The Effect of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Brand Loyalty: A Study on Telecommunication and Brewery Industries, Bamenda, Cameroon

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Research Article

Abstract

Purpose: *This study seeks to investigate the relationship between celebrity endorsement (celebrity similarity, celebrity attractiveness, and celebrity popularity) and brand loyalty in the city of Bamenda, Cameroon. It also examined the comparative analysis between the telecommunication and brewery industries in Bamenda, Cameroon.*

Method: *This study employed a quantitative research design, incorporating surveys and causal research approaches. A total of 450 questionnaires were administered for each industry, including subscribers of telecommunication companies and consumers of brewery products in Bamenda, both in-person and online. 429 questionnaires were retained for telecommunication companies and 424 for brewery products. The multiple correspondence analysis was used to construct indices of celebrity endorsement and brand loyalty. The ordinary least squares (OLS) were used to test hypotheses.*

Results: *Data analysis indicates that all three indicators of celebrity endorsement have a significant positive effect on consumer brand loyalty. Results for both the telecommunication and brewery industries are statistically significant at the 1% level. However, the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer brand loyalty is significantly more pronounced in the telecommunications sector than in the brewery sector. The study concluded that enhancing celebrity endorsement features will substantially increase brand loyalty among consumers.*

Implications: *This study has significant practical and theoretical implications for consumer behavior in developing countries, particularly Cameroon.*

Keywords: Brand loyalty, Brewery industry, Celebrity endorsements, Telecommunication industry

1. Introduction

The global market has grown tougher yearly, with different companies rendering services to the same market audience. Companies now engage in various marketing communication strategies to take the larger share of the market from their competitors, including using celebrities to gain their audience's attention and patronage (Okorie & Agbaleke, 2017). Celebrity endorsement has become one of the most popular tools of advertisement in marketing used by most of the major organizations these days. This strategy is being increasingly used by

organizations daily, and it has become the winning formula as it increases the brand's popularity, which results in more significant sales numbers for the investing company (Jha *et al*., 2021).

Cameroon is not left behind when using celebrities by competing companies like breweries and telecommunication companies. In 2017, "Union Camerounaise des Brasseries (UCB) used Samuel Etoo Fils as their brand ambassador for the soft drink "special". Tchakoute et al. (2024) showed that in 2020, only 20% of breweries in Cameroon used celebrity endorsements, and by 2021, this number had increased to 40%. In 2022, 60% of breweries in Cameroon used celebrity endorsements; in 2023, this number increased to 70%, and in 2024, 80% of breweries in Cameroon used celebrity endorsements.

To curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic in the country, Cameroon issued a set of measures in March 2020, including the requirement to close drinking establishments by 6 P.M. every day. According to a report by Business in Cameroon (2021), the brewery industry rests on three companies, namely, Société Anonyme des Brasseries du Cameroon (SABC) (Castel group), Guinness Cameroon (Diageo group), and UCB (Kadji group). In 2018, their combined net sales were 457.2 billion Francs CFA (789.5 million USD). SABC paid 17.3 billion Francs CFA (375 million USD) of taxes and duties to Cameroon's public treasury. SABC says it invested CFA35 billion in the country in 2017. The various taxes it paid to the public treasury amount to CFA06.6 billion (356.7 million USD). With assets estimated at CFA700 billion, the company employs 6,000 people, of whom 3,000 are direct employees working at three entities: the breweries, Cameroon's glass factory (Société Camerounaise de Verrerie-SOCAVER), and Cameroon's mineral water company (Société des Eaux Minérales du Cameroun-SEMC).

With seven plants throughout the country, the Castel group controls 72% of the country's beer market. The beer market in Cameroon was equal to 1.27 billion USD (calculated in retail prices) in 2015. Until 2025, the beer market in Cameroon is forecast to reach 2.15 billion USD (in retail prices), thus increasing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4.91% per annum for the period 2020-2025. This is a decrease compared to the growth of about 6.07% per year registered in 2015-2019. The average consumption per capita in value terms reached 57.15 USD per capita (in retail prices) in 2015. It grew at a CAGR of 3.36% annually in the subsequent five years. In the medium term (by 2025), the indicator will slow its growth and increase at a CAGR of 2.34% per annum (strategy.com, 2022).

Mobile Telecommunications Network (MTN), the telecommunication sector leader in Cameroon, uses celebrities like Samuel Eto'o Fils, Francis Ngannou, Aboubakar Vincent, and Fai Collins. At the same time, Orange Cameroon also uses popular celebrities like Mr Leo and KO-C for their advertisements. MTN advertisement of "Eto'o peut" uses the image of Eto'o, a football celebrity, in selling with the technique of constructing different products and services and naming them. The use of the football celebrity (Eto'o) with the adverb "Eto'o peut" translated as "Eto'o can" to present the products and services to the audience is to manipulate them. Eto'o is a celebrity who has the power to bring in consumers. Thus, giving their products and services different names, bonuses, tariff plans, using slogans and catchy headlines, which are selling points by the company in advertising, will bring in consumers (Atanga & Ngu, 2019).

Celebrity endorsement has some antecedents, such as celebrity attractiveness, which includes values such as similarity, likeability, intelligence, and familiarity (Oladejo & Fayemi, 2015). There is also celebrity similarity, which can be measured based on the age of the celebrity, the gender of the celebrity, the religion of the celebrity, the ethnicity of the celebrity, and celebrity popularity, which is the extent to which a celebrity is prominent or well known to the target audience. Issues of fame, recognizability, identifiability, and prominence are important values of celebrity popularity (Oladejo & Fayemi, 2015).

Bamenda is one of the largest cities in Cameroon, located in the Northwest Region of Cameroon, and is the capital of the Northwest Region and the headquarters of the Bamenda Plateau. Bamenda has telecommunication and brewery companies, and cannot be left behind when talking about celebrity endorsements and brand loyalty, and is one of the most important cities in the region. Endorsing a product or

service, a celebrity transfers his personality (a message) to the brand, and the message is transferred from the brand to the customer, leaving an impression on the customer's mind and finally influencing customers' decisions to buy that particular brand (Odionye et al., 2021). What remains uncertain is whether the endorsement of celebrities by telecommunication companies and brewery companies in Cameroon has made the desired positive impression on the minds of their consumers, influencing them to subscribe to or patronize and become loyal to the brands. Despite celebrity endorsement and expensive advertising, several products have failed to attract customers' attention. When a celebrity is not accepted, his or her unacceptability may negatively affect the product that he or she identifies with (Apejoye, 2013). From these controversies regarding the fact that there is a negative relationship between celebrity endorsements and brand loyalty, while some works revealed that there is a positive relationship, there is a worry. Additionally, the authors did not compare celebrity endorsements in big companies to see how they are practiced in various industries. Also, most of the studies have been conducted in Western cultures, and it is unclear whether the findings can be generalized to other cultures with different consuming behaviors and norms, like Cameroon and the city of Bamenda in particular.

Summing up from the above, this study therefore seeks to contribute to celebrity endorsement literature by looking at the relationship between celebrity endorsements and brand loyalty. The results are compared between two different industries, the brewery and the telecommunications industries. This will provide telecommunication and brewery companies with valuable insights on endorsing celebrities that promote impulse purchases while also promoting long-term goal attainment, which will lead to consumers' brand loyalty. This study is, therefore, set out to answer the following research questions:

The main research question is how celebrity endorsement affects consumer brand loyalty in the telecommunication and brewery industries in Bamenda, Cameroon? The specific research questions are as follows:

I. What is the influence of celebrity similarity on consumers' brand loyalty in the telecommunication and brewery industries in the city of Bamenda, Cameroon?
II. Does celebrity attractiveness influence consumers' brand loyalty in the telecommunication and brewery industries in Bamenda, Cameroon?
III. Does celebrity popularity influence consumer brand loyalty in the telecommunication and brewery industries in Bamenda, Cameroon?

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

This section will review the literature concerning celebrity endorsement and brand loyalty and develop hypotheses.

2.1. Conceptual Literature Review
2.1.1 Celebrity endorsement

Celebrity endorsement is a technique of persuasion where customers relate to a person used or featured in an advert (Okafor, 2011). Celebrity endorsement is a technique that is adopted in advertising campaigns; this is used to boost and give a product an added advantage to a brand because when celebrity endorsers appear in an ad campaign, consumers tend to feel a sense of belonging to the brand in question (Okorie & Agbaleke, 2017). Mahira (2012) defined a celebrity as a person who enjoys public recognition, fame, and acceptance. He uses these attributes on behalf of consumer products to appear in advertisements and promotions. Celebrity endorsement can be measured using different constructs, as indicated by various authors. Anyadighibe *et al.* (2022) used celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, and celebrity popularity as constructs of celebrity endorsement in order to show the relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer purchase decision in Nigeria. Tobi *et al.* (2021) carried out a study, and their specific objectives were to examine the effect of a celebrity's trustworthiness and a celebrity's familiarity on purchase decision in order to explain the effects of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behavior: evidence from the Seven-Up Bottling Company Plc in

Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria. Omoregbe and Osifo (2019) used celebrity trustworthiness, celebrity expertise, celebrity respect, celebrity attractiveness, and celebrity similarity as attributes of celebrity endorsement. Some features of celebrity endorsement, such as attractiveness, trustworthiness, extraordinary lifestyle, or exceptional expertise, make celebrity endorsers enjoy a high degree of public cognition and trust (Silvera & Austad, 2004). The present study adapted the celebrity similarity, celebrity popularity, and celebrity attractiveness as constructs, which will suit the area under this study.

2.1.2. Brand loyalty

According to Boulding *et al*. (1993), brand loyalty is the degree to which a customer is willing to repeat purchases of a particular brand. Kotler (2003) defined brand loyalty as the degree to which customers continue to purchase a product or service over time, despite other alternatives. Keller (2003) defines brand loyalty as the predisposition of a customer to choose a particular brand over others in the face of competition. Brand loyalty is a commitment that is deeply held to consistently rebuy or re-patronize a service or preferred product in the future despite situational impacts and marketing efforts that have the potential to create switching behavior (Oliver, 1997; Alkhawaldeh & Eneizan, 2018).

We have the various types of brand loyalty, which are hard-core brand loyalty, which is characterized by consumers' emotional commitment to a brand, often resulting in brand advocacy and sustained purchase over time (Uncles & Dowling, 2003). Also, we have Split consumers' brand loyalty where consumers are loyal to more than one brand but limit their options to two or three brands. Consumers can spread their loyalty based on experiences, preferences, or situational factors (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2007). Another brand loyalty is shifting-Customer brand Loyalty, where customers will buy their products from one brand for a certain period before switching their loyalty to another. They will then remain loyal to the second brand, so they shift preferences, which can be because of varying factors (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2005). Brand loyalty can be determined through various aspects: firstly, customer satisfaction; research has consistently shown that customers who are satisfied with their experiences are more likely to return to the same brand, recommend the brand to others, and become loyal advocates (Oliver, 1997). Perceived quality of the product is a crucial aspect of brand loyalty, as it plays a significant role in shaping customers' attitudes and behaviors towards a brand. When customers perceive a brand's products or services as high-quality, they are more likely to become loyal customers (Zeithaml *et al*., 1996).

Perceived value is one determinant of brand loyalty for a product or service and influences brand loyalty (Kotler, 2003). Perceived value is a crucial aspect of brand loyalty, as it plays a significant role in shaping customers' attitudes and behaviors towards a brand. Also, a brand's image and reputation influence brand loyalty (Aaker, 1997); a strong brand image can foster loyalty, while a weak or negative brand image can lead to disloyalty. The quality of the customer experience also influences brand loyalty. When customers have a positive experience with a brand, they are more likely to become loyal and advocate for it. On the other hand, a poor customer experience can lead to disloyalty and negative word-of-mouth (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Emotional attachment: The emotional attachment to the brand is a key driver of brand loyalty (Hochschild, 1983). Effective loyalty programs can increase brand loyalty (Reichheld, 2003). Word-of-Mouth: A positive word-of-mouth recommendation from satisfied customers can increase brand loyalty (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). Word-of-mouth is a powerful tool in building brand loyalty. Social identity: a consumer's sense of belonging to a particular social group or community can influence brand loyalty (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity is a crucial aspect of human behavior and plays a significant role in shaping brand loyalty. We also have determinants such as trust; the level of trust between the customer and the brand can influence brand loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Brand personality traits associated with the brand can influence brand loyalty (Aaker, 1997). Also, the cultural fit between the customer and the brand can influence brand loyalty (Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

2.2. Hypotheses Development

Some studies have addressed the relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumers' brand loyalty.

2.2.1. Celebrity similarity and brand loyalty

Thompson and Zhang (2024) studied the influence of social media celebrity similarity on brand loyalty in younger consumers. They discovered that perceived similarity significantly enhances brand loyalty among younger demographics due to the strong emotional connections formed via social media platforms. Vries and Lans (2022), on the effect of celebrity-brand similarity on brand loyalty across different cultural perspectives, indicated that higher perceived similarity levels of a celebrity increase brand loyalty, particularly in collectivist cultures where social identity plays a more significant role in consumer behavior. Also, Dholakia and Talukdar (2004) conducted a study analyzing the emotional aspects of brand loyalty through celebrity endorsements, revealing that emotional connections formed through perceived similarity to celebrity endorsers significantly enhance brand loyalty. The authors argue that brands utilizing relatable celebrities can foster stronger emotional bonds with their consumers. We therefore hypothesize as follows.
H1: Celebrity similarity significantly influences consumers' brand loyalty.

2.2.2. Celebrity attractiveness and consumer brand loyalty

Barlow *et al*. (2024) studied the effects of celebrity attractiveness on consumers' emotional responses and explored how these emotions drive brand loyalty. The results showed that positive affective responses to celebrities correlate with stronger brand loyalty. Rosenfeld and Berg (2023) analyzed how celebrity attractiveness affects consumer attitudes toward brands and their purchase intentions. The results showed that an attractive celebrity can positively shift consumer attitudes, reinforcing brand loyalty. Also, Aichner *et al*. (2022) examined the impact of influencer attractiveness on brand loyalty in social media. The study found that attractiveness positively influences consumer trust, leading to heightened brand loyalty, particularly within the beauty and lifestyle sectors. We therefore hypothesize as follows.
H2: Celebrity attractiveness significantly influences consumers' brand loyalty.

2.2.3 Celebrity popularity and consumer brand loyalty

A study by Cheng and Hu (2024) explored how consumers' emotional connection towards popular celebrities affects their loyalty to endorsed brands. The findings showed that celebrity popularity enhances emotional engagement, leading to stronger brand loyalty. A comparative analysis by Salman & Ashraf (2023) focused on the differential impacts of celebrity popularity versus attractiveness on brand loyalty. The study concluded that while both factors are significant, the popularity of the celebrity has a more robust effect on fostering consumer loyalty. Singh and Kaur (2022) assessed how celebrity popularity affects consumer trust and brand loyalty. The results highlighted that popular celebrities positively impact brand trust, directly influencing consumers' loyalty. Also, Tung and Chao (2021) explored how celebrity popularity on social media platforms influences brand loyalty among younger consumers. The findings indicated that higher levels of celebrity popularity significantly enhance brand loyalty through increased consumer engagement and trust. We therefore hypothesize as follows.
H3: Celebrity popularity significantly influences consumers' brand loyalty.

3. Research Framework

Based on our hypotheses, we develop the following research framework that illustrates the relationship between variables.
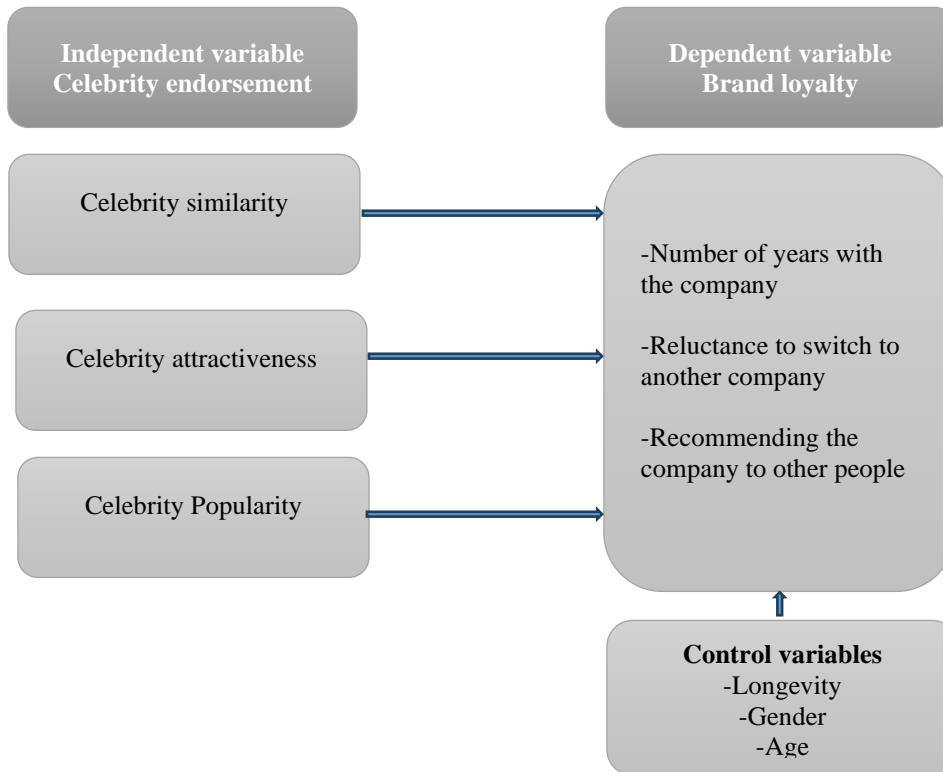
Fig.1: Research Framework

4. Methodology

This section presents the study's methodology, including the research design, sample size, sampling technique, model specification, data analysis techniques, validity and reliability of the research instruments, and ethical considerations. This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design, drawing inspiration from McCracken's meaning transfer model (MTM) (1989).

The meaning transfer model assumes that celebrities transfer meanings (such as feelings, credibility, personalities, and values) to brands or products through endorsement (Jain & Roy, 2016). This theory posits that celebrity endorsers have cultural and symbolic meanings that they transfer to the product they endorse. In order to effectively use celebrity endorsement, the firm must associate the product with the features of a celebrity that the consumer can easily get attracted to and be influenced to buy (Erdogan, 1999; Johansson & Sparredal, 2002; Oyeniyi, 2014). This study adopted a model with three indicators of celebrity endorsement: celebrity similarity, celebrity attractiveness, and celebrity popularity. Brand loyalty was captured using the longevity of consumers in a particular company, reluctance to switch to other products, and resistance to switching to other competitors. The econometric model of this study is specified as follows:

This study examines the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer brand loyalty. In order to examine the aggregate effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer brand loyalty, the following model is specified:

$$CBL = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 CEND + \alpha_2 LONG + \alpha_3 FEMALE + \alpha_4 AGE + \varepsilon_9 \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots.(1)$$

Where CBL is the consumer brand loyalty index constructed with Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) In addition to capturing the effect of celebrity endorsement components on consumer brand loyalty, the following disaggregated model is estimated:

$$CBL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CES + \beta_2 CEA + \beta_3 CEP + \beta_4 LONG + \beta_5 FEMALE + \beta_6 AGE + \varepsilon_{10} \dots\dots (2)$$

Condition: Regress the dependent variable (consumer brand loyalty) on the independent variable (celebrity endorsement).

The target population was consumers of telecommunication and brewery products and services in the city of Bamenda, Cameroon. The study relied on primary data collected using structured questionnaires with a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 represents strongly disagree, and 5 represents strongly agree. It was developed by the researcher and administered to the consumers face-to-face and online. Reliability, validity, normality, and outlier tests were conducted to ensure that the data collection and model instruments were reliable, valid, followed a multivariate normality, and no outliers. The reliability of a scale was quantified using a statistic called Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

The questionnaire was designed in three sections. Section A consisted of demographic information; Section B looked at the indicators of celebrity endorsement (celebrity similarity, celebrity attractiveness, and celebrity popularity). Celebrity similarity was measured in terms of ethnic background, lineage, surname, historical background, and religious background of the celebrities. Celebrity attractiveness was captured in terms of physical attractiveness, physical attributes (body, flawless skin, and stylish fashion choices), skin color, and the fan bases of the celebrities. Celebrity popularity was captured using trustworthiness, credibility, engaged following, social media following, recognition, visibility, and exposure. Lastly, section C consisted of elements of consumer brand loyalty captured in terms of contract renewal, longevity with the brand, reluctance to switch to another provider, and utilizing multiple services and products offered by the specific company.

A convenient sampling technique was used to select the respondents, and data were collected by the researcher, who conducted the study one-on-one with the respondents. The results were imputed into Google Forms, an online survey application, and a link was generated and shared with participants. The researcher ensured that participation in the study was voluntary, consumers' responses were kept confidential, and their identities were kept anonymous. Those who indicated their willingness to participate in the study were given the questionnaires for completion. Among 450 sampled questionnaires for each industry, the telecommunication and brewery industries, 429 and 424 were returned, respectively. Collected data was coded into SPSS version 21 for analysis.

The first-hand data were analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. The multiple correspondence analysis was used to construct celebrity similarity, attractiveness, and popularity indices. Later on, the ordinary least squares estimation technique was used to test the study's hypotheses. The model variables were used to examine the 853 responses using Cronbach's α. The reliability test was used to determine the internal consistency of the constructs in the model. In an attempt to perform this, Cronbach's Alpha was used with an accepted threshold of at least 0.7. The internal consistency of the participants was not violated for any of the variables, as Cronbach's Alpha coefficient values ranged between 0.7495 and 0.8017. These exceeded Chua's (2006) recommended threshold of 0.60. Thus, the instruments and constructs were valid and reliable for the study.

5. Results

This subsection presents demographic characteristics, indices for the different variables, and regression results for the four objectives. Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of sampled respondents.

Results from Table 1 indicate that there was almost a balance between male and female consumers to ensure gender representativeness. However, men slightly dominated the sample as they represent 50.53% of the sample, corresponding to 431 of the sampled consumers, as against 49.47% (259) female consumers, and it has been normalized. Further descriptive analysis shows that most respondents were married, given that this category represents 51.6% of the sample, corresponding to 440 of the sampled consumers, as opposed to 48.4% of the sample who reported being single, corresponding to 413 of the sampled consumers.

According to results from table 1, most respondents were aged between 20 and 40 years and corresponding to 433 (51.4%) of the sampled consumers followed by consumers in the age bracket 40 years and above corresponding to 393(46.6%) of the sampled consumers while 17(2%) of the sampled respondents were less than 20 years.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Variable	Categories	Freq.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Gender	Male	431	0.5052755	0.5002655	0	1
	Female	422	0.4947245	0.5002655	0	1
Marital status	Married	440	0.5158265	0.5000427	0	1
	Single	413	0.4841735	0.5000427	0	1
Age	Less than 20	17	0.0199297	0.1398406	0	1
	Age [20 – 40[	433	0.5076202	0.8696118	0	1
	40 and above	393	0.4725402	1.0130946	0	1
Level of education	No education	13	0.0152403	0.1225793	0	1
	Primary	290	0.3399766	0.4739788	0	1
	Secondary	271	0.3177022	0.4658561	0	1
	Higher	279	0.3270809	0.4694223	0	1
Employment status	Unemployed	18	0.021102	0.1438087	0	1
	civil servant	164	0.1922626	0.3943095	0	1
	business man	172	0.2016413	0.4014611	0	1
	farmer	170	0.1992966	0.3997058	0	1
	pensioner	164	0.1922626	0.3943095	0	1
	private employee	165	0.1934349	0.3952227	0	1
Longevity with the company		853	12.87222	5.738949	1	24

Source: Author computation,2024

Further descriptive analysis shows that most of the respondents had primary education, given that this category represents 34% of the sample, corresponding to 290 of the sampled consumers, as opposed to 32.7% of the sampled respondents who reported having higher education, corresponding to 279. In comparison, 31.8% (271) of the respondents reported having secondary education, and 1.5% reported having no education, corresponding to 13 of the sampled consumers.

For the employment status of the respondents, most of the respondents indicated that they were business men as this category 20.2% of the sample corresponding to 172 of the sampled consumers, 19.9% of the sampled respondents indicated that they were farmers corresponding to 170 of the sampled consumers, 19.3% of the sample indicated that they were private consumers corresponding to 165 of the sampled consumers. In comparison, 19.2% of the sampled respondents indicated that they were pensioners and civil servants, corresponding to 164 of the sampled employees, and 2.1% indicated that they had been, corresponding to 18 of the sampled consumers.

Further demographic descriptive analysis reveals that the average value of consumer longevity with the company is 12.9 years, which implies that, on average, sampled consumers have been working for close to 13 years, with a standard deviation of 5.7 years. This indicates moderate dispersion of values around the mean, with some consumers reporting that they have been consuming for just 1 year, while others claimed to have been consuming for up to 24 years.

Based on results from Table 2, the overall model is significant at the 1% level, as shown by the probability of Fischer statistics (0.0000), as well as the telecommunication and brewery models, which are all significant at the 1% level. The celebrity endorsement aggregate index consistently positively affects consumer brand loyalty across all specifications. Specifically, the coefficient of celebrity endorsement index in the overall model is positive (0.631), which implies that celebrity endorsement relates positively with consumers' brand loyalty in the telecommunication and brewery industries in Bamenda, Cameroon. A unit point increase in the celebrity

endorsement aggregate index will lead to a 0.63 point increase globally in the consumer brand loyalty index. This result is significant at the 1% level. Similarly, a unit point increase in celebrity endorsement aggregate index will bring about a 0.704 point increase in consumer brand loyalty index in the telecommunication sector and a 0.551 point increase in consumer brand loyalty in the brewery industry in Bamenda. Both results are statistically significant at the 1% level. However, it should be highlighted that the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer brand loyalty is significantly more pronounced in the telecommunications sector than in the brewery sector.

Table 2: Robust OLS results the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand loyalty

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	Overall	Overall (Disaggregated)	Telecom	Telecom	Brewery	Brewery
Celebrity endorsement index	0.631***		0.704***		0.551***	
	(0.0568)		(0.0924)		(0.0561)	
Celebrity similarity index		0.275***		0.251**		0.362***
		(0.0799)		(0.101)		(0.124)
Celebrity attractiveness index		0.357***		0.394***		0.280***
		(0.0851)		(0.116)		(0.0881)
Celebrity popularity index		0.253***		0.352**		0.119
		(0.0968)		(0.137)		(0.0862)
Longevity	-0.000513	-0.000506	-0.000811	-0.000776	-0.000255	-0.000263
	(0.000433)	(0.000437)	(0.000589)	(0.000587)	(0.000643)	(0.000684)
Female dummy	0.00378	0.00403	0.00145	0.00180	0.00624	0.00676
	(0.00493)	(0.00490)	(0.00753)	(0.00744)	(0.00596)	(0.00611)
Age [30 – 40[	0.00208	0.00281	0.00545	0.00499	0.000965	-0.000414
	(0.00604)	(0.00571)	(0.00911)	(0.00865)	(0.00791)	(0.00727)
Age [40 – 50[	0.0167**	0.0167**	0.0274**	0.0272**	0.00713	0.00754
	(0.00717)	(0.00707)	(0.0115)	(0.0115)	(0.00818)	(0.00806)
Age [50 – 60[	0.00312	0.00327	0.00118	0.00123	0.00542	0.00576
	(0.00592)	(0.00586)	(0.0107)	(0.0106)	(0.00710)	(0.00671)
Age ≥ 60	-0.0208	-0.0217	0.00308	0.00386	-0.0525*	-0.0580**
	(0.0190)	(0.0190)	(0.0210)	(0.0209)	(0.0294)	(0.0280)
Constant	0.00984	-0.00186	0.00757	-0.00634	0.0124	0.00466
	(0.00630)	(0.00723)	(0.00988)	(0.0108)	(0.00761)	(0.00861)
Observations	**853**	**853**	**429**	**429**	**424**	**424**
R-squared	**0.593**	**0.595**	**0.615**	**0.616**	**0.592**	**0.608**
Prob > F	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**
Breusch Pagan p-value	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**	**0.0000**
Mean VIF	**1.22**	**1.46**	**1.19**	**1.38**	**1.28**	**1.66**

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Source: Author computation,2025

Further results indicate that the coefficient of the celebrity similarity index in the overall model is positive (0.275), which shows that consumer similarity positively relates to consumer brand loyalty. In effect, a unit point increase in consumer similarity index will lead to about a 0.275 point increase in consumer brand loyalty. Moreover, this result is significant at the 1% level. Thus, celebrity similarity has a significant positive effect on consumer brand loyalty. In terms of sector of activity, it should be noted that a unit point increase in celebrity similarity index will result in about a 0.251 point increase in consumer brand loyalty index in the telecommunication sector and a 0.362 point increase in consumer brand loyalty in the brewery industry. Both outcomes are statistically significant at the 5% and 1% levels, respectively. Thus, celebrity similarity

significantly enhances consumer brand loyalty in the brewery industry more than in the telecommunications industry.

Similarly, celebrity attractiveness positively affects consumer brand loyalty, given that the coefficient of celebrity attractiveness is positive (0.357). Specifically, an increase in celebrity attractiveness index by one point will result in about a 0.357 point increase in consumer brand loyalty index, everything being equal. In addition, this result is statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, celebrity attractiveness significantly promotes consumers' brand faithfulness. Results from the sectoral analysis indicate that a unit point increase in celebrity attractiveness will promote the consumer brand loyalty index by 0.394 points in the telecommunication sector and 0.280 points in the brewery sector. Both results are statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, celebrity attractiveness significantly enhances consumer brand loyalty more in the telecommunications industry than in the brewery sector.

Furthermore, results from Table 2 show that the coefficient of celebrity popularity index is positive (0.253), which implies that celebrity popularity has a positive influence on consumer brand loyalty globally. In other words, the more popular the celebrity endorsed by telecom and brewery companies, the higher consumer loyalty towards the company's products will be. Regarding marginal effect, a unit point increase in celebrity popularity index will generate about a 0.253 point increase in consumer brand loyalty index, everything else held constant. Also, it should be noted that this outcome is statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, celebrity popularity positively and significantly affects consumer brand loyalty. Sector-based analysis indicates that celebrity popularity stimulates consumer brand loyalty by 0.352 points in the telecommunications sector. In comparison, it does the same by 0.119 points in the brewery industry, everything being equal. However, only the results from the telecommunication sector are statistically significant at the 5% level. Thus, celebrity popularity significantly promotes consumer impulse purchase behaviour in the telecommunications sector but not in the brewery industry.

Going by the control variables, results from Table 2 indicate that longevity of purchase with the company negatively affects consumer brand loyalty globally and specifically in the telecommunication industry and the brewery industry. The longer the consumer purchases from the company, the less loyal he becomes to the brand. The coefficients of female gender are positive in the overall model and also in the sectoral models. These results reveal that women are more loyal to a particular brand than men. In other words, women are more likely to be faithful to a particular brand than men. This is also true in both the telecommunications and brewery sectors. However, none of these findings is found to be statistically significant. Thus, gender has no significant effect on consumer brand loyalty.

Going by the age groups, overall results show that only consumers between 40 and 50 years are significantly more loyal to a brand at the 5% significance level. Age [40 – 50] increases the brand loyalty index by 0.017 points. This is further confirmed in the telecommunication sector, as this age range enhances the brand loyalty index by 0.027 points, and it is significant at the 5% level. In the brewery industry, results from age distribution instead reveal a significant negative effect of age 60 and above on consumer brand loyalty, given that this age group was found to reduce the brand loyalty index by 0.058 points, and the result is significant at the 5% level. Regarding the validity of the results, it should be noted that all three models are significant at the 1% level, therefore revealing that celebrity endorsement by telecommunication companies and brewery companies significantly affects consumer brand loyalty. In the same light, there is no major concern about multicollinearity in the three models, given that the mean VIF results are all lower than the critical value of 2.5. Thus, the above results are reliable and valid.

6. Discussion

This study found that celebrity similarity positively and significantly affects consumer brand loyalty. This result aligns with the a priori expectation, which suggested that celebrity similarity will significantly affect

brand loyalty. These results conform to the findings of (Baur & Prester, 2023), who investigated the impact of celebrity endorsements on brand loyalty in the beauty industry and found a positive effect of celebrity endorsement on brand loyalty. However, the authors indicated that there are differences in terms of responses to celebrity endorsement across different cultural regions. Also, the study found that celebrity attractiveness had the highest effect on brand loyalty, which conforms with the a priori expectations that celebrity attractiveness has a positive significance on consumer brand loyalty.

This result is in line with that of Aichner et al. (2022), who examined the impact of influencer attractiveness on brand loyalty in social media and found that attractiveness positively influences consumer trust, leading to heightened brand loyalty, particularly within the beauty and lifestyle sectors. This study also found that celebrity popularity significantly affects consumer brand loyalty, which is in line with expectations, suggesting that celebrity popularity affects consumer brand loyalty. These results align with those of Cheng & Hu (2024), who explored how consumers' emotional connection towards popular celebrities affects their loyalty to endorsed brands. The findings showed that celebrity popularity enhances emotional engagement, leading to stronger brand loyalty.

7. Conclusion and Policy Implications

This study investigated the relationship between celebrity endorsements and brand loyalty in Bamenda, Cameroon's telecommunication and brewery sectors. The study adopted a quantitative design comprising surveys and a causal research design to achieve this. The overall results show that celebrity endorsement has a significant positive effect on consumer brand loyalty. Specifically, celebrity similarity, attractiveness, and popularity significantly promote consumer brand loyalty. It means that these three variables play a vital role in attracting customers. The telecommunication and the brewery industries can use these elements to attract customers and enhance brand loyalty. Comparatively, celebrity similarity significantly enhances consumer brand loyalty in the brewery industry more than in the telecommunications industry. In contrast, celebrity attractiveness significantly enhances consumer brand loyalty more in the telecommunications industry than in the brewery sector. Celebrity popularity significantly promotes consumer brand loyalty in the telecommunications sector, but not in the brewery industry. The study concludes that improving celebrity endorsement will be a significant customer stimulus, increasing brand loyalty.

Therefore, this study recommends that these companies use influencer marketing platforms to reach younger or older audiences, depending on their target audience, and promote their products through social media campaigns. They should partner with attractive celebrities because this can increase brand appeal and attract new customers, especially among younger demographics. They should use celebrities with values and interests that align with the target audience.

This study has significant practical and theoretical implications for celebrity endorsement and consumer brand loyalty in developing countries like Cameroon.

This study is, therefore, a significant step in the literature on celebrity endorsement and consumer brand loyalty in developing countries. It tests the applicability of the celebrity endorsement model within an African retailing context, considering the existence of societal peculiarities and cultural differences.

8. Limitations and directions for future study

The study is not void of limitations. The first limitation stems from the fact that the findings are based on a study conducted among consumers from two selected companies in one city, Bamenda. As such, for the results to be generalized, a study that includes all the companies in all the cities of Cameroon should be conducted and then compared. Also, other variables of celebrity endorsement should be used, like celebrity credibility, celebrity trustworthiness, celebrity congruence, and celebrity expertise.

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the paper. Noela Buwah Neba reviewed the paper and suggested improvements. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Appendix
Questionnaires
Celebrity Endorsements

Celebrity similarity	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
The ethnic background and lineage of the celebrities used by the company are familiar.					
The surnames of the celebrities used by the company are familiar.					
The historical background of the celebrity is well expressed.					
The celebrities used are from diverse religious backgrounds.					
The religious affiliation of the celebrity matches mine.					
The generation of celebrities used and the target audience are the same.					
Younger celebrities used by the company are more appealing.					

Celebrity attractiveness	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
The celebrities used by the company are perceived as physically attractive.					
The physical attributes of the celebrities used (body, flawless skin, and stylish fashion choices) are highly desired.					
The skin color of the celebrities used is different.					
The celebrities used by the company are relatable and aspirational.					
The celebrities used by the company are friendly.					
The fan bases of the celebrities used are significant.					
The fan bases of the celebrities used are dedicated.					

Celebrity popularity	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
The celebrities used to engage in influencer marketing.					
Celebrities used are trustworthy, credible, and have an engaged following.					
The level of engagement and interaction with celebrities' followers is high.					
The content and drive trends created by celebrities used by the company are viral.					
Behind-the-scenes moments and the personality of celebrities are showcased.					
The social media following, visibility, and exposure of the celebrities used are high.					
The recognition of the celebrities used by the company is enhanced.					

BRAND LOYALTY

Brand loyalty	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
You have been with the same company for an extended period.					
You consistently renew your contracts with the company.					
You show reluctance to switch to another provider despite the availability of alternative options.					
You actively recommend the services and products of the company to friends, family, or colleagues.					
You utilize multiple services and products offered by the specific company.					
You actively participate in customer feedback surveys, providing testimonials, or interacting with the brand on social media platforms.					
You exhibit resistance to switching to a competitor.					