ADVERTISING DECISION MAKING IN CAMEROON AS A CULTURAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT: *The principal objective of this study is to investigate the impact of consumer culture on advertising decisions in Cameroon. The cultural variables used include: language, religion, individualism/collectivism, beliefs, values, customs, and pride. We collected primary data from the towns of Douala and Yaounde through the use of questionnaire, calculated Cronbach`s alpha for each of our measuring instruments to ensure their reliability. This data is analysed through Chi square analysis test, multiple correspondence analysis, the test of T student, poison regression analysis, and Spearman correlation test. We found out that prominent values influencing advertising decisions are; pride, face to face contact in business negotiation, elastic time concept, long term orientation, and high social tides. Our results showed that consumer culture has a strong impact on advertising in all the regions with the exception of the centre and south regions. It is represented in the products we buy through design. Lastly, local models have a strong positive impact than foreign models, we recommend enterprises advertising in Cameroon to practice ethno advertising, and more so new products should first be advertised in the rest of the regions and gradually to the Centre and south Regions.*

KEYWORDS: advertising, Religion, Language, Acculturation, Collectivism, Face to face contact, pride, Long term orientation, and Elastic time concept.

RESUME

L` objectif principal de ce travail de recherche est d` évaluer l`impact de la culture du consommateur sur la publicité. Les variables culturelles prises en compte sont la langue, religion, L'orgueil, le collectivisme, les coutumes, croyances et les valeurs. Des données primaires ont été collectées à Douala et Yaoundé à travers un questionnaire, et nous avons calculé la valeur l`alpha de Cronbach pour vérifier le niveau de fiabilité de nos variables. Les hypothèses de recherche sont testées à travers le test de Khi deux, l'analyse des

correspondances multiples (ACM), les régressions de poisson, le test T de Student et le test de corrélation de Spearman. D`après les résultats obtenus, les variables culturelles qui influencent la publicité sont ; le contact en face à face, le temps élastique, la langue, l'orgueil, et les liens sociaux étroits. Nos résultats montrent que la culture influence fortement la perception publicitaire des consommateurs de toutes les Régions du Cameron a l`exception des régions du Centre et du Sud. La culture est représentée dans tous les produits à travers le design. Enfin, les model local ont une influence culturel forte que les model étranger. Nous recommandons donc aux entreprises de pratique l`ethno publicitaire. Aussi nos résultats montrent-ils clairement que les nouveaux produits devraient être vulgarisés par la publicité d'abord dans les Régions donc les décisions publicitaire sont fortement influencés par la culture et progressivement dans les autres régions (Centre et Sud)

Mot clé : publicité, Religion, Langue, Acculturation, Collectivisme, Contact face à face, L'orgueil,

INTRODUCTION

Advertising is one of the most instrumental elements of the promotional mix. Prospection is more effective via advertising. Advertising is a delicate issue to deal with since it constitutes the essential element that keeps the customers' informed on the existence of the product, the quality of the product, the price, and where the product can be made available, (Andrew et al, 2015). Great products fail due to inadequate advertising. Over a hundred years ago, if a man could write a better book, preach a better sermon, etc. than his neighbours, though, he lives in the bush, the world made a beaten bath to his door, Smith, (2003). But, this is not true today due to the nature of competition. Many excellent products fail because no one knows about them. More powerful advertising are all used by competitors to win and keep market share. As such, we can say that one of the most important roles a marketer has is to communicate effectively. If great products cannot win all the times, it can be as a result of the advert that does not fit the market segment in question. Adapting advertising to culture will increase advert perception, Minas (2014). Thus, which factors can enable us to choose the right promotion type or mix is a good question to answer, if we want to keep customers up to the long run.

Here, we shall examine the role of culture on advertising perception as a dominant component of the promotional mix. Any enterprise that does not take culture into consideration during advertising must be suffering seriously from marketing myopia, Levitt (1960) in Dubois (2000). Levitt in Doole and Lowe (2004) argues that advertising and marketing can be standardised across cultures but this is far from being true as we shall see at the end of this work. According to Knapp and Hall, 2009 in Minas, (2014), some cultures consider certain simple gestures in the opposite sense eg a thumbs-up signals approval in American and Islamic culture.

Conscious of the above we realise that the error some Enterprises make is to use persuasive, entertaining and seductive advertising to force the consumers' to buy what the production manager wants them to buy. However, no matter the intensity of persuasive advertising, perception would hardly take place. A product can sell spontaneously only if advertising decisions are culturally oriented. For this reason, the understanding of culture in advertising is very vital if not primordial, irrespective of the marketing situation, Mbaye, (2009). It seems relatively difficult having adequate knowledge of consumer behaviour without a thorough understanding of culture, psychology, and sociology. But out of these three, culture is the most influential as far as marketing is concerned. All studies focused on influencing human

behaviour and particularly consumer behaviour take culture as a relevant variable. This consideration lies in the fact that culture is a source or provides sources of consumer behaviour.

If marketing originated around the 19th century afterthe industrial revolution, it was because enterprises were not selling for the single reason that they did not look at marketing as a cultural framework, Degoberto, (2005). It was worth noting that cultural meanings are located in the culturally constituted world, and have to be transferred from there to the consumer product and from the consumer product to the consumers", through advertising, before the consumer can have a positive perception, Minas and Benjamin,(2014).

So far, early works in the domain of culture and advertising have focused on the whole affective-cognitive behavioural spectrum of ethical decisions, cultural programming, cross-cultural analysis, culture and globalization, cultural dimension of individualism etc. This research on its part goes further to investigate the effects of cultural factors on advertising decision making in the Cameroon context. **We are more particularly concerned with making marketers understand the consumer adverts perception process which can only be understood if the organisation succumbs to a set of behaviour, myths, rites, rituals, symbols, beliefs, assumptions, and mainly values that allows the organisation to place the customer culture at the centre of its adverts activities.** From Degoberto, (2005), we should accept marketing as a cultural expression rather than a technical one. Thus, adverts should take the same direction. This therefore brings us to the following question:

Research Question

How does culture influence advertising communication perception in Cameroon?
For feasibility, we have break down this question to specific questions as follows:
1. Which cultural attributes (values, language, and language behaviour, and patterns of thought etc) are responsible for effective conception of an advertising message?
2. How does culture influence the perception framework of advertising?

Objective of the Study
The principal objective of this study is to show how successful advertising decisions can be achieved in Cameroon through a detailed analysis and implementation of a people's cultural traits (the effect of culture in the stages of the advertising development process)
To attain this main objective, we have pass through the following specific objectives:
1 Examine the cultural attributes to be considered during the conception of an advertising message.
2. Examine how culture can influence the customer's perception framework.

Research Hypotheses
The nature of the problem statement gives rise to the following research hypotheses:
H$_1$: Prominent variables influencing advertising communication in Cameroon are Pride, face to face contact, long term orientation,. Collectivism, long term orientation and elastic time concept
H$_2$: Cultural differences are determinant components in the consumer adverts perception process.

THE REALITIES OF ADVERTISING

If advertising could be looked upon as a technique facilitating the propagation of certain ideals or the economic order link between two groups of people, one group having goods and services to supply and the other group exercising an effective demand of the goods and services, Salgou in Londrivie and Bronchard, (2002) or as a pleasurable and exerting experience, refreshing to watch and pleasant to listen, reflecting quality by being quality and make potential customers say…..I wish…..I should have been consuming the product in question or again in more concrete and precise terms as a non-personal and non-interactive or unilateral form of communicating information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products or ideals by identified sponsors through different media, emanating from an industrial or commercial organization (Arens and Bovee,1995), then it is clear that it cannot be effective without the application of culture. This is because culture is the way people do things in their environments or the way they behave and react to stimulus, meaning it will determine what they like to do, think and react to. It will determine what is appealing to their eyes, to listen, to feel etc.

Levitt in Doole and Lowe, (2004) argued that advertising and marketing can be standardised across cultures and since then, there has been a heated debate as to whether or not advertising can be standardised across cultures. He was short sighted because in no way can globalisation transform the world into a homogenious cultural market place where all customers can be persuaded by the same advertising appeals, irrespective of the culture they belong to. This is possible in situations of similarities in culture, Sun and Tinkham. (2005). More and more adaptation is still required in local markets. There are major differences in the reason why customers buy products. These differences come about as a result of cultural differences. Current research supports that cultures which are more high- context like that of Cameroon and Africa at large, use fewer information cues per advertising than low context cultures. Substantial differences exist across countries, and certain styles are more frequent in some countries and less in others.

If marketing should be looked upon as a cultural framework, Degoberto, (2005) then, advertising should equally be viewed as a cultural framework. For advertising to be successful, it must reflect the realities of each target market. The decoding of advertising messages is influenced by the person (encoder) in some area eg in high context culture. On the other hand it has no influence in low context cultures.In some countries, advertising styles focus on the creative strategies used in the commercials while in some the creative styles are focused on the overall strategy that is used for commercials. In some segments, the focus is on themes used in advertisements or the activities and their implied (or shown) thematic environment. Others still will look in particularly for gender roles and gender stereotypes (Dahl, 2005), body shape and price appeals.

We shall focus more particularly on the adverts appeals most frequently referred to as beliefs and values. They should be used frequently in advertising across cultures. We shall duel more on the most implicit values, rather than the functional feature of the commercial, such as amount of information, style, creative strategies etc. These appeals or values include self- respect, or self- esteem, nurturance, belonging, and so on. Cameroonians are proud individuals and self-respect if not self-esteem should be an important variable for successful advert in Cameroon. All researchers in this domain indicate that there is some difference in the usage of appeals

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across cultures (Dahl, 2005). Related literature reveals that localising advertising messages to suit consumers' expectation in each market is however the most important aspect in campaign planning across cultures. It is worth noting that even small cultural differences might play a major role in advertising.

Cultural Values as Predictors of Advertising Content, and Reality
We have looked at culture in this write up as all those elements that determine the behaviour of people in the society, that is, what they do, how they do it and why they do it the way it is done. Elements in this definition may stand for language, religion, beliefs values and customs, collectivism etc. culture is in layers like an onion. The inner layers are intangible while the outer layers are tangible. We cannot see or touch the inner layers of culture but the outer layer which is the result of our behavior.

It is important making an attempt to compare the different aspects of advertising and to establish links between the aspects examined and the society, country or culture in which the advertising is to take place. This can be on the basis of language, beliefs, Collectivism, pride, values and customs. Appeals or values such as youthfulness, the number of ethnic minorities shown in advertising, body shape, level of undress, leisure activities and household work,/children activities, figure and ground shown, individual performance or explicit relationship etc vary as we move from one place to another. From this judgment, therefore, the portrayers of the model will equally differ as we move from one culture to another. In the US, advertising relies more prominently on leisure themes and the portrayer of people as individuals rather than people in a relation, Sung and Tinham, (2005). In Cameroon the reverse is true. Thus, as we move from one culture to another there is a substantial difference in both the appeals used and the occasions in which the products are used in the commercials, and the rhetorical style used in commercial. Cameroon commercials should reflect more symbolic and traditional values which can be attributed to traditional eastern values. In France, overall advertising contains less standardised advertising, Dahl, (2005). In general, it is interesting to note that although most studies use a wide variety of measures of cultural differences, all conclude that there are very clear cultural differences in the various factors of advertising execution or appeals studied. Levitt`s, (1983) argument that advertising messages can be standardised in culturally close countries was rejected. Caillat and Mueller in Dahl, (2005), pointed out that even between countries which may easily be considered to be culturally close, substantial differences can exist in advertising. This is particularly important, as there is a significant leverage for the argument that a globalisation of consumer needs would first occur in two countries that share the same language and are both at a similar level of economic development.

Culture, Advertising Perception and Acceptability
Culture dictates all human behaviour, be it relative to consumption of all levels and categories and conditions our perception of stimuli particularly in terms of language, beliefs, values and customs which are inputs to the perception of all stimuli. It dictates the adverts background in terms of colours, the figure in all its form, the prime time, the person delivering the message, the advertising medium, the advertising message and a host of others. According to Minas, (2014), it is a conditioning element for the perception of an advertising message.

According to Shavitt et al. (2008, p. 1103). In Minas,(2005), culture includes "shared elements that provide standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting among those who share a language, a historical period, and a geographical location. Culture serves as

a source of lay theories about the world and shapes how people attend, think, and react, crafting their life views and philosophies. For example, people in Western cultures perceive an advertisement showing a woman wearing a white dress (in which white is traditionally associated with purity) differently than people in Eastern cultures (in which white signifies death). Thus, culture conditions the perception of an advertising message. From this definition, it is but normal to come up with the idea that all products have a cultural meaning, Mccraken, (2008) and from hear we can draw the conclusion that all adverts as seen in this write up should be a framework of culture for perception to take place. At any time perception takes place, the product under advertising is recognize and accepted.

Observed Cultural Differences and Advertising Messages
Marketers should be inspired to understand perceived differences and similarities in order to develop and send the right messages to the right people at the right time and place. It is not always true that countries with perceived similarities should be approached in the same way (receive exactly the same advertising message in the same manner). „There are always some slight differences that can cause at times serious misunderstanding. We should always identify, at least potentially, a certain degree of predictability in the observed differences. Hofstede, (2005), in his article, compare your home culture with your host culture, said `culture is more often a source of conflict than of synergy. He said cultural differences are a nuisance at best and often a disaster for marketing across regions. It is sometime amazing how different people in other cultures behave. We tend to have a human instinct that `deep inside" all people are the same-but they are not, therefore, if we go into another country or region and make advertising decisions based on how we operate in our own region-the chances are we will make very bad decisions. Hofstede's research gives us insights into other regions so that we can be more effective when developing target advertising. In Cameroon we have a series of factors affecting advertising. These factors include aspects such as ethnic diversity, illitracy, local languages and so on. These factors have a determining impact in the success of all advertising messages. They determine the advertising medium, background, prime time etc. Before the empirical part of the work, we shall equally examine these factors in the upcoming paragraphs under the heading below.

Ethnic Diversity, Illiteracy, Local and Legal Languages as a Source of cultural Groupings
These three factors are primordial in determining the success of advertising in Cameroon. The form, direction, message, and advertising background all depends on these elements. Cheich, (1986) uses language as the basis of distinguishing different cultural groups in Africa. In this classification people belonging to a cultural group may have slide linguistic differences but if they understand each other, we say they have a common language or dialect. Examples in the centre region include the Ewondos, Eton, and the Manquisas and in the Bamiliki region, the Lebialem, Menoua, and the Bambutus who form one linguistic group. From here it would be better for us to know the different linguistic groups in Cameroon in order to develop a suitable mix for them. According to the linguistic atlas for centre African states since 1985, there are 248 languages in Cameroon. These are grouped into Tchadish Cameroon (56 languages), Benoue-Congo Cameroon (41 languages), Adamawa-oubangui Cameroon (40), Bantou grass fields languages (50), Bantou and Mbam languages (14), the bantou equatorial languages (34).

In terms of official languages, we can segment the country into two zones: English speaking and French speaking. These two groups to an extent are not different only in terms of language

but in terms of beliefs and values and consequently have different consumption pattern induced since the colonial era. Following the same logic of Cheich Anta Diop Cameroon can equally be divided into nine linguistic zones: one and two (Afro-Asiatic), third zone Pyloum Niger-Congo- Koordofonian (Fulfulde, Benue-Congo, Adamawa-Oubanguier), fourth zone (Bantous), fifth zone (Bafia and Sanaga), sixth zone (the Limbe to Cambo zone), the seventh zone (regrouped Benoue-Congo languages that are not Bantous), the eight zone(covers the South-West, North West and Western Cameroon), and the ninth zone (covering the grass fields of the east). We equally have the administrative classification which has a lot of importance since the repartition is still in function of cultural characteristics as it is geographic thus only the names are changing.

The above classification can help marketers seriously in determining what to offer to the consumers in function of product design, quality, core product, tangible and augmented product not forgetting pricing and distribution. This is because the different groups at least have a collective programming of the mind to a certain extent, meaning that they are homogeneous. This is highlighted by the fact that there are no cultural differences within the ethnic groups Yizie, (2010), eg, there is no difference between Anglophones Bamilekes and francophone Bamilekes in terms of beliefs values and customs which are the basis of consumer behaviour. Knowledge of this will help enterprises to design products, fix price and distribute the product to customers' satisfaction.

But our greatest problem here lies in the promotional mix. This problem is that of linguistic diversity which must be respected for advertising, sales promotion, and public relation to be a success as stipulated in the previous paragraphs. But doing so is too expensive, while advertising with the two official languages still causes a serious problem as only at most 30% of the country's population can read and understand English and French. This language diversity makes it relatively difficult to advertise to the understanding of our total targeted market.

What can be the most acceptable solution is our target. The repartition in terms of official languages into two zones cannot give us a good solution in the mixing of the mix. But considering the nine zone classification, we can have a solution in terms of the product, price, distribution and promotion. In this situation, each of the nine groups will be targeted as a market segment. As far as advertising is concerned we can communicate to the people of the entire north in Fulfulde as both of them understand this language, as such, if each of these groups is large, profitable, and having growth potentials, they should be targeted as a market segment.
Cameroon has so many ethnic groups as seen above with different sub cultures and local languages. This situation makes national standards in advertising difficult as a result of cultural diversity. The culture of an important ethnic group can ungainly acquires the impetus of belonging to the national state. In some situations different ethnic groups are in violent opposition in a way that we cannot say that they constitute a nation. This is a typical example of Cameroon.

If we are looking at culture as the collective programming of the mind as stipulated by Hofstede (2000), or as the way we do things around here (Ralph, 1945 in Doole and Lowe, 2004), or as all those components that shape behavior in the society, then we can agree that each ethnic group has a unique cultural programming of the mind and a unique mode of perception.

This means that, in terms of advertising, each ethnic group should be targeted as a market segment since they speak different local languages, listen to different radio stations, watch different television channels, have different group leaders, and familiar to different advertising mediums.

The Role of Advertising as an instrument of Meaning Transferred from the Culturally Constituted World to Goods and Vice- Versa

Here we show how meaning can be transfer from the culturally constituted world to consumers' goods and from consumers' goods to the consumers'.Let's start by showing how meaning is transferred from the cultural constituted world to goods by advertising and product design. According to McCraken (2008), advertising works as a potential method of meaning transfer by bringing the consumer good and representation of the culturally constituted world together within the frame of a particular advertising. Here, the creative director of the advertising agency will seek to conjoint these two elements in such a way that the viewer/ reader glimpse an essential similarity between them. When this symbolic equivalence is successfully established, the viewer/ reader attributes to the consumer goods certain properties he/she knows exist in the culturally constituted world. The known properties of the culturally constituted world, thus, come to reside in the unknown properties of the consumer good and the transfer of meaning from world to consumer good is established.

Our observation and analysis make me to go contrary to McCraken (2008) by bringing in the role of marketing research in the study of consumer behaviour which is nothing far from the cultural meaning of consumer goods. Culture is seen only through consumers' behaviour and it is this behaviour that is represented in consumer goods. Thus, market researchers extract these cultural realities from the culturally constituted world and take it to the operation team in the enterprise who materialise it in consumer goods through product design. From this standpoint we can conclude that the known properties of the culturally constituted world have come to reside in the unknown properties of the consumer goods and the transfer of meaning from world to goods is achieved. It is then from here that advertising and rituals can transfer cultural meaning from the product back to the consumers. Here, through advertising, the cultural representation or meaning can be reviewed by the consumers as a means to justify that the product can meet consumers` specification or requirements as stipulated by Garvin in (Baily 2005.) in his TQM studies. Through this process, all the symbolic properties made to feature in the consumer goods are transferred to the consumers through advertising.

METHODOLOGY

In order to master the role consumer culture plays in advertising, we have the obligation to undertake an enquiry from the consumers' who are the dictators of advertising processes through their culture, and secondly, from the different authors who have shown interest on the role of culture in marketing. Our data was principally quantitative.

The statistics used in this work are basically from primary research. These primary data were got through a questionnaire, and exploratory inquiry. Exploratory research enabled us to have interviews with enterprises in the goods industries (textile, brewery and, food industries) and consumers of textile, food, and brewery products in order to have the cultural attributes they think have an impact on their marketing decisions and to compare them with what we think

can have a strong impact on consumer purchase behaviour as reviewed from observation and preliminary interviews.Data collection through questionnaires took a time period of four months, ranging from October to January 2016. A total of 308 consumers were successfully questioned based on the ability to have people from all the ethnic groups of the country.After the collection of data, we had the obligation of changing them to valuable information. This could only be done if the data were analysed through the use of statistical test. To be sure that our measuring instruments were the right ones for this study, we calculated Crownbach`s alpha for each variable. To have valuable information we used the test of chi square, multiple correspondent analyses, the test of T student and the test of correlation of Spearman, not forgetting poison regression analysis.

Multiple correspondence analyses enabled us to divide our respondents into two groups: those that have the impression that culture affects their purchase behaviour and those that think that culture has no effect on their purchase behaviour. From here the test of Chi square gave us the general impact of culture on advertising. The alphas of cronkbach were used to verify the convenience of variables. To validate our hypotheses we used regression analysis and the test of correlation of Spearman on each of them.

Model used in the analysis
Poisson regression is another form of, well,...regression. A model is fitted. Coefficients are obtained and interpreted as in any other regression model. As with logistic regression, the underlying mathematics and underlying probability distribution theory are different from ordinary least-squares regression, which is why Poisson regression is treated as a separate topic even though, from the consumer's viewpoint, it's all regression.

The Poisson log linear model

$\text{Log}(\mu) = \alpha + \beta x$
Since the log of the expected value of Y is a linear function of explanatory variable(X), and the expected value of Y is a multiplicative function of x: $\mu = \exp(\alpha + \beta x)$

Where, µ is the dependent variable which stands for advertising, x is the independent variable representing culture which is measured in the on-going study with the following attributes; Collectivism, pride, religion, language, beliefs, values and customs.

The expanded form of our model after considering all the variables becomes:
Log (advertising) = α + β1Collectivism + β2Pride + β3Religion + β4Language + β5 (Beliefs, values, Customs) + €1 B i > 0

Data analysis

Culture affects the way marketing activities takes place, thus, it conditions media preferences, advert background etc as we be seen below.
As seen below we shall start with descriptive statistic where we shall examine media preferences, adverts characteristics in function of customer preference, advert background etc and proceed to the different test.

Media Preference and Advertising in Cameroon

For every five people questioned, four of them prefer advertising which is done through the television, indicating that the most widely used media in Cameroon should be the television with the only exception that this media does not cover the entire territory of Cameroon. For this reason, other media still have great use depending on the situation at a particular time in space. For example, in no way can the television replace bill boards because people cannot be in contact with bill boards while at home or in the plane, cars, or ship but all these can move with the television while bill boards are suitable only with road transport. The table below gives us a clear indication that the most preferred advertising media is the television with 78.1%.

Table I: The Most Preferred Advertising Media

I am more captivated by an advertisement when it is done through	Percent
Television	78,1
Radio	5,4
News paper	2,4
Word of mouth	5,7
Bill board	8,4
Total	**100,0**

Advertising and Cameroon Reality

Four out of five people interviewed say advertising that interests them is that which has a clear message indicating product functions. In this situation we learn that advertisers have to be more logical, and be consumer oriented. This means that persuasive advertising should be limited to a greater extend as consumers are becoming more rational, looking for clear messages indicating product functions. For this to succeed, production must start and end with the market, for this is the only means for rational advertising. It should be noted that persuasive advertising is short lived as no one can buy a bad product twice. All the same, this mean that respondents are in favour of the use of local and familiar faces in advertising. This result shows that 35.3%, as against 34.7%, are in favour of the use of familiar faces in advertising. This means that advertising should be adapted to fit cultural specificities and with a clear massage indicating product functions.

The Perception of Advertising

A number of points influence the interpretation and acceptance of an advertising message. Perception depends on how the message is clear, indicating product functions as well as the figure and ground. The ground (background) must not dominate the figure (product).The table below gives a clear indication that in Cameroon perception depends greatly on the clarity and product function as express by 78.3% of the respondents.

Table II: Advertising and Message Perception

Advertising that interest me more is that which	Percent
has a clear massage indicating product functions	78,3
has familiar and interesting music	14,2
has familiar or local backgrounds	7,5
Total	**100,0**

Local Backgrounds/Advertising Perception

For the majority of Cameroonians, advertising that interest them is that which portrays local backgrounds or say local images. For this reason, we can equally say with certainty that Cameroonians consume familiarities or identities. This means that in advertising they prefer people who are familiar to deliver massages to them. This, therefore, instigate us to confirm that Cameroon has a high context culture. This is a clear indication that there are other elements surrounding the message that helps in the understanding of the message. If we make a critical analysis in business negotiations in Cameroon, we will realise that majority are verbal contracts. It is equally true as justified from the collectivist attribute which was strongly verified.

From the table below we realise that 55.7% of the population under study prefer common backgrounds in their advertising and common advertising backgrounds means local or familiar backgrounds which all imply cultural backgrounds, meaning that our Cameroon consumers prefer common faces or black faces in advertising. Culture, therefore, has a strong influence in our advertising.

Table III: Advertising Background

Advertising that interest me is that which portrays	Percent
Common backgrounds	55,7
Foreign backgrounds	44,3
Total	**100,0**

The Profile of Cultural Involvement and Advertising

From Spearman correlation coefficient, we realise that there is a positive and significant correlation between advertising and the profile of cultural involvement. Here again, we can say again with certainty that culture has a more than significant influence on advertising decisions and, thus, our hypothesis is partially validated and will be fully validated after regression analysis.

Table IV: Cultural Involvement and Advertising

	Advertising
Profile of cultural involvement	0,135 N(308) SIG 0,018

Calculation of Centre Tendencies

We have calculated the averages and standard deviation of the different independent variables as seen in the table below.

Table V: Beliefs, values and customs, religion, Language collectivism, and Pride

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max
Beliefs, values and customs	308	28.13636	13.06265	0	53
Religion	308	15.82792	7.081167	0	30
Language	308	16.77273	6.594364	0	28
Collectivism	308	26.4026	9.469633	0	43
pride	308	2.74026	1.483043	0	5

The above table helps us to calculate the averages and standard deviation for the different values, the lower the standard deviation, the more the relation. Pride therefore has a stronger relation or influence as compared to collectivism and language. In the preceding table we have undertaken a regression analysis to see the significance of each of the variables.

Regression analysis

The table below shows the relationship that exists between our dependent and independent variables. We can clearly see that all the cultural variables have a co- relation with advertising as express by the coefficients shown in the table below. In the table, bivaculture stands for Beliefs, values and customs.

Table VI: Spearman Advert Bivaculture,Religion, Language, Collectivism, and pride

	Adverts	Bivaculture	Religion	Language	Collectivism	Pride
Advert	1.0000					
Beliefs, values and customs	0.1247	1.0000				
Religion	0.0631	0.2431	1.0000			
Language	0.0637	0.1668	0.2715	1.0000		
Collectivism	0.0377	0.2009	0.1336	0.1529	1.0000	
pride	0.0041	0.0191	0.0394	0.0615	0.0633	1.0000

Poison Advert, Beliefs, values and customs, Religion, Language, Collectivism, Pride,

Non constant Collinear
Iteration 0: Loglikelihood= -3555.4151
Iteration 1: Loglikelihood= -1538.5753
Iteration 2: Loglikelihood= -1493.4617
Iteration 3: Loglikelihood= -1493.4617
Iteration 4: Loglikelihood= 1493.4112

Table VII: Spearman Correlation Test on Culture and Advertising

	cultural attributes			
	Beliefs,values, and customs	Religion	Language	Collectivism
Advertising influence my purchase behaviour	0,102 N(305) SIG 0,000	0,105 N(303) SIG 0,041	0,142 N(302) SIG 0,013	0,134 N(306) SIG 0,019

From the table, it is seen that all the Spearman correlation coefficients are positive between advertising and all the cultural attributes. Thus, in conclusion we can say that advertising activities of the enterprise are dependent on the cultural realities of the consumers. This will be verified by Poison regression below.

Table IX: Poison Regression   Number observed= 308
Loglikelihood = -1493.4112   Wadchi2(5) = 19653.40

Pro > Chi2= 0.0000

Adverts	Coef	Std err	Z	P > Z	95%conf	Interval
Beliefs, values and customs	0.0157249	.0016511	9.52	0.000	.0124887	.018961
Religion	0.0207248	.0030481	6.80	0.000	.0147506	.0266989
Language	0.0306009	.0031999	9.56	0.000	.0243291	.0368726
Collectivism	0.024322	.0021272	11.43	0.000	.0201528	.0284912
pride	0.1058796	.0114796	9.22	0.000	.0833801	.1283792

From the regression table above, the results are significant at a 10% confidence level. This is a clear indication that advertising is a cultural framework in Cameroon. Collectivism, pride, language, beliefs values and custom, and religion are all significant at a 10% confidence level

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

1.   A cross examination of all the Regions show that all Cameroon consumers adhere strongly to the norms and traditions of their communities with the exception of the Centre and South Regions, From this classification, the Northern Regions come first, follow by „grand West"

2.   Religion dictates what people do, what they eat, how they eat and of cause standard rules of behaviour in the society. In Cameroon, therefore, adverts patterning to the north are totally different in terms language prime time etc. From this perspective, the country can be segmented into two big segments in function of religion. Majority of people stick to the fact that the goods they consume must not be an abuse of their religion.

3.   Colour perception varies as we move from one region to another but in general, the most preferred colour in Cameroon is white. This has an impact on advert perception

4. From the regression analysis above, we realise that the following principal values influence advert perception in Cameroon:

5.

a). Pride: A cross table analysis indicated to us that everybody prefer the most expensive mark, whatever the income level. They equally like distinguishing themselves from others. This goes in line with the results of Lamond, (2001), where he said blacks are proud people who like using consumption to shape their identity. This same value justify why majority of Cameroonians like distinguishing themselves from others. Despite the fact that Cameroon is a poor indebted country, the most expensive marks are found in Cameroon. This has a lot to do with advertising

b). Elastic time concept: Just in time is not the concern of Cameroonians. Thus, late delivery is a common concept in Cameroon with the exception of people from the west and northern regions who have the conception that just in time increases product quality.

c). Face to face contact: Cameroonians prefer face to face contact in all their purchase transactions as compared to other forms of contacts. This is one of the principal reasons why one fix phone proposed by CAMTEL failed in Cameroon despite the fact that the price per minute for international calls was very cheap. This equally has much to do with advertising. In conclusion we can say that our hypotheses have been validated and, consequently, culture has a significant positive influence on advertising decision making. This analysis shows that Cameroon can be segmented into two main segments: One regroups consumers who are not strongly influenced by culture (Centre and South Regions) and the other regrouping the rest of the Regions who are strongly influenced by culture.

IMPLICATION OF RESULTS

 Culture is both tangible and intangible but only its tangible aspect is visible. The intangible aspects of culture is invisible and found in the culturally constituted world in the form of beliefs, values and customs, collectivism, religion etc while the tangible aspects can be seen in consumer goods such as houses, cloths, food and so on. For this reason we have seen that all products have a cultural meaning and equally that this cultural meaning is resident at three levels: consumer goods, consumers themselves, and the culturally constituted world. For enterprises to succeed, they must be able to transfer cultural meaning from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods through advertising.

This advertising need to take into consideration the cultural realities of the people in order for them to get the message, perceive it positively and accept the transfer. For this to succeed, we must determine how the advertising will be done and must have found out that it should be done through the television, using local backgrounds and with familiar faces using either English or French and if possible the mother tongue depending on the targeted market segment.
Since Cameroon is collectivist, loves face to face contact in business negotiation, make up of proud consumers, have an elastic time concept, success can only come if these factors are taken into consideration in design and particularly in advertising in order to unfold the cultural meaning in the product and generate positive awareness

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

These results are in agreement with many cross cultural research results. From the results above, promotion as a whole should be looked upon as a cultural framework which agrees with the results of Degoberto, (2005). According to him, for marketers to conserve customers, they should consider culture in mixing the mix.These results counteract the results of Levit 1983 in Steven, (2006) where he talks of the standardization of markets but falls in line with those of Steven who argued that advertising is strongly influence by culture and that it should be adapted to fit different marketing specificities. Hofstede, (1999), carried out the same studies in Australia and New Zealand and had the same results even though it was a cross Country approach.

Ekerete, (2001), carried out a research on the impact of culture on the marketing strategies of multinational companies marketing in Nigeria and still found out that culture has a strong impact on the marketing mix of multinationals. In the same light, Usunier in many of his researches have found the same positive impact as these results. According to him globalisation can only succeed if they think globally and react locally, (`consummation global, rime avec le loca`l). These results are contrary to those of Tan and Tsui, (1978), who investigated the impact of familiar faces in advertising and found that foreign faces or images had more positive impact than familiar faces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the interpretation of results, we have come up with a series of recommendations. This is in order to assist in the improvement of advertising and consequently marketing transactions in Cameroon. All Enterprises marketing in Cameroon must adapt Cameroon values, language, language behaviour (French and English as spoken by local Cameroonians) and pattern of taught in order to succeed. This implies that, they must master their perception or say their life style and purchase behaviour (decision making process). Cameroon can be segmented into two big segments in terms of culture, with the grand North, West, North West, littoral, South West and North West forming one segment which has a strong cultural impact and East, South, and Centre forming another which has a weak cultural impact. Advertising decision making should be in function of these.

In terms of religion the Country can be segmented into two segments that is, the South and Northern Regions. (Muslims in the North, and Christians in the South). Relative to language, it can be segmented into three big segments, Fofebe in the grand North, English in the North and South West Regions and French in the grand Centre, littoral and West Regions. These are segments large enough to target. Enterprises should know that this has a lot to do, in so far as advertising is concern.

For these reasons:
1. Advertising to the Northern Regions should be done in the dialect, (Fofebe), the South West and North West in English and in French for the rest of the Regions

2. Adverts in the Northern Regions should be completely different from those in the Southern Regions. These differences come about as a result of religious values.
5. The decision making process in Cameroon is hardly an individualistic process and thus Enterprises marketing in Cameroon should take into consideration the fact that Cameroon is a collectivist country.

7. According to customers in the North and West Regions, delivery time influence product quality. Enterprises may not respect delivery time in the other Regions but must do so in the former.
8. Advertisers should use local backgrounds, familiar faces, and language that will be positively perceived by the different targeted segments. Colours use should be in function of Regional perception for example white for North and Centre regions.
10. In advert decision making in the Littoral Region, particular care should be taken relative to beliefs, values, customs, and collectivism, in the North West, religion, in the South West, language and in the North collectivism

CONCLUSION

If geo-marketing and geo-merchandising have become current research topics in marketing, it is because of their cultural inclination. People consume similarities and not differences. The more people are similar, the more we can deliver the same message to them. It is culture that helps us to group people into segments in order to develop different messages that can be perceive positively in different segment.Culture affects advertising prime time, advertising background, the product under advertising, the advertising agency selected, the advert channel, the encoder of the message, the structure of the messages etc. Symbols have different meaning in different cultures for example a head node in one culture may mean yes and in another culture no. Different expressions have different meanings in different cultures and affect the perception of advertising. In this light as seen in our results Cameroon enterprises should use English and French as spoken by native Cameroonians. This argument guarantees us to say that culture should be looked upon as a cultural framework.

PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

If we end this piece of research work without pointing out areas which we have been unable to cover then we have not facilitated further research.

1. From observation, Cameroon can be divided into two principal segments in terms of price sensitivity: one big price sensitive segment and one small non price sensitive segment but we were unable to prove this from our enquiry. The non price sensitive segment corresponds to those we call the "nouveaux riches" in Cameroon. This can help advertising decisions to a greater extent.

2. How the advertising of a new product should evolve in Cameroon is another important issue. When a new product is to be lunched, where should we first advertise it and where should we last advertise it.

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