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Autonomy and Effect on Adolescents Socialization into Economic Independence Among the Bamileke of West Cameroon

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Abstract: Purpose: Investigating autonomy and adolescent socialization into economic independence provides insights into the complex processes of identity formation, self-discovery and social integration. Research findings can inform parents, educators and policymakers on how to promote healthy autonomy development and socialization in adolescents leading to better outcomes in academic, social and emotional domains. The knowledge on autonomy can help identify factors that contribute to or protect against adolescent problems such as substance abuse, mental health issues or antisocial behaviour. Understanding the interplay between autonomy and socialization during adolescent can inform the development of targeted interventions aimed at promoting positive youth development, preventing problem behaviours or supporting adolescents facing specific challenges. Investigating autonomy and socialization across different cultural, socioeconomic, environmental contexts can reveal how these factors influence adolescent development and inform culturally sensitive practices. By understanding how autonomy and socialization intersect, researchers can identify ways to promote mental health, well-being and resilience in adolescents, contributing to a heathier and more supportive society. Findings from such study can guide the development of policies and programs aimed at supporting adolescent development such as youth empowerment initiative, mentoring programs or community-based services. This study sought to examine the effect of autonomy on adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke of West Cameroon. The ecological theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) provided the theoretical underpinning of this study.

Materials and methods: The study adopted the concurrent nested mixed method research design which is an approach that requires both qualitative and quantitative data to be collected at the same time or in parallel within the same study. Quantitatively a questionnaire was used to test the effect of autonomy on adolescent socialization among the Bamileke of West Cameroon while qualitatively a semi-structured interview was conducted with 16 parents. The study side was the Bamileke society of the West region of Cameroon. With regard to sample 384 adolescents and 16 parents were recruited from 8 selected villages (Bamedousso, Bamekoue, Bamougong, Bangang, Bamendjing, Bamenyam, Bamessingue, Balatchi) of the Bamboutos Division in the West Region of Cameroon. The sampling techniques used for the study were the simple random sampling, the purposive sampling and the snow ball sampling. Therefore, in the Bamboutos Division which is made up of four sub-divisions which are Babadjou, Batcham, Ngalim and Mbouda, the villages were selected though simple random sampling whereby the names of the villages were written on pieces of papers, reshuffled and selected. Adolescents were purposively selected because the

researcher identified some of the characteristics, she was looking for such as adolescents staying with their parents with age bracket 15 to 20. Parents were selected through snowball sampling because adolescents assisted the researcher in identifying other parents. A questionnaire with determined internal reliability coefficient was used for information gathering. Data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings: Results show that autonomy was able to explain the variations in economic independence at 86.4%. Analysis also suggested that a unit increase in the level of autonomy will increase socialization into economic independence at 1.031 units. Furthermore, results confirmed the model as a good fit (F= 111.567), consequently the null hypothesis was rejected.

Implications to theory, practice and policy: Understanding autonomy and adolescent socialization can refine theories of adolescent development such as self-determination theory and social learning theory. Recognizing the interplay between autonomy and adolescent socialization highlights the importance of considering contextual factors in developmental theories. Incorporating cultural variations can enrich theoretical frameworks and promote more nuanced understanding of adolescent development. Parents and caregivers can foster healthy autonomy development by balancing guidance with gradual increases in independence and decision-making opportunities. Educators can promote autonomy-supportive learning environments, encouraging student autonomy, self-regulation and motivation. Mental health and counsellors can focus on autonomy related issues such as self-esteem, identity and decision making. Community-based programs can design activities and services that promote autonomy, socialization and positive youth development. Policymakers can develop and implement policies that promote autonomy-learning environments such as student – centered learning and flexible curriculum design. Governments and organizations can establish initiatives that foster adolescent autonomy such as youth leadership programs, mentorship schemes and community engagement projects. Policies can be developed to protect adolescent's rights to autonomy, dignity, self-determination while ensuring their safety and well-being.

Keywords: Autonomy, Sociocultural-Values, Adolescents Socialization, Economic Independence.

1. Introduction:

In many traditional societies, adolescence marks a critical juncture in the transition from childhood to adulthood. Among the Bamileke people of West Cameroon, adolescent socialization plays a pivotal role in shaping the economic independence of young individuals (Marga,2009). The Bamileke known for their rich cultural heritage and strong entrepreneurial spirit, have a unique approach to adolescent socialization that emphasizes autonomy and self-reliance (Tchoffo,2006). By examining the cultural, social and economic factors that influence adolescent development, this research provides insights into the ways in which Bamileke youth navigate the challenges of transitioning to adulthood (Hunt,2012). The way in which autonomy is fostered among Bamileke adolescents and how this autonomy contributes to their socialization into economic independence are the core issues of this research.

Autonomy is a complex concept with multiple dimensions and perspectives. Psychologically autonomy refers to an individual's ability to self- regulate, make decisions and act independently while still being connected to others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Philosophically autonomy is the capacity for self-governance, free will and moral agency enabling individuals to make choices that reflect their values and principles (Kant, 1975). Educationally autonomy in learning refers to student's ability to take ownership of their education, set goals and make decisions about their learning process (Holec,1981). Socially autonomy is the freedom to make choices and act upon them without undue influence or coercion from others while still being part of a social network (Giddens, 1991). Politically autonomy refers to self-governance of communities, regions or nations enabling them to make decisions about their own affairs and manage their own resources (Kymlicka,1995). Medically autonomy refers to patients right to make decisions about their medical treatment, free from coercion or undue influence (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001). Culturally autonomy can be understood as the ability to preserve and express one's cultural identity, values and practices while still engaging with other cultures (Taylor, 1992).

Among the Bamileke people of Cameroon, autonomy and adolescent socialization play a crucial role in shaping the transition to economic independence (Pharrell, 2010). Traditionally Bamileke society emphasizes collective responsibility and interdependence, with adolescents learning vital skills and values through apprenticeships and community involvement (Tandah, 2009). However rapid modernization and urbanization are transforming the social and economic landscape, creating new challenges and opportunities for young people (Gaaulia, 2013). As Bamileke adolescents navigate this changing context, they must balance the need for autonomy and self-reliance with the importance of maintaining social connections and respecting cultural traditions (Minsfeld,2010).

Economic independence is a key aspect of this transition as young people seek to establish themselves as financially stable and self-sufficient individuals (Harenth *et. al*, 2008). The study explores the complex interplay between autonomy, socialization and economic independence among Bamileke adolescents, examining how they negotiate these competing demands and forge their own part to adulthood. By investigating the cultural, social and economic factors that shape this transition, we can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which Bamileke youths are redefining traditional notions of autonomy, socialization and economic independence in the context of modernization and globalization (Perez, 2014). From the foregoing, the study thus seeks to provide an answer to one research question which is: How do autonomy affect adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke of West Cameroon?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Etymologically the word autonomy had its roots from the Greek origin whereby autos meant self and nomos meant rule, law or governance. In its early appearance in ancient Greek political philosophical thinking, it was a term used to make a distinction between a city state possessing autarchy (self-rule) and the one under the control of some other city state. In its early usage therefore, autonomy was used to denote self-rule, self-governance or self -determination. The term was never extended to individual acts but to the freedom of an autarchic state to make laws which were especially suitable to its own specific situation. It was not until the enlightenment period in Europe that the concept assumed a new meaning and became a buzz word for a philosophy that emphasized on individual choice and self-determination. Beauchamp (2005) is of the opinion that although there is little agreement concerning the nature or scope of autonomy, nevertheless the belief that we ought to respect the autonomous choices of persons runs deep in common morality.

Hunt (1998) is of the opinion that autonomy is a significant cultural value among Bamileke adolescents, playing a crucial role, a catalyst in their transition to economic independence in terms of early entrepreneurship. Tsapi (2009) holds that Bamileke adolescents are encouraged to engage in small scale entrepreneurship such as selling goods at markets or raising livestock. This fosters autonomy, self-reliance and economic independence. In addition, Bamileke adolescents are gradually

given more decision-making authority within their families, allowing them to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills Mumth (2005). Furthermore, when it comes to financial management, adolescents are taught to manage their own finances, making decisions about saving, spending and investing. Sonkwa (2001) opines that autonomy helps them develop financial literacy and responsibility. Many Bamileke adolescents participate in apprenticeships, learning trades such as farming, craftsmanship or commerce. This hands-on experience promotes autonomy, skill-building and economic independence (Kerth ,1997).

According to Tyson (1994) they are some cultural practices that foster autonomy in the Bamileke community such as initiation rites that mark important transitions in life, including adolescence. These rites involve challenges and tests that help adolescents develop autonomy, resilience and self-reliance. Werenth (2004) holds the fact that mentorship fosters autonomy because Bamileke adolescents are often paired with mentors, who provide guidance, support and encouragement. This mentorship helps adolescents develop autonomy, confidence and decision - making skills. Community involvement is also a vital role due to the fact that Bamileke adolescents are encourage to participate in community activities such as farming, hunting or cultural events. This involvement fosters autonomy, social responsibility and economic independence (Tchinda,2019).

According to self-determination theory, autonomy is a fundamental psychological need that enables individuals to feel a sense of volition and self-regulation (Deci & Ryan). Melvich (2005) is of the opinion that autonomy is all about people thinking and acting on their own thing, desires, liberty and decision to make their own thing. In this work autonomy is a central feature of adolescent development, playing a key role in adolescent's psychosocial adjustment. During this period Bamileke adolescents begin to separate from their parents, find their own identity and think independently. In the Bamileke community one of the most important tasks for all adolescents is learning autonomous skills that will help them manage their own lives and make positive, healthy choices. Autonomy means the capacity to self-govern which is the ability to act independently, responsibly and with conviction.

This concept of autonomy relies on the agency of a moral being to exercise his or her own decisions about his or her being. Kitayama (2005) opines that autonomy means self-governing, and comes from a Greek word meaning independent. A system is autonomous if and only if the organization of internal aspects of system processes is the dominant factor in the system's self-preservation, making both itself and the processes that contribute to autonomy functional. Autonomy is the quality or state of being self-governing, self-directing, freedom and especially moral independence. Autonomy is independence in one's thoughts or actions. An adolescent from a strict household who is now living on her own for the first time is an example of someone experiencing autonomy. When a group wants to govern itself or a person wants to make independent decisions, they are looking for autonomy (Ryan, 2000).

The issue of autonomy is becoming increasingly pervasive in cross-cultural research relating to parenting and teaching (Chirkov, 2001). In our modern world, which is becoming more global and boundless, this is up to peoples' autonomous decisions to choose where, how and with whom to live their lives and what cultural practices to exercise. The existing anthropological research provides evidence that autonomy, if it is understood as actions that emanates from one's self, is one of human universals (Brown, 2002) meaning that regardless of the country, culture, or society wherein people live, they have a clear idea that some of their actions can be and should be regulated by themselves and that some of their behaviours are regulated by forces outside themselves.

Combined with such other universals as intentions, choice making, self-control, these universals create a pretty clear picture of a modern understanding of autonomy as a psychological state which includes intentions to act, originated within one's self, and which most naturally occurs when a person chooses among alternatives. If a choice is autonomous, then the self is responsible for this action and it regulates a person's self-determined actions according to one's moral sentiments and

world views (Moneta, 2002). But these sentiments and views have to be internalized and deeply integrated into a person's self in order to be guidelines of a truly autonomous action. The logic of this reasoning leads to the conclusion that autonomy, or, saying it more correctly, a tendency toward autonomous actions, is a part of human nature and that we all, as members of the human species, are predisposed to exercise and practice this powerful capacity under favourable conditions (Alkire, 2002).

Another view of autonomy stems from a constructionist position that autonomy is a moral value which results from social construction within the network of meanings and practices of a particular society and culture (Schneewind, 1998). As a sociocultural construction, autonomy, in this case, together with other moral values as freedom, human rights, individualism, is not culturally universal as the tendency toward autonomous actions described above, but is more cultural, historical and society relative. The confusion emerges when the scholars who study human agency and motivation cross-culturally reject the idea of human nature with inherent desires such as love, esteem, autonomy, and self-expression. Pinker (2002) treats human motivation together with the issues of autonomy and agency as mere cultural constructions dependent on the nature of self, which is also predetermined by societal forces.

The consequences of having these different approaches applied to the issue of autonomy could be pretty dramatic. If we accept the idea that autonomy is a part of human nature, then, it is logical to expect that providing the opportunities for people to exercise this ability will make them happy and fully functioning individuals in most if not all societies. People suffer when the freedom to exercise the inherent desires is thwarted (Pinker, 2005). But the culture relativist approach would partly or completely deny the ability of people within particular cultures to value and benefit from autonomous actions (Oishi, 2000), or even further, it may emphasize that in some societies, being controlled and exposed to authoritarian ruling may be associated both with behavioural satisfaction and with more adaptive behavioural outcomes (Miller, 1999).

Researchers such as Hofstede (1997) have defined individualism as the system of cultural representations and practices where priority is given to the individual's needs, goals, and preferences, rather than to the group's needs, goals and preferences. Thus, individualism is seen as a pattern of cultural values, meanings, and practices that has been constructed through the history of human civilizations in order to provide people with guiding rules and standards for decision making in their behaviors. Individualism is one of several systems of cultural values (e.g. collectivism) which are distributed among various societies, ethnic groups and countries.

Autonomy as a moral value is one of the constituents of individualism (Lukes, 1973). Autonomy is bounded to the cultures that exercise and propagate the philosophy of individualism. Autonomy can be understood as the natural and universal tendency of human beings to execute their behavior willingly and to fully endorse the actions they are engaged with (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The tendency toward autonomous actions become a universal attribute of any member of any society independently of what system of cultural values and practices, individualism or collectivism, they exercise (Chirkov, 2007).

Kitayama (2003) holds that the meaning, the value and even the label of this natural tendency are constructed by the socio-cultural context wherein it is exercised. But the phenomenological experience of it and its functional role in human activity remains the same across countries and continents. In order to be fully human, we need to be autonomous in our actions. The concept of autonomy is present in the mindset of the Bamileke adolescents because they prefer to set up their own objectives and work towards the realizations of their goals.

According to Buscema (2004) sociocultural values are the set of rules, principles and beliefs that govern the behaviour of the human being within society. Helson (2018) is of the same view when he sees Sociocultural values as beliefs, values, traditions and habits that influence our everyday behaviour. These values influence the decisions we make and actions we take. Because of this,

sociocultural values have an important impact on economic development. Rather Werrent (2015) is of the opinion that sociocultural values are learned passively from a very young age, since they are instilled within the family nucleus. Later they continue to learn throughout life insofar as the human being interacts in the society. Tunch (2012) sees sociocultural values from a different perspective when he acclaims that they are the forces within the society that influence the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of individuals.

Sociocultural values allow the human being to relate adequately with people from the same sociocultural group, that is, to share the same beliefs, ideals and principles. Sociocultural values influence the achievement of goals and the satisfaction of needs, since they give meaning to social interaction because they allow us to identify what we prefer or not from people according to the values assimilated during childhood. For example, during adolescence you have the possibility of interacting with different groups, with different beliefs, and there is the possibility of choosing which group you want to belong to (Humth, 2009). Some examples of sociocultural values are: **Respect for** Traditions, which refers to the respect instilled in the traditions of the society in which they live. Examples of traditions are dances, gastronomy and festivities. Carnival of Mazatlán (1987) holds that traditions are a way of preserving the culture and history of a nation.

Conger (2003) stipulates that the overall living conditions of individuals get influenced by sociocultural values and through sociocultural values individuals generate awareness in terms of norms, values, standards and principles, which are regarded to be of utmost significance for the individuals in enriching their lives. From the stage of early childhood, the individuals are imparted knowledge in terms of sociocultural values from their family members. As people grow, they need to put into operation these sociocultural values, so they are able to enrich their lives. These values are different in terms of various communities, i.e. rural, urban and tribal. All these communities have their own sociocultural values such as norms, beliefs, and principles on the basis of which they live their lives.

Ahmen (2004) is of the opinion that adolescent socialization is the process by which a human being from infancy acquires the habits, beliefs and accumulated knowledge of society through education and training for adult status. Atwater (2018) sees adolescent socialization from a different perspective when he reiterates that adolescent socialization is a largely unidirectional process whereby parents transmit cultural norms and standards to their children, with the goal of reproducing them in successive generations. Aral (2001) rather defines adolescent socialization as an assessment which focused largely on children's compliance with parental expectations or their acquisition of culturally valued goals and behaviors. However, most researchers, including those from different theoretical vantage points, now agree that socialization is considerably more complex than being unidirectional. There has been an increasing emphasis on bidirectional processes and children's active role in their own development (Igbo, 1995). This is why researchers have focused on socialization as a reciprocal dynamic process and on children's agency in parent– child relationships.

Grusec (2002) has raised questions about the conditions under which children accept or reject parental messages and the goals beyond compliance that parents have for children. In addition, there is substantial evidence that children and adolescents interpret, negotiate, and respond to adults' efforts to control, guide, or influence their behaviour (Kelechi, 2011). Indeed, adolescents do not unthinkingly adopt adult values; they challenge and sometimes resist those that they consider to be inappropriate, immoral, or illegitimate (Bateman, 1999). Thus, effective socialization depends, in part, on adolescents' evaluations of the messages communicated for instance, whether or not the behaviour being prescribed is culturally normative, or whether adolescents believe that adults are acting out of concern or support, as opposed to being intrusive and controlling. Therefore, there is ample evidence that socialization processes are dynamic and reciprocal and that teens actively participate and exert agency in their development.

Lee (2006) holds that parents are the primary socialization influence on adolescent. Certainly, other members of the nuclear family and extended family influence adolescents. However, because of the parents' long-standing association with adolescents their influence is greater than that of any other family member. Parental influences on adolescent socialization do not begin when the child is judged to be an adolescent. Rather, research demonstrates that parental child-rearing practices exert a continuous influence across childhood and adolescent years. Researchers noted that parents not only shape the behaviours of their children directly, but also that children adopt values and behaviours similar to those of their parents through observational learning. Hence, the study of disciplinary techniques used by parents to train children becomes important to understanding children's and adolescents' behaviour. Historically, the study of relationships between child-rearing techniques and offspring behaviour has been interpreted in a parent-causation framework (Crouter & McHale, 1989; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). In other words, it has been assumed that parental child-rearing techniques cause child behaviour.

A more simplified means of characterizing parent types has been suggested by others (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). It is focused on just two dimensions of child rearing; parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Parental responsiveness is similar to Becker's warmth/hostility dimension in that it refers to the degree to which the parent interacts with the adolescent in a warm, supportive and accepting manner. Parental demandingness refers to the extent to which parents expect and demand mature and responsible behavior; it is related to Becker's restrictive/permissive dimension Maccoby and Martin note that four parent types can be identified by looking at the combinations of high and low for each dimension. These four parent types are: Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent, and Indifferent. Parents who are high on each dimension, that is, those who not only respond warmly but demand mature and appropriate behavior, are labelled authoritative. Those who are low on each dimension, that is, those who respond in a cold or more cool manner and who make few demands for mature and appropriate behavior, are labelled indifferent (Holland, 2003).

The economic independence of young adults is important for themselves, their parents, and society. Young adults consider economic independence to be one of the top criteria for entering adulthood (Arnett, 2000). No parents would like their children to rely on them for life. Economically independent young adults are necessary for the healthy development of a society. Recently the process of transition to adulthood has become lengthened and more complicated for young adults. Key milestones such as residential independence, completion of education, entering the workforce, marriage and having children have become more protracted and diverse (Amkombe, 2005).

With a longer period of transition to adulthood, many young adults rely on their parents and immediate families for economic assistance over an extended period of time. Young adults' economic independence is important not only for themselves and their families but also for the healthy development of the economy. The existing literature suggests economic, psychological, and demographic differences in young adults' economic independence. Family factors such as parental socioeconomic conditions and parenting styles affect the degree of young adults' economic independence. Young adult's economic independence can be viewed from economic and socio psychological perspectives.

Bamileke adolescents acquire practical skills through apprenticeships, vocational training and hands-on experience. Nsamenang (2002) highlights the importance of apprenticeships in Bamileke culture where adolescents learn essential skills from experienced craftsmen. Bamileke adolescents are socialized to develop an entrepreneurial spirit, encouraging innovation, risk – taking and self-reliance. Kofon (2013) found that Bamileke adolescents who participated in entrepreneurial training programs showed significant improvements in their economic independence. Bamileke adolescents learn financial literacy skills, including budgeting, saving and investing. Tambong (2015) emphasizes the importance of financial literacy education in Bamileke communities where adolescents learn to manage finances effectively. Bamileke adolescents participate in vocational training programs, equipping them with marketable skills and preparing them for the workforce. A report by the

International Labour Organization (ILO) highlights the effectiveness of vocational training programs in promoting economic independence among Bamileke adolescents. Bamileke adolescents receive guidance and support from mentors, who provide valuable advice and encouragement. Ngeh (2018) found that Bamileke adolescents who had mentors showed significant improvements in their economic independence and self-confidence.

Tchoffo (2003) anchors that debt management is a prerequisite in economic independence. You need to know the numbers (the good, bad, and ugly) in your economic life. Accept responsibility for acquiring debt and demonstrate the self-discipline and maturity of creating and following a plan to pay off all debt. Balancing the money, you put in the bank every month with your spending and saving decisions is a balance you will need to maintain throughout your life whether you are twenty-two or ninety-two. Succeeding at creating and maintaining balance in your economic life requires you to actively and consistently plan, track, and review how you earn money, spend money, and save money (Marenth, 2009). Credit cards are not evil; however, they can be dangerous if not used wisely.

Minimize the amount of debt you have on a credit card to the line of credit. We live in a credit-based society and at times you will be judged solely by the numbers in your life. You need to possess positive behaviours when managing credit. You have the right to pull one free report every twelve months from each of the credit bureaus. Stagger your reports every four months and you automatically have created a free credit report reviewing system (Beroshky, 2000). Every time you pull a report, review it thoroughly within five days. It is your responsibility to ensure that the information in each report is correct not the bureaus. Follow directions provided in the report to file for corrections. Do not procrastinate. These are some of the principles of achieving economic independence (Barnes, 1992).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the concurrent nested mixed method research design which requires both qualitative and quantitative data to be collected at the same time or in parallel within the same study and one method dominates while the other one is embedded or nested. Quantitatively a questionnaire was used to test the effect of autonomy on adolescent's socialization into economic independence. The study site was the Bamileke society of the West Region of Cameroon. With regard to sample, 384 adolescents were recruited from 8 selected villages for the study. Participants were selected using purposive sampling and a questionnaire with determined internal reliability coefficient was used for information gathering.

The participants were living with their parents and were within 15-20 years of age. Concerning age distribution, the following was reported: 15-17 (20%), 18-20 (41%), 20 and above was (39%) with males (51%) and females (49%). The highest number of participants were from Balachis (22%) and Bamedousso (16%), 88% of youths owned personal businesses and majority (56%) assist in family businesses at least three times a week. In the communities, most participants (99%) run business errands for parents and also do bargaining and save money in local safes (small wooden boxes) (99%) and most young people live with their parents (98%).

In terms of measures, the socio-demographic variables captured age, sex, village, personal business, family business, family business assistance, purchases, bargaining, place of stay. A questionnaire was the main instrument to gather information from participants and it was divided into three sections.

Measure for autonomy: The instrument was designed to measure the autonomy of adolescents in local context, and items were drawn from literature (Burdus, 2010; Maluu,2012). The measure had 10 items with relevant indices: independent spirit, choice of what to wear, respect of opinions, decision on how to save money, master of decisions, owners of businesses, employment of other youths to run businesses, provide directives for the growth of businesses, the strong desire to embrace the world of business, working personal money. Sample questions comprised: "I have independent spirit", "I choose what to wear". The internal reliability analysis for the sub-scale was performed.

Measures for adolescent socialization into economic independence: The instrument was designed to measure the degree at which adolescents are being socialized into economic independence and measures were derived from literature (Ahmen,2004; Atwater,2018; Fomba,2009). The measure had 10 items and indices comprised business leader intention, family care ability, planning hight level business, business education, provision of family needs, building personal house, satisfy personal needs, achievement drives in life, self-reliance and siblings financial support. Sample items: "I hope to become a leader in business associations" "I plan to reach the highest level of wealth in my field".

Using a four-point scale the measure was coded and scored to assess the state of autonomy habits and socialization into economic independence: strongly disagree =1, disagree =2, agree =3, strongly agree +4. The internal reliability analysis for the sub-scale was performed.

Data Analysis

In terms of data analysis, descriptively, the data were presented on tables in the form of frequencies and percentages. With respect to inferential statistics, the regression analysis was used to check the linear effects between autonomy and adolescent socialization. Also, the analysis was presented using thematic analyses.

Analysis of quantitative data

Table 1: Autonomy and effect on adolescent socialization into economic independence.

Statements	Responses				Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
	SA	A	D	SD			
Independent spirit.	180(46.8%)	129(33.6%)	40(10.4%)	35(9.1%)	3.38	0.79	7
Choice of what to wear.	300(78.2%)	61(15.8%)	22(5.7%)	11(2.8%)	3.40	0.83	6
Respect of opinion.	200(52.1%)	80(20.8%)	61(15.8%)	39(10.2%)	3.41	2.30	5
Personal savings.	150(39.1%)	104(27.1%)	80(20.8%)	50(13.1%)	3.35	0.89	8
Master of my decisions.	224(58.3%)	98(25.5%)	39(10.2%)	23(5.9%)	3.48	0.75	3
Owner of businesses.	240(62.5%)	84(21.8%)	40(10.4%)	20(5.2%)	3.41	0.97	5
I employ other youths.	223(58.1%)	99(25.7%)	38(9.9%)	24(6.3%)	3.68	0.64	1
Provision of directives.	284(73.9%)	59(15.4%)	29(7.5%)	12(3.2%)	3.62	0.73	2
Strong business desire.	200(52.1%)	79(20.6%)	61(15.8%)	44(11.5%)	3.22	0.93	9
I work my own money	235(61.3%)	99(25.7%)	31(7.8%)	29(5.2%)	3.43	0.82	4
Total average	223.6(57.9%)	89.2(23.2%)	44.1(11.4%)	28.7(7.4%)	3.09	0.96	

Table 1 shows that 46.8% of the respondents strongly accepted that young people have independent spirit, 33.6% agreed, 10.4% disagreed while 9.1% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.38 and the standard deviation of 0.79, with a ranking position of 7. An overwhelming majority (78.2%)

of the respondents strongly agreed that they choose what to wear, 15.8% agreed, 5.7% disagreed while 2.8% strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 3.40 and the standard deviation of 0.83, with a ranking position of 6. Furthermore, 52.1% of the respondents strongly affirmed that their parents respect my opinion, 20.8% agreed, 15.8% refuted, 10.2 strongly opposed the opinion with the mean of 3.41 and the standard deviation of 2.30, with a ranking position of 5. In addition, 39.1% of the respondents strongly accepted that they decide how to save my money, 27.1% agreed, and 20.8% disagreed while 13.1% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.35 and the standard deviation of 0.89, with a ranking position of 8. To proceed, 58.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that they are the master of their decisions, 25.5% agreed, 10.2% disagreed while 5.9% strongly disagreed to the fact with the mean of 3.48 and the standard deviation of 0.75, with a ranking position of 3.

Moreover, 62.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that they own their business, 21.8% agreed, 10.4% disagreed while 2.5% strongly disagreed to the idea with the mean of 3.41and the standard deviation of 0.97, with a ranking position of 5. Again, 58.1% of the respondents strongly accepted that they employ other youths to run their businesses, 25.7% agreed, 9.9% refuted while 6.3% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.68 and the standard deviation of 0.46, with a ranking position of 1. An overwhelming majority of 73.9% of the respondents strongly accepted that they provide directives for the growth of their business, 15.4% agreed, 7.5 % disagreed while 3.2% strongly disagreed to the fact with the mean of 3.62 and the standard deviation of 0.73, with a ranking position of 2. Moreover, 52.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that they have the strong desire to embrace the world of business, 20.6% agreed, 15.8% disagreed while 11.5% strongly disaffirmed to the idea with the mean of 3.22 and the standard deviation of 0.93, with a ranking position of 9. Above all, 61.3 % of the respondents strongly accepted that they work their own money, 25.7% agreed, 7.8% disagreed while 5.2% strongly rejected the idea with the mean of 3.43 and the standard deviation of 0.82, with a ranking position of 4.

Verification of hypothesis One

H0[3]: There is no significant effect of autonomy on adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke.

Table 2: *Regression Model Summary for autonomy and adolescent socialization*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.864[a]	.746	.739	49.68431

The model summary table shows that a moderate positive effect (R = 0.864) exists with autonomy on adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke. Furthermore, R-Square for the overall model is 0.746 with an adjusted square of 0.731.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients for autonomy and adolescent socialization into economic independence.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	**Std.Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	11.712	12.238		.957	.000
	Autonomy	1.031	.098	.864	10.563	.000

The table 3 for regression coefficients indicates that the regression equation is given by Adolescent socialization = 11.712 + 1.031 x autonomy.

Thus, when there is autonomy, the adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke is at 11.712. When autonomy increases by one-unit, adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke increases by 1. 031.This increase is significant as indicated by the p-value of 0.000

Table 4: ANOVA Table of Regression Analysis for autonomy and adolescent socialization into economic independence

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	275405.620	1	275405.620	111.567	.000[b]
	Residual	93804.155	38	2468.530		
	Total	369209.775	39			

The ANOVA table shows that F (111.567) with p = 0.000. This suggests that there is a significant effect of autonomy on adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke. Consequently, Ho3 was rejected and Ha3 upheld. It therefore implies that, there is a significant effect of autonomy on adolescent socialization int040o economic independence among the Bamileke.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The qualitative analysis consisted of the interview guide which was conducted with parents of adolescent children. The interviews were analyzed by presenting the questions, the categories, themes, code descriptions, grounding and the quotations of the respondent

Interview

Content Thematic Responses of Parents

Table 5: Based on autonomy

Questions	Categories	Themes	Code description	Grounding	Responses
Do you think Bamileke adolescents are self-directed?	Yes	Decision making	Bamileke adolescents having the right to do their own things by them selves	All	…" They choose what business to do, they make their own decisions, they are the masters of their occupations, they are economically independent…."
What are the ways in which Bamileke parents help their children to be self-governing?	Many ways	Buying what they want	ways in which Bamileke parents render autonomy to their adolescents	Majority	… » Parents give them money to buy what they want, parents ask them the type of business they want to operate, parents seek their opinions in all the decisions they take…. »
In your opinion are you comfortable with the autonomy of your children?	Yes	Running their own buisnesses	Being comfortable with the autonomy of their children	Majority	…" when they invest in the business of their choice, they do it better than imposing a business on them…."

Table 5 shows that what parents think about Bamileke adolescents as being autonomous was categorized as" yes". The theme was based on decision making; Bamileke adolescents having the

right to do their own things by themselves was the code description, all of them grounded the idea meanwhile the quotation says they choose which business to do, they make their own decisions, they are the masters of their occupations, and they are economically independent.

In addition, the respondents categorized the ways in which Bamileke parents render autonomy to their adolescents as many ways, with a theme of buying what they want; ways in which Bamileke parents render autonomy to their adolescents was the code description. The grounding had a majority meanwhile the quotation says parents give them money to buy what they want, parents ask them the type of business they want to operate, parents sick their opinions in all the decisions they take.

To proceed, on opinion whether they are comfortable with the autonomy of their children was categorised as, "yes", the theme was based on running their own businesses with a code description of being comfortable with the autonomy of their children. Majority grounded the idea meanwhile the quotation says they when they invest in the business of their choice, they do it better than imposing a business on them.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The quantitative results revealed that autonomy has an effect on adolescent socialization into economic independence among the Bamileke. Based on the interview, all respondents affirmed that they choose which business to do, they make their own decisions, they are the masters of their occupations, and they are economically independent with the themes of decision making, the type of business to operate and Running their own business.

The focus group revealed that all of them said they are independent in their decisions and no body forces them in making their own choices and they are masters of their life with the themes of making choices and decisions. The above findings are in line with Beauchamp (2005) who is of the opinion that although there is little agreement concerning the nature or scope of autonomy, nevertheless the belief that we ought to respect the autonomous choices of persons runs deep in common morality. In other words, ideal moral agency requires that our choices be neither constrained externally by others nor internally by some limitations within us.

Actions based on moral principles which are not self-chosen are heteronomous that is mere impositions. Kant (2008) thinks of autonomy and rationality as co-extensive and as necessary and sufficient conditions for the ascription of rights to persons. His ethical ideas continue to have great impact on ethical thinking till date. In our context a person is autonomous if he is the author of his moral principles, their originator, if he chooses his moral principles, if the ultimate authority or source of his moral principles is his will, if he decides which moral principles to accept as binding upon him, if he bears the responsibility for the moral theory he accepts and the principles he applies, if he refuses to accept others as moral authorities, that is he does not accept without independent consideration the judgment of others as to what is morally correct.

Wullet (2008) is of the opinion that autonomy means liberty that is independence from controlling influences and agency which is the capacity for intentional action. In other words, for an action to be qualify as autonomous it must not only be intentional, it must be based on sufficient understanding. Caregivers may either threaten or foster autonomy in adolescents. There may be long-term consequences for an individual who fails to gain autonomy at the appropriate time or gains too much autonomy too early.

Adolescents learn best through practice and must learn to problem solve, establish their own set of values, and take on more responsibility (Beenth, 1998). Youth benefit from guidance and support and helping adolescents exercise healthy autonomy may mitigate psychological risks. Research demonstrates that increased autonomy without guidance from adults is harmful to adolescents' development. On the other hand, using controlling or coercive measures to protect an adolescent from making risky decisions may lead an adolescent into further pursuit of autonomy and often in the

opposite direction intended by well-meaning adults. Essentially, there are risks associated with both complete autonomy as well as excessive control.

A balance between independence and support is needed and often stems from having a close, emotional relationship between the adult and teen (Ruthma, 2001). Children express a desire for autonomy at two stages toddlerhood and adolescence. This sense of self-governance feeling, behaving, and thinking independently becomes particularly profound in the latter set of years, as adolescents have more of an understanding of the world around them and confidence in their own abilities (Senth, 2000). While every parent wants their child to grow in this way and doing so is important to living a happy and productive life as an adult, this transition often comes with some difficulties both for sons and daughters as well as mothers and fathers.

According to Furstenberg (1993), behavioral autonomy is the ability to make decisions and follow through with actions without simply following along or copying the decision-making styles of parents or peers. As teens grow and develop, they realize that different situations require different solutions. They can think abstractly, compare choices, and think about how their decisions may change an outcome. Developmentally, it is somewhere between ages 15 and 18 when they will begin to feel more confident in their own decision-making skills and move toward achieving true behavioral autonomy.

Value autonomy refers to making decisions based on a personal value system comprised of independent attitudes and beliefs in spiritual, political, and moral choices. This type of autonomy allows your child to come to independent conclusions about their own values, rather than simply accepting the values that they were brought up to follow or following along with those of their friends (Mweeth, 2009). Developing autonomy helps teens make emotional, behavioral, and values-based decisions in preparation for adulthood, but this can often cause tension between parents and adolescents. Instead of communication and closeness (which is what many parents want most and perhaps are even used to enjoying), quarrels and rebellious behavior can strain the parent-child relationship.

According to Smith (2009) across all environments, parental responses to adolescent autonomy strivings require balancing the need to set limits on behavior and the need to provide adolescents with sufficient freedom to try out new behaviors and learn from mistakes. The appropriate balance, however, between limit setting and encouragement of exploration depends on the level of complexity, challenge, and danger in the adolescent's environment. Thus, the same parental behaviors may be more or less appropriate depending on the environmental context in which they occur. For example, parental inhibition of autonomy whether it is defined in behavioral terms (e.g., strict rules and consequences) or in cognitive terms (e.g., discouragement of individual expression) may be entirely appropriate in dangerous environments that pose multiple threats to the adolescent's well-being (Mewanth, 2008). In less risky contexts, however, these same autonomy-inhibiting behaviors might be more likely to reflect a maladaptive parental reluctance to allow normative autonomy development to proceed.

Kenneth (2010) is of the opinion that research focusing on behavioral approaches to autonomy confirms that in high-risk contexts, parents are more likely to use strategies emphasizing conformity and obedience rather than those that promote independence and autonomy. Similarly, initial evidence from survey-based studies also suggests that parental approaches to behavioral autonomy have different consequences for adolescent development in high-risk contexts. Although results of this research have been somewhat mixed, several studies have found that adolescent reports of parents' authoritative parenting are not necessarily linked with positive outcomes in non-White, non-middle-class samples, whereas parenting styles involving a greater restriction of autonomy (i.e., authoritarian styles) are related to more positive child adjustment in these groups.

The previously noted research has been limited to examining the links between parents' behaviors and adolescent outcomes. Adolescents' own behaviors, however as well as their interpretations of

parental behaviors are also likely to be influenced by their socio environmental context (Suthen, 2005). High levels of adolescent autonomy vis-à-vis parents may not be adaptive in these environments, even if these same behaviors would be adaptive in less dangerous contexts. Similarly, adolescents who might chafe and rebel when their autonomy is highly restricted in relatively safe environments might be more tolerant of such restrictions in higher risk environments. Unfortunately, research has not assessed adolescents' role in seeking autonomy vis-à-vis parents as it is moderated by the ecological context in which the adolescent is developing (Lanny, 2006).

CONCLUSION

The challenge, however, is to recognize that there are variations across cultural groups in the degree to which autonomy and adolescent socialization are valued relative to loyalty and deference to the family. In addition to variations across cultural groups in the degree to which autonomy is a cherished goal, some parents are likely to find themselves in circumstances in which environmental influences, such as neighbourhoods, may propel them to exert greater control over their adolescent children in order to protect their well-being.

The society has been shown to respond to the said transformation by either attempting to abandon the prevailing traditional norms and customs, replacing them with modern ones or, in some cases, adopting part of the norms and values, while simultaneously abandoning some aspects of the age-old practices. Moreover, the impacts of the said unprecedented socio-economic and cultural changes have worked to undermine and erode the society's institutions' capacity to enhance resilience and continuity. It is recommended that any strategy that geared towards improving youth empowerment has to be taken into account how socio-economic changes have affected the traditional socialization pathways of adolescents in Cameroon in general and the West Region in particular.

Primarily because of the contributions of cultural developmental and adolescent socialization theories, the bulk of research on the influences of socio-cultural values has focused on adolescent's socialization agents (such as parents). The study of adolescence reminds us, however, that other agents of change are important to study. Although family (including parents) has been the focus of much of the socialization research, another study area of importance is peers especially during adolescence. Peers provide added ''role-taking opportunities'' and expose adolescents to novel behaviours (Hart, Atkins, Markey, & Youniss, 2004; Hart & Atkins, 2002). Furthermore, cultural dilemmas can become much more important and challenging because their cultural consequences become increasingly significant and personally relevant to the self and to others.

Adolescents also have more opportunities to become agentic in their social roles and responsibilities. For example, their engagement in work and community activities such as community service, extracurricular activities and their increased exposure to socially regulated behaviours like driving, smoking, alcohol, joining the military frequently places adolescents in moral decision-making situations. The media such as the internet, magazines, films, access and literacy level among many adolescents provide additional unique and significant socializing experiences that cannot be underestimated. Not only do adolescents have access to cultural information but they are also capable of creating and promoting their own beliefs and actions to others. No doubt, the influence of these socializing experiences is intertwined with the impact of the authority figures and the peers who are part of the socializing spectrum of these opportunities.

The contributors to this special issue present a diverse set of findings that provide a glimpse of the complex and multidimensional nature of the cultural values of adolescents. However, the cultural values of the adolescent are likely to be different across different societies as a result of culturally based practices that transmit cultural messages. As ecocultural theorists note, parents from different cultures create unique opportunities and practices to train their children in their own cultural system (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Although there may be similarities in the change processes that occur, their meanings and perceptions are likely to vary as a function of the unique social norms, mores, and belief systems. In turn, these perceptions likely impact their behaviours. The dynamic interplay

among beliefs, norms, and perceptions creates a cultural atmosphere that is embedded in one's culture. Thus, there are likely multiple cultures in adolescence development.

At the level of the individual, understanding the multiple contexts (home, school, neighbourhood, work) that adolescents navigate and the various agents of influence (biological, family, peers, media) bring us closer to understanding their complexity. All adolescents must learn to navigate through their cultural values in their respective communities. These multiple cultural values may comprise their family demands, their peer demands, and the demands placed on them by the broader society (school systems). Each of these cultures presents different cultural norms, beliefs, and norms that impact their social functioning. The task is to develop theories and models of adolescents' cultural development that consider these various levels of influence and their multiple contexts. The relevance of the research and policy making on adolescents' cultural development rests on our explicit acknowledgement of these complex issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Autonomy can refer to self-rule, self-determination, self-knowledge, absence of external causation and free will. At the same time, autonomy can be understood as a capacity, a competence, a constitution, an ideal. This work will go a long way to help autonomous adolescents to freely follow their business desires and enhance their social well-being. Autonomy allows adolescents to manage on their own with everyday tasks, become more and more independent and make their own decisions. The need for autonomy evolves throughout childhood and adolescence and it entails gradually gaining a form of control over oneself and one's life. Parents are the first social agency through which young people acquire self-assertiveness as it enables them to take risk in future. Also closely related to their children at home, they should be more interested in knowing their children abilities and motivate to achieve. Adolescents should put in effort in the direction of understanding their culture and cultural values. In so doing they will easily understand how their culture can influence their socialization.

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