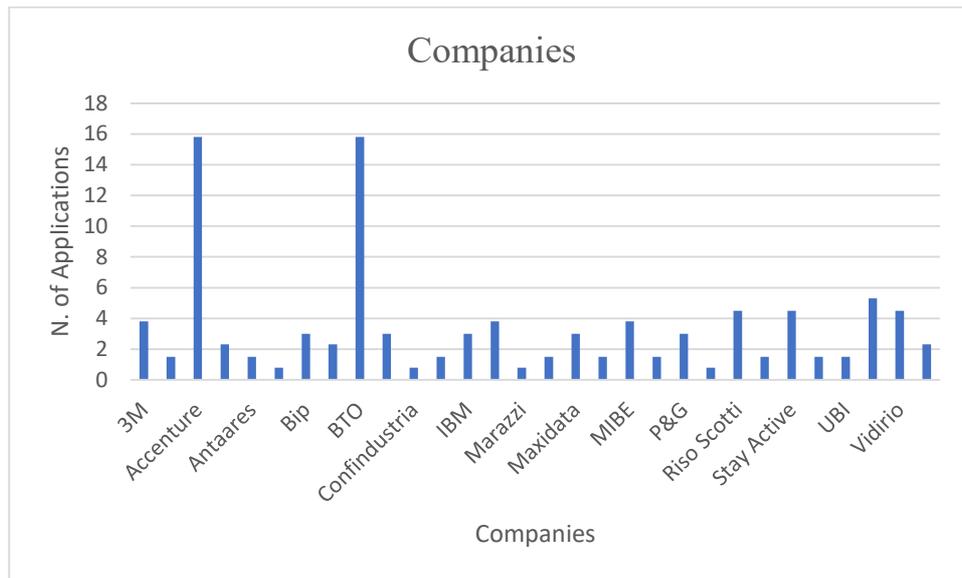


Figure 5 - Students Applications v.s Companies

Each request/application done by each student is considered the statistic unit. In total, we have considered 130 Statistics units.

Table 2 summarizes the data of the sample that were subject to our observation (OBS):

Sample	Number of Observations (OBS)
Statistic Units/Applications	130
Students	53
Number of Offers	18
Average applications/student	2,45

Table 2 - Summary of the sample data

The Applications were then compared to the Company’s needs, i.e. the number of Offers in Table 2.

The variables that have been considered for each Application are shown in Table 3:

Variable list	Descriptions
Digital marks	Digital marketing marks
Average	Average mark in all exams
Linkedin	Number of connections on Linkedin
Facebook	Number of connections on Facebook
Applications	Number of applications for each student

Table 3 - Variables

3.5 Results

Table 4 shows a summary of the data of the sample (all the students) and the result of the matching between the Applications and the Offers.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Applications	53	2.481.481	2.149.425	1	9
Linkedin	53	2.256.226	1.550.163	0	500
Facebook	53	2.634.364	543.199	0	2044
Average	53	2.692.192	1.672.256	21,5	29,64
Digitalmark	53	6.777.778	1.218.515	0	30
JobFound	53	0.3818182	.4903101	0	1

Table 4 - Descriptive statistics of the sample/Matching Matrix

We found a positive correlation between the number of LinkedIn connections and the probability to find a job (Tab 5).

	Applications	Linkedin	Facebook	Average	Digital mark	jobs found
Applications	1					
Linkedin	0,0204	1				
Facebook	0,3058	0,1331	1			
Average	-0,1887	0,1536	0,2045	1		
Digitalmark	-0,1586	-0,0766	-0,2779	0,2443	1	
JobFound	0,0859	0,5205	0,2148	0,1793	-0,1773	1

Table 5 - Correlation Matrix

Both descriptive statistics and regressions have been executed.

Using the MIBE sample (Table 2) we want to test our research questions, and we expect to have positive correlations between the use of digital marketing strategies on the social and on the web and the chance to find a job.

We used data from the personal profiles on social media and the results of their digital marketing exam (Table 4). We regressed the variables using the results of the applications. The result of the regression analysis are shown in Table 6.

The results show that using digital marketing tools in personal branding can increase the chance of finding a good job.

The use of LinkedIn in particular for promoting yourself leads to better results (Table 6).

VARIABLES	(1) JobFound	(2) JobFound	(3) JobFound	(4) JobFound	(5) JobFound
Digitalmark	-0.00716 (0.00551)	-0.00836 (0.00558)	-0.00609 (0.00598)	-0.00462 (0.00555)	-0.00443 (0.00559)
Average		0.0672 (0.0412)	0.0537 (0.0431)	0.0357 (0.0395)	0.0430 (0.0411)
Facebook			0.000139 (0.000132)	8.98e-05 (0.000120)	6.02e-05 (0.000128)
Linkedin				0.00143*** (0.000413)	0.00142*** (0.000416)
Applications					0.0213 (0.0309)
Constant	0.437*** (0.0763)	-1.385 (1.102)	-1.075 (1.140)	-0.893 (1.035)	-1.134 (1.098)
Observations	54	52	52	51	51
R-squared	0.031	0.075	0.096	0.278	0.286

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6 - Results of the regression analysis

Unfortunately, there is still no empirical evidences of Facebook importance in personal branding strategies for finding a job.

This study is based on graduate students, every student is considered a digital brand and the analysis shows a positive correlation with the number of connections on Facebook and with the students' marks in the master exams.

The number of connections is a good indicator of Personal brand awareness.

Social media and digital tools are quite effective in the first job research even because these digital tools are cheap and, in some cases, free. From Table 6, we can understand the importance of connections on Linkedin even if the job offer comes from other channels. Linkedin is not only a tool for companies to find human resources, but they also use it as a source of information. In the model, we use the number of connections as a proxy to understand the level of use of this social media platform.

Unlikely we can't see a significant impact of Facebook presence, but further study with larger databases could probably analyze this dependence.

The job market now relates to social media because companies don't have time to use the HR department for interviewing all the candidates for a specific position. The HR managers screen the CVs list using also data they got from the web, and they use also the linked page of the company to reach the highest number of potential candidates: social media, in this study we focus on LinkedIn, is becoming the main platform for job recruiting, finding information. Since companies relate to LinkedIn, graduate students that better perform in personal branding on the platform have better chances to find a job.

4. How digital Personal Branding performance affects political election results.

4.1 Aim of the research project

There is a strong debate around the need for quantitative studies, aimed to demonstrate the effectiveness of spending energies and resources on personal branding in the political environment. Especially the leverages to optimize the results are not too many. The scope of this paper is to fill this gap in the political environment where the audience is particularly vast. The advantage here v.s. other environments is the possibility to compare the individual's performances in a competitive arena which is homogeneous among different people in terms of conditions, timelines, and goals; this arena is the "election campaign". This common arena allows the identification of data and results that are free from distortions so that the results of the study in terms of personal branding are extremely solid.

This research explains the relationship between digital personal branding and the electoral performance (for electoral performance indicator we consider electoral polls).

This study begins by examining parallel developments in contemporary communication and democracy; the question is how personal branding arises as a form of a market-appropriate response to the political need of communication.

There are not yet empirical studies analyzing the relationship between the digital personal branding strategies and investments and the success at political elections.

This research investigates how the reputation and the sentiment on Twitter can influence political results. Tweets regarding Italian politics, considered as personal brands, will be analyzed in this paper with the R sentiment analysis methodology.

The results of the study are matched with other data coming from institutional sources such as the political elections, or official surveys i.e. SWG.

The Personal Branding of politicians has been explored in many perspectives, not only linked with digital topics and digital marketing tools.

The paper investigates how much personal branding strategy on Twitter affects the performance of the politicians and their political parties as a consequence.

The effect of personal digital branding on performance will be demonstrated by tools of text mining techniques within the R sentiment analysis. In the literature, you can find examples of similar

researches (ref. to the literature review section), but no one uses text mining for the analysis of the politicians' brands performance.

There is a strong debate about the importance of social media, their effect on the consumer market, on the financial information, and the important field of political elections.

The politicians use social media to create personal branding equity, they can create awareness because they can reach with their accounts a very huge audience with extremely low investments by keeping full control of their messages. The most important role of social media is also to create the one to one engagement with the elector. Through the social contact the electors can create a direct relationship with the leaders; thanks to its characteristics twitter looks the perfect tool to create engagement.

The political debate online through Twitter can be a good indicator of the performance of the politicians and, as a consequence, for their political parties.

4.2 Research Question

How the politicians' performance on Twitter affects the political parties' results? The research focuses on the sentiment analysis on Twitter and the impact on the traditional poll.

4.3 Literature review

The new challenge for politicians is shaping a brand on social media according to their vision and try to be consistent. The main aim of a politician's account on social media is to create a profile to spread the message and to create awareness and positive associations in the electors.

The focus of the research is the politicians' brands: how they market themselves as a brand.

The evolution of communication drove people to express their opinion on social media; especially on twitter.

The brand concept perfectly suit to the electoral situation: all candidates compete on the vote of citizens, the presence of a strong personal brand is crucial.

Personal branding for politicians is linked, and it should be, with the concept of e-democracy not in a formalized platform for everyday decisions, but because electors are now users. Social media users express opinions on their leaders. The paper aims to understand how the online performance can reflect in reality. The idea is that if you have a good digital marketing strategy you can reach more electors, understand the sentiment about your "brand" and take decisions accordingly. If

politicians can monitor reactions to their ideas, they can understand how they can improve their electoral performance.

In Europe, there are some parties and leaders that are trying to apply a concept of direct democracy. The idea is that the leaders should have a strong link with the electors and always try to understand the people's needs.

According to this idea, it's very important the use of sentiment analysis of social media: this could be the tool that can shorten the distance between politicians and electors, and can also show a good overview of the popular sentiment.

Scholars study the social media applied in political communication because the new channels, especially Twitter, offers a wide range of information in a very short time: "Rapid dissemination of information through social media platforms, such as Twitter, provides politicians and campaigners with the ability to broadcast their message to a wide audience instantly and directly while bypassing the traditional media channel" (Yaqub *et al.*, 2017).

Mining sentiment and opinions in the text has grown rapidly, due in part to the large increase in the availability of data expressing personal opinions (Pang and Lee, 2008b).

In particular, sentiment in Twitter data has been used for predictions or measurements in a variety of domains, such as stock market, politics, and social movements (Bollen, Mao and Zeng, 2011) the use of sentiment in finance to understand and predict markets. The idea is to use the sentiment as a tool to measure personal brand performance on the web. The second step is to compare results with traditional surveys and analyze how the web predict the real world.

Also, Italian scholars studied the political situation. Mazzoleni (Mazzoleni, 1995) studies the transition of the Italian political situation in 1994; Mazzoleni assesses that in the election the new party Forza Italia, created by Silvio Berlusconi, won the competition also thanks to the new communication strategy.

The use of mass media, in this case, television, changed the paradigm; it created a personal brand. The idea is that Silvio Berlusconi entered in all families and people believed him. So, the idea is that with the new paradigm people have better marketing performance if they are marketed as brands.

But now there is a new revolution in the media, the mass media are no longer the focus of communication (Mazzoleni and Bracciale, 2018); the new way to reach all voters is the social media.

The revolution of web 2.0 moved the competition from a “one to many” communication, typical of the broadcast TV, to the “one to one” communication typical of the interactive platform of the Internet; the citizens want to talk and interact with their leaders. The voters now want to have an active role every day not only at the elections. The opinions on the social now can influence a lot the parliament. If there is a model to analyze sentiment on the new media, we can understand how the political brand performs. The analysis focuses on the link between survey conduct offline and online sentiment on twitter.

There are some cases in other countries; as an example in a study of Twitter in Canada electoral politics, (Small, 2011) finds that the interactions revolving around the #cdnpoli hashtag failed to meet the standard of two-way deliberative dialogue yet succeeded in disseminating political information about the election.

There are lot of after the rise of candidate websites in 1996, e-mail in 1998 (the Jesse Ventura campaign), online fund-raising in 2000 (the John McCain campaign), and blogs in 2004 (the Howard Dean campaign; Gueorguieva, 2007), the microblogging platform Twitter has become a legitimate and frequently used communication channel in the political arena as a result of the 2008 campaign. (Tumasjan *et al.*, 2010)

Scholars have recently started to investigate social media as a tool to forecast elections (Tjong, Sang and Bos, 2012) assess the popularity of politicians, and compare the political decisions that people express online with those captured using traditional tools (O’connor *et al.*, no date) (Ceron *et al.*, 2014).

There are also researches focusing on USA presidential election prediction: (Wicaksono, Suyoto and Pranowo, 2017) tried to forecast the winner using data from twitter, but the model couldn’t decide the winning party or candidate if the votes are a tie, because there are regulations about tie-breaking vote that decided by the senates that cannot be implemented in the system.”

Some of these works use simple techniques, focusing on the volume of data related to a specific party or candidate. Other scholars have stated that a candidate’s number of Facebook supporters could be a valid indicator of electoral fortunes (Sang and Bos, 2012), while (Tumasjan *et al.*, 2010) compared party mentions on Twitter with the results of the 2009 German election and argued that the number of tweets related to each party is a good predictor of its vote share.

But, only counting mentions or tweets is not sufficient to provide accurate foresight (Chung and Mustafaraj, no date). Accordingly, other studies have attempted to improve this stream of research using Sentiment Analysis. (Bakliwal *et al.*, 2013) Bakliwal for example developed a sentiment

classifier based on lexical induction and found correlations between several polls conducted during Irish General Elections in February 2011. (O'Connor *et al.*, no date) O'Connor showed results, revealing a correlation between Obama's approval rate and the sentiment expressed by Twitter users, but in this case, Obama's win was overestimated also because of the electoral target. Some types of electors are not active users of social networks and they are not well distributed among parties. Also, SA of tweets was found to perform as well as polls in predicting the results of the 2011 Dutch senate election (Sang and Bos, 2012). This paper aims to demonstrate that the digital brand performance is affecting the results in the traditional pool.

The growth of social media usage is an important change in the marketing rules, in personal branding, and political competition and debate. Surprisingly there are not yet studies addressing this topic.

The focus of analysis is the social media, in particular Twitter, since it is very popular in the world. In the USA for example according to Pew Internet and American Life Project, 66% of US adults who use social networking sites (or 39% of all US adults) started politically oriented activity on these sites, and a third of these social media users report linking to preexisting content that relates to political or social topics.

Some studies focus the attention on Twitter and its link to political campaigns: Jungherr mapped the literature in a systematic literature review. "Twitter has become a pervasive tool in election campaigns. Candidates, parties, journalists, and a steadily increasing share of the public are using Twitter to comment on, interact around, and research public reactions to politics" (Jungherr, 2016). The idea is that with the massive use of social networks, the people interact online; if you can capture the opinion on the net you can analyze how digital performance can influence results. As done for the consumer product, digital brand of politician are a theme of discussion on the major social so they have a performance. (Gómez, Hernández-Santaolalla and Sanz-Marcos, 2018).

The importance of social media as a solution to monitor electoral campaigns is well established. Day-by-day evaluation of the evolution of online ideas and opinions allows observers trends and public opinion well before traditional polls that need more time to be processed.

However, there are difficulties in recording and analyzing the performance because the online presence doesn't represent all the population: the Twitter users are not a perfect sample of the electoral population because of some differences in ages, study level, and geographical distribution. All the previous differences can produce inaccurate forecasts of final polls and results. (Ceron, Curini and Iacus, 2016).

To understand the electors' opinion day by day, there have been increasing efforts to approximate various survey measures using social media. Social media especially Twitter can be a very useful tool to monitor electors' opinions minute by minute (Beauchamp, 2017).

The previous studies focus on the strategic branding of people and how they influence the performance, but not yet how the personal branding influence the organization. The case analyzed is the theme of politics: the role of the leader in this field is crucial for the performance of the organizations in this case parties. The analysis is not predicting election outcomes, but the sentiment analysis shows the performance on social media and then affects the parties' performance (Murthy, 2015).

To understand the performance of the brand we use R and text mining; currently there are yet studies focusing only on simple KPIs, such as likes, favorites, and retweets. (Pang and Lee, 2008a) and they are not sufficient for the complete explanation of the phenomenon.

The assumption is that a lot of people are talking about a specific topic even if they are not involved in a discussion directly on the profile of the person we are studying. Since the field we chose is political elections the social media chosen is twitter: "The preferred social media platform for marketing purposes was Facebook. Twitter was more used for continuous dialogue compared to Facebook" (Enli and Skogerbø, 2013) and analyzed political election in Norway. In that case, they considered only tweets written by some selected profiles and not the sentiment of the whole platform users. Also in Nigerian elections, Oyebode analyzed the sentiment analysis and tried to understand the candidates' chances of being elected into the highest position of authority in Nigeria (Oyebode and Orji, 2019).

4.4 Methodology

The steps of the methodology are shown in Fig. 6.

We have chosen December 2018 because that was the period with the highest volume of tweets and was not influenced by particular events such as the election (Italian elections March 2019). The politicians were the representatives of the three major parties: Salvini, Di Maio, and Renzi.

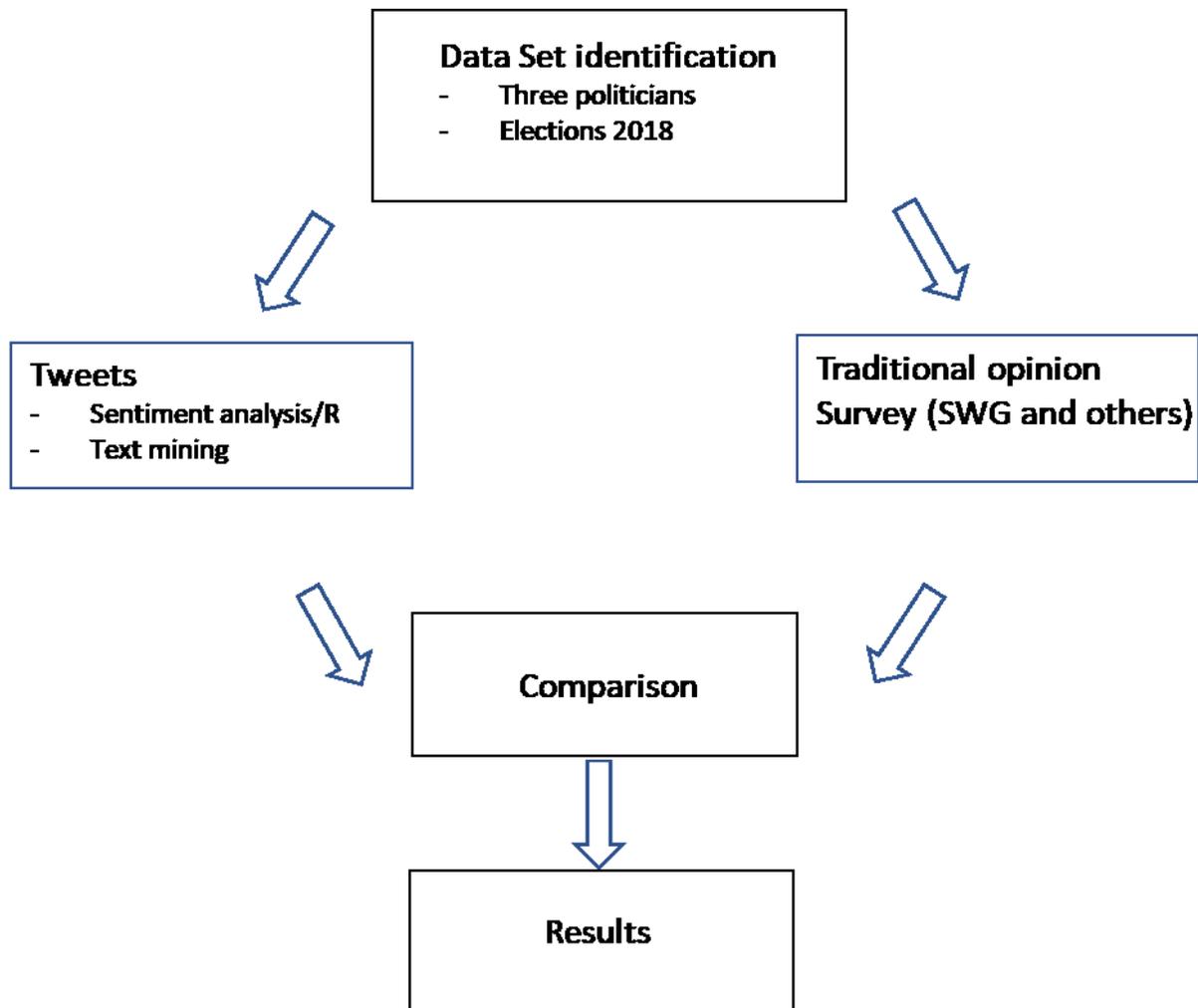


Figure 6 - Methodology for elections survey analysis

To extract the sentiment of these tweets automatically, we used Sentiment Analysis in R. To download the tweets in R we used the pack twitter R and downloaded them automatically. As described previously, this paper aims to compare the results obtained by sentiment analysis, performed on data extracted from social media, with the results from traditional opinion surveys. Online there are many surveys every week monitoring the Italian situation: Piepoli, Euromedia, SWG, Tecnè, and Index. Specifically, this study compares the polarized results (positive and negative opinions) of the Twitter sentiment analysis with the results of a voting traditional survey conducted by SWG during December 2018.

We started downloading tweets from the web using an API and using the R software to manage the data. The period that has been considered, December 2018, was the month with a very high volume

of tweets, while it was also sufficiently far away from the election time so that we could study the effects in a normal situation without particular shocks.

The methodological procedures used to perform the analysis is based on the following steps:

- define the subject of the study,
- choose the data source,
- define the key terms for data mining,
- select the opinion-mining software and package,
- collect and prepare the data,
- define the training set,
- perform the sentiment analysis
- Perform a regression model and validate the results.

Specifically, the methodology determines the rate at which certain sentiments and emotions (e.g., future orientation, positive or negative emotions) are present in the text. For both psychological dimensions the code calculates the relative frequency with which words related to that dimension occur in a given text sample (e.g., “truffa – fraud “ladro- thief” are counted as negatives). We focused on the three politicians with the highest number of votes.

The figures 7,8,9 show graphs of the word related to a particular candidate. Word cloud created images underling the most used words to give a picture that immediately shows the image of a related topic.



Figure 7 – Wordcloud Renzi



Figure 8 – Wordcloud Salvini



Figure 9 – Wordcloud Di Maio

We decided also to take into account the main parties in Italy competing for the prime minister elections; we have assumed the performance of the leader is linked to the performance of the party. The sentiment analysis is performed with R and with the Italian version of the lexicon dictionary. The Nlyia is a lexicon-based and supervised machine learning (ML) techniques to detect the sentiment polarity, i.e. negative or positive, (Oyebode and Orji, 2019). The software gives a rating to every tweet according to the dictionary with a scale from -1 to +1 so we can give a score to each tweet and monitor the sentiment for every “personal brand”. The wordlist is taken from the lexicon and enriched with the missing keyword regarding the topic.

The key idea is to understand how the digital marketing strategy can influence the performance of politicians by using the statistical tool “Sentiment Analysis in R”. The results had to be adjusted according to the communication language because for instance the Salvini’s approach is based on the use of negative words, to extract strong sentiments from electors.

The variables of the model as described in Table 7 are the following:

Variable	Description
favoriteCount	Number of favorite for the tweet
Y	Log number of favorite for the tweet
Salvini	The presence of name Salvini (0-1)
DiMaio	The presence of name Di Maio (0-1)
Renzi	The presence of name Renzi (0-1)
EMOTION	Total words positive and negative
EMOTION2	EMOTION*EMOTION
SENTIMENT	Difference between Positive and negative words
SENTIMENT2	SENTIMENT*SENTIMENT
ANDROID	Device used Android
IPHONE	Device used Iphone
IPAD	Device used Ipad
WEB	Device used Web browser
voto	Survey results

Table 7 – Description of all the variables included in the model

Favorite count is a retweet and not a native tweet). I have decided to use the log of Favorite Retweet count (Y) to smooth the differences when the number of retweets of two candidates is very high using the log function. We took the function to avoid the overestimation of some tweets written by influencers.

The variable Salvini, Di Maio, and Renzi are dummies: if the tweets contain the politician’s name the value is 1 otherwise 0. Emotions (the difference between positive and negative score according to lexicon dictionary) and Sentiment (Algebraic sum of positive and negative score according to lexicon dictionary). Emtotion2 and Sentiment2 are quadratic variables that are in the model to study if the effect is a linear one or a non-linear effect.

In the model, we analyze also the device used for the tweet: mobile or web.

There are also the details about the device or the browser used for twitter.

The sample of the study is composed of 581.436 unique tweets, each with one of the following hashtags: Renzi, Di Maio, and Salvini. The analysis of the sentiment relies on text mining and it is based on the lexicon dictionary, assigning a score +/- 1 to words.

From this it has been generated the variable Sentiment and this score has also been used for calculating the overall score of each politician.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
voto	581,436	25.6977	6.456.849	16.8	33
Renzi	581,436	.3264727	.4689229	0	1
DiMaio	581,436	.3143355	.4642511	0	1
sentiment	581,436	-2.97e-09	1	-3.989.933	5.405.338
EMOTION	581,436	1.143.049	1.258.033	0	8
ANDROID	581,436	.4942367	.4999672	0	1
IPHONE	581,436	.222377	.4158434	0	1
IPAD	581,436	.0488824	.2156224	0	1
WEB	581,436	.1478254	.3549271	0	1
Y	581,436	3.761.956	2.154.857	0	8.183.677
EMO_SENT	581,436	1.720.299	4.190.686	-16	49

Table 8 - Descriptive Statistics

The dependent variable “Voto” is built on the survey: the percentage of voter preferences in the days of the single tweet (Table 9).

Data	Legia Nord	M5S	PD
03/12/18	32	27,3	17,6
10/12/18	32	26,2	17,5
17/12/18	33	26,5	16,8
07/01/19	32,2	26,3	17,3

Table 9 - N. of vote preferences (%) of the Candidates/Parties

Data collected by SWG and published by LA7 on January 7th. 800 interviews were made with the methodology CATI-CAMI-CAWI on a sample stratified by gender, age, zone, size of the Municipality of residence with an error margin equal to $\pm 2,5\%$.

Table 10 shows the correlation matrix, indicating the correlation among the variables included in the regression model.

	voto	Renzi	DiMaio	Salvini	SENTIM~T	EMOTION	ANDROID	IPHONE	IPAD	WEB	Y
voto	1	-0,92007	0,092538	-0,09912	-0,08695	-0,01484	0,020836	0,003779	-0,01631	0,043509	-0,10202
Renzi	-0,92007	1	-0,4714	0,086004	0,064769	0,013678	-0,03158	-0,00497	0,028432	-0,05468	0,092852
DiMaio	0,092538	-0,4714	1	0,005104	0,031961	-0,00097	0,033506	0,004484	-0,0367	0,037615	-0,00895
Salvini	-0,09912	0,086004	0,005104	1	0,646907	0,014079	0,001892	-0,00213	-0,01565	0,043649	0,871747
SENTIM~T	-0,08695	0,064769	0,031961	0,646907	1	0,020971	0,005908	-0,00211	-0,02892	0,0526	0,717197
EMOTION	-0,01484	0,013678	-0,00097	0,014079	0,020971	1	-0,52863	-0,22411	-0,41172	0,071495	0,011636
ANDROID	0,020836	-0,03158	0,033506	0,001892	0,005908	-0,52863	1	-0,12123	-0,22273	0,067264	0,005015
IPHONE	0,003779	-0,00497	0,004484	-0,00213	-0,00211	-0,22411	-0,12123	1	-0,09442	0,030945	-0,00141
IPAD	-0,01631	0,028432	-0,0367	-0,01565	-0,02892	-0,41172	-0,22273	-0,09442	1	-0,11554	-0,01502
WEB	0,043509	-0,05468	0,037615	0,043649	0,0526	0,071495	0,067264	0,030945	-0,11554	1	0,058787
Y	-0,10202	0,092852	-0,00895	0,871747	0,717197	0,011636	0,005015	-0,00141	-0,01502	0,058787	1

Table 10 - Correlation Matrix

Form the correlation table (table 10) we can see that there is no significant correlation between all the variables in the model.

We run the regression model to understand how different variables influenced the performance i.e the variable Voto (Table 11).

VARIABLES	(1) voto	(2) voto	(3) voto	(4) voto	(5) voto	(6) voto	(7) voto
Renzi	0.0477*** (0.000111)	0.0479*** (0.000112)	0.0482*** (0.000112)	0.0479*** (0.000112)	0.0478*** (0.000112)	0.0483*** (0.000112)	0.0483*** (0.000112)
DiMaio	0.0697*** (0.000112)	0.0697*** (0.000113)	0.0697*** (0.000112)	0.0698*** (0.000113)	0.0697*** (0.000113)	0.0696*** (0.000112)	0.0696*** (0.000112)
ANDROID	0.000270 (0.000170)	0.000276 (0.000170)	0.000274 (0.000170)	0.000283* (0.000170)	0.000272 (0.000170)	0.000266 (0.000170)	0.000269 (0.000170)
IPHONE	0.000272 (0.000185)	0.000273 (0.000185)	0.000301 (0.000185)	0.000279 (0.000185)	0.000281 (0.000185)	0.000297 (0.000185)	0.000296 (0.000185)
IPAD	0.000485* (0.000261)	0.000477* (0.000261)	0.000504* (0.000261)	0.000477* (0.000261)	0.000477* (0.000261)	0.000513** (0.000261)	0.000501* (0.000260)
WEB	0.000563*** (0.000197)	0.000581*** (0.000197)	0.000602*** (0.000196)	0.000599*** (0.000197)	0.000584*** (0.000197)	0.000579*** (0.000196)	0.000573*** (0.000196)
Y	0.000540*** (2.17e-05)	0.000527*** (2.17e-05)	0.000503*** (2.17e-05)	0.000524*** (2.17e-05)	0.000509*** (2.17e-05)	0.000514*** (2.17e-05)	0.000513*** (2.17e-05)
SENTIMENT		0.000542*** (3.95e-05)	0.00187*** (6.41e-05)			0.00179*** (6.74e-05)	0.00302*** (0.000125)
SENTIMENT2			0.000959*** (2.01e-05)			-0.00114*** (2.40e-05)	0.000726*** (4.26e-05)
EMOTION				0.000548*** (3.68e-05)	0.000519*** (8.58e-05)	0.000308*** (9.13e-05)	0.000761*** (0.000129)
EMOTION2					0.000267*** (1.94e-05)	0.000117*** (2.10e-05)	0.000455*** (3.57e-05)
EMO_SENT							0.000790*** (6.76e-05)
Constant	-0.0356*** (0.000180)	-0.0353*** (0.000181)	-0.0354*** (0.000180)	-0.0351*** (0.000183)	-0.0356*** (0.000186)	-0.0357*** (0.000186)	-0.0356*** (0.000186)
Observations	581,436	581,436	581,436	581,436	581,436	581,436	581,436
R-squared	0.413	0.413	0.416	0.413	0.414	0.416	0.416

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, *p<0.1

Table 11 - Results of the regression analysis

This study has attempted to identify whether the results obtained by applying the sentiment analysis technique to data extracted from social media, in this case Twitter, can reveal the political preferences of citizens with approximately the same accuracy as traditional opinion polls.

4.5 Results

The results show how the digital performance of the leaders impacts on the elections. This performance is based on the tweets related to the three main politicians of the days. We can understand the data are mostly negative (Table 11) because people prefer to complain about politicians than celebrating them. The idea is that the less negative the better is performing.

Comparing with data from the traditional survey we can understand that the two main parties, the ones with better performance, are performing the same in the Sentiment analysis. We can state less negative Tweets can reflect more political consensus, as we can see in Table 11.

The other variable Emotion is the sum of all reactions positive and negative; in the model this variable brings an increased accuracy to the model. It shows a positive correlation with the dependent variable Voto. The reactions in the tweets about a single personal brand increase its performance in the survey, and this shows that both positive and negative reactions increase the consent. The highest number of reactions can be used as a proxy of awareness; this case shows personal branding awareness affect positively the electoral results of the party linked with the personal brand. Also, the positive reactions have a positive effect on the electoral results, but with a lower intensity.

The combination of these 2 effects shows how the performance of politicians on social media affects the results in surveys.

The analysis shows the influence of Sentiment on the variable “voto”; the variable emotion shows a higher R squared and it is positively correlated to the independent variable.

Even though sentiment analysis has not the same accuracy level as traditional opinion in this research there is an estimation of the influence of sentiment in the surveys; and with this regression model it is possible to understand how the control variables affect the results.

I have introduced the quadratic variable (see fig. 10,11,12) to understand if there is a non-linear effect and if it is significant (table 11). Figures 10 shows that the effect is not linear and the

quadratic variable is significant, indeed the effect increases until a certain threshold and then starts decreasing. The emotion is a very important effect on the performance, but a high value has a negative impact.

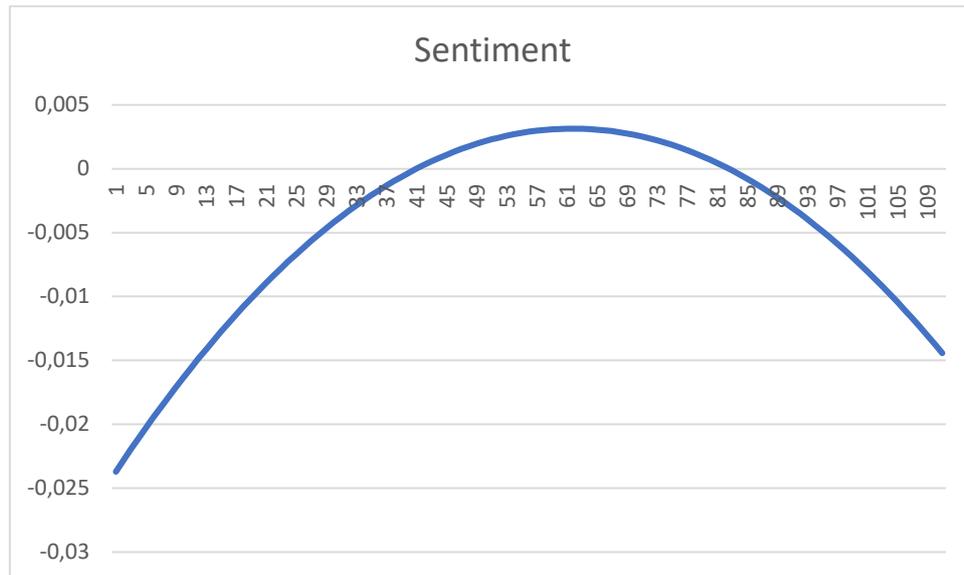


Figure 10 - Quadratic curve of Sentiment

Similarly, the variable Emotion has a significant non-linear effect has shown in table 11.

As shown in Fig. 11 the variable EMOTION initially has a positive effect, until the level is not too high otherwise it becomes counterproductive. The excellent level of emotion is lower than the general average so it would be useful to make campaigns that stimulate more emotion. If the curve arrives at the level higher at a higher value than the average then changes the comment: "campaigns focus too much on emotion, which is important but less than you think"



Figure 11 - Quadratic curve of Emotion

We also estimate the effect of the Sentiment with different levels of Emotions and as we can see in fig 12 with a high level of emotion the highest level of sentiment is lower. This shows that the positive effect of sentiment in the presence of high emotion is lower.

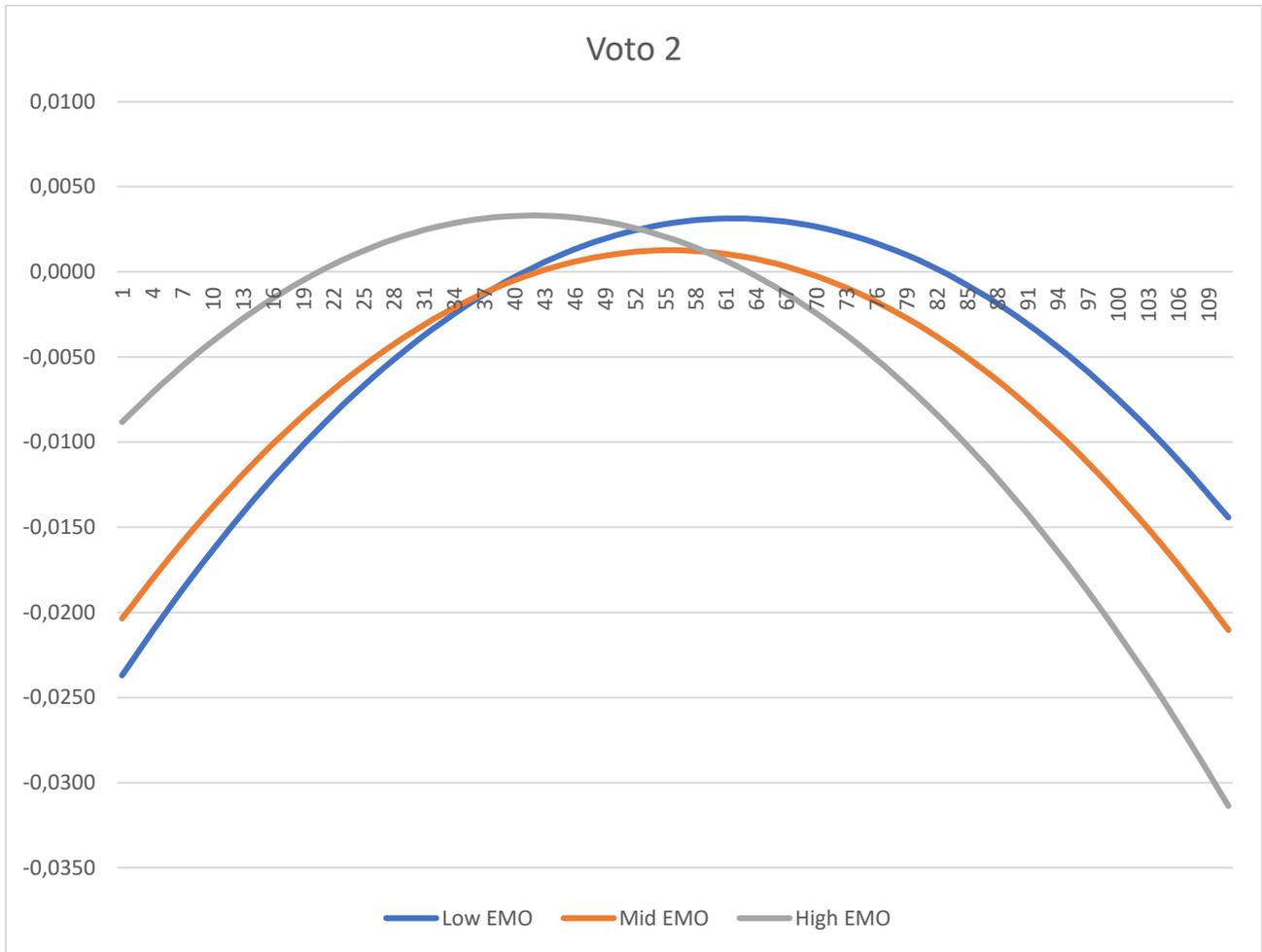


Figure 12 - Dependency from different levels of Emotions

Sentiment depends on Emotion. The most relevant implication is that if the EMOTION level increases, the maximum optimal level of SENTIMENT that is beneficial shifts to the left. So you need to find a good balance between the two things: you need to find a personal branding style that can lead to positive feelings (SENTIMENT), even getting benefits from a touch of passion, pathos (EMOTION), but without exaggerating otherwise too much emotion worsens the optimal LEVEL of SENTIMENT. So it's probably important to also stay on "content and facts" that we have a bit of a personal touch, avoiding - or reducing purely emotional tweets. So the pure fact ("Our work has reduced unemployment by 2%") does not generate the maximum on the web, but not too many purely emotional posts ("This is the perfect candidate, the one I love"). The top is obtained by standing on elements of content seasoned with a bit of emotion ("Thanks to our measure -2% unemployment: here is the news that makes me love my job").

Overall, we conclude that Twitter does appear to display a predictive quality of sentiment analysis: best performer politicians digital brand drive their parties to better electoral results.

The study shows how much personal brand affects the parties and in particular, their digital performance are important for the results in an electoral challenge. The traditional poll is the proxy to estimate performance at the election. We can understand also that we can use sentiment analysis and text mining as a tool for monitoring political performance.

5. Conclusions

The thesis focused on the subjects of personal branding and digital marketing; this research was based on a consistent literature review and an examination of developments in contemporary communication. Personal branding through digital marketing proved to be the market-appropriate response to specific needs, such as employability or performance in political elections. While literature was available in both areas, empirical evidences were still scarce in the current society. The literature analysis was structured against the topics of the thesis, starting from concepts of personal branding (Peters, 1997) up to its development using the social media. Personal branding has been concretely examined within two different fields of applications, where the marketing of the individuals was the key to success. Two separate papers have been prepared each addressing specific real case studies i.e. a) the experience of the post-graduate students of MIBE (Master International Business Entrepreneurship) at the University of Pavia when looking for jobs and b) the practices of politicians during the last political campaign in December 2018 have been produced.

The first paper refers to personal branding strategies that are applied by students during their first job research. Even if there are not yet empirical studies on the specific subjects, the students start to implement the principles of personal branding supported by digital marketing to find the best job for initiating their careers. There are some studies in the literature referring to the use of rules of brand within Companies that can be applied also to individuals, even if they are not yet focusing specifically on the job market research by students (McNally, 2003). Within these theoretical studies in the strategic marketing applied to personal branding the people and their careers are marketed as brands with the same rules as if they were products.

This work aimed to understand how students can develop personal branding by applying the rules of digital marketing to market themselves and have a better opportunity to find proper jobs. Positive

or negative impacts of this phenomenon have been investigated in the hiring process. The expectation was that digital marketing through the social media allowed individuals to invest in their brand with a significant positive impact while limiting the amount of the needed investments. The results showed that a high level of connection on LinkedIn can affect the job finding. The perspective of a digital personal brand in the case of the students increased their performance

The second paper of my thesis addressed the development of personal branding, supported by digital marketing tools, as applied within the political environment; it focused on the influence to exit polls and the performance of politicians during the elections.

There are not yet fundamental proofs of the relationship between digital personal branding strategies, related investments and success at political elections. The scope of the paper was to investigate how reputation and sentiment on twitter can influence political results. The tweets of the Italian politicians, that are considered as personal brands, were assessed utilizing R sentiment analysis; data from Twitter have been downloaded using a specific API and using R. Then analyzing them with a sentiment analysis in Stata I understood that the performance on Twitter affected the performance in the traditional poll. The results have been compared with other data coming from institutional sources such for example official surveys. The regression model implemented showed how sentiment on twitter affected the results in traditional polls and impacted the party's performance. This is not yet enough to predict the election results, but, shows that personal brand, in this case, politicians, that are the best performer in the sentiment on the web, are also the best performer in the polls.

The results of my thesis show how much personal branding theory is linked with digital marketing and how much the two concepts together can affect the performance of individuals in achieving results in different fields. Very cheap tools offered by digital marketing allow the majority of people to develop their branding strategy, as a contrary to the past, when personal development was possible only to a niche of people who could afford significant investments.

While the results have confirmed the positive impacts of personal branding into the two concrete case studies above, other application fields should be explored to confirm the outcome of the thesis. The limitation of the thesis relates to the fact that I have considered cases where the application of the technology, e.g. the utilization of the social media, is already quite advanced: the specific case of one single university (job research for MIBE students at Pavia) and a single area of study. For further studies, it will be interesting to investigate also the data regarding senior managers and how personal branding can affect their careers. There is space for further investigation also in the

second paper: Tweets in the sample refer to one single state (political performance in Italy), the reference period could be longer, and all the data are compared with traditional polls instead of elections. Nevertheless, we may reasonably expect that other areas will be positively influenced as long as the digital knowledge will be more

6. References

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7. Attachment: MIBE Students Questionnaire

MIBE placement

*Mandatory Field

1. Email address *



MIBE

Master in International
Business & Entrepreneurship

2. Name *

3. Surname *

4. Upload your photo for the selection process *

5. Study track *

Select one of the following:

International management

Digital management

Personalized Study Plan

6. Are you a Double Degree Student? *

Select one of the following:

Yes - Home University is Pavia (fully enrolled MIBE, 2 years)

Yes - Home University is NOT Pavia (one year in Pavia)

No

7. Academic year *

Select one of the following:

2016/2017

2017/2018

Other: _____

8. Spoken Language

Select all the applicable items

	Italian	English	French	Spanish	German	Chinese	Russian	Arabic
B1	<input type="checkbox"/>							
B2	<input type="checkbox"/>							
C1	<input type="checkbox"/>							
C2	<input type="checkbox"/>							

9. Other language (please specify language and level)

10. Previous Working Experiences

SOCIAL NETWORK

11. LinkedIn Profile

Select one of the following:

- No
- Yes
- Yes, I have a complete profile and I use it
- Yes, I think it's the best tool to find a good job a

12. Your LinkedIn address

13. Facebook - Number of Friends at the present date (leave it blank if you don't have a Facebook account)

14. Instagram - Number of Friends at the present date (leave it blank if you don't have a Instagram account)

15. Twitter - Number of Friends at the present date (leave it blank if you don't have a Twitter account)

16. LinkedIn - Number of Friends at the present date (leave it blank if you don't have a LinkedIn account)

17. Snapchat - Number of Friends at the present date (leave it blank if you don't have a Snapchat account)

PREFERENCES

18. Interests in Industries / Areas (more than one choice is allowed)

- Managerial Consultancy
- Automotive
- Food & Beverage
- High tech & Electronics
- Web
- Fashion
- LifeScience & Healthcare
- Telco
- Entertainment
- Finance & Banking
- Start ups

19. Preferred functional area (more than one choice is allowed)

Marketing and/or Communication

Data Science & Analytics

Sales

HR & Organization

Accounting

Finance

R&D

Procurement

Operations & Logistics

Other: _____

20. Which are your favorite companies in the list? (more than one choice is allowed)

Bip

Accenture

Engineering

Facility live

Vodafone

Axelero

7pixel

Marazzi & Associati (IP & internationalisation processes in US)

UBI Banca / UBISS

LG

Riso Scotti

3M

IBM

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