

# The Role Played by Celebrities in the Promotion of Goods and Services in Cameroon

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**ABSTRACT:** *Advertisers in Cameroon at the local and national level always make use of celebrities in their adverts so as to win the hearts of their potential customers. This form of promoting goods and services is visible on television and radio especially during some special programs organised by some radio and television houses such as ‘Equinoxe Soir’ (Equinox Evening). Furthermore, most streets in Cameroon are coloured with billboard posters carrying the images of Cameroonian celebrities from the music, football and the entertainment industry advertising the products or services of companies such as MTN and Orange Cameroon just to name but these. This paper looks at types of celebrities used by marketers in Cameroon in the promotion of their goods or services, why Cameroonians use celebrities in their adverts and the advantages of using them in the promotion of their goods. The paper further explores the role they play in the promotion of goods and services on billboard posters. This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. Random sampling technique was used to collect the sample of data from billboards posters (2022-2023). Furthermore, data was also culled from some television programs such as Equinox Evening. Source credibility theory was used to analyse the collected data. The analysis reveals that three types of celebrities are used by Cameroonians in their adverts. These celebrities are from the music, football and the entertainment industries. In addition, Cameroonians use celebrities in their adverts to attract the attention of the target audience as well as influence customers’ views of a product. The advantages of using celebrities by Cameroonians in their adverts is that it positions the brand in the minds of the target audience. More so, it attracts new users as well as breathe life into a failing brand. These celebrities play an enormous role in the marketing of goods and services in that, they invite the public to join them consume the goods or services they are seen promoting. This gesture makes the messages on these*

*advertises to be credible. The credibility of these messages also makes the public to believe in what they say; thus an increase in sales.*

**Keywords:** role, celebrities, promotion, goods and services, Cameroon

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## INTRODUCTION

Advertising is referred to as a form of discourse in the sense that it has influenced not only the structure of language and the modality of life style, but also the content of routine daily acts of communicative exchanges. Advertising messages have permeated the entire cultural landscape. Printed advertisements fill the pages of newspapers and magazines. Commercials interrupt television and radio programs constantly. As Beasley and Danesi (2002) point out, “brand names, logos, trademarks, jingles and slogans have become part and parcel of the ‘mental encyclopedia’ of virtually everyone who lives in a modern-day society (See Wodak, 2006b; & Wadak, 2007). Advertising has progressed beyond the use of simple techniques for announcing the availability of products or services. It has ventured into the domain of persuasion and its rhetorical categories have become omnipresent in contemporary social discourse. Because of the growing effectiveness of its persuasive technique, it has become entrenched into social discourse by virtue of its wide spread diffusion throughout society. Everywhere one turns, one is bound to find some advertising message designed to persuade people to buy a product. This leads to the inescapable conclusion that advertising has developed, since the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century into a privileged form of social discourse that has unparalleled rhetorical force. With the advent of industrialisation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, style of persuasion became increasingly important in raising the persuasive efficacy of the advertising text. Accordingly, advertising started to change the structure and use of language and verbal communication. Everything from clothes to beverages was being promoted through ingenious new techniques. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century came to close, American advertisers in particular were, as Dyer (1982) points out were “using more colloquial, personal and informal language to address the customer and also exploiting certain effective rhetorical devices to attract attention to a product.” So persuasive had this new form of advertising become that, by the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it started becoming a component of social discourse, starting to change some of the basic ways in which people communicated with each other and in which they perceived commodities and services. From the 1920s onwards, advertising agencies sprang up all over, broadening the attempts of their predecessors to build a rhetorical bridge between the products and the consumer’s consciousness (See Sayer, 2006; Saussure & Schulz, 2005).

The language of advertising has become the language of all, even of those who are critical of it. As Twitchell (2000) puts it, “language about products and services has pretty much replaced language about all other subjects.” It is no exaggeration to claim that, today, most of our information, intellectual stimulation, and life-style models come from, or are related to advertising images. Since the 1920s, positioning and image creation have become the primary techniques of what has come

to be known as the era of persuasion in advertising. This is an era in which advertising messages have moved away from describing the product in itself to focusing on the consumer of the product, creating product imagery with which the consumer can easily identify (Woodward & Denton, 1988). Adverts and commercials now offer the same kinds of promise and hope to which religions and social philosophies once held exclusive rights: security against hazards of old age, better positions in life, popularity and personal prestige, social advancement, better health and happiness. Simply put, the modern advertiser stresses not the product, but the benefits that may be expected to ensue from its purchase. In this regard, Beasley and Danesi (ibid) point out that, “the advertiser is becoming more and more adopt at setting foot into the same subconscious regions of psychic experience that were once explored only by philosophers, artists, and religious thinkers.” The growing interest in social media today makes advertising even more conspicuous (Mogaji, 2021, p. 1).

There are many businesses operating in Cameroonian towns and cities. These businesses range from multinationals to the one-man business. The presence of many businesses in the country implies that there is stiff competition. Furthermore, the business climate in the world as a whole is unstable due to many crises that are rocking the world today such the ongoing wars between Russia and Ukraine and the war between Hamas and Israel. There is also the war on climate change that is also causing untold harm to humanity. Due to the precarious nature of the world as painted above, business men and women have decided to employ persuasive communication strategies that can make their target population to buy what they are selling. For this reason, some of them make use of words, phrases, clauses and sentences to remind their target audience of what they are selling and why they need to buy their products. Other business operators make use of celebrities in their adverts so that they can win the hearts of the public to buy what they are selling. This form of advertising is conspicuous on radio, television and billboard posters where these people use celebrities from the music, sports and entertainment industries to tell the Cameroonian people that the products of these business owners are good and that they need to go in for them because they are also using these products or services as seen in figure one below.



Figure 1. Showing the Cameroonian musical celebrity Petit Paye advertising the services of Orange Cameroon

Source: *Equinoxe Soir* (Equinox Evening). June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024

According to Monks (2011), people use celebrities in advertising for these reasons:

- a. *Memorability*: Celebrities are excellent for grabbing people's attention and instantaneously; a campaign is more memorable because of a famous face on the screen.
- b. *Endorsement*: The use of a famous face helps to influence the way consumers view a product. If a glamorous model or film star advertises a new product or service, the customer subconsciously equates that product with the appearance or star-quality of the celebrity.
- c. *Star Quality*: Celebrities have the ability to transfer their personal qualities onto a product. For example, a celebrity known for his edgy sensibility may advertise a product in order to shape a new image for a brand.

The term celebrity shall be defined so as to specify the sense in which it relates to the context of this study. The term celebrity has been defined in different ways by different researchers. Credibility refers to the extent to which the source is recognised as possessing significant

knowledge or experience to offer an unbiased judgment (Carroll, 2008). Roll (2006) described celebrities as people who are widely known to the public for their accomplishments in their respective fields, be it the movies, sport, music or politics. A celebrity is someone who gets public acknowledgment by a related group or groups of people because of his or her achievements in certain disciplines (*Spry et al.*, 2011). According to McCracken (1989), a celebrity could be defined as “any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition when they appear in the advertisement in front of the consumers.” In the context of this study, a celebrity is an outstanding person in any domain of life who has made a name for his or herself and is used by marketers to woo the public to buy what these marketers are selling, be they retailers or multinationals. The aim of this paper is to examine types of celebrities used by Cameroonians in the promotion of their goods and services in Cameroon, why they use them and the advantages of using them. The study also explores the role played by these celebrities in the promotion of goods and services in Cameroon. This work would be useful to scholars since it could enlarge and widen their knowledge of the relevant use of celebrities in the marketing milieu. This study is guided by the following research questions:

- What are the types of celebrities used by business people in Cameroon in the promotion of their goods and services?
- Why are they used in the marketing domain?
- What is the advantage of using them in the marketing of goods or services?
- What role do they play in the promotion of goods and services on television and billboard posters?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is hitched on source credibility theory which looks at how people react to information and give a positive reaction to an advert, information or suggestion based on the source of the information. This theory in advertising maintains that the receiver’s acceptance or otherwise of a message depends fully on how the sender of the message is. Furthermore, source credibility theory (Berlo *et al.*, 1969, Hovland & Weiss, 1951., Hovland, *et al.*, 1952) explain how the persuasiveness of a communication is determined in part by the perceived credibility of the source of the communication. The theory explains how the information provided by advertisers can be judged as more credible than others. Fogg (2002) described surface credibility from “initial judgements based on surface traits such as a person’s looks, his or her dress, or hairstyle” (p. 132). From an advertising perspective, source credibility would mean the design of your advertisement and how people would consider it credible. Is it designed professionally to appeal to people? This also recognises the model that is used for the advertisement. If you are advertising a dental health clinic for teenagers, would you use an influencer, or a dentist for the campaign? Who do you think is more credible to give advice regarding dental treatment? Advertisers must make sure that while trying to get the attention of their customers, their design (including choice of images and text) should convey a form of credibility. If consumers consider the information credible, they are more inclined to process it further and to act. In the context of Cameroon, business people use celebrities

on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis in their adverts either on the radio, television or billboard posters just to name but these to make their messages credible to the public so that they can win the hearts of their potential customers. Celebrities have worked hard to make a name for themselves and to also create a highly engaged audience who enjoy following their daily lives plus which brands they use. By using them to promote your business, they build credibility and trust in your brand which in turn wins the hearts and minds of the public to go in for this product.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many studies have been conducted on the use of celebrities in the promotion of goods especially in the western world. Some researchers have examined the risk involved in using celebrities in the advertising industry. For example, White *et al.*, (2009) are of the opinion that endorsement relationships can turn sour and perceptions can change if celebrities face negative publicity. For example, the Mike Tyson jail sentence, the O.J. Simpson murder case, the Tiger Woods sex scandal, and actress Zhang Ziyi's charity fraud. When the negative image of a celebrity is exposed, the organisation's brand image is in turn tarnished, causing a fall in consumer trust and confidence (Nelson, 2010). In the same line of thought, Johansson and Sparredal (2002) and Ericsson and Hakansson (2005) also affirm that a drop in a celebrities' popularity or a sudden change in their personality and image can affect an organisation negatively. Other critics have looked at how the physical appearance of a celebrity such as the physical beauty of this person can impact on consumers' behaviour towards products and services compared to when the products and services are promoted by people who lack physical attractiveness (Ohanian, 1991., Hassan & Jamil, 2014., Kahle & Homer, 1985). In the same vein, Menon *et al.*, (2001) acknowledge that physical attractiveness is a tool to change the consumer's behaviour and raise consumer's intention to buy a product. On the other hand, some scholars have delved into the expertise a celebrity possesses that can make customers buy the products advertised in question (Amos *et al.*, 2008). They are of the opinion that if a celebrity can convince consumers with the expertise he or she has, then consumers' intention to choose the product will increase. Soleimani *et al.*, (2020) investigate the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand reputation and found that the credibility of the approving celebrity has a positive and significant effect on the reputation of the brand. Furthermore, findings obtained from the subordinate assumptions show that attractiveness, expertise and being commensurate with products have a positive and significant impact on brand reputation whereas trustworthiness does not affect brand reputation significantly. Moreover, findings obtained from the moderator assumption reveals that negative publicity plays the role of the moderator in the causal relationship between the credibility of the approving celebrity and brand reputation.

Evan, *et al.*, (2021) assess the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement in marketing fashion products on social media in Indonesia by taking these five attributes into consideration: familiarity, congruity, physical appearance, trustworthiness, and expertise. The analysis showed three

attributes that positively impact consumer's purchase intention; familiarity with the celebrity, trustworthiness of the celebrity; and the expertise of the celebrity in giving recommendation. Chung-kue and Daniella (2002) discussed advantages and potential concerns of multi-celebrity endorsement advertising and documented the actual use of multiple celebrity endorsers in the milk mustache campaign in the USA. The analysis indicated that these milk mustache ads have matched their celebrities' gender, age and type of milk attributes in appealing to their female/male, teen/adult consumers. The results further support that fit between the endorsed product and various celebrities is a key factor for using multiple celebrity endorsers in advertising. Kaikati (1987) equally conducted research on celebrity advertising with the aim of: (1) providing a historical overview of celebrities in advertising, and to discuss at least four types of celebrity advertisements; (2) to highlight the advantages and hazards of using celebrities in advertising; (3) to outline the FTC guidelines and other developments in the field. The author concludes that communication research on celebrity advertising seems to be rather contradictory. On the other hand, there is a strong consensus that the number of celebrity ads have increased significantly over the past few years. Belch and Belch (2013) carried out a content analysis study of the use of celebrity endorsers in magazine advertising and found that the use of celebrities varies by magazine type with their use being highest for sports and teen publications. The use of celebrities also varies by product/service category as does the type of celebrity utilised, such as athletes, actors/actresses, entertainers and supermodels. Celebrity use based on expertise occurs primarily for athletic products. Erdogan and Baker (2000) researched on the process by which British advertising agencies select celebrity endorsers, who is involved in the process and their roles, as well as factors deemed important in selecting celebrity endorsers. Findings indicate that there is an unwritten and informal process of selecting celebrity endorsers, in which there are a number of factors affecting decisions such as celebrity popularity, availability and credibility, and what the celebrity stands for.

Lear *et al.*, (2008) conducted research on products endorsed by sports celebrities sold by retailers and found changes in the frequency of advertisements using sports celebrities compared to previous studies. Additionally, it appears that products which are ultimately sold by retailers are endorsed more frequently by celebrities in certain sports than others. Schimmelpfennig (2018) investigates the usage of different types of celebrities in German print advertising and found that the share of celebrity endorsements as defined by the literature adverts that features individuals known to the general public is as low as 2.9%. Moreover, the study's results are compared with those from the US and it is shown in what product categories celebrity usage differs substantially between marketers. Liu *et al.*, (2019) in their study propose that, as compared with a blurred or partially-covered face, a clear celebrity endorser's face will impair consumers' brand recall. Focusing on celebrities' faces as the visual attention magnet, the study demonstrates that a clear celebrity endorser's face adversely affects the level of consumer engagement with brand name. The findings suggest that the inclusion of a celebrity's face is a double-edged sword in advertisement design and should be done with caution. Jain *et al.*, (2010) in their study attempt to:

- Identify the mode/s in which a celebrity is depicted in Indian television commercials.
- Ascertain the relationship (if any) between the category of product endorsed and the type of celebrity used.

.• Identify the correspondence between product categories and mode of celebrity presence.

The findings of the study indicated that:

- Around 64 per cent of the commercials used the implicit mode of celebrity portrayal for different product categories.
- Usage of film celebrities was more extensive than sports celebrities in major product categories. This was probably because the shelf life of fame for a film celebrity is more than that of the sports celebrity.
- Male celebrities dominated the product categories like food and beverage, automobiles, and consumer durables. The female celebrities were featured majorly in beauty products. No distinct association was found between the product categories considered and the mode used for celebrity portrayal.

Alam *et al.*, (2021) examine the pros and cons of celebrity advertising in India and demonstrated that there are a lot of advantages of using celebrities in the advertisement campaign, that is the reason which makes this promotional tool so popular that it seems impossible to imagine a marketing strategy without the use of celebrity as endorser. However, this mode of promotion is not free from disadvantages and risks but carefully carved out celebrity advertising strategy, considering all the relevant factors and under right circumstances can justify the high cost associated with this form of advertising and can give good return on the investment. Umeogu (2012) explains the role of source credibility theory in relation to advertisements, politics and religions. The analysis revealed that being perceived as credible should be strived for in the face of challenges and competitions. One has to package oneself so that what you present to others works to your advantage.

Many studies have been conducted on advertising discourse in Cameroon from different stands. Some researchers have investigated advertising discourse in Cameroon from a stylistic perspective (Foneng, 1994, Foncho, 1997, Tchhoffouo, 2004, & Fomukong, 2016), others from a pragmatic viewpoint (Epie, 2016), from a semiotic analysis (Eka' Aban, 2009, & Gemo, 1998), from a lexical analysis (Acha, 2007 & Ngum, 1989), from a symbolic perspective (Emvana, 2000), from a persuasive angle (Mbe, 2001, Fuh, 2004, 2011, 2018, Atemba, 2007, & Ekane, 2007), from a bilingual perspective, (Ngu, 1990, Ngo, 2006), from a communicative stand point (Jean, 2013), from a marketing perspective (Kuoh, 2014, Zonese, 2014, Raisa, 2012, Ajasse, 2004, Agiam, 1998, Andong, 2004, Wouodjom, 1998, Ekellem, 1992 & Ghaila, 1998), from the language that is used in advertising (Fuh, 2023) from the viewpoint of linguistic inequalities in terms of language (Nkamta & Ngwenya, 2017) and from a deictic perspective (Fuh, 2024c). From the above information, it could be said that a lot has been written on the language of advertisement from countless perspectives, however nothing has been written on the role played by celebrities in the promotion of goods and services, although it has been observed that in Cameroon marketers always



make use of these persons in their adverts as seen with companies such as MTN Cameroon, Orange Cameroon and Guinness Cameroun S.A to name but these so that they can convince their target customers to buy their goods and services.

## METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. Random sampling technique was used to collect the sample of data from billboards posters. This method helped the researcher to identify, study and collect the required information related to the study. A total of six billboard posters (2023-2024) were culled in some major towns of Cameroon such as Douala and Maroua. Furthermore, three posts were also culled on Equinox Television during the program “*Equinox Soir*” (Equinox Evening). After reading these billboard posters, the researcher identified types of celebrities Cameroonians use in the marketing of their goods and services, why they are in the marketing domain, the advantages of using them and the role they play in the marketing domain.

### Analysis

This section focuses on the analysis of the data. The analysis of this study is hitched on Source Credibility theory propounded by Hovland, *et al.*, (1952) which is seen as a situation where message believability is dependent on the credibility status of the sender in the minds and eyes of the receivers.



Figure 2. Cameroonian football celebrities. Picture taken at Rond Point Douala on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, 2023

The picture above depicts three Cameroonian football celebrities who have done exploits for their national team by winning trophies for their country. These football stars have made a name for themselves, thus MTN Cameroon (Mobile Telephone Network) has decided to use them to market its services. The picture indicates that there are 14 villas to be won. It could be said that of the 14 villas to be won, these three celebrities have won a villa each. This is justified by the facial expressions (smile and laughter) on the face of Fai Collins, the first person on the left hand side. Furthermore, Vincent Abubakar, third person on the right hand side is seen pointing to a villa, perhaps one that he has won. This is because he tried his chance (*TryYaChance*) by dialing this code \*222# or \*126# and won a villa because this life is luck (*This life na chance*). It is worth noting that credibility is all about the tendency to believe or trust someone with little or no doubt of being deceived or manipulated. It also refers to a person's perception of the truth of a piece of information. By using these celebrities in this advertisement, MTN makes its message credible to the target population because they can actually see these people who have won a villa each due to the fact that they are subscribers and customers of the above company.

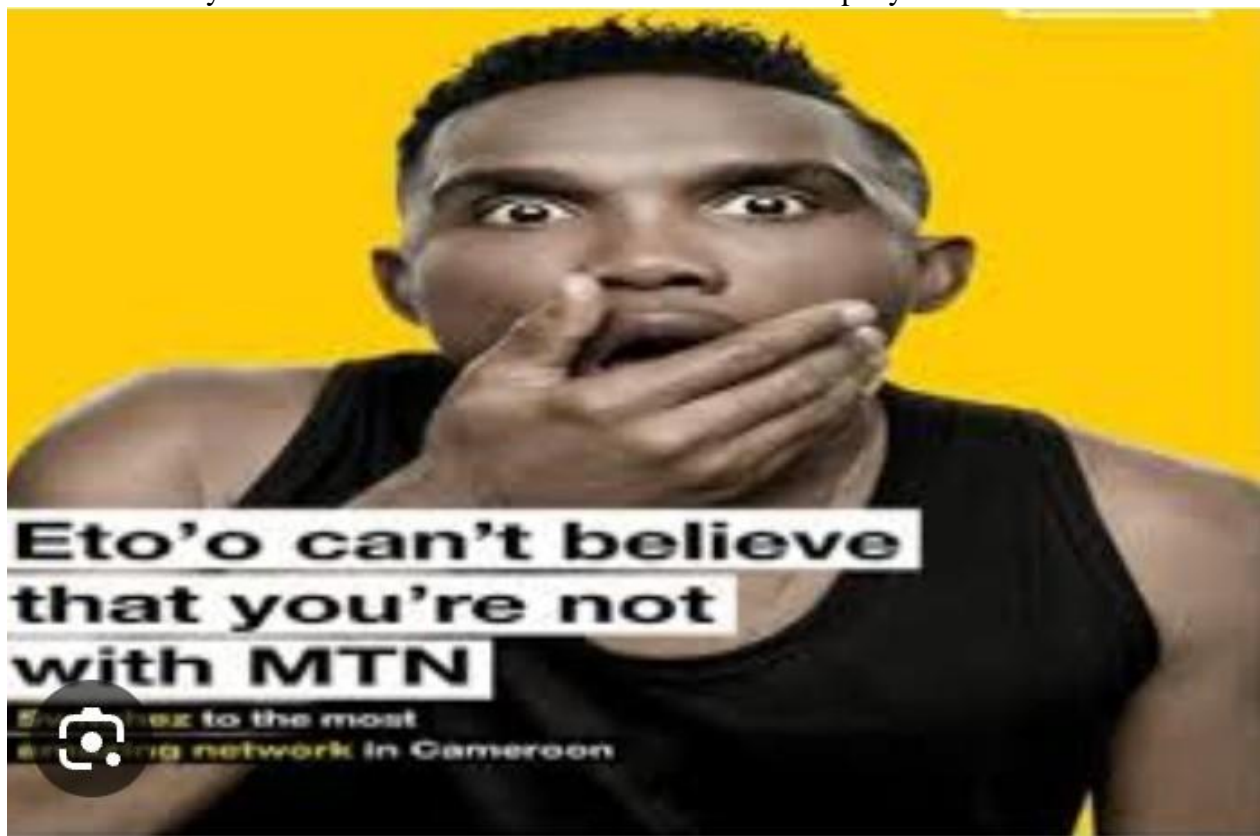


Figure 3. Samuel Eto'o a football celebrity. Picture taken at Ndokoti on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 2023

The picture above shows Samuel Eto'o, one of Cameroon's football stars. He has won the Champions League with FC Barcelona in 2006 and 2009. He also did same with Inter Milan in 2010. He has also won African best player award four times. He won a medal during the Olympic games in the year 2002. At moment, he is the President of Cameroon Football Federation. In fact, he has made a name for himself in Cameroon, Africa and the world at large as far as football is concern. The picture shows Samuel Eto'o, the Cameroonian football legend. He is not only surprised, but equally shocked. This is because "He can't believe that you're not with MTN." His disbelieve is justified by the expression on his face. His mouth is half open and closed by his hand just like his eyes which are wide open too. It could be said that he is surprised because he is enjoying the services of this company which he knows that Cameroonians are also doing same but that is not the case. He is therefore inviting the public to join him enjoy the services of this company. It could also be averred that the public is going to go in for the services of this company. The presence of this celebrity in this advert makes the message credible, thus persuasive to win the hearts and minds of people.



Figure 4: Cameroonian comedian Fingon Tralala. Picture taken at Ange Raphael on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November, 2023

The picture shows the celebrated Cameroonian comedian Fingon Tralala inviting Cameroonians to join him enjoy the services offered by MTN Cameroon. From the picture above, one notices that there are prizes to win on Wednesdays such as *180 GB data, 90.000 Airtime, 10 Scratch cards and 02 MY Box*. It could be asserted that this comedian won the above prizes by calling or dialing \*222#. For this reason, he is so happy as justified by the expression on his face. Furthermore, because he wants to share this joy with the public, he invites them to join him by winning some of the above prizes. It could be confirmed that this method of publicising goods is persuasive enough to make the target audience go in for what is being sold as they can see the advertiser enjoying what is being sold.



Figure 5. The comedian Fingon Tralala. Picture taken at Comice-Maroua on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024

The picture in the advert above shows Fingon Tralala who is in a happy mode. He is happy because “He bought a bundle of at least 250F”, played \*222# and won “1 plot of land.” He is therefore inviting Cameroonians to follow his example and win a plot of land every day as demonstrated by his sitting position. In the same line of thought, the picture also shows another happy man moving towards may be a loved one with arms wide open. It could be understood that this man has also won a plot of land too. It is believed that the message of this well-known comedian shall convince the public to go in for the services of MTN, hence an increase in sales and profits.



Figure 6. The Cameroonian former national team captain and coach Rigobert Song. Picture taken at Djaringole Maroua on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, 2023

The picture depicts Rigobert Song, former national team captain of Cameroon. Just like Samuel Eto'o who has done exploits for his country so too is Song. It is worth noting that he coached the Cameroon national team from 2022-2024. The picture above portrays Song dressed in lemon the colour of the product he is advertising. He is holding two bottles of *BUBBLE UP BITTER LEMON* in his hands. The advert indicates that there are lots of products to be won by the public if they buy this product. The things to be won are: 0.5 bottle of *BUBBLE UP BITTER LEMON*, 1.25-liter bottle, a cap, a T-shirt, a laptop and a desk top p54. From this advert it be concluded that he bought a product of the company *Source du Pays* and won the above products. For this reason, he is inviting the public as illustrated in the picture to join him enjoy the advantages offered by this company. By using this celebrity in this advert, it makes the message to be credible and believable to the reader who in turn will react to it by buying what is being advertised because if a man like Song can consume this product, then it means that the product is good.



*Figure 7: The Cameroonian Musician Petit Paye with associates. Picture taken at Pond Rouge Maroua on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, 2024*

This billboard poster portrays the Cameroonian musical icon Petit Paye standing in the middle of two people, probably musicians too. He is inviting the public to start the year at Max because there are millions plus vehicles to be won. Furthermore, there are smart TVs and cash to be won every five minutes too. The public can only win these prizes by dialing #195\*3# or #150#. The picture displays hundreds of thousands in front of him, an indication that he too started the year at Max by winning millions, vehicles and smart TVs. The message in this advert is made credible to the target audience in that this celebrity is seen enjoying the services of Orange Cameroon as depicted by his dressing which carries the colours of Orange Cameroon and his physical appearance. For this reason, he is calling on whosoever will to join in the ambiance.

## DISCUSSION

As a reminder, this study examined the role played by celebrities in the promotion of goods and services in Cameroon. The analysis revealed that marketers in Cameroon use three types of celebrities in the marketing of their goods and services, be it on television or on billboard posters. These celebrated Cameroonians used by these people are musicians, comedians and footballers. The paper has established that Cameroonians use celebrities in their adverts to attract the attention of the public to the product sold and to also influence the way consumers see a product. The advantages of using celebrities by Cameroonians in their adverts is that it positions the brand in the minds of the target audience. More so, it attracts new users as well as breathe life into a failing

brand. The analysis further illustrated that these celebrities are projected in adverts in different ways. For example, they are always smiling, an indication that they enjoy the goods and services of these companies. In the same vein, they are seen as people who bought the products of these marketers and won extra products. They are seen inviting the target audience to join them enjoy the products of these companies. Some of them are surprised that Cameroonians are not enjoying the services of some companies such as MTN (see figure 3). Lastly, some of them are dressed in the colours of the companies they are representing, an indication that they are part of this company (see figure 1 and 6). By deploying these strategies in their adverts, marketers make their messages credible to the public who in turn buy what is being sold, thus an increase in sales and profits. This study is similar to that of Sliburyte (2009) in that it also looks at the role played by celebrities in the marketing domain. However, the two works differ in terms of analysis as the above author affirmed that the gender of a celebrity endorser does, to an extent, condition the effectiveness of an advertisement. The purchase intentions of consumers are inextricably related to the credibility of a celebrity endorser used in an advertisement, their perceptions of expertise of a celebrity endorser, the attractiveness and popularity of the latter as well as celebrity-product congruence. Furthermore, this study also contrasts that of Fuh (2024c) which illustrated that the Petty while selling his goods on the Douala-Melong highway makes use of person, place, time, social and discourse deixis. More so, the analysis also validates that the Petty trader also makes use of non-deictic categories such as prayers, songs and facial expressions such as eye contact, blink of the eye, smiles, laughter and body language such as a nod of the head. These deictic and non-deictic expressions put together play a great role in convincing the customers of the Petty trader to buy what he or she is selling each time he or she proposes his or her goods to passengers on board any travelling agency like Garanti Express and Moghamo Express just to name but these plying the Douala-Melong highway.

### **Implication to Research and Practice**

There is the presence of local, national and international goods in Cameroonian markets. For this reason, there is stiff competition in the marketing milieu. Due to this ferocious business climate, those who have the financial means go in for the services of celebrities so that they can gain a market share and stay in the business industry. This study is therefore of great importance, first to researchers in that it reveals the type of discourse be it verbal or nonverbal that celebrities deploy to market the goods and services of Cameroonians or companies. Second, it reveals to marketers the types of celebrities they should use in their adverts, how they should dress, how they should behave in adverts and the moral characters they need to possess so that they can have many customers who shall buy what they are selling.

### **CONCLUSION**

This paper explored types of celebrities used in Cameroon by the business community in the marketing of goods and services from 2023-2024 in some cities of Cameroon such as Douala and Maroua. The analysis exposed that marketers in Cameroon use three types of celebrities in the marketing of their goods and services, be it on television or on billboard posters-musicians,

comedians and footballers. The paper has established that Cameroonians use celebrities in their adverts to attract the attention of the public to the product sold and to also influence the way consumers see a product. The advantages of using celebrities by Cameroonians in their adverts is that it positions the brand in the minds of the target audience. More so, it attracts new users as well as breathe life into a failing brand. The findings further illustrated that these celebrities are projected in adverts in different ways. They are always smiling, an indication that they enjoy the goods and services of these companies. They are seen as people who bought the products of these marketers and won extra products. They are seen inviting the target audience to join them enjoy the products of these companies. Some of them are surprised that Cameroonians are not enjoying the services of some companies. Some of the celebrities are dressed in the colours of the companies they are representing, an indication that they are part of this company. By deploying these strategies in their adverts, markers make their messages credible to the public who in turn buy what is being sold, thus an increase in sales and profits.

The researcher concludes that business men and women in Cameroon in particular should use the services of celebrities in the promotion of their goods and services so that they can gain a market share and also keep body and soul together. However, they should only use celebrities who are morally upright and respected by the target population.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

The business community in Cameroon makes use of celebrities in the promotion of their goods and services on radio, television, billboard posters and social media on a daily basis. This paper has examined types of celebrities used by the above people in the selling of goods or services. It also looked at the role they play in the marketing domain in some towns like Douala and Maroua in Cameroon. However, this study limited itself only to three types of celebrities used in Cameroon in the marketing of goods and services. In addition, only two regions out of ten in Cameroon were considered in this study. So, researchers can still write on the use of celebrities in the promotion of goods and services in the ten regions of Cameroon. They can equally write on the use of celebrities in all domains of life used by Cameroonians in the selling of products so that a logical conclusion can be drawn. They can also write on the use of celebrities on radio, magazines or social media in the marketing of goods or services.

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## **Appendix**







