

# Predicting satisfaction with life from generativity and identity threat: The experiences of indigenous Baka Forest People in Cameroon

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## ***Abstract***

This research attempts to predict satisfaction with life from generativity – the desire to leave something for posterity and social identity threat. A randomized sample of 90 participants from two Baka communities was surveyed using the Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS), the stigma consciousness questionnaire (SCQ), and the satisfaction with life scales (SWLS). Multiple regression analysis indicated that one could predict SWL from concern for generativity and perception of identity threat. The findings stated that Baka ethnic people are dissatisfied with their life, have elevated levels of concern for generativity, and are extremely conscious of stigmatization by out-group members. The study has made suggestions for future research directions and possible program intervention strategies. Future research should embrace a bicultural comparative study of Baka and Bantu ethnic populations. Similarly, policy reforms should focus on augmenting wellbeing amongst the Baka indigenous people through the institution of evidence-based practices. For example, the establishments of new laws that will create and protect ethnic minority zones, and also, authorize the formation of a development fund which will facilitate the funding of new development initiatives. Furthermore, an ecological management board that incorporates Baka ethnic people in conservation projects will permit community participation in development and enhance general wellbeing.

***Keywords:*** satisfaction with life; identity threat; generativity; indigenous populations

## **Predicting satisfaction with life from generativity and identity threat: The experiences of indigenous Baka Forest People in Cameroon**

### **1. Introduction**

Indigenous people, as well as minority groups worldwide, encounter challenges that are unlike those experienced by dominant members of any society. Populations that are disadvantaged for reasons such as sexual and gender orientation, race, religious, and ethnic affiliation to mention a few face these problems. The difficulties encountered by indigenous people are the focus of this paper. According to the United Nations, there are approximately 370 million indigenous people spread over 70 countries worldwide. Native populations have unique cultural traditions and have a keen interest in protecting their cultural ways from dominant societies. Several studies indicated that indigenous people are marginalized by dominant communities and that those who wield power subject them to conditions that are insensitive and violate their fundamental human rights. This study examines the lives of two Baka ethnic communities in southeastern Cameroon. The study attempts to predict satisfaction with life (SWL) as discussed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) amongst Baka Forest People currently living in the villages of Bifolon and Menzoh from two primary constructs—generativity and social identity threat (SIT). Irrespective of the challenges involved in using Western developed theories and instruments in studying nonwestern populations as postulated by Cobern (1996), ideas developed from a Western perspective, and applied to nonwestern communities, often fail to account for contextual differences, which often impact the findings of such studies. Rosen and Walker (2004) argued that it is misleading to use Western theories as an objective way of explaining phenomena in nonwestern communities. They posited that adopting such a stance assumes a position of cultural dominance which negates the current sociopolitical realities of nonwestern societies. Consequently, such theories may be full of omissions and inevitable distortions.

That said, studies that use Western approaches and instruments to study nonwestern societies introduce new knowledge in several ways. Findings clarify the challenges of adopting particular pedagogic approaches in understanding the etiology of phenomena from a cross-cultural perspective. Consequently, such studies assist scholars in reflecting the cross-cultural applicability of research instruments, theories, concepts and principles developed in different cultures. Studies using Western concepts such as generativity stand the risk of not being understood in non-western societies. Generativity is the struggle against stagnation, which increases as one advances in age. It denotes one's ability to have concern for establishing and guiding the next generation (Kruse & Schmitt, 2012). In describing identity threat, Dalton and Huang (2014) argued that "social identity threat occurs when people encounter feedback (event, information, or social response) that is negative, and which pertains to traits deemed essential, and refers to an in-group rather than an out-group" (p. 1018). The concepts of generativity and identity threat are imperative, in studying the contingencies that influence the degree of happiness in life.

#### *1.1 Research Objective*

This study deliberated on the view that a set of variables guides human existence. That prevailing subsystems do effect influence, on the human experience within a larger macrosystem. However, that to maximize well-being, it is imperative to investigate the status of the welfare of people within the paradigm of different sub systems. Understanding the level of wellbeing allows researchers to systematically identify existing risk and protective factors, which will then permit these researchers to develop strategies for intervention that are evidence-based. The present study is limited to establishing the status of satisfaction with life amongst Baka indigenous people. Wellbeing and wellness, as well as sub-concepts, are contingencies shaped by shifting paradigms between different subsystems. Understanding the roles that generativity and identity threat play in satisfaction with life further helps in grasping issues that relate to wellbeing and wellness. The objective of this investigation was to predict satisfaction with life from generativity and perception of identity threat, as a means of understanding Baka

Forest People's level of happiness with life. Baka people face challenges which have been described by Achu and Asongu (2015) as ranging from infrastructural problems, vicissitudes in lifestyles, economic difficulties, and inhuman treatments. The Global Post (2011) shared this viewpoint. According to the newspaper, Baka people are treated by out-groups as if they were "pets." Such experiences as illustrated by Achu and Asongu and the Global Post have psychological implications which can contribute to an ethnic group's dissatisfaction with life. The research makes use of the hypothesis that satisfaction with life amongst Baka indigenous people, can be predicted from generativity goals and perception of social identity threat.

### *1.2 Theoretical/Conceptual Framework*

Three psychological concepts have guided this research. The concepts of generativity which are elaborated in the theory of the psychosocial development of Erik Erikson, identity threat as depicted by Tajfel and Turner (1979), and investigated from the standpoint of stigma consciousness as proposed by Pinel (1999), and satisfaction with life (SWL) of Diener (1985). This study was part of a mixed methods research dissertation for a Ph.D. The study was duly approved by the Chicago school of Professional Psychology IRB as well as the Ethics Review and Consultancy Committee (ERCC), Cameroon Bioethics Initiative (CAMBIN) in Cameroon. The study made use of the concept of generativity as expounded in the theory of the psychosocial development of Erik Erikson, and the idea of identity threat (using an adapted Pinel's stigma consciousness questionnaire) as well as the concept of satisfaction with life (SWL). The scales used in the research included SWLS (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), the LGS for measuring generativity (as cited in Hofer, Busch, Chasiotics, Kartner and Campos, 2008), and finally, SCQ (Pinel, 1999). The entirety of these scales were adapted to fit the cultural reality of the Baka indigenous people.

Generativity is that concern one has for future generations. It is theorized as a major worry in midlife situations for adults (Lawford, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 2012). An integrative framework provided by McAdams and de St Aubin (1992) considers generativity as motivated by a social demand and an inner desire to behave in a particular manner (Hofer et al., 2008). The concept of identity threat is important in understanding intergroup relations and considered vital in understanding motivation for achievement and someone's generative goals. Generativity is a critical framework for studying the Baka indigenous people. It is used explicitly within the context of Baka relationship with the dominant Bantu neighbors, those organizations that are claiming a stake in Cameroon's tropical rainforest (home to Baka people), as well as the Cameroon government's prerogatives to protect the rights of Baka indigenous people. Vulnerability for this research is considered a source of psychological threat and a devaluing factor contributing to Baka Forest People's life. For example, a report by the Global Post (2011) cited above posited that Bantu people are always maltreating their Bantu neighbors. Bantu people subject Baka people to experiences that fit the definition of slavery. Their satisfaction with life is, therefore, questionable. Satisfaction with life referring to an overall assessment of an individual's quality of life (Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996). It is considered an important concept in understanding the lived experiences of the Baka people in Cameroon, and pivotal for improving their overall wellbeing.

## **2. Research Background**

The Baka constitute part of a larger group of indigenous populations in the Central African subregion. They are known by many as Pygmies, but who for the purpose of this study will be designated as Forest People. The Baka Forest People were previously nomadic, lived mainly in the tropical rainforest rich in resources, and which they exploited for the benefit of their livelihood. Unlike the Sámi who are recognized by the Constitution of Finland as Indigenous (Sarivaara, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2014), the Baka of Cameroon, as well as other Indigenous Forest People within the region, do not have such recognition. Just like the Sámi, Achu and Asongu (2015) have posited that the Baka practice a gatherer-hunting culture, live primarily on fishing in small rivers and streams in the forest, engage in bird hunting, and other scavenging activities in the forest. A form of livelihood which the Baka and other Forest Peoples have practiced for thousands of years. Unfortunately, the Cameroon government have not provided an institutional framework that protects the rights of Baka people as an indigenous people (Pyhälä, 2012).

Consequently, few opportunities exist for the Baka to preserve their culture and way of life.

Today the Baka are primarily seminomadic, partly due to government action and the influence of colonial and post-independence laws, which have denied the Baka Forest People their customary tenure rights to the rainforest (Gilbert & Couillard, 2009). Several studies locate the Forest People in several countries in the subregion. These include the countries of Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Gilbert & Couillard, 2009; Devin, 2011; Simo & Nchoji, 1995). Forest People likewise are known by other alternative names, such as Babinga, Bebayaga, Bebayaka, de l'est, Pygme, Pygmees, and Pygmy-E (Lewis, Gary & Fennig, 2013). In the past, many Baka Forest People adorned their body with paint, filed their teeth into points, and while men wore loincloths, females wore straps and belts (Devin, 2011). A significant number of anthropologists and some other researchers from different disciplines have described Forest People as innately linked to the forest's natural resources (Simo & Nchoji, 1995; Devin, 2011). Asking that Baka people leave the forest and limit their access to forest resources can impact their concern for generativity and perception of identity (Fai, 2016). Consequently, this will influence their satisfaction with life. Baka people and similarly other Forest People have suffered a similar fate when compared to the experiences of Native people as in the Americas. For example, Achu and Asongu (2015), as well as Pyhälä (2012) posited that Baka people had lost their motherland, were experiencing oppression in the hands of nearby Bantu neighbors, and experience a life of abject poverty. Lalonde (2006) similarly postulated that the Aboriginal people in America, following contact with Europeans, sustained assaults on their cultures and on their communities in addition to being forcefully transferred, and access to resources and lands blocked. Powerful forces beyond the control of indigenous people have undermined their traditional way of doing things. Experiences, which have influenced indigenous people's views about concern on what to leave for posterity, their identity, and feelings about their state of satisfaction with life.

### *2.1 The Influence of Generativity and Social Identity Threat on Satisfaction with Life*

Much has been written, about the concepts of generativity, social identity threat, and satisfaction with life. These concepts will not be extensively elaborated here in detail. However, these notions are briefly examined, to depict their significance within the paradigm of satisfaction with life and the relevance of these concepts to the well-being of the Baka Forest People of Cameroon. While Generativity is the concern for future generations, theorized as a major source of anxiety in midlife for adults (Lawford, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 2012), social identity is an individual's sense of who they are, on their membership in a particular group. People, therefore, think of themselves and others, not as unique individuals, but as team members (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Social Identity Theory (SIT) suggests that people establish self-conceptions based on two paradigms – a personal or self-identity and a collective identity. An individual or self-identity refers to personal qualities such as beliefs, skills, and abilities, whereas a collective identity denotes one's membership in a particular group. On the other hand, satisfaction with life can be suggested to be a global assessment of a person's quality of life, based on their chosen criteria. According to Lucas, Diener, and Suh (1996), satisfaction with life stipulates an overall assessment of an individual's quality of life. It is considered an important concept in understanding the lived experiences of Baka people in Cameroon within the framework of their happiness.

***Satisfaction with Life*** - Wellbeing has been a concern for several disciplines including those that have studied the human mind, its functions, and how such impact human behaviors under certain constraints. Satisfaction with life spans related disciplines such as economics, medicine, social geography, and sociology (Rablen, 2012). It is central in comprehending wellbeing from the dynamics of sundry factors that affect it. Accordingly, factors that influence satisfaction with life can vary from one culture to another and may similarly be affected by environmental exigencies. It is therefore conceivable that such influences may not necessarily be similar for everyone, because of situational contingencies. This study reviewed the concept of satisfaction with life as a means of understanding overall wellbeing (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Rablen, 2012). It examined the relationship prevailing between welfare, generative goals (what people desire to leave for posterity), and the impact of social identity threat perception on an Indigenous Forest People like the Baka of Cameroon. Studies done by Fai (2016) and others have argued that the Baka population for some time has been encountering

marginalization, stigmatization, prejudice, and diverse forms of discrimination. For example, Rupp (2001) posited that a Bangando (a non-Baka ethnic group) might not allow their daughter to marry a Baka, only because they believe a Baka will not have the material wealth to afford such a marriage. Pinel and Paulin (2005) have positioned that discrimination can lead to disengagement, with people high in stigma consciousness disengaging from stigmatizing conditions, which contributes negatively to an individual's wellbeing, as well as the society's welfare. Social contextual variables as is argued by Jack, Ali, and Dias (2014) exposed vulnerable populations to risk factors. These subsequently unleash mental health challenges which may include depression, experiences of unembellished stress, poverty, and violence. It is therefore possible that Baka people's concern for generativity and perception of their social identity can influence satisfaction with life.

**Generativity** - Generativity, as mentioned earlier, is the ability of people during adulthood to have concern for what they will leave for posterity. An integrative framework provided by McAdams and de St Aubin (1992) have argued that concern for generativity was motivated by what they termed a cultural need and an inner desire to behave in a particular manner (Hofer, Busch, Chasiotis, Kärtner, & Campos, 2008). According to Guastello, Guastello, and Briggs (2014), adults expressed generativity through nurturing their younger people. Another approach they argued was that individuals with a concern for generativity demonstrated leadership by promoting the development of youths via parenting, volunteer work, or through other means of engagement with their youth. Peterson (2006) argued further that there was an association between generativity and some life attributes. For example, he theorized that people with high concern for generativity demonstrated an interest in the values of younger people. Similarly, parents who are generative view themselves not only as parents but also as teachers and role models for their children. Fathers with generative concern for their children's social and emotional development had concern for the larger general welfare of society (Peterson, 2006). Higher generativity scores are noted as having a significant role in parents' involvement in their children's education (Guastello et al., 2014). According to studies conducted by McAdams, de St Aubin, and Logan (1993), de Medeiros (2009), and Guastello et al. (2014) identity threat, generativity, and satisfaction with life are interrelated. Guastello et al. (2014) for example, argued that generativity has remained one of the strongest predictors of satisfaction with life. Likewise, they have also assumed that perception of social identity threat does have an influence on satisfaction with life, which is the dependent variable in this study. The notion of social identity threat is certainly not new. It can be appropriately correlated with stigma consciousness, which brings to the forefront what can be described as a stigma-induced identity threat, which according to Shelton, Richeson, and Vorauer (2006) integrates transactional models of stress and coping.

**Social Identity Threat** - Social identity threat is understood as constituting instances when individuals within a group, as well as the group to which they belong, feel that the group to which they belong has inappropriately been negatively appraised. One of the premises of this research was the assumption that outgroup members were negatively evaluating Baka indigenous populations. In the same way, and as argued by Tajfel and Turner (1996), social identity theory posits that group membership produces an ingroup/self-categorization and the promotion of the organization in a manner that is favorable to the ingroup to the detriment of the outgroup. Shelton, Richeson, and Vorauer (2006) speculated that interethnic interactions and the threat of being perceived as stereotypical of one's ethnic group indicated that the way members of a stereotyped ethnic group respond to matters of identity threat can be exposed through behaviors that include avoidance, outgroup devaluation/derogation, and behavior modulation/regulation. Ethnic identity is an element of one's self-concept and conveys one's attachment to his or her ethnic group (Guyll, Madon, Prieto, & Scherr, 2010). Guyll, Madon, Prieto, and Scherr, have argued that the social identity theory of Tajfel (1981) posited that self-esteem was partially derived from one's perception that one's group had value. Negative stereotypes threaten this understanding and consequently elevate levels of stigma consciousness. Congruently, group identification as stated by Guyll, Madon, Prieto, and Scherr, moderates stereotype threat effects. On the other hand, a strong identification with a negatively stereotyped ethnic group can also lead to an increase in one's vulnerability to perceptions of an existing stereotype threat. Understanding phenomena such as these are important because it helps to establish the current social context within which such life spectacles are occurring.

According to Reicher (2004), it is imperative that one's social framework informs human social action. Understanding the concept of identity among an indigenous people like the Baka requires close examination of their perspective. It is only from such a perspective that the notion of being negatively assessed can be fully comprehended. Negative evaluations can and do determine how individual group members perceive issues of stigmatization orchestrated against them by an outgroup. Borton, Reiner, Vazquez, Ruddiman and Anglin (2011) hypothesized that both visible and invisible stigma could have an adverse impact on social interactions. When members of different social classes go through various psychological experiences within the same physical environment, due to the sociocultural and historical legacies the concept of social identity threat can provide a useful perspective for understanding these differences (Emerson & Murphy, 2014). It is from this point of view that Tajfel and Turner (1986) theorized that individuals have a desire to maintain a positive perception of their group as a collective. When people challenge the positive perceptions apportioned to people, individuals within that group experience a sense of intimidation, often displayed through negative emotions.

In a study carried out by Phelan (2010), groups with stigmatized social identity experienced discrimination, stereotype threat, as well as internalized prejudice. Feelings that one's identity is susceptible can lead to stress, which is a risk factor that can consequently contribute to adverse physiological and psychological outcomes. Identity threat negatively impacts communication and individuals' capability to access services such as high-quality healthcare. Smith, Kausar, and Holt-Lunstad (2007) proposed that stigma causes stress consequently it is correlated with emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and biological responses that have negative long term implications on health. Perceived discrimination and other forms of stigma related behaviors that target an outgroup contribute to stress in that target group. Discrimination can also lead to depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, and social isolation (Phelan, 2010). Stigma consciousness is when individuals are aware that they are being defamed. Stigma consciousness has a direct impact on someone's satisfaction with life, as well as their concern for generativity.

### **3. Research Methods**

Ninety (90) individuals who participated in this study, were selected from two Baka settlements in southeastern Cameroon. These constitute the settlements of Menzoh and Bifolon. Forty-five (n=45) family units were randomly selected, with two adult members nominated from each of these households. Ages ranged between 21-80 years. The gender distribution of the sample under study consisted of men (72.2%) and women (27.8%). Ages, marital status, educational levels, occupations, income, and languages spoken were investigated and indicated in the final report. Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Multiple regression analysis determined the relationship between the dependent variable (satisfaction with life), and the independent variables (generativity, and identity threat). Instruments included the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ; Pinel, 1999), the Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS; McAdams, de St Aubin & Logan, 1993), and the Satisfaction with Life Scales of Diener (1985).

### **4. Research Results**

To determine the nature of the relationship between the various variables a multiple linear regression analysis was effected. The explanatory variables configured into tables, primarily include, the summaries of the demographic information of the sample and descriptive statistics of the study.

#### *4.1 Research Participants*

The study sample consisted of 90 Baka Forest People. Table 1. has data that include the mean age and number of children for the sample studied. The frequency and percentage summaries of the categorically measured demographic variables; marital status, gender, camp location, educational level, employment status, income, ethnicity, and language(s) spoken, are presented in Table 2.

A majority of the Baka Forest People in the sample studied were married ( $n=87$ ; 96.7%), with a mean number

of children 4.02 ( $SD = 2.75$ ). The majority of those sampled were male ( $n=65$ ; 72.2%). The average age of the 90 Baka Forest People who participated was 36.02 years old ( $SD = 13.96$ ). The most elderly Baka person was 83 years old while the youngest was 21 years old. More than half ( $n=62$ ; 68.9%) of the samples of Baka Forest People studied had completed primary education. On employment status, the vast majority ( $n =89$ ; 98.9%) were unemployed. While regarding income level, a majority ( $n =82$ ; 91.1%) of the 90 Baka Forest People earned 1000FCFA per month, an amount estimated at approximately 2.00 US dollars (exchange rate of \$1=500FCFA). Regarding camp location, 76 (84.4%) resided in the Bifolon Baka settlement, while 14 (15.6%) lived in Menzoh. All participants are of Baka ethnicity and speak the Baka language.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics of Age (n = 90)*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	90	21	83	36.02	13.96
Number of Children	90	0	10	4.02	2.75

**Table 1**

*Frequency and Percentage Summaries of Demographic Information (n = 90)*

Items	Frequency	Percent
Marital Status		
Single	3	3.3
Married	87	96.7
Gender		
Female	25	27.8
Male	65	72.2
Camp Location		
Menzoh	14	15.6
Bifolon	76	84.4
Educational Level		
None	18	20
Primary	62	68.9
Secondary	10	11.1
Employment Status		
Unemployed	89	98.9
Employed	1	1.1
Income		
2000	4	4.4
10000	82	91.1
20000	4	4.4
Ethnicity		
Baka	90	100
Language Spoken		
Baka	90	100

#### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics: Summary of Study Variables

Descriptive statistics of means and standard deviation were used to summarize the data of the continuous variables under study, the dependent variable (satisfaction with life) and the independent variables (generativity and identity threat). To obtain the scores of the survey variables all items in each of the survey instruments - Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS), Satisfaction with life Scale (SWL), and Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ) were summed up. To create a continuous measure scores were summed up. Table 3 summarizes the descriptive statistics summaries of the scores among the 90 Baka Forest People who live in the tropical rain forest in Southeastern Cameroon.

First, the mean score obtained from the SWL measure, the dependent variable of the study that indicates how

satisfied people were with their life, was 7.99 ( $SD = 1.61$ ). Scores that range within 5 - 9 signpost that participants are extremely dissatisfied with life. Findings obtained from this measure consequently point to the fact that the sample of 90 Baka Forest People currently living in Bifolon and Menzoh in Southeastern Cameroon were extremely dissatisfied with their life.

The mean score obtained for generativity was 33.51 ( $SD = 7.68$ ). This score was in the average range, indicating that the samples of 90 Baka Forest People who live in the rain forest of Southeastern Cameroon, Gabon, and Congo have average levels of generativity.

Third, to calculate the scores of the SCQ geared towards obtaining the measure of the independent variable of identity threat, items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 were reverse coded before getting the summed scores. The mean score obtained was 55.61 ( $SD = 7.11$ ). This score falls in the higher end of the 10 to 70 range of possible scores for identity threat. Higher scores indicate higher levels of stigma consciousness. Therefore, the samples of 90 Baka Forest People who live in the tropical rain forest settlements of Bifolon and Menzoh in Southeastern Cameroon expressed high levels of stigma consciousness. Higher scores designate a high standard concern for identity threat.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics of Scores of Satisfaction with Life, Generativity, and Identity Threat (N =90)*

	<i>N</i>	Minimum*	Maximum*	Mean	Std. Deviation
Satisfaction with life	90	5.00	12.00	7.99	1.61
Generativity	90	20.00	56.00	33.51	7.68
Identity threat	90	39.00	70.00	55.61	7.11

*Note.* \*Denote possible average scores

#### 4.3 Reliability of the Responses from the Survey Instruments

A test was carried out to establish the reliability and validity of the survey instruments as a means of establishing the internal consistency reliability of the survey results among the 90 samples of Baka Forest People. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability statistics for the three stated instruments were computed. Table 4 summarizes the Cronbach's Alpha reliability statistics.

Only the LGS ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ) instrument had an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha value (i.e., greater than 0.7, the minimum acceptable value). The responses on the SWL ( $\alpha = 0.23$ ) and SCQ ( $\alpha = 0.55$ ) instruments did not have acceptable Cronbach's Alpha values, indicating that the replies on these surveys were not reliable.

**Table 3**

*Cronbach's Alpha Statistics of Survey Instruments of SWL, LGS, and SCQ*

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
SWL	0.23	5
LGS	0.88	20
SCQ	0.55	10

#### 4.4 Multiple Regression Results

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the dependent variable (satisfaction with life), and the independent variables (generativity and identity threat). A cutoff significance value of 0.05 determined the statistical significance of relationships in the regression analysis. Table 5 summarizes the results of the regression analyses for the relationship between generativity and identity threat and satisfaction with life.

The unstandardized beta coefficient was analyzed to determine the independent contribution of generativity to satisfaction with life. The unstandardized coefficient value of generativity (beta = -0.06) was negative, indicating

that concern for generativity has a negative relationship with satisfaction with life among the sample. The regression result showed that concern for generativity could be used to predict satisfaction with life amongst the Baka indigenous people.

**Table 5**

*Regression Results of Influence of Generativity and Identity Threat on Satisfaction with Life*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	8.45	1.34			6.32	0.00
Generativity	-0.06	0.02	-0.30		-2.68	0.01*
Identity threat	0.03	0.03	0.13		1.16	0.25

Note.  $F(2, 87) = 3.62$ , Sig. = 0.03,  $R$  Square ( $R^2$ ) = 0.28,  $N = 90$

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction with life

b. Predictors: (Constant), Identity threat, Generativity

\*Significant at level of significance of 0.05

## 5. Discussion

The result of the multiple regression indicated that concern for generativity was negatively related to satisfaction with life. However, identity threat was not. Possibly, participants were upset that their circumstances were making it impossible for them to fulfill their generativity goals.

An interesting outcome of the findings was that there was not a significant relationship between identity threat and satisfaction with life. Results of the study pinpointed the fact that the sample of Baka individuals studied was extremely dissatisfied with their lives. At the same time, the results also highlighted an interesting aspect of the survey: High levels of stigma consciousness did not seem to have a significant effect on satisfaction with life. Perceived discrimination and stigma related behaviors would be expected to create depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, and social isolation (Phelan, 2010), and should influence satisfaction with life. However, this is not so with the Baka community studied, suggesting that there is a probable mediator or explanatory variable that impacts the relationship between identity threat and satisfaction with life. This relationship indicates that it is possible there is a mediator variable (figure 1), and for this population, it could be that resilience or coping strategies have led to a situation where identity threat is no longer impacting satisfaction with life. It is not clear, however, what may be the underlying explanation for this situation.

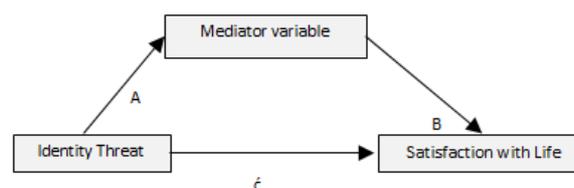


Figure 1. Possible mediator effect between identity threat and satisfaction with life.

Dalton and Huang (2014), Borton et al. (2011), and similarly Pinel and Paulin (2005), researched coping approaches to issues that relate to identity threat. Their results may aid understanding of why there was not a strong correlation between identity threat amongst the Baka indigenous people and their satisfaction with life. According to Dalton, and Huang (2014), when individuals feel threatened, they may use motivated forgetting as a psychological defense mechanism. Motivated forgetting involves suppressing unwanted memories from one's consciousness. Borton, Reiner, Vazquez, Ruddiman and Anglin (2011) as well as Pinel and Paulin (2005) shares this view. For example, Borton et al. (2011) posited that targeted groups or entities suppress thoughts that they are stigmatized, while Pinel and Pauline (2005) theorized that people high in stigma consciousness tend to disengage from stigmatizing situations.

Other coping strategies which may have contributed to the absence of a positive correlation between identity

threat and satisfaction with life include what Smith, Kausar, and Holt-Lunstad (2007) have pointed out is the ability of individuals high in stigma consciousness to escape situations where they may be stereotyped or judged. Shelton, Richeson, and Vorauer (2006), argued that people from an ethnic group that is often stereotyped possibly will react to identity threat through behaviors that will help them avoid stressful situations. Also, increased in-group identification may provide a way to moderate stereotype threat effects (Guyll, Madon, Prieto, & Scherr, 2010), and this is the case amongst the Baka of Southeastern Cameroon, based on my experience in the field. These variables just mentioned can consequently build the capability for a group of people who believe there is an imminent threat to their social group to manage such threats in ways that do not translate to negative experiences with regards to satisfaction with life, as observed in the findings of this study.

The findings do, however, suggest that when people have concern for generativity, this contributes to their dissatisfaction with life. Concern for generativity for the samples of Baka individuals who participated in this study contributed to their dissatisfaction with life. By implication, this means that the fewer concern people have about meeting their generative goals, the less dissatisfied they will be with their lives.

### *5.1 Research Limitations*

The purpose of this investigation was to understand the relationship between concern for generativity and identity threat (predictors) and satisfaction with life (outcome). However, there were limitations on the influences of other variables in this relationship. For example, there were possibilities of interviewing bias and instrument bias. Questioning bias includes the possibility that the methodology of directly administering research tools to the sample under study may have led to the interpretation of responses in ways that fitted an already existing schema of the interviewer. Also, the duration it took to administer the test instruments may have influenced the findings negatively. Due to limited time in the field, this could have led to poor translations of instruments from Baka's original language to French the language used for interviewing the research participants. Poor interpretation of questions conceivably could have resulted in ineffectiveness in capturing the phenomenon, and consequently, there could have led to inconsistent and or unreliable results. In fact, the responses obtained from the SWL and SCQ instruments, as pointed out earlier, were found not to be reliable. These findings were significant and deserved further scrutiny. Furthermore, the results of the research could not be fully understood independently of the exigencies involving other important actors in Baka people's lives (for example their Bantu brothers, logging companies, mining concerns, the government, etc.). In the absence of a comprehensive approach that targeted other significant stakeholders who directly or indirectly influence the well-being of the Baka indigenous people, it is problematic to appreciate the real circumstances impacting their lives based on the current findings.

An additional limitation can be considered as an inadequacy in instrument adaptation to meet the contextual reality of Baka indigenous people. To be able to overcome these limitations, future researchers are obligated to spend more time living in the communities under study to understand the Baka people's perspectives from an insider's point of view. Furthermore, adapting research instruments in ways that will meet the contextual reality of the communities was paramount in determining how reliable the research findings will be. In the case of the Baka people, translating research instruments into the Baka Language and comparing constructs to ensure these are an adequate representation of the Baka equivalent was going to cost not only time but also money, two variables that I was not privileged to have during this research process.

Correspondingly, it is important to critically review responses from research participants to certify that answers match existing realities. To achieve this, the presentation of similar research instruments to other nonBaka groups such as the Bantu ethnic populations who share common community facilities with the Baka is important in understanding the lives of Baka people from outsiders' perspective. Additionally, investigating other stakeholders such as the environmental conservationists, mining and logging companies in the area who influence the lives of Baka people is crucial in comprehending the Baka experience. A comprehensive approach means that that the procurement of diversified data about issues of well-being was imperative, as this

information can be triangulated to have a fair picture of the prevailing circumstances of the Baka people.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Several recommendations can be made on the findings of this study and include a view suggested by Cobern (1996). Cobern has extensively studied the challenges of attempting to transfer science education and curriculum developed in Western cultures and used in nonwestern communities. According to him, science concepts, theories, and instruments alien to nonwestern users pose problems because these are not understood within local cultures and contribute infinitesimally to learning. Research using such devices can only be beneficial scientifically if the instruments are proficient in meeting validity and reliability requirements. Even then, it is still questionable what validity and reliability will mean from an indigenous cultural perspective. Otherwise, from a Western scientific perspective, reliability and validity can be achieved if participants in a study have the ability to use logic when required to use common sense reasoning in responding to what they have understood as asked in a particular question, or set of questions.

Also, Cobern (1996) also suggested that to avoid the pitfalls of failure in transferring western science education, research and curriculum development to nonwestern countries, these countries can benefit from science by not accepting curricula from the West, but rather making use of a constructivist methodology. The challenges of using Western instruments in nonwestern societies is equally valid for international scientific and cross-cultural research, as is the case with this study. It is recommended, therefore, that researchers, as well as institutions teaching cross-cultural research, should develop techniques that facilitate international and intercultural learning. Teaching techniques that promote international and intercultural education will help develop instruments that are culturally sensitive and designed from a constructivist perspective, as suggested by Cobern (1996). Future research should dedicate a considerable amount of time in exploring and defining concepts under study. Identifying similar ideas within the community with their correspondent meaning, and contrasting original concepts with western concepts for purposes of ensuring that these align is important consequently will benefit research efforts and help increase the credibility of investigation results.

### 5.3 Future Research

Future research should find out the underlying factors that are limiting Baka people's ability to access opportunities and resources, within and beyond their community boundaries. For instance, finding out the role of stereotypes on performance avoidance, and or performance approach goals. Examining also the effect of discrimination in Baka people's ability to access political, economic, social, civic and educational opportunities. Smith, Kausar, and Holt-Lunstad (2007) defines performance-avoidance goals as the desire to avoid demonstrating incompetence compared to other people, while performance approach goals are considered to be a wish to show competence about others. On the Baka indigenous people, what may influence the differences in stereotype threat activation include an individual's level of education, the level of income, the level of interaction with other non-Baka ethnic populations (acculturation), and degree of access to available resources. That can allow Baka people to live an optimal life that is comparable to the lives of their Bantu neighbors. In the same manner, the lived experiences of Baka people as narrated by residents of Bifolon and Menzoh during field observations (Fai, 2016) indicated that engaging might be more detrimental to wellbeing than disengaging. According to Fai, accounts shared by Baka people authenticated the degree of abuse and discrimination currently being experienced by Baka people during interactions with their Bantu neighbors. Though Pinel and Paulin (2005) have argued disengaging as detrimental not only to the individual but society, it is evident that disengaging in the case of Baka indigenous people may be thought of as beneficial by the population and should constitute an exciting area for future research.

Similarly, there are huge lists of risk factors used to describe the contributing influences to feelings of identity threat among indigenous communities like the Baka. Some of the contingencies in question discussed by Lalonde (2006) include adverse health status, infant mortality rates, high disease rates, low life expectancy, the

absence of the ability to get an education, challenging economic circumstances and existing social disadvantages. Future research needs to explore the relationship existing between resiliency and cross-cultural adaptation. Resiliency and cross-cultural adaptation is an exciting area where future research can measure the concept of resiliency cross-culturally, with a focus on how cultural setups may determine ethnic disparities in ability to be resilient. Findings from such a research initiative will furnish further information that will provide a greater understanding of the real discrepancy that may exist between the ability of Baka both as individuals and as a collective to overcome adversities that threaten their very existence, compared to persons and organizations within Bantu communities. Also, findings can aid the determination of resiliency as a contributing mediator which may account for the weak relationship between identity threat and satisfaction with life as observed in this research.

## 6. Conclusions

In conclusion, this investigation assumed that Baka indigenous people were experiencing severe challenges which were negatively impacting their satisfaction with life. Based on this assumption it was thought that one could predict Baka happiness from concern for generativity and feelings of identity threat. Turnbull (2015), an anthropologist who had conducted research on the Mbuti Forest People and similar to the Baka, insinuated that the Mbuti believed the forest was like a "father" and "mother" who gave the Mbuti everything they needed in life. Without such a "father" and "mother," it was assumed Baka's wellbeing was under threat and that Baka eviction from the forest was negatively impacting their lives.

This research together with research conducted by others can possibly open up debates which will promote indigenous people's wellbeing. The present research can lead to possible program intervention suggestions that will remedy some of the problems being faced by indigenous populations in Cameroon. A few examples include the establishment of new laws that will create and protect ethnic minority zones, establish development funds for development initiatives, and launch an ecological management board as well as introduce policies that will facilitate social impact assessments for projects that impact Baka culturally, economically and psychologically. This research has made valuable contributions to existing psychological knowledge about the lives of Baka people. The research has provided lessons regarding the obstacles faced by researchers in transferring instruments and concepts from one culture to another in scientific inquiry.

The results of this research have supported the view that one can predict satisfaction with life amongst the Baka indigenous people from their concern for generativity and perception of identity threat. The research similarly has suggested that Baka people have high concern for generativity and that they believe existential circumstances were threatening their status as an ethnic group. However, the study found out that identity threat alone does not have a large effect on satisfaction with life, suggesting that there may be other variables that perchance may be mediating the relationship between satisfaction with life and identity threat for Baka Forest People. Interestingly too, some of the responses provided by the sample of Baka people studied were not reliable. Unreliable responses warrant further scrutiny in future research. Finally, a bicultural methodological approach, where the investigator spends more time living amongst the two groups of Baka indigenous people (nomadic forest dwellers and those who have settled on logging routes), may be relevant. A bicultural approach will enhance the understanding of the real meaning and impact of generativity and perception of identity threat on the subjective wellbeing of both groups.

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