

REPUBLICUE DU CAMEROUN

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UNIVERSITÉ DE YAOUNDE I

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CENTRE DE RECHERCHE ET DE  
FORMATION DOCTORALE EN  
SCIENCES HUMAINES, SOCIALES  
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FORMATION DOCTORALE EN  
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SOCIALES

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POST GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR  
SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL  
SCIENCES

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DOCTORAL RESEARCH UNIT FOR  
SOCIAL SCIENCES

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**THE EXPERIENCE OF AFFILIATION AND IDENTITY TRAJECTORY IN THE  
INTERNALLY DISPLACED ADOLESCENT OF THE NORTH WEST AND SOUTH  
WEST REGIONS OF CAMEROON**

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Clinical Psychology

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**SUMMARY**

<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>LIST OF ANNEXES.....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>RESUME .....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>0. GENERAL INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: ADOLESCENCE AND SELF-IDENTITY .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2: NARCISSISTIC ANACLISIS AND TRAJECTORY OF PERSONS IN SITUATION OF MIGRATION .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS .....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>GENERAL CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>ANNEXES .....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT.....</b>	<b>XXI</b>

To  
The Grand Tiomeza Family

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## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of the development of secondary sexual characteristics in boys and girls.....	19
Table 2: Recapitulation of the variables, modalities, indicators and indices (synoptic table). .....	<b>Erreur ! Signet non défini.</b>
Table 3: Summary of participants' characteristics.....	77
Table 4: Guide to the analysis of content of interviews.....	83

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

**APA:** American Psychological Association

**CHRDA:** Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa

**CPDM:** Cameroon People Democratic Movement

**GBHS:** Government Bilingual High School

**ICG:** International Crisis Group

**IDP:** Internally Displaced Person

**IOM:** International Organisation for migration

**IPSS:** Institute for Peace and Security Studies

**NW:** North West

**RH:** Research Hypothesis

**SW:** South West

**UNHCR:** United Nations High Commission for Refugees

## **LIST OF ANNEXES**

**Annexe 1:** Attestation of research

**Annexe 2:** Informed consent form for participants

**Annexe 3:** Restitution of individual interviews

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is entitled “the experience of affiliation and identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent of the South West and North West regions of Cameroon”. Being a subject of unconscious, his encounter with the other or the group, that is family members, friends, school, neighbourhood and community at large, results in the establishment of an intersubjective link. Therefore, making the subject not only the subject of unconscious, but also the subject of intersubjective link and subject of group. The encounter and interaction of these three results in the emergence of psychic formations and processes that structure the psychic life and self of the subject. From these, is established within the subject, a sense of sameness, continuity and security in identity and existence. Yet, the internally displaced adolescent has been forcefully cut-off from these intersubjective links and consequently from the groups and now finds himself in a strange land and alone. He is now cut-off from family, friends and links that constitute his psychic reality. His internal intersubjective link is put to malaise. There is a rupture in the link and it is this rupture that is experienced as disaffiliation. In this situation of disaffiliation, how does the internally displaced adolescent manage to cope with his past, present and future and integrate his new environment? What psychic processes are mobilised and put in place to navigate this experience? From this is derived the research question: how does the experience of dis/affiliation renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent. To examine the question, this study makes use of the qualitative research method and follows the comprehensive approach, with an interview guide as data collection tool. It is addressed to two participants. The analysis of results through the thematic content analysis method reveal that the experience of disaffiliation renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent by mobilising psychic operations of negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity. While negativity of obligation and relative negativity renders account of constructive identity trajectory, radical negativity renders account of the vulnerable identity trajectory marked by a profound suffering, internal state of distress, tension and displeasure, feeling of insecurity, inferiority, self-hatred, a sense of powerlessness and disorientation in the internally displaced adolescent. This trajectory is evident in doubt about one’s abilities, constant ruminations and thoughts about one’s experience and uncertainty about the future with no concrete project of action.

Keywords: internal displacement, affiliation-disaffiliation, link, identity trajectory.



## RESUME

Ce mémoire s'intitule "vécu d'affiliation et la trajectoire identitaire chez l'adolescent déplacé interne des régions du Sud-Ouest et du Nord-Ouest du Cameroun". En tant que sujet de l'inconscient, sa rencontre avec l'autre ou le groupe, c'est-à-dire les membres de sa famille, ses amis, son école, son quartier et sa communauté au sens large, entraîne l'établissement d'un lien intersubjectif. Ainsi, le sujet devient non seulement le sujet de l'inconscient, mais en plus le sujet du lien intersubjectif et le sujet du groupe. La rencontre et l'interaction de ces trois éléments aboutissent à l'émergence des formations et de processus psychiques qui structurent la vie psychique et l'identité du sujet. A partir de ceux-ci, s'établit chez le sujet, un sentiment de similitude, de continuité et de sécurité dans l'identité et l'existence. Pourtant, l'adolescent déplacé interne a été coupé de force de ces liens intersubjectifs et, par conséquent, des groupes, et se trouve maintenant dans une terre étrangère et isolé. Il se retrouve maintenant coupé de sa famille, de ses amis et des liens qui constituent sa réalité psychique, mettant à mal son lien intersubjectif interne. Il y a donc rupture du lien et c'est cette rupture qui est vécue comme une désaffiliation. Dans cette situation de désaffiliation, comment est-ce que l'adolescent déplacé interne arrive à faire face et faire lien entre le passé, présent et futur, quels sont les processus psychiques mobilise et mise en place ? Ainsi, se découle la question de recherche : comment l'expérience de la désaffiliation rend-elle compte de la trajectoire identitaire chez l'adolescent déplacé interne ? L'examen de cette question engage la mise en œuvre méthode de recherche qualitative et suit l'approche compréhensive, avec un guide d'entretien comme outil de collecte de données. Cette étude s'adresse à deux participants. L'analyse des résultats par la méthode d'analyse de contenu thématique révèle que l'expérience de désaffiliation rend compte de la trajectoire identitaire de l'adolescent déplacé à l'intérieur de son pays en mobilisant des opérations psychiques de négativité d'obligation, de négativité relative et de négativité radicale. Alors que la négativité d'obligation et la négativité relative rendent compte de la trajectoire identitaire constructive, la négativité radicale rend compte de la trajectoire identitaire vulnérable marquer par une souffrance profonde, un état de détresse, tension et déplaisir, un sentiment d'insécurité, d'infériorité, de haine de soi et de désorientation chez l'adolescent déplacé interne. Cette trajectoire se manifeste par des doutes sur ses capacités, des ruminations et des réflexions constantes sur son expérience et une incertitude quant à l'avenir, sans projet d'action concret pour l'avenir.

Mots-clés : déplacement interne, affiliation-désaffiliation, lien, trajectoire identitaire.

## **0. GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## **0.1. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

### **0.1.1. Context of the study**

Migration is a constant phenomenon in human history and people have constantly been on the move for thousands of years (Connel & al., 2016), from one place to another in search of a better life (Dicko, 2021). According to Dicko, migration is a result of several factors: on one hand, the search for better living conditions, better salaries, a more comfortable environment or to meet friends and family; on the other hand, a good number of people do not choose to leave their place of residence but are forced to do so against their will, these are refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), who run away from persecution, conflicts, violence, and/or natural or manmade disasters. This study is interested in the second category of migrants and particularly the IDPs of the crisis in the North West and South West regions of the Country.

According to Ozer et al. (2003), most people are exposed to at least one violent or life-threatening situation during the course of their lives. For Kouadio et al. (2012), the last half-century has accustomed humanity with another aspect of social disorder that was marked by the first two world wars, after which since then, conflicts ceased to involve sovereign states but turned into regional conflicts and internal confrontations within the same society. Most conflicts in the world at large, became internal conflicts. Important of such conflicts are those of Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia in the world at large, for according to the United Nation High Commission for Refugees ([UNHCR], 2015), they constitute top origins of refugees and IDPs. Turpin-Samson (2019) precise that, the humanitarian crisis in Syria, produced 6.6 million internally displaced persons and more than 5.6 million refugees worldwide.

According to Alhadji (2018), countries surrounding the Lake Chad basin in Africa have for the past decades faced socio-political and armed conflicts, especially from the group Boko Haram, conflicts which have had devastating repercussions on the population. He explains that the attacks perpetrated include bombings and killings, kidnappings and destruction of life and property and this led to the migration of a massive population; precisely the attacks in the North East of Nigeria led to the migration of about 650000 persons, wherein some by migrating became internally displaced persons in their own countries while other became refugees in the neighbouring countries notably Cameroon.

Cameroon is not left out from among countries facing armed conflicts and insecurity; firstly, from the external group Boko Haram and secondly an internal crisis in the North West and South West regions of the country, otherwise called the Anglophone crisis. The

Anglophone crisis according to Okereke (2018), began with peaceful protest matches in September 2016 by lawyers of the English-speaking regions of the country, to vent their grievances over the perceived marginalisation of the Anglophone Common Law practice in the country and later on in October 2016, went on strike. According to the same author, teachers of the Anglophone Teachers Trade Union also went on a solidarity strike to protest against the distortions confronting the educational system in the Anglophone regions. At the rally, several thousand people joined teachers to express grievances according to the article. The police and the army violently dispersed the demonstrators, several people were severely beaten, dozens of others were arrested and at least two people were shot dead (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2017). According to the ICG, student at the University of Buea organised a peaceful match on campus to express their grievances but were brutally repressed by the police and some of them were arrested in their homes; female students were beaten, undressed, rolled in the mud and one was allegedly raped.

According to ICG (2017), the most violent confrontation occurred in Bamenda when the CPDM organised a pro-government rally in the Anglophone regions and the angry crowd prevented this from taking place and this led to violent clashes, several wounded, four deaths and about 50 arrested and demonstrators set fire to a police station, government buildings and vehicles. Several other incidents took place and increased rioting which led to the declaration of war (Okereke, 2018). Violence and confrontations in the two Anglophone regions of the country according to the article, aggravated the crisis as these led to destruction of properties, serious wounds and injury and loss of lives.

According to the Centre for Human Right and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA) and Raoul Wallenberg Centre (June 2019), the circumstances surrounding the Anglophone crisis include murder, forceful transfer of population or population displacement, imprisonment, torture, rape and sexual violence. The authors report 200 villages partly or completely destroyed, between 450000 and 500000 people internally displaced and another 30000 to 35000 who sought for refuge in neighbouring countries. The Cameroon minister for territorial administration and decentralisation asserted in December 2019 that 152,000 persons were displaced from the Anglophone regions and Amnesty International reported 679,000 displaced persons in Cameroon and 52,000 refugees in Nigeria who fled from the Anglophone regions (Amnesty International, 2020). According to the Institute for Peace and Security Studies ([IPSS] 2020), from the beginning crisis in October 2016, at least 3,000 people have been killed, more than

200 villages destroyed and an estimated 500,000 displaced internally while an estimated 40,000 others have fled to neighbouring Nigeria.

### **0.1.2. Justification of the study**

According to Kouadio et al. (2021), the world has known a drastic increase in the number of refugees and IDPs due to the numerous wars and violence that currently characterise the world. These conflicts that tear down national communities and societies entirely do not leave civilians out. For him, these civilians are regularly exposed to and are objects of violence, either directly or indirectly and of physical and psychological deprivation. They are forced to escape by abandoning their homes, villages, towns or countries and migrate to a place little or not affected by the conflicts or a place able to provide asylum. The authors explain that displaced persons who find themselves out of their country of origin and who have crossed international borders are called refugees, whereas those who do not cross international borders are called internally displaced persons.

However, this study is interested in internally displaced persons and precisely the internally displaced adolescents of the crisis in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon otherwise called the Anglophone crisis. For Goldman (2009), an internally displaced person is a person who has been forced to leave his home of residence as a result of armed conflicts, communal violence, serious human rights and humanitarian law abuse and disasters and who remain at risk within this place of residence. According to the author, forced displacement like that experienced by the internally displaced persons of the Anglophone crisis, frequently include multiple human right violations, given that it breaks up immediate families, cuts off important social and community ties, terminates stable employment opportunities, deprive infants, adolescents and expectant mothers and the sick of access to food, adequate shelter or vital health services, and make the displaced person vulnerable to acts of violence, attacks on camps, disappearances or rape.

According to Desplenchin (2013), apart from material, economic, judicial and physical conditions, migration also has important psychic repercussions, which go to the extent of interrupting and disorganising the sense of sameness and continuity of the displaced person. For the author, forced displacement can alter the representation that the displaced has about the self and also alter his relationship with the self and with the other. To understand how forced displacement has such repercussions on the displaced, Desplenchin writes that it is important to trace back the life before and conditions of migration as an experience that separates and

isolates the subject, either through objective conditions or particular psychic situations that are capable of transforming one's relationship with others. The author lays emphasis on the relationship, the tie that links one to another. This tie or link between the individual and another reflects that expressed in filiation and affiliation links.

Filiation and affiliation originate from Latin "filiare" and "affiliare" respectively. Filiation generally refers to the filial relation of a parent and the offspring. Affiliation according to Couchot (2002) carries a double connotation. The first refers to the term organisation and the act of grouping into a vaster form and the second connotation refers to the act of adhering to an organisation. Thus, the author expresses affiliation as an action that aims at attaining a state of adherence or belonging to a vaster assembly. Being an extension of the concept of filiation, which reflects the transgenerational transmission of property – material or immaterial based on the filial relation of parent and offspring, affiliation is an extension of this relation to a larger assembly than the family. Couchot writes that affiliation can thus be defined as a mode of belonging to a specific social group that is organised and structured, meaning that the elements that constitute the assembly are put in place to accomplish a given function and introduce the individual to a culture. Culture should be understood here as a system of knowledge and social role that the subject needs to know and accomplish in order to be a member of the group, accepted by other members. For the author, this belonging or affiliation will then structure the subject's perception of reality, offer him a frame to serve as container, within which family structures of interaction take meaning and significance and thereby define the social identity of the subject which might either convey or substitute the family identity.

It is important to note that this desire to belong to a specific social group, a group out of family context, is more evident at adolescence. For Claes (2014) and Coslin (2017), adolescence is a period of human development wherein the construction and consolidation of identity is a major developmental task. With the new psychic realities, re-emergence of sexual drives, the relationship of the adolescent with the parents (primary family) is transformed and new relationship (links) are created outside the family with friends in the neighbourhood, school or church or other social groups. For Cannards (2019), adolescence is a moment of peer comparison and finally identification and adherence to certain shared values, norms and ideals, which may reflect the basic identifications, procure a sense of sameness and continuity of the Self.

The soundness of this research resides in the fact that adolescence is a period marked by inevitable tensions and conflicts or again by perturbations and inadaptations. According to Taborda-Simões (2005), adolescence is characterised by discontinuity and rupture. With the advent of adolescence, existing unity and harmony with nature is interrupted, the adolescent is banned from his paradise of comfort and must start a new journey filled with stumps, turbulence and uncertainties. Referring to Erickson, Taborda-Simões makes it clear that it is within these crises that the process of identity formation takes place.

Not only is the internally displaced adolescent confronted with the above crises, he is also confronted with the fact that he has been cut-off from the filiations and affiliation that are supposed to support him and his process of identity construction. Unlike persons who effect a voluntary migration, the internally displaced adolescent has been force by the crisis to escape from his habitual place of residence and he is cuts off from and have lost his immediate family members, friends, important social and community ties, soil of origin, values, norms, ideals, that makeup the culture that structure his identity. According to Gonzalez et al. (1999) forceful displaced and disaffiliation from one's culture, natural environment may result in the disorganisation of their psyche and culminate in psychopathology. Still for Turpin-Samson (2019), this is a painful process that may manifest as depression.

## **0.2. FORMULATION AND POSITIONING OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

According to Kouadio et al. (2012), conflicts destroy national communities and cause the explosion of internal societies and civilians are not left out. They are constantly objects of multiple violence and human right violation, physical and psychological deprivations. In such conditions, the only alternative is to run away from home, (village, town) to another place, thus, forceful displacement. The internally displaced adolescents who run away from homes, in the course of their migration, are cut-off and they loss their close family members, friends, important community and social ties, soils of origin, shared value and ideals.

For Lévy-Soussan (2006) filiation is the parental link that unites generations together. It inscribes the individual in a given lineage or genealogy. For the author, filiation is a subjective construction of one's own internal reality which permits one to be called father, mother, son or daughter. According to Hill (2013) filiation is a sort of in-between the innate need for attachment and the learned need for belonging to a group. It is a link that expresses the human need to belong and to be contained by an intimate familial context which prepares the person for participation in a group out of the family group. He affirms that affiliation is an extension

of filiation link; it is an extension of the need for attachment which already is made manifest in family attachment as a unified group. Affiliation is thus, a person's need to feel implicated and belonging to a social group. At adolescence, the filiation ties are displaced on sociocultural objects such as friends, neighbours, school and other groups, common values and ideals. These constitute the internal and subjective reality of the subjects and fashions his identity.

Talking about links, Kaës (2010a; 2010b) makes us understand that every individual is three things: a subject of the unconscious, a subject of link and a subject of group. By this, he distinguishes three spaces of psychic reality: the intrapsychic or intrasubjective space (singular subject's space), the interpsychic or intersubjective space (that of the link) and the transpsychic or transsubjective space (that of the group). Each of these psychic spaces possess its own formations, processes, function, energy, mode of organisation and functioning.

The group psychic space is conceived as a specific entity and cannot be reduced to the subjects that constitute it. In its ergonomics, its function is to link, to transform and to accord or harmonise the psychic spaces of subject members of the group in order to create its own specific psychic formations and processes. Also, the group psychic space contains several psychic spaces distinct from the group psychic space with each having its specific content, organisation, functioning, topic, dynamics and economy.

The intersubjective space refers to that of the intersubjective link that is established in the group between members of the group among themselves. By content, the link is a specific space of psychic reality that is constructed from a psychic material that is engaged in an encounter between two or more subjects. It connects subjective objects in its own specifically consistent manner. In the link, subjects are in a relation of accordance, conflict, echo and mirror, in rapport with their own internal objects and those of others. Also, the link involves a more or less stable movement of investments and representations and actions that bring two or more subjects together to accomplish certain psychic realisations that could not be possible alone.

The intrapsychic or intrasubjective space or the psychic space of the singular subject define the psychic reality that constitutes the subject himself. Being a subject of unconscious, the subject must be conceived in his intrapsychic space, intersubjective space and the space of configuration of links (groups, family, school, community), where he takes the place assigned to him in its double axis: synchronically with his contemporaries and diachronically with his lineage. In group, the subject manifests his double status as a subject of unconscious and a subject of group. Group situations put at work the rappings that the subject entertains with his



own unconscious objects, with the unconscious objects of others and with common and shared objects that are already present, inherited or those that emerge and are constructed in situations of group.

For Kaës (2009; 2010a; 2010b), the interaction of these psychic spaces results in the creation of shared psychic formations and processes, common to the subject and to the group (family, school or community). He affirms that the subject is preceded by the group within which he is called to take a place and contribute to its maintenance. The subject is an heir, a servant, a beneficiary and link in a chain that precedes and structures his psyche. The subject is born in a group, is enveloped by physical and psychical care, by languages, hands that support, skin/flesh that joins to that of the subject and gives it warmth, odours, images, words and speeches. These link the subject from within to the other and forms the nucleus of that which makes and remakes the subject's psychic life and Self. These links are as such at the origin of the sense of self and identity of the subject.

The internally displaced adolescent was a member of a family group (with sub groups of brothers, sisters, parents), school group, neighbourhood and community groups. In his interactions with these group, there is created an intersubjective link and psychic space connecting him to the groups. Then he suddenly finds himself in a strange land, alone and no longer in connection with the groups within which he grew up. He is now cut-off from family, friends and relations that constitute his psychic reality. His intersubjective psychic space or the space of intersubjective link is put to malaise. Whereas Kaës (2010a) in the logic of the link affirms that "not one without the other, without the link that unites them and without the assembly that contains them and structures them". The internally displaced adolescent now finds himself in an environment wherein he no more live or function within the groups with which intersubjective links have been created. He also finds himself in a context wherein the other, the group and the other subjects of the group are absent. There is a rupture in the link and it is this rupture that is experienced as disaffiliation.

This experience of disaffiliation or rupture as Kaës (1979, p. 23) puts it, interrupts the continuity of the self, the organisation of one's identifications and ideals, the usage of one's defence mechanisms, the coherence of one's personal mode of feeling, thinking and acting. In fact, it puts the subject in a situation of identity crisis. So then, how does the internally displaced adolescent in this situation manages to cope with his past, present and future and how he integrates his new environment? What are the psychological processes in place?

### **0.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The question that this research seeks to answer is: how does the experience of disaffiliation through negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW? The operationalisation of the general research question of this research is broken down to the following specific questions:

- How does the experience of disaffiliation through negativity of obligation renders account of the identity trajectory of the internally displaced adolescent?
- How does the experience of disaffiliation through relative negativity renders account of the identity trajectory of the internally displaced adolescent?
- How does the experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity renders account of the identity trajectory of the internally displaced adolescent?

### **0.4. OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH**

The present research has as general objective to analyse the experience of disaffiliation by means of negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity and to understand how this renders account of the identity trajectory of the internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW regions of Cameroon. This general objective has given place to specific questions hereby stated as follows:

- To understand how the identity trajectory of an internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW region from his experience of disaffiliation through negativity of obligation.
- To examine how the experience of disaffiliation through relative negativity contributes in the identity trajectory of an internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW region.
- To apprehend how the identity trajectory of an internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW region from his experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity.

### **0.5. ORIGINALITY AND PERTINENCE OF THE STUDY**

The object of study of this research is identity in its dynamic dimension. Identity carries two dimensions as made explicit in the works Erickson (cited in Kroger, 1996, p. 20) called identity achievement or realised identity as Claes (2014) who visits Erickson puts it. For Erickson, an optimal sense of identity” entails a subjective sense of well-being; accompanied by a feeling sameness and being at home in one’s body, a sense of continuity in the knowledge of where one coming from and where one is going and an inner confidence of being recognised

by those who count. According to the author, the other connotation of an optimal sense of identity is made manifest through commitment to social roles and values that best fits one's own unique combination of needs and talents.

Bitogo (2018) also buys this double dimension or significance description of identity: subjective or state dimension which corresponds to Erickson's first connotation of identity above, and an objectives or process dimension which corresponds to Erickson's second connotation. According to author, the subjective dimension of identity, on one hand, is associated to the subjective experience of the Self, to be oneself. It refers to the characteristics that define a subject and an internal sense of sameness, continuity, belonging, value/worth, autonomy, coherence in the manner of thinking, feeling and acting, and the confidence in the sense of existence. This subjective identity also includes the feeling of being unique and different from others. On the other hand, the objective or process dimension of identity is considered as the most evident part of one's identity; it is evident in personality traits, character and attitudes in concrete live situations. It is the dimension of identity that is deployed in various domains of life.

This research is interested in how identity is deployed. This refers to the objective or process dimension of identity which is observable in character and attitude. In this research, the internally displaced adolescent, who has lived in a given culture that has structured his identity, who he is but due to the crisis, he has lost his family, friends, groups, soil of origin and every other thing that makes and structures who and what he is. In this situation of disaffiliation, how the internally displaced adolescent deploys his identity through the different identity trajectories is the focus of this research. According to Schafer-Mutarabayire (2009), identity deployment is observed in the process of contact between the individual and the other and/or the environment. This research focuses on how the internally displaced adolescent deploys his identity through trajectories, as he gets into contact with the new environment (new home and school).

The experience of affiliation in this research refers to the way the adolescent lives this work of integration. It can be supportive in a situation in which the surfaces of anaclisis are playing their role effectively and there is reciprocity in service between the adolescent and the group. In a case where the surfaces of anaclisis can no more play their role, where in the group can no more assure the metapsychic frame and the continuity of the Self of the adolescent like the case of the internally displaced adolescent, Kaës (1979), this is experience as a rupture or

disaffiliation as it is in this research. The internally displaced adolescents of this research have been forcefully cut-off from their filiations and affiliations, and are presently in a new environment with little or no support.

According to Kaës (1988), this experience of disaffiliation robs the Self of the individual of the elements of the Self and puts into disruption the continuity of his Self, his identifications and ideals, his personal mode of feeling, thinking and acting and leaves him in a situation of doubt and confusion about the Self, his own existence and uncertainty about the future. A situation that he calls crisis of identity.

The writing of Kaës (1979) was well demonstrated in a given context: the European context. This context has its specificities and particularities. It is a context characterised by individualism, egocentrism. This study is carried out in the African context which has its own specificities different from those of the European context. In the African context, collective life and the other constitute part and parcel of the self. The intersubjective link between the subject and the group is very enlarged: ranging from family links, links in schools, neighbourhood, community and society, If the experience of disaffiliation from these constitutes a disorganisation of identity or identity crisis in the European context, is it possible that by changing the context, such experience lead to similar outcome? This is the task this study has to carry out; that is to verify this theory in the African context.

## **0.6. DELIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY**

### **0.6.1. Thematic delimitation**

This study is inscribed within the framework of psychopathology and clinical psychology. In psychopathology because it treats the problematic of link. According to Marty (2009), the individual is a relational being. He is a subject of links and relations. From birth, the individual contracts links and is connected to the mother to the extent of giving to the adult the feeling that the baby is gifted with a look. Marty affirms that the baby is not passive but he is an heir to a certain knowledge that permits him to get into relation with an object. His encounter with this object permits the construction of his psychic reality.

The link that this research interrogates consist the filiation and affiliations. Filiation according to Lévy-Soussan (2006) is the parental link that unites generations together. It inscribes the individual in a given lineage or genealogy. For the author, filiation is a subjective construction of one's own internal reality which permits one to be called father, mother, son or daughter.

According to Hill (2013), affiliation is an extension of filiation link. To him, the filiation link is that which expresses the human need to belong and to be contained by an intimate familial context which prepares the person for participation in a group out of the family group. He affirms that affiliation is an extension of the need for attachment which already is made manifest in family attachment as a unified group. Affiliation is thus, a person's need to feel implicated and belonging to a social group. At adolescence, the filiation ties are displaced on sociocultural objects such as friends, neighbours, school and other groups, common values and ideals. These constitute the internal and subjective reality of the subjects and fashions his identity.

Kaës (2009) in his narcissistic contract theory distinguishes primary narcissistic contract which he called the filiation contract from the secondary narcissistic contract which he called affiliation contract. The filiation contract links the subject to his family made up of the parental couple and the child. The child makes no effort to belong to this group. He is the wish of the parental couple and so receives investments from the latter and later on will have to invest the parental couple and family with his own narcissistic libido. The parental couple prepares the child for later integration of the larger society at adolescence. The affiliation contract here refers to the link that exists between the adolescent and his different social groups out of family setting. In the extrafamilial groups like school, friends, neighbourhood and community, the narcissistic investments and exchange continue. The adolescent contracts with the members of the group links that structure his identity.

If these filiation and affiliation links structure the psyche, self and identity of the subject, what becomes of him when he is cut-off from these links? Desplenchin (2013) says to be cut-off from the links that make up one's existence interrupts and disorganises the psyche, the continuity of the Self and identity of the subject. This is exactly the psychopathological aspect of this dissertation: the narcissistic identity suffering that the internally displaced adolescents are constantly confronted to. To this Kaes (2010) write that the sufferings or pathologies which we encounter today are disorders that emerge as result of the constitution of internal and external links in the psyche, notably disorders of default in psychic envelops and demarcation signifiers, of defiance in the process of symbolisation and are related to narcissistic pathologies.

Narcissistic identity sufferings, Schafer-Mutarabayire (2009) define as a pathology that makes difficult the subjectivation function of the Ego, pathologies that are at the origin of the lack of being. It makes reference to a profound suffering that is generally inaccessible. They

are characterised internally by states of distress, experience of tension and displeasure without representation, without a way-out or hope. Other symptomatology of narcissistic identity suffering of the internally displaced person include: a feeling of insecurity, of inferiority, of self-hatred, sense of disorientation and powerlessness.

This study is inscribed within the frame of clinical psychology because it questions the life experience of the internally displaced, his personal history, structure and functioning, which are important elements that can permit a re-adaptation to the reel or reality. This study seeks to comprehend the psychic mechanisms mobilised to deal with the suffering that emerged in the psyche. Psychic suffering experienced by the internally displaced adolescent gives way for the unconscious activation of psychic mechanism to deal with the negative. These mechanisms are in the domain of denegation pact and has a role to defend the organisation and integrity of the psyche, hence Self and identity of the internally displaced adolescent.

Again, clinical psychology because it is interested in the person of the internally displaced adolescent. An internally displaced person is someone who due to crisis of any kind is forced to abandon their habitual place of residence to a new place of residence still within the same country or without crossing international boundaries. In the course of their migration, they live experiences that could hinder their progress and integration in the new place of residence. So, this research is interested in the person of the internally displaced adolescent, his experience of migration and disaffiliation and how this experience contributes to his identity.

### **0.6.2. Spatial delimitation**

This study is focused on identity trajectory in internally displaced adolescent who attend school and took place in the centre region of Cameroon, Mfoundi division, Yaoundé IV subdivision and precisely in Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Ekounou. GBHS Ekounou is a grammar secondary school establishment with both the francophone sub-system and the Anglophone sub-system. It was created on September 15, 1984. The Anglophone sub-system comprises of Form 1 to Form 5 in the first cycle and Lower sixth and Upper sixth in the second cycle. GBHS Ekounou is one of the few schools in Yaoundé that receives internally displaced children and adolescents from the North West and South West regions no matter how saturated the school may be. It is in this context that this research titled “the experience of affiliation and identity trajectory in internally displaced adolescent of the North West and South West regions of Cameroon”, is carried out.

### **0.6.3. Temporal delimitation**

This study is an actual and punctual and carrier subject that brings to light the rapprochement that exist between the loss, separation and disaffiliation from fundamental elements of life and the identity trajectory observed in the internally displaced adolescent in school. As such, Erickson's psychosocial development theory, the psychoanalytical theory of Freud and Kaes and Goyette & Royer's conception of identity trajectory have been of great importance in the comprehension of the problematic of this work.

All through, this work is organised and articulated in 5 chapters: the first chapter carries on adolescence and Self-identity. The second chapter is titled narcissistic anaclisis and identity trajectory in persons in situations of migration, the third chapter covers the methodology mobilised in this study, the fourth on the presentation and analysis of data and the last chapter covers the interpretation of results and perspectives. These chapters are introduced by a general introduction and concluded upon by a general conclusion.

**CHAPTER 1: ADOLESCENCE AND SELF-IDENTITY**



Adolescence constitutes a key period in human existence when one examines the evolution and significance of an individual's identity. Adolescence is "at the crossroad" as Marcelli and Braconnier (2008) put it, a passage between childhood and adulthood, the adolescent is no more a child and not yet an adult. This implies a to and fro movement between renouncing his childhood on one hand and on the other hand struggling to attain a stable adult identity and constitutes in itself, the essence of the psychological processes that lead to the development of identity.

According to Mireille (2021), in the process of human development, the transition from childhood to adolescence is a stage whose outcome is uncertain. Some young people go through this period of change without harming themselves or their parents, while others experience terrible crises. Adolescent crisis makes adolescents question the values of their childhood. It is a step necessary for the development of the identity.

In this chapter titled adolescence and Self-identity, this research is going to be articulating on the concepts of adolescence: wherein we will present adolescence as a period of development and as a task; self-identity: within which it articulates the concept of the Self, the Self at adolescence and its construction at this period of adolescence; identity status based on the model of Marcia; and also the theoretical models of identity construction that will guide the research and finally the facts upon which the research problem is partly derived.

## **1.1. ADOLESCENCE: A TIME, A TASK.**

### **1.1.1. The concept of adolescence**

By etymology, the term adolescence comes from the Latin word "*adolescere*" which means "to grow". The concept of adolescence has no specific definition yet authors such as Clement and Demont (2008), Feldman (2010), Coslin (2017) and Marcelli and Branconnier (2008), accord on the fact that adolescence is a passage from childhood to adult age. Clement and Demont (2008) writes that, adolescence means to grow to maturity; the term referred to persons of a given age range. The traditional definition of adolescence is greatly based on physical development, given that during this period, there is an explicit increase in height and weight. For Feldman (2010), it is a crucial period, a time of profound changes and occasionally of turmoil. It is characterised by important biological, social, emotional and cognitive changes as the adolescent strives for maturity, independence and to move towards adulthood.

Coslin (2017) uses the term adolescence to etymologically describe persons who are still growing and have not yet reached adulthood; those in whom the process of growth has not

yet reach it term. He accords with the above authors on the fact that this period of adolescence is characterised by changes and transformations in various levels but it is the physical aspect of growth and transformation, that is those linked to the body, that marks the spectacular entry into adolescence and provoke the apparition of other aspects of growth that is those not directly linked to the body, the social and cognitive changes.

Examining the start of and entry into the period of adolescence, Clement and Demont (2008) affirms that the beginning of adolescence remains highly associated to the primary manifestations of puberty. For Feldman (2010) the most dramatic and spectacular changes that are explicit and can be observed by all are the physical ones: a spurt in height, the growth of breasts in girls, deepening voices in boys, the development of body hair, and intense sexual feelings; all signs of puberty, cause curiosity, interest, and sometimes embarrassment for individuals entering adolescence. Cannard (2019) writes that the criteria for the start and end of adolescence do vary from one author to another. She defines criteria to mark the start and end of adolescence based on the different dimensions of adolescence: biological, cognitive, psychic, social and judicial and precise that the entry into adolescence biologically takes its roots in the advent of puberty.

If adolescence constitutes a crucial period in the construction of identity, which is the object of study of this dissertation and the advent of puberty marks the entry into this period, then puberty itself should constitute a vital element in the period of adolescence and even in the construction of identity; for it is the advent of puberty that kindle the other aspects of transformation and development necessary for the construction of identity at adolescence. If puberty marks the start of adolescence, Clement and Demont (2008) notify that there yet no consensus on the end of adolescence but the converging point remains that the end of puberty does not mark the end of adolescence. Psychosocial developments must be taken into account. If puberty marks the beginning of adolescence, what age or moment is appropriate to talk of puberty?

Puberty is a universal concept and has been present at every era and in all species of mammals. Puberty comes from the Latin variants "*pubertas; pubes; impubes*" which means "age of maturity, manhood; pubis, pubic hair; beardless". By etymology, puberty is a period of maturity wherein the adolescent begins to develop pubic hairs, beards, and adult characteristics. For Clement and Demont (2008), the puberty process is relatively complex but at a given point, visible changes can be observed by the environment. The term puberty refers to the processes

underlying the physical changes by which a child becomes an adult who is able to reproduce. For Claes, (2014), puberty refers to the maturation of physical and reproductive characteristics and constitutes the most rapid change that occurs in human life. Cannard (2019) defines puberty as the activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-gonadal functions resulting in a complete development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics, a definite height and reproductive and fertility functions. The primary sexual characteristics are those directly involved in the reproductive function and the secondary sexual characteristics are related to physical particularities.

Tanner and Marshall described the different evolutionary stages of puberty in boys and girls and proposed a classification called “Tanner stages” that is still today used as a reference (Mazzarino, 2018). For these authors, the most visible changes during puberty are growth in stature and development of secondary sexual characteristics. Equally profound are changes in most body systems, such as the endocrine and neuroendocrine axis which their activation leads to the achievement of fertility, maturation of secondary sexual characteristic and acceleration of growth in stature. According to Tanner (1981), the developments of puberty spurts in boys at an average of 12 1/5 and 15 1/5 years and in girls at an average of 10 1/5 and 13 1/5 years and arrive their developmental peak at an average of 14 and 15 in boys and 12 and 13 in girls. Thought these ages, there are variation from one person to another in terms the “chronological age at which adolescence begins and different stages of physical maturity are reached; (b) variation in the time taken to pass through the various stages of development of the breasts and of the pubic hair; (c) variation in the temporal relationships between the development of the breasts, of the pubic hair, the adolescent growth spurt, and menarche” (Marshall & Tanner, 1969, P. 291). Tanner stages comprise three different classifications: in boys, development of the external genitalia; in girls, development of breast; and in both boys and girls, development of pubic hairs.

**Table 1: Summary of the development of secondary sexual characteristics in boys and girls**

Secondary characteristics	stages	Stage characteristics
Development of external genitalia in boys	Stage 1	Pre-adolescent. Testes, scrotum, and penis are of about the same size and proportion as in early childhood
	Stage 2	The scrotum and testes have enlarged and there is a change in the texture of the scrotal skin. There is also some reddening of the scrotal skin but this cannot be detected on black and white photographs.
	Stage 3	Growth of the penis has occurred, at first mainly in length but with some increase in breadth. There has been further growth of testes and scrotum.
	Stage 4	Penis further enlarged in length and breadth with development of glans. Testes and scrotum further enlarged. There is also further darkening of the scrotal skin, but this is difficult to detect on photographs.
	Stage 5	Genitalia are adult in size and shape. No further enlargement takes place after Stage 5 is reached.
Breast development in girls	Stage 1	Pre-adolescent; elevation of papilla only.
	Stage 2	Breast bud stage; elevation of breast and papilla as a small mound, enlargement of areola diameter.
	Stage 3	Further enlargement of breast and areola, with no separation of their contours.
	Stage 4	Projection of areola and papilla to form a secondary mound above the level of the breast.
	Stage 5	Mature stage; projection of papilla only, due to recession of the areola to the general contour of the breast.
Development of pubic hair in both boys and girls	Stage 1	Pre-pubertal (can see velum hair similar to abdominal wall).
	Stage 2	Sparse growth of long, slightly pigmented hair, straight or curled, at base of penis or along labia.
	Stage 3	Darker, coarser and more curled hair, spreading sparsely over junction of pubes.
	Stage 4	Hair adult in type, but covering smaller area than in adult; no spread to medial surface of thighs.
	Stage 5	Adult in type and quantity, with horizontal distribution.

**Source:** Marshall and Tanner (1969, pp. 291-292; 1970, pp. 14-15)

Going back to the object of study in this dissertation which is the construction of identity and given that adolescence constitutes a key period in this process of identity construction, it was important to present the above transformations of puberty. The above transformations, which are biological, have a psychosocial incidence on the general development of the adolescent: as he develops a certain perception about his pubertal development and confront it with that of his reference group and situate himself with regards to this reference group; and trigger changes in other developmental aspect like the affirmation of autonomy from parents and establishment of close relationship with peer friends on a social plan, and access to formal thoughts on a cognitive plan (Claes, 2014). All these changes at various levels impose on the adolescent certain adjustments and reorganisations in relation to the body, the Self and other, which contribute in the construction of identity.

### **1.1.2. Adolescence: a time**

From the first studies of adolescence, Claes (2011) writes that it was defined as a unique and specific period in the course of human development characterised by the pre-eminence of biological and psychosocial factors and especially of intense emotional crisis (Claes, 2011). This conception of adolescence as a period of crisis is characterised by emotional instability, tumult, contradictory games of love and passion and state of tension. This conception greatly dominated the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is followed the emergence of grand theories of adolescent psychology. These grand theories focused each on a central reality and always making reference to the notion of crisis in their explanation of this unique developmental period called adolescence. These theories include: psychoanalysis which placed emphasis on sexuality; Piaget on cognitive development; and Erickson on the construction of identity. These psychoanalytic, cognitive and psychosocial theories of adolescent development, all hold that access to adulthood passes through a unique period of crisis characterised by confrontations and disturbances which they considered to be normal and healthy development (Claes, 2011).

Freud (1905, p.72) ended his essay on “The Transformations of Puberty,” by stating: *“The starting point and the final aim of the process are clearly visible. The intermediate steps are still in many ways obscure to us. We shall have to leave more than one of them as an unsolved riddle”*.

Freud just like most of those who wrote after him, notably A. Freud, Piaget and Erikson, conceive adolescence as a unique period of development, demonstrating their starting and ending point but leaving out the intermediate stages that adolescence goes through before

attaining maturity. It is Blois who has gone a long way in resolving this unsolved riddle by concentrating on the intermediate steps of adolescence development.

Blois (1962) offers a truly systematic presentation of the normal adolescent process with a unified theory of adolescent development based on psychoanalytic principles. He views adolescence not only as a transition between childhood and adulthood but also as a separate and distinct stage of development having its own intermediate stages. Muuss (1980), referring to Blois (1962), writes that “normal development proceeds in an orderly progression identified by five adolescent phases: preadolescence, early adolescence, adolescence proper, late adolescence and post-adolescence”. The transformations produce developmental characteristics that distinguish each phase from the one that follows or precedes it. Each of these six phases presents specific tasks and experiences, and the progression from one phase to the next is not just a matter of maturation, but requires psychic restructuring which contributes towards the attainment of a personal identity. Muuss (1980) presents the adolescent developmental stages and organizes them around the themes of drive organization, ego development, somatic maturation, conflict and conflict resolution as below. These stages include: Preadolescence, early adolescence, adolescence proper, late adolescence and post adolescence.

Preadolescence, also referred to as pre-puberty, marks the entry into adolescence. There is a pronounced increase in the energy of the psyche which is experienced as general tension. Somatic changes set in in both primary and secondary sexual characteristics. These create more intra-psychic tension and leads to the beginning of the destabilisation of the previously consolidated ego. The peculiarity of this phase that we can analyse with regards to the object of study of this dissertation, which is identity construction, is that preadolescence is the beginning of the destitution and disorganisation of an already established and consolidated ego identity. This is evident in their “uncontrollability and unpredictability” (Muuss, 1980).

The changes of preadolescence continue to progress during early adolescence. There is an increase in libidinal drive and a strong clash between the demands of the Id and the Superego which leaves the Ego weakened and inefficient. This impoverishment of the Ego is also because it lost the legitimate support of the parental Ego. Another important change is the qualitative change in drive orientation which requires that pre- and oedipal love objects be given up in the favour of non-incestuous love objects; a detachment from parental dependencies and

attachment to peer groups (Muuss, 1980). This is the beginning of sexual identity at adolescence which is heterosexual in nature.

Muuss, (1980) presents the conception of adolescence, somatic maturation, intensification of the sexual and aggressive drive and the modification of drive orientation, to reach their peak at averagely fourteen or fifteen years, at adolescence proper. “This is a period of psychological restructuring, of chaos, of mood swings, of turmoil and crisis, of experimentation, and it manifests itself in the unpredictable, vacillating and rebellious behaviour typical of adolescents” (p.247). For the author, adolescence proper is also a period heightened ego experience. The ego now joins the libido in its movement toward heterosexual object finding. “This process involves a resolution of the second positive Oedipus complex and a movement toward heterosexuality” (Muuss, 1980, p.248). The resolution implies a distinct turn towards the achievement of a sexual identity and independence. However, there is restraint in the movement towards extra-familial heterosexual love object, fear of a new dependency on the love object, fear of losing parental protection, security and guidance; especially at a time when dependence on parents is fast declining.

Late adolescence is a period of personality and identity consolidation. The ego emerges from the chaos and turmoil that characterise adolescence proper, strengthened and begins to achieve a more stable and lasting organisational structure. (Muuss, 1980) identified the developmental task of late adolescence as the “elaboration of a unified Ego” and the achievement of a “stable Ego organisation”, terms which are evocative of the achievement of Ego identity in Erickson’s theory. Post adolescence marks the transitional phase between adolescence and adulthood. Post adolescence brings the ultimate goal of the adolescent process, which is the establishment of a stable psychic organisation. This ushers the adolescent in the final achievement of a stable self and identity, to completion. The self and self-esteem attain more constancy and stability and is less vulnerable to external demands. What emerges during post-adolescence is the moral personality, firmly anchored in society; there is a renewed experimentation with ego interests and with potential love objects. Post adolescence sees the emergence of a clearer conception of social roles, a sense of purpose, and a sense of direction and a sense of identity.

Looking at the above presentation of the different intermediate stages of adolescence according to Blos (1962, as cited in Muuss, 1980), it is important for us to mention that these stages and their characteristics show the complexity of adolescence. Preadolescence, with

changes that take place both biologically (somatic changes) and psychically (the re-emergence of drives), marks the beginning of the destitution and disorganisation of an already established and consolidated ego identity. Adolescence proper makes the height of what Erickson called Crisis due to the maturation of the sexual characteristics, the intensification of the sexual and aggressive drives, the conflict between bisexuality and heterosexuality and the re-emergence of the oedipal conflict. In order to come out of these, the adolescent has a number of tasks to accomplish. According to Blos the ultimate task is the resolution of the pubertal Oedipus complex at adolescence proper and later on the “elaboration of a unified ego”, achievement of a “stable ego organisation” and “personality consolidation”, terms which are evocative of Ego identity in Erickson’s theory. Adolescence, apart from being a time or a constitutive period of human growth, also constitutes a task. The young adolescent has a number of tasks to accomplish in order to attain autonomy, independence, identity and adulthood.

### **1.1.3. Adolescence: a task.**

The notion of developmental task at adolescence was introduced by Havighurst in 1962 (Claes 2014). It makes reference to the new realities imposed on each individual during the same period of development imposing diverse accomplishments which permits a progressive access to growth, maturity and autonomy. According to Claes (2014), Adolescence is a period of life characterised by change and evolution at various levels: biological (the transformations of puberty); social plan (affirmation of autonomy towards parents and establishment of fruitful relationship with peers) and cognitive plan (access to formal thoughts and the construction of identity), which constitutes the object of this dissertation. These evolutions have a psychological incidence on development by imposing adjustments and reorganisations in relations to the body, the Self and others, which corresponds to the different levels of developmental tasks to be accomplished by the adolescent.

This conception of adolescence based on the notion of task carries a double dimension. One underlines the role of the growing adolescent in the construction of his own development and the other inscribes the development of the individual within a concise environment by establishing the link between the personal abilities and social demands (Claes, 2014). We are going to articulate the different developmental tasks, which the transformations of adolescence impose, in relations to the body, others and the self.



### **1.1.3.1. Developmental tasks in relation to the body**

Developmental tasks related to the body makes reference to tasks related to pubertal development, which refer to physical and reproductive maturation. According to Claes (2014), one of the developmental tasks of adolescence consists in facing, integrating and adapting to the physical changes that occur during pubertal maturation. To face pubertal changes is a normative task at adolescence given that every human being passes through this stage of development and faces it. Other tasks are normative and restrictive; these are those that concern only a subgroup of adolescents and in this framework, those whose pubertal maturation began either very early or very late than expected. As a result, adolescents who find themselves out of the temporal norms have two major tasks. On one hand to face the challenges that pubertal maturation imposes (which consist the normative task) and on the other hand to face the different expectations, preoccupations and reactions of the different surroundings with respect to adolescents who experience their maturation within the norms (which consist the restrictive task).

According to Claes (2014), the normative restrictive task of early puberty is different from that of late puberty. For him, early adolescents are the first in the group to experience pubertal maturation; so do not have a mature model upon which they can evaluate their level of maturation in relation to their social environment; and the adolescents themselves, their peers and adults around them are not prepared for these pubertal changes and these might create inadequate reactions. On the other hand, late adolescents are the last to experience pubertal growth; since had their mature model but yet will express worries and experience mockeries relative to the lateness of maturation.

The task of facing and integrating the bodily changes depends on socio-cultural norms and the resolution of the normative restrictive task depends on the adolescent and his group of reference (Claes, 2014). According to the author, depending on the context, a development considered “in time” could be considered a restrictive task whereas an “out of norm” development could be considered a normative task. Facing, integrating and adapting to one’s bodily changes goes in comparison with peers and permits the adolescent to situate himself and thus, develop a sense of sexual identity. Again, when adolescents find difficulties in the accomplishment of a task, they could redefine the developmental task according to their specific problems, rejecting the demands associated to a given task and redefining them.

According to Claes (2014), these characteristics of pubertal maturation, as said above, depend on individual difference and so, they differ between boys and girls and even between adolescents of the same sex in timing and rhythm. The notion of timing refers to the starting age of pubertal maturation and constitutes the adolescent's developmental measure with respect to the expected pubertal maturation of a given age, a reference group. The notion of rhythm makes reference to the fastness in the succession of sequences, the time necessary to pass through all the stages of pubertal development. For the author, these processes of timing and rhythm play an important role in the adolescents who are faced with both the process of maturation and expectations of the social environment. Adolescents who experience a late and slow pubertal maturation live a completely different experience from those who experience early and fast pubertal maturation. This timing in the experience of puberty maturation has great incidence on the adolescent's relationships with other and on his representation of the Self.

#### **1.1.3.2. Developmental tasks in relations to others**

Muuss (1980) made it clear that a crucial task at adolescence is the separation from parental dependencies and engagement in intimate relationships with peers. For Claes (2003), adolescence constitute a key period when it comes to the evolution and significance of interpersonal relations in the course of human existence. Adolescence is at the centre of a decisive change in the social life of the individual given that, this period is characterised by a progressive disinvestment of the life lived within the family in favour of an intense and progressive engagement in relational life outside the family. Parents loss the central position they occupied in the life of the child whereas friends take a bigger place in the social and emotional life of the adolescent.

According to Claes (2003), these changes take place simultaneously with others changes in the body: physiological and puberty transformations. Puberty maturation and the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics have great impact on the social development of the adolescent given that it modifies the perceptions, expectations and responses of others vis-à-vis him and significantly influences the nature of his social interactions, and largely his social universe. It is at adolescence that individuals get engaged for the first time, in the construction of their own social universe, out of parental and family control (Claes, 2011). This is done by associating with peers with whom they share a certain number of principles that characterise a particular lifestyle. These associations offer to the adolescent a series of opportunities to which

he never had access as a child. From these associations, the adolescent creates his social universe, from which his identity is created as well.

Very often, the beginning of adolescence coincides with the entry into secondary school (Claes, 2003). This offers to the adolescent a new social environment or context different from that of primary school. This school is particularly different from other social instances such as family or group of friends. Taking into consideration the size of the environment and the multiple possibilities of social interaction it offers, the large number of students, their diversity, the presence of sub-adolescent groups and sub-adolescent cultures gives to the adolescent a multitude of contact and association possibilities. This social instance also offers a status through competition, evaluation of results and the experiences of success or failure which in return have an incidence in the adolescent's representation of the Self.

Claes (2014) makes it clear that, concerning pubertal timing, girls generally live earlier their puberty than boy. Given the difference in pubertal timing, adolescent girls who experience early pubertal maturation separate earlier from their parents and have the tendency to interrelate with masculine friends who are older than them and show behaviours of transgression of norms. The author explains that these girls who develop early associate themselves to boys who correspond to their puberty status and this helps to resolve the normative restrictive task of this stage. This experience appears to be same with adolescent boy with experience early puberty maturation.

### **1.1.3.3. Developmental tasks in relations to the self**

According to Muuss (1980), separation experience from parental dependencies and familial love objects and turning to peer groups and extra-familial love objects is the crucial task of normal adolescent development. What he referred to as "second individuation process". This task is inherent to the task of definitively resolving the Oedipus complex and involves a disengagement from the earlier family object ties and immature dependencies and a movement toward heterosexuality. The resolution of the pubertal Oedipus complex implies a distinct turn towards the achievement of a sexual identity and independence. The author identified the final developmental task of adolescence as the "elaboration of a unified Ego" and the achievement of a "stable Ego organisation", terms which are evocative of the achievement of Ego identity in Erickson's theory. The ego achieves a more stable and lasting organizational structure. The sexual identity is more firmly entrenched and becomes irreversible. There is a consolidation of

social roles and personal identifications which gives this phase its descriptive title, «personality consolidation».

For Claes (2003), with puberty maturation and changes in relations come the modification of one's representation of the self. As social relations are as well changing, new capacities of reflection on the self and of anticipating the reactions of others emerge. The author writes that it is at adolescence that individuals actively take part in the construction of their own social universe, by associating to peers with whom they share common characteristics. By engaging in relationships with other and participating in collective life, offers an environment for the affirmation of his individuality and self and be differentiated from other. Engage in groups, makes friends and engage in intimate relationships are tasks of adolescence, yet it is also time to forge one's identity, to become someone for oneself and for others.

The construction of identity which constitutes a central task at adolescence, makes reference to one's rapport with the self. This rapport permits the individual to define the self, situate the self with regards to others, via a series of fundamental things like the choice of a career, interpersonal relations, sexuality, beliefs and values. In all this, the other is always present; the construction of identity and the knowledge of the self is always is always elaborated within a dynamic interaction; the construction of the self, the affirmation of the self and relations with others are always intrinsically linked. It is in interaction with others that the adolescent knows, constructs and affirms the self.

According to Claes (2014), pubertal timing has great effects on body image and self-image and depends on the sociocultural norms and expectations. Given that puberty maturation brings about changes in body weight and size and so the developmental task for the adolescent does not only consist in adapting to the new physical characteristics, but also integrating the various reactions of the surrounding, the sociocultural expectations and norms. For the authors, adolescent girls who experience early pubertal growth, due to their perception of their body weight show signs of low self-esteem, depression and somatic disorders. For the other sex, boys who experience early pubertal maturation consider themselves to be very attractive, more satisfied with their body, muscular growth and generally with their "look" and "appearance" than other boys of the age. On the other hand, boys who develop late, who are smaller and generally present smaller muscular formation than their peers, are more unsatisfied with their bodies (Claes, 2014).

In summary, this conception of adolescence as a developmental task portrays adolescence as a complex phenomenon characterised by challenges at several level. First in the body with the transformations of puberty, the adolescent is worried and very much concerned with his body in relation and comparison with others of his age group. The task at this level consist in facing, integrating and adapting to these bodily changes which in comparison with peer group, situates the adolescent and gives him a sexual identity. Secondly at the level of relationship with others, adolescence comes with the quest for autonomy from parents and independence from family love objects. The task here consists in engaging in fruitful relationships with friends. Finally, at the level of the self, the advent of puberty, the re-emergence of drives and Blos' second Oedipus complex destabilises and disorganises the previously established identifications which gave the child a sense of self. The adolescent now finds himself not knowing who he is, where he comes from and where he is going; questions that Claes (2014) says are fundamental at this period of adolescence. The task of this level consists in building from the biological and sociocultural aspects, a sense of self that is unique to one, that differentiates one from others. This sense of self constitutes what Erickson called Identity and is the subject of this dissertation.

We have examined the concept of adolescence in the following aspects: the transformations of puberty and their psychological incidence, as a specific period of human development and as a task to accomplish for a successful transition from childhood to adulthood. The advent of puberty maturation imposes on the adolescent a certain number of tasks to accomplish, in relation to the body, others and self. After haven examines these, it is necessary to focus on the major developmental task at adolescence which is the construction of a self and identity and also constitutes the object of study of this research.

## **1.2. SELF-IDENTITY**

### **1.2.1. The concept of self**

According to Hamachek (1978), the concept of self otherwise referred to as self-concept has been difficult to define with precision because of the numerous domains in which it is used. William James (cited in L'Ecuyer, 1978, p. 17) in his famous chapter writes that "a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account". Summarily, the self-consist of everything that can be called mine or be part of me. For L' Ecuyer, James is the founding father of the

concept of self and his work has been a fundamental source of inspiration for other authors. James constructed two major dimensions of the self: one referred to as the “Empirical self or Me” and the other the “pure Ego or soul” (Leary, 1990, p. 107). In a more detailed analysis of the self, James identified the components or constituents of self which we will develop in the next part of this section in this dissertation.

According to L’Ecuyer (1978), the self-concept for one school of thought is an organised configuration of perceptions about the Self accessible to consciousness; for another school it is the fruit of social interaction, it appears as a product of the society and becomes a sort of introjection of the way others see me; and yet for another school of thought, the Self constitutes a subjective entity more or less influenced by the unconscious. This global definition encloses within itself, different conceptions of the self-concept: the “phenomenal self and self-concept of Carl Rogers”; the “social self of Mead” (L’ Ecuyer, 1978, p. 15) and the ego as a self. Inspired by the works of James and other authors, L’ Ecuyer conceived an integrated model of the self-concept, conceiving the self as a multidimensional and hierarchical system made of structures, substructures and categories. We are going to be making reference to this model as we develop the various types of selves according to James.

Also inspired by the works of James was Hamachek, who in his 1985 article postulates that each person has a self, self-concept, self-esteem and an ego. The author shows that the self-concept, self-esteem and ego are interrelated components of a person’s sense of self. The self refers to “one’s sense of personal existence” (Hamachek, 1985, P. 136) or sense of identity. The author explains that the self is a person’s total subjective environment; it is the centre of experience and significance or meaning. The self includes among others a system of ideas, attitudes, values, qualities and commitments. It constitutes a person’s inner world which is distinguished from the outer world consisting of other people and things. The self-concept refers to the awareness people have about the self at any given moment. It is “our private mental image of ourselves, a collection of beliefs about the kind of person we are” (Hamachek, 1988, P. 354). Self-esteem is one’s sense of personal worth (Hamachek, 1990).

### **1.2.2. Types of selves**

The original writings of James on the self, identified four components of self (L’Ecuyer, 1978) after a detail and holistic analysis of the empirical self and the pure ego, wherein he subdivided “the empirical self into “the Me viewed as material, the Me viewed as social, and the Me viewed as spiritual in nature” (Leary, 1990, P. 107), which together with the pure ego make

up the four components of self. In the integrated model of L' Ecuyer, he talks of structures and he identifies substructures and categories of the self.

#### **1.2.2.1. The material self**

The material self refers to the body of the individual and all his possessions, both material and personal, that he calls "his"; which are part of him for example "his" house, "his" wife, "his" clothes, "his" land (L' Ecuyer, 1978). L' Ecuyer distinguishes two substructures of the material self: the somatic Self substructure which regroups everything making reference to the physical body (physical appearance and characteristics); and the possessive Self substructure which regroups elements that the individual calls "his" and involves both objects and persons (animate as well as inanimate objects and possession of person like "my mother", "my children"). The body is the most intimate part of the self and even certain parts of the body than others (Leary, 1990). For the author, the key notion here is emotional feeling: individuals feel and experience the material dimensions of their selves, including those dimensions that extend beyond the borders of their bodies, what L'Ecuyer called possessive self. This emotional feeling and experience about particular aspects of the material self is distinctively personal, unique to each individual and specifically ours (Leary, 1990).

#### **1.2.2.2. The social self**

The social self in James' conception considers the recognition that the individual gets from within a milieu (persons or group) and especially the considerations from significant persons; this dimension of the self also refers to the reputation (either good or bad) that the individual has in his milieu (L'Ecuyer, 1978). According to the integrated multidimensional and hierarchical model of L' Ecuyer, the social self indicates that the individual "gets out of himself, opens up to others, enters into interaction with the other" (L'Ecuyer, 1978, p 84). The author identifies two substructures of the social self: the substructure of social attitude and preoccupation which refers to, on the one hand, a person's desire to participate or his real participation in activities with others and on the other hand, a simple verbalisation of his attitude towards others without really participating; and the substructure referring to sex which involves how persons integrate their sexual reality by first of all becoming conscious of your sexuality, and how one communicates with others as a sexual person.

#### **1.2.2.3. The spiritual self**

The spiritual self according to James include physical capacities and intellectual faculties and dispositions, interests, tendencies, aspirations of a person which he recognises as

being part of him, being part of his profound desires and emotions (L'Ecuyer, 1978). In L'Ecuyer's model of the self, he talks of a personal Self structure which refer to the most intimate psychological characteristics of an individual with some being descriptive or general (making reference to the self-image) and others being very much deep (making reference to self-identity). The substructure of self-image involves a variety of descriptions covering diverse aspects of self-experience: aspirations: ideals, desires, wishes; activities: sports, games, manual and intellectual activities; feelings and emotions: love, pain, hatred, joy, disappointment; likes and interest, capacity and aptitude; qualities and flaws. The self-identity substructure surpasses the general characteristics of self-image and goes deeper to the individual's subjective sense of being and existing. This includes simple denominations (name, age, sex, address); role and status (posts and functions in a group, his belonging to a group, profession); consistence (the general sense of internal coherence or incoherence, of continuity or discontinuity, of comprehension or incomprehension of what takes place within the self); ideologies (a sort of life philosophy, life principles); and lastly abstract identity (self-identification to certain categories, classification of self in or among a particular group.

#### **1.2.2.4. The pure ego**

The pure ego refers to what is today known as the sense of identity and coherence between the different selves (L'Ecuyer, 1978). This corresponds to the personal self structure in L'Ecuyer's model and particularly the self-identity substructure, which describes the various modalities and clues of self-definition. According to Leary (1990), James' analysis of the literature on the self and specifically that on the existence and nature of the transcendental ego confirmed his hypothesis that personality implies the incessant presence of two elements: an objective person (the empirical Me) and a passing subjective thought (I). The author points out the relation between the two aspects of the self that although distinct and loosely construed, are both necessary for the definition of an identity.

James developed the four constituents of self presented about but L'Ecuyer (1978), inspired by James, went further to talk of an adaptive self structure and a self-non-self structure. The adaptive self of L' Ecuyer refers to the reactions of an individual faced with his own perceptions. They carry two aspects: an evaluative aspect (self-value or self-esteem), which implies a positive or negative judgement on oneself based on a system of values that are either personal or imposed by the external environment; and the aspects of activities of the self, that indicates the different mode actions and reactions of the individual before his perception and reality (past, present or future) in view of maintaining, defending and promoting the self.



The self -non-self structure of L' Ecuyer (1978) corresponds to the opinion of others on the self, involves statements wherein the person is personally concerned with the judgement of others on the self, for example “My parents say that I am lazy”, and also the “person does not talk directly of himself but of others by making reference to the self” (L' Ecuyer, 1978, p. 85).

### **1.2.3. The self at adolescence**

According to Cannard (2019, p. 190), “If there is a period wherein, we question the self, it is the period of adolescence”. At adolescence, questions like “who am I?”, “what do I worth?” are paramount; the adolescent renounces certain self-images of childhood and becomes a sexual being in search of other sexual objects different from previous parental ones. She affirms that adolescence means rejecting previous identifications related to parental object and searching for new ones. Physical maturation, cognitive development, drives resurgence and separation-individuation processes necessitate self-adaptation. The new experiences and feelings massively experienced at adolescence make reference to the interrogations on oneself. With all these experiences, the adolescent does not feel himself as before and these create impressions of being strange and feeling of anxiety which questions the person’s sense of cohesion, continuity and identity (Cannard, 2019). How then, does the adolescent constructs a self?

### **1.2.4. The construction of self at adolescence**

Adolescence is a time when one is confronted with the task of self-definition, as the process of self-definition and the construction of self-identity, or identity formation as Erickson called it, becomes a normative developmental task at this age (Kroger, 1996). According to Claes (2014), the construction of identity constitutes a major developmental task at adolescence. In psychology, identity is classically defined from two bases: individual or personal identity and social identity. The personal identity or again self-identity serves as the foundation for the originality, uniqueness and differentiation of the individual. The social identity conveys similitudes, rapport with the different persons that make “us” (Claes, 2014).

This part of this chapter focuses on: Erickson’s psychosocial theory of identity, for not only is he the first to enquire into the issue of identity formation at adolescence (Kroger, 1996), but his works remain the major reference in the field of identity development in different domains of life. The works of Marcia are also a reference given that he operationalized the concepts of Erickson and proposed identity statuses (Claes, 2014). The writings of Erickson

are within the framework of Ego psychology, he uses the term Ego identity to refer to self-identity (Kroger, 1996).

According to Erickson (as cited in Marcia et al., 1993, p. 3), the process of identity formation “involves a synthesis of childhood skills, beliefs, and identifications into a more or less coherent, unique whole that provides the young adult with both a sense of continuity with the past and a direction for the future”. Kroger (1996) affirms that identity depends on the interplay of what young persons at the end of their childhood have come to mean to themselves and what they now, at adolescence, appear to mean to those who are significant to them. By this, the author distinguishes between identity formation that takes place at adolescence and the childhood processes of introjection and identification. The first sense of I (self) emerges at childhood. Through a trustful interplay with parental figure during infancy and the experience of a safe relationship, the infant comes to the knowledge of his own self. This Self is distinct from that of the parent and others. During childhood, the desire to be like others causes the child to assume roles and values that identify him to the other; it is the process of identification. This identification serves as the primary means by which the self of the child is structured (Kroger, 1996). At adolescence, identity formation involves a synthesis of these earlier identifications into a new configuration, which is based on but different from the sum of its individual parts. It occurs when the adolescent selects and discards some of these childhood identifications in accordance with personal interest, talents and values.

Identity formation is a process that also depends on social responses. Erickson (1968) writes that the young adolescent is primarily occupied with what he appears to be in the eyes of others as compared to what they feel they are and also occupied with connecting to the opportunities offered in roles and skills cultivated in the surrounding. The integration of these takes the form of ego identity and this ego identity is the sense of accrued confidence of an inner sameness and continuity in one's meaning for the self and others.

At the end of adolescence and early adulthood, what should be present is “an optimal sense of identity” (Kroger, 1996, p. 20). There should be a subjective sense of well-being; accompanied by a feeling of sameness and being at home in one's body, a sense of continuity in the knowledge of where one is coming from and where one is going and an inner confidence of being recognised by those who count. According to the author, the psychosocial connotation of an optimal identity should manifest through commitment to social roles and values that best fits one's own unique combination of needs and talents. For Claes (2014), what is achieved at

the end of the synthesis of the elements of the past (past history), present characteristics (needs, personality traits) and future expectations is a “Realised identity”. This refers to a flexible and durable engagement in basic and fundamental domains of life which guarantees two things: a feeling of satisfaction, well-being and confidence at the individual level; and the integration of the individual in the society on a psychosocial plan.

As mentioned above, Erickson’s approach to self-identity construction or ego-identity formation, as he uses it, remains till date the major reference in the field of identity development at adolescence; but it was Marcia who operationalized the theoretical approach of Erickson into what he called identity status by defining two processes at work in the construction of a self-identity: exploration and commitment (Claes, 2014). While exploration or exploration of alternatives as use by Marcia refers to the process of searching for different possibilities in a given domain of life, commitment corresponds to adherence to an assembly of values, objectives and beliefs. According to Claes, convening the processes of exploration and commitment at adolescence is of capital importance because the sense of a self-identity result from commitment to a significant domain of life, which normally occurs after a period of exploration, also referred to as a period of crisis. The author explains that after the dependence period of childhood, the young adolescent makes his entry into the larger society by expanding her social relations, coming into contact with institutions and the culture. This entry supposes that the adolescent explores the different aspects and different possibilities of life. This process of exploration is followed by positioning oneself with respect to others, taking a stand that results from the process of individuation; this refers to commitment. Commitment to significant social roles gives the adolescent a sense of self-identity (Claes, 2014). Based on these processes of exploration and commitment, Marcia defined four identity statuses, or modes of identity resolution or again individual adjustment styles to the psychosocial task of identity formation (Marcia et al., 1993).

### **1.2.5. Self-esteem at adolescence**

According to Cannard (2019), self-esteem is an assembly of representations that an individual has about oneself, it is the evaluation that an individual makes with regards to the value he attributes to himself: that is his degree of satisfaction with the self. For Harter (cited in Cannard) it refers to and manifests in the general evaluation of how much one likes one self, how much one is happy with oneself and how much one respects oneself as a human being. The author emphasises that this dimension of an individual reflects his perception of himself

and not his reality. For Cannard, self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self and depends on the descriptive component of the self which is self-image.

At adolescence, puberty maturation is generally accompanied by an increase in body weight and size especially in girls (Claes, 2014). The author writes that given that the effects of timing (whether early, on time or late pubertal maturation) on body-image largely depends on the social context, the adolescent can like, be happy and satisfied with oneself depending on her surrounding peers. Female adolescents especially those who experience early pubertal maturation are generally unsatisfied with themselves due to the increase in body weight. Male adolescents on the other hand, especially those who experience early maturation consider themselves to be more attractive, they are generally more satisfied with their bodies, their muscular growth and overall look than others. Contrarily to these, those who experience late maturation are generally smaller in size and height, smaller muscles and unsatisfied with themselves. In summary, adolescent girls are generally unsatisfied with their body-image than adolescent boys (Claes, 2014; Cannard, 2019).

To construct an identity begins with learning to know oneself, learning to know others, interacting with and integrating into the environment by responding to its demands. The manner by which the adolescent explores his environment, personally commit himself to a goal, role or value and the manner in which he will process information will lead him to adopt a particular identity status.

### **1.3. IDENTITY STATUS**

According to Kroger (1996) the greatest element in the identity formation process of Erickson that attracted researchers' attention has been fidelity or commitment, which began with James Marcia who fully examined the processes of exploration and commitment and define identity statuses. For the author, fidelity or commitment to a vocation, a set of meaningful values, and a sexual identity are the observable cues indicative of a more or less successful identity resolution during late adolescence; and passes through a period of exploration also known as crisis. For Marcia (1966) and Marcia et al. (1993), exploration or crisis on one hand refers to the adolescent's period of struggling and active questioning in arriving at a decision about values, goals, and beliefs; an engagement in choosing among meaningful alternatives. Commitment on the other hand refers to the degree of personal investment in individual exhibits; it involves making relatively firm choices about one's identity elements and engaging into significant activities that are directed towards the

accomplishment of those choices. It corresponds to the adherence to an assembly of beliefs, goals and values. Claes (2014) writes that a sense of personal identity results from commitment in significant domains of life and is possible only after a period of exploration of different possibilities or alternatives. By combining these two processes, Marcia defined four identity statuses, in other words, individual adjustment styles to the psychosocial task of identity formation in the areas of occupation, ideology and interpersonal values

### **1.3.1. Identity achievement.**

Subjects of identity achievement have experienced a period of exploration of alternatives and are currently committed to an occupation and ideology; they have seriously questioned and considered several occupational choices and have made decisions on their own terms (Marcia, 1966; 1980). Identity achievement corresponds to a personal stand and commitment which results from a significant exploratory activity; it characterises persons who are able to give reason for their choices and explain how they arrived at those personal choices (Claes, 2014; Coslin, 2017, Cannard, 2019).

### **1.3.2. Identity diffusion**

According to Marcia (1966; 1980), identity diffusion may or may not have experienced a period of exploration and its distinctive attribute is the absence of commitment; they have no set occupational or ideological direction, regardless of whether or not they may have experienced a decision-making period. The author explains that identity diffusion has neither decided upon an occupation nor is much concerned about it. Although he may mention a preferred occupation, the individual gives the impression that the choice could easily be abandoned should opportunities arise elsewhere; he is either uninterested in ideological matters or takes a smorgasbord approach in which one outlook seems as good to him as another. These subjects are characterised by an absence of a coherent assembly of personal values (Claes, 2014). Claes characterises them as those who allow themselves to be carried by the wind.

### **1.3.3. Moratorium**

Moratoriums concern individuals who are currently struggling with occupational and/or ideological issues: they are in the period of identity crisis or exploration and their commitments are vague. Moratorium is distinguished from identity diffusion by the struggle to make commitments (Marcia, 1966; 1980). Claes (2014) writes that moratorium is more of a stage in the process of identity formation than an identity resolution like other statuses. This is because the work of exploration is theoretically supposed to open the adolescent to the definition of his

own values and choices. Adolescents at moratorium take different tests, play different roles and experiment choices that could be abandoned at any time.

#### **1.3.4. Foreclosure**

Foreclosure like identity achievement corresponds to persons who are committed to occupational and ideological positions though these have been parentally chosen rather than self-chosen. They show no evidence of crisis; they become what others have prepared or intended them to become and his beliefs are virtually the faith of his parents (Marcia, 1966; 1980). For Cannard (2019), foreclosure is when the adolescent adopts the objective, values and commitments of the parents or other significant persons for him automatically without any exploration of alternatives and search for a personal identity, more or less void of parental control. His choices and ideologies are not deliberate and do not come from him.

The four identity statuses of Marcia are an extension of Erickson's bipolar description of identity at adolescence. The author envisaged a progression of identity following a developmental sequence moving from diffusion and foreclosure to moratorium and then achieved identity (Claes, 2014). Identity evolves between 12 and 18/21 years. At early adolescence, the predominant identity is diffused or foreclosed; between 18 and 21 years, the greatest changes in identity occur with a significant change from identity diffusion or foreclosure to identity moratorium or achievement. At 20 years, most persons are already at identity achievement (Marcia, 1980; Claes, 2014; Coslin, 2017; Cannard, 2019).

### **1.4. MODELS OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION**

The section of this research work presents the explanatory theory for the part of this work centred on identity construction which is the object of study of this work. The question of "who am I" and "What is my worth" are predominant at adolescence (Cannard, 2019). It is a period where one questions the self. That author writes that to become adolescent means to renounce certain self-images of childhood and infantile situations with all its inputs. It is to become a sexual being, to reject all past identifications associated to parental objects, whereas all these were invested narcissistically and affectively. Through these, one comes to understand that the process of identity construction did not commence at adolescence but its roots are traced from early childhood. It is in this light that this research convenes Freud's theory of psychosexual development from which it shall bring out aspects of identity construction from early childhood and will continue with the theory of Erickson on identity formation.

#### **1.4.1. Freud's model of identity construction**

Freud talks of identity in terms of the concept of self, which refers to the consciousness of being, of being a subject, singular and unique. This concept of self evolves with time and its construction takes place in the form of an unconscious process called identification. Identification according to Freud (1921) is the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person. During the first month of life, the child develops a link with the father and mother and conceives at the same time, a first model of the self and when he discovers that the parents continue to exist even when out of his sight, he understands that he constitutes an entity different from others.

Freud puts in place five stages of psychosexual development through which the child navigates to come to the knowledge of the self (Avignon, 1998). Freud puts forward the hypothesis that each stage prioritises a particular zone of the body, which constitutes the main centre of satisfaction and pleasure for the child and the child successively invests each of these zones as the stages of development unfold. Thus, the manner in which each stage is lived or experienced by the child, the manner in which the child navigates between the demands of the Id and regulations of the Ego will determine the basis of the child's psychic life, concept of self and identity. This shows the importance of the early stages of life in future identity.

Freud (1923) confirms this conception of identity construction through identification as the substitution of the object of the Ego and a model of narcissistic identification. The author sees identification to a lost as the mechanism of primary importance in the formation of the Ego (Self) by resolving the internal conflicts between the Ego and libidinal investments. Identification is thus the means by which the Id renounces its objects and also a means for the Ego to control the Superego.

Freud (1923) adds that for the formation of the Superego, the most glaring form of identification is that to the father, who was the source of frustrations. His identification with his father then takes on a hostile colouring and becomes identical with the wish to replace his father. The author also precise that, identification permits the Ego keep check on the imperious demands of the Id and that the libido of the Id is absorbed in the Ego and its aggressiveness is attributed to the Superego. Thus, identifications based on love structures the Ego whereas identifications based on the fear of the object structures the superego. Thus again, identification is invariably dependent of the emotional tie to an object, a tie that can be libidinal or aggressive.

Identification is in fact, ambivalent from the very first; it can turn into an expression of tenderness as easily as into a wish for someone's removal. The choice of object is bit by bit replaced by identifications which are constituted on ambivalence towards the object choice. So, identification definitely reflects that which we want to be and object investment reflects that which we want to have; that is in other words “being like”. It is all these identifications that form the basis of one’s identity.

#### **1.4.2. Erickson’s identity model**

Erickson’s most substantial contribution to the understanding of identity was the placement of the concept within the framework of normal development (Marcia et al., 1993). For the authors, only Erickson was able to place the concept within a psychosocial developmental outline of human life cycle. The notion of identity, one’s idea of who one is, how one defines oneself appears to be a process that began since infancy and is concretised at the fifth stage (adolescence) in the eight stages of the life cycle (Kroger, 1996). Identity is partly conscious and partly unconscious; it gives one’s life a feeling of sameness and continuity yet also a ‘quality of unselfconscious living’ and is taken for granted by those in possession. Identity involves conflict and has its own developmental period during adolescence and youth, when biological endowment and intellectual processes must eventually meet societal expectation for a suitable display of adult functioning.

Unlike his predecessor Freud, who in his traditional psychoanalysis lays emphases on Freud had left psychoanalysis focused on the role played by biology in personality and identity development, Erickson sees that “traditional psychoanalytic method cannot quite grasp identity because it has not developed terms to conceptualize the environment” (Kroger, 1996, P.16). For him, while biology is important, individual life history and the presiding cultural and historical context must be considered in the definition of identity. As such Erikson conceptualizes and defines identity in an interdisciplinary way; biological endowment, personal organization of experience, and cultural milieu all conspire to give meaning, form, and continuity to one’s unique existence.

Basing his thoughts on the theory of Freud who looked at identity development to end at childhood and depends on the interaction of the different instances of the psychic apparatus, the development of identity according to Erickson results from the interaction of the subject’s ego with his social environment. For him, identity is the affair of adolescence: the formation of identity commences where the utility of identifications ceases (Mbole, 2022). Identity



formation involves a synthesis of these earlier identifications into a new configuration, which is based on but different from the sum of its individual parts. The process of identity formation depends on the interplay of what young persons at the end of childhood have come to mean to themselves and what they now appear to mean to those who become significant to themselves. As such, the identity task of adolescence consists in integrating his identity to the Self, become himself. When his identity is forged, the adolescent unconsciously has the feeling of uniqueness, unity and integration. There is a sense of sameness and continuity in what he was and now is and between what he had experience and he is experiencing.

Erickson demonstrates the complexity of the process of identity by describing eight stages of the life cycle, ranging from birth to old age; with each stage being a critical period of development which involves bipolar conflicts that must be addresses and resolved to be the self and to grow. Each polarity presents a crisis, a crucial turning point where development must move either for the better or the worse as one is with his own desires and expectations, constantly confronted to the physical environment, social and historical context and the aspirations that one generates to the environment (Kroger, 1996; Cannard, 2019).

Coslin (2017) writes that Erickson's psychosocial theory of development proposes a complete perspective of life, in which adolescence occupies a crucial place due to the fact that it prepares the adult by defining his identity. Erickson defines eight stages as follows: Basic trust versus mistrust; autonomy versus shame and doubt; initiative versus guilt; industry versus inferiority; identity versus role confusion; intimacy versus isolation; generativity versus stagnation; and integrity versus despair. Identity versus role confusion which corresponds to adolescence is our point of focus but it is important to appreciate the contribution that the earlier stages make in the definition of one's sense of self-identity and together with the contribution of later stages in making complete the life-cycle (Erickson, 1968; Kroger, 1996; Coslin, 2017; & Cannard; 2019).

Arriving at the end of this chapter, one can say that the period of adolescence is indeed a key period in human life when examining the identity of an individual. The advent of puberty, the physiological transformations that come with it have consequences on the psychological and social plan. The adolescent thus, has tasks to accomplish in relation to the body, to others ad to the self. The task related to the self constitute the major developmental task at adolescence: the task of self and identity construction. The models of identity construction exposed in this chapter make clear that the process of identity construction begins from early

childhood with the infant's earliest identifications and continues through out childhood and adolescence where the early identifications are synthesised into a new sense of being not different from the previous but marked by continuity and sameness.

**CHAPTER 2: NARCISSISTIC ANACLSIS AND TRAJECTORY OF  
PERSONS IN SITUATION OF MIGRATION**

In the previous chapter of this research work, we presented the literature review relative to the adolescence and self-identity and the theoretical framework. In this present chapter, this research focuses on what has already been done as concerns the concept of affiliation and trajectory of persons in situation of migration by articulation firstly on the phenomenon of migration, secondly on identity trajectory, thirdly on injured narcissism, fourthly on denegation pacts and finally on the theoretical perspective from all which a conclusion (theoretical constation) that will partly constitute the problem of this research will be drawn.

## **2.1. THE MIGRATION PHENOMENON**

Migration is an integral part of the society and people are constantly being on the move for thousands of years (Connel et al., 2016). According to Mazzella (2014), the word migration originates from the Latin word “migration” which means “passage from one point to another”. It is derived from the verb “*migrare*” which means “to move from one place, change of residence or habitat, to transit from a locality to another”. For the author, the word migration has since the 16<sup>th</sup> century been referred to the displacement of a population from their place of residence to another either far or near.

Mazzella (2014) distinguishes two types of migration: internal migration and external or international migration. Internal migration on one hand refers to the movement of persons taking place within the borders of a country, either by nationals of the country or international migrants in the country. International migration on the other hand refers to the movement of persons away from their place of residence across international borders to a country in which they are not nationals (International Organisation for Migration [IOM], 2019). According to Cantor and Apollo (2020), the fact of crossing an international border or not is usually taken to be the key point in distinguishing internal from international migration and internally displaced persons from refugees. Those who cross international borders are referred to in the country receiving them as refugees. Persons who effect internal migration are called internally displaced persons (IDPs) and these do not cross international borders.

Based on the causes of departure from one’s place of residence, Mazzella (2014) distinguishes voluntary migration from involuntary or imposed or again forced migration. The author convenes he notion of intentionality and explains that migration is a personal act and linked to one’s biographical history and life experience.

### **2.1.1. Migration as a voluntary phenomenon**

According to Haas (2010) the phenomenon of migration is often a deliberate decision of an individual or a people with the aim of improving livelihood, enable investments, acquire assets which will insure against future shock and stresses. Mazzella (2014) by convening the notion of intentionality in the phenomenon of migration explains that it is usually a project built by persons based on their personal history and life experience. For Abdessadek (2012), the migration project is created based on individual desires and expectations, and is confronted with the realities of the new place of residence. This confrontation, according to the author, permits the migrant to evaluate his project and level of success. Cantor and Apollo (2020) summarise this that voluntary migration usually has economic motives, the search for a better life as the driving force.

### **2.1.2. Migration as an involuntary or imposed phenomenon**

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees ([UNHCR] 2015), involuntary or forced migration is the displacement of persons from their habitual place of residence to a new one as a result of persecution, conflict, generalised violence or human right violation. For Haas (2010), migration is considered as a flight from misery which according to Turpin-Samson (2018) results from violence, terrorist attacks, and kidnappings, threats of death, violent deaths, exploitations and loss of objects. To these, Cantor and Apollo (2020, p. 648) write that “Certainly, in contexts of conflict, safety-related motives appear to be the main trigger for forced displacement, outweighing all other considerations”.

In the context of this research, the focus is on internal migration and specifically the IDPs of the crisis plaguing the North West and South West of Cameroon. According to Goldman (2009), an IDP is a person who has been forced to leave the home of residence as a result of armed conflict, communal violence, serious human right and humanitarian law violation and who remains at risk within his own country. The author continues that forceful displacement frequently entail multiple human right violation as it breaks up immediate families, cuts off important social and community tie, terminates stable relationships and forecloses opportunities and make the displaced population vulnerable. Turpin-Samson (2019) writes that displacement forced by armed conflicts, like that in the NW and SW regions of Cameroon, generates a definite separation from many objects such as place of origin, members of immediate and distant families and friends. The lost object could be a loved one, an object, an ideal or value and the author writes that this is a painful process that could be manifested as depression.

## **2.2. TRAJECTORY OF PERSONS IN SITUATIONS OF MIGRATION**

According to Goyette and Royer (2009), young persons like adolescence who experience forceful displacement from their habitual place of residence to a new residence, generally encounter serious obstacles that disrupt their diverse transitions towards identity construction, consolidation and adulthood. He affirms that these adolescents as compared to others, accumulate more psychosocial difficulties and rupture with their families and communities of origin, they find themselves in a new environment and are most often confronted with the demands of autonomy and independence and identity construction which constitute a major developmental task at this stage (Claes, 2014).

Goyette and Royer (2009) recognise the fact that the support system plays a fundamental role in the adoption of an identity trajectory. They affirm that each support system has an impact in the various domains of transition and this impact depends on the relational dynamics that the adolescent entertains with the support system. Thus, the author is interested in the relational dynamics that exists between the young adolescent and his support system because this could either favour, disfavour or hinder the process of transition to identity consolidation.

By relational dynamics, Goyette and Royer, (2009) refer to the attitude of the adolescent towards the support offered: acceptance, rejection or indifference. It permits one to understand how the adolescent interacts with the latter and the attitudes he adopts with regards to the support system. Depending on his attitude, the relational dynamics can either be missing or inexistent, of dependence (the presence of the support system is indispensable for the adolescent to galvanise his individual efforts may be due to lack of autonomy). It can be of independence (the impact of the support system is not really tangible) or interdependence (where the support system accords and concerts with the adolescent in the process of transition).

The major trajectories towards identity in which adolescents and young people engage can either be qualified as a constructive tendency or a vulnerable tendency (Goyette & Royer, 2009). The term tendency is used to demonstrate the dynamic nature of the process of identity construction and consolidation. It shows a possibility of oscillation and change or transfer from one trajectory or tendency to another which does not necessarily mean a prejudice in the identity trajectory. The constructive tendency refers to the galvanisation and dynamics in place in the adolescent's projects in the various domains of transition that depict identity construction and consolidation: professional, residential and family domains. The vulnerable tendency on

the other hand, refers to a situation of hindrance or regression in the various domains of transitions towards identity.

The trajectory of each adolescent is unique and so one must consider the initial situation of each child, their present needs, capacities and aspirations (Goyette & Royer, 2009). The galvanisation, strategies and dynamics put in place by the adolescent, in relation to the situation that determines the qualification given to the trajectory adopted. This, for the author, shows that several dimensions interact and contribute to concretise the trajectory of identity adopted by the adolescent. The qualification of constructive or vulnerable tendency depends on: the elaboration of projects or plans and how the adolescent galvanises himself towards the project in the transitional domains; and the support offered to the adolescent and relational dynamics entertained towards it.

Goyette and Royer (2009) identified four identity trajectories adopted by adolescents to face the task of identity construction in the context of forced displacement: ascendant and constructive trajectory; Stable and constructive trajectory; stable and vulnerable trajectory; and descendant; and vulnerable trajectory.

### **2.2.1. Ascendant and constructive trajectory (+)**

According to Goyette and Royer (2009), adolescents in the ascendant and constructive trajectory include those who at their arrival and start of life in their new place of residence appear to be calm, timid, cold but with the help of the social support system or network, they are able to stabilise themselves in a given identity path. Such entertain a relational dynamics of interdependence with a vector social support. Even though some of the subjects could be situated already from their very arrival in the constructive tendency, not all are able to display such capacities. Others pass from a relationship of vulnerable dependence, which is a relational dynamics of dependence with an inhibiting social network which was an obstacle to their process of identity construction, to a constructive interdependence by modifying their relational dynamics and mobilising their efforts towards projects that are constructive. This trajectory leads to a more positive and sustainable identity. One could think that the beginnings of coldness, calmness, timidity were moments of observation and exploration, after which the young adolescent becomes engaged in life projects that define the self. This trajectory refers to what Claes (2014) calls realise identity.

### **2.2.2. Stable and constructive trajectory (0+)**

For Goyette and Royer (2009), adolescents inscribed in this trajectory are those who take a constructive path from the very beginning of their settlement in the new residence and who have maintained the constructive tendency till identity consolidation. For the author, these adolescents were already inscribed in a constructive project that depicts identity. They present little or no personal crisis or problems like others (mental health problems, relational difficulties, drug consumption) and were less socially isolated but on the contrary presented social and personal skills and abilities needed for construction and consolidation of a stable identity. The relational dynamics of independence and/or interdependence with social network usually characterise these adolescents.

The identity status that characterises these is foreclosure, for though exploration is absent; they remain committed to the choices and stay focus on the constructive path already chosen generally by someone close or a parent (Marcia, 1966; 1980).

### **2.2.3. Stable and vulnerable trajectory (0-)**

Generally, these adolescents from the very beginning of their stay in their new place of residence remain all through fixed in the vulnerable path (Goyette & Royer 2009). They do not make any effort or galvanise themselves towards a constructive project and generally entertain a relational dynamics of independence towards a vector social support system and show desires to cut-off links with this vector social support. Instead, they entertain a relational dynamics of dependence with an inhibiting social network involving more or less delinquent persons and they entertain a relationship of dependency with one or more persons in the inhibiting network. These adolescents do not take time to observe and explore opportunities around them and make little or no efforts to engage in a constructive project in any domain of transition and so they remain confused, what Marcia (1966) called diffusion.

### **2.2.4. Descendant and vulnerable trajectory (-)**

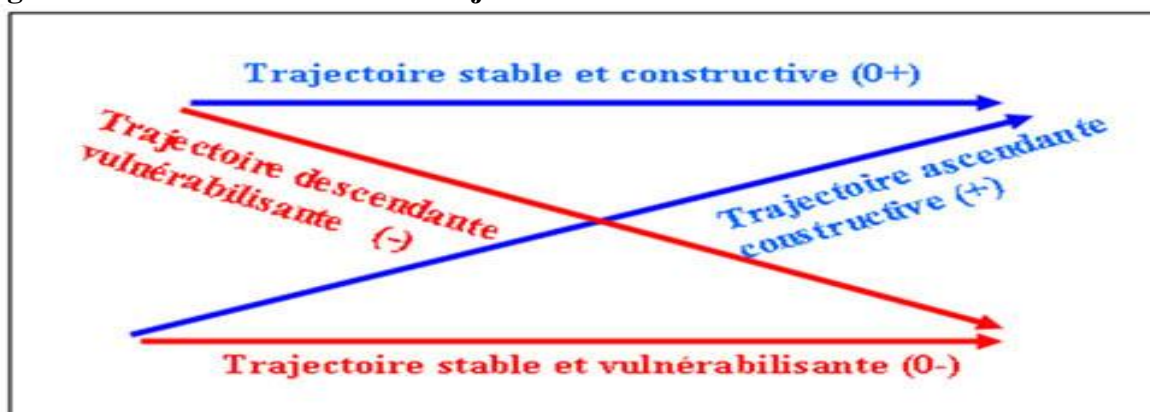
This trajectory involves adolescences whose situation has degenerated with time; for apart from not having a vector supporting social network, they are engaged in affectionate relationships characterised by dependency and have negative effects on their identity consolidation process (Goyette & Royer, 2009). According to the author, when these adolescents are able to find a single person to support them, their relational difficulties keep the latter away and they find themselves isolated and in a situation of failure. Goyette & Royer write that these young persons, generally have serious mental health problems, behavioural



problems, repeated elopements which undermine every effort put in place for their growth and residential instability.

If moratorium is considered as corresponding to this identity trajectory, it is because with the adolescents here exploration of their social milieu is present, as they are able to get the support that they need and a place of residence but due to the vagueness of their commitment, they lose this support and experience great residential instability (Marcia, 1966; 1980, Goyette & Royer, 2009). Their commitment is not only vague, but could be completely absent as Claes (2014) writes that adolescents at moratorium explore and take different tests, play different roles and experiment choices that could be abandoned at any time (the absence of commitment).

**Figure 1: Illustrative table of the trajectories**



**Source: Goyette & Royer, (2009). The trajectories of insertion on youths of the Youth Qualification Project. p. 10.**

From the above, we have seen that the trajectories of identity construction are qualified either as constructive or vulnerable tendency. These qualifications render account of the dynamic nature of the process of identity construction and the possibility of fluctuation from one trajectory to another in the identity construction process. For Wenger (1998), the term trajectory implies that identity is not a fixed course or fixed destination but it suggests a continuous motion that has the momentum of its own in addition to the field of influence or interest, to divert to another course or trajectory. He uses trajectory to demonstrate that identity is a continuous process, constructed within a social context and defined with respect to multiple interactions.

As such, the internally displaced adolescents who was a member of a certain group within which his existence and self is established, now finds himself in a strange land. How then does

he deploy his identity? What trajectory will it take? We are made to understand that this depends on how he galvanises and strategizes; the dynamics he puts in place and the relational dynamics he entertains with his new environment. It is worth noting that these depends on his experience of the process of migration, the psychological incidence of the migration process in the life of the internally displaced adolescent.

### **2.3. MIGRATION AND INJURED NARCISSISM**

According to Eiguer (2007), migration is at the centre of the identity crisis; it presents a particular trauma in which the ego is upset and deregulated. For the author, persons in migration are usually characterised by feelings of loss, instability, confusion and anxiety; there is a remarkable splitting of the ego and this has consequences on the sense of identity. For Desplechin (2013), apart from physical, material and economic conditions, migration in general and forced migration in particular also has important psychic repercussions to the extent of disrupting and disorganising the sense of sameness and continuity of the self of the displaced person. To understand this, the author writes that it is important to trace back the conditions of migration, as an experience that separates and isolates the subject; either through objective conditions or particular psychic situations that are capable of transforming one's relationship with others. For Desplechin, migration on a psychic plan, extends as an alteration of one's link with the self (injured narcissism) due to the intensity of the task of migration and the alteration of one's link to others.

#### **2.3.1. Narcissism**

The term narcissism denotes "the attitude of a person who treats his own body in the same way in which the body of a sexual object is ordinarily treated - who looks at it, that is to say, strokes it and fondles it till he obtains complete satisfaction through these activities" (Freud, 1914, p. 1). The term appears for the first time in the works of Freud (1910) to account for the object-choice of homosexuals, for they take themselves as their sexual object. He used the term to describe the irreducible love for the self; the individual begins by taking for himself, his own body as love object and subsequently somebody else other than himself as love object. Freud (1914) develops this concept in his psychoanalytic theory of libido, particularly to talk about libidinal investments. He postulates the existence of a single psychic energy called the libido and the clinical observation of his patients permitted him to distinguish between two forms of libido based on their objects of investment: Ego libido (investment of the Self by the Ego) and object libido (investment of another who is out of the Self by the Ego). By Ego libido and object libido, Freud relates and contrasts two mental states: the first state is one in which the

love object of an individual is his own body (primary narcissism) and in the second stage the love object is another person other than the self (secondary narcissism).

Also, in distinguishing between the forms of libido based on their objects of investment, Freud (1914) suggests that a human being originally has two sexual object choices: himself and the woman who nurses him. As the individual grows up, their choices of sexual object changes. In one, the individual in their later choice of love object or sexual object, take their own self as model and not their mother; they are seeking themselves as love objects and thus exhibiting a type of object choice called the narcissistic object choice. In the other, individual derives their choice of love objects from their past experiences of satisfaction; that is the person who satisfies the growing child's needs of feeding, care and protection becomes his earliest love object, this is the attachment or anaclitic object choice. This form of object choice introduces the notion of anaclisis.

By anaclisis, the APA dictionary of Psychology refers to “an extreme dependence on another person for emotional or physical support or both, just as an infant is dependent on the parents for the satisfaction of his or her basic needs” (VandenBos, 2015). To talk about anaclisis, we propose to use variants of the word like “support”, “dependence” and “lean”. Freud (1905d) introduces the term anaclisis to make reference to the anaclisis of the sexual instincts on the self-preservation instincts: the sexual instincts, dependent on the self-preservation instincts, only become independent by leaning on the vital functions provided by the organic source. Freud (1914) revokes the concept of anaclisis to describe the type of object choice wherein growing children and adolescents and adults take for their love object, the mother or a representative of the mother; that is one who satisfies their basic needs. It is in this light that Laplanche and Pontalis (1989) refers to anaclisis as the act of subjects leaning on objects of instincts and self-preservation in their choice of a love object.

Freud (1914) analyse the narcissistic position of the subject and specifically the anaclisis or dependence or leaning of the primary narcissism on the parental narcissism. The narcissism of the child leans on the unrealised dreams and desires of the mother and father and the preceding generation. Freud proposes a model of reciprocity in vital services rendered between the individual and assembly and the societal chain, and by this model he explains that the individual leans on the assembly of the society for certain vital services likewise does the society. Kaës (as cited in Vandecasteele & Lefebvre, 2006) proposes a generalised conception of the anaclisis and defines different surfaces of anaclisis being respectively the body, the

mother, the primary group and the social group. The author writes that the development psyche (the milieu where identity develops) is based on and inspired by a direct rapport, link or connection with the other (mother, primary and social group). By this, he underlines the indispensable or inevitable aspect of intersubjectivity as the condition for human existence and psychic life. This is evident in the double status of the subject which implies reciprocity in services offered and rendered between the individual and the society. These services are unequal; the society takes the majority and leaves the individual with no choice than to belong to an assembly or group. To this, a question arises as to how the subject gets connected or linked to the group, whether primary or secondary.

### **2.3.2. Psychological contract and narcissistic contract**

According to Desmarais and Dubouloy (2010), while the psychological contract covers relationships that develop between individuals: expectations, promises and compromises, the narcissistic contract concern the unconscious relationship between individuals or an individual and an organisation. For the author, the narcissistic contract is the link that binds the individual to the larger human society. He explains that the first narcissistic contract is the first links that unites the mother with the child. This contributes to construct in the individual a sense of belonging to a group and permits him to feel recognised by the family, close relations and peers.

Freud (1914) proposes a model wherein the subject constructs himself in the double vital position and is in a conflict wherein he is opposed to himself and divided into either being himself his own end or taking the place of the unrealised desires, values and functions of the network of persons that make up his genealogy. Kaës (2009) developed this conception of Freud by proposing the concepts of a subject of group and a subject of link. The individual is part and parcel of certain links and alliances: the family, group and institution; he is at the same time a servant, beneficiary and heir to this chain; he builds the self within it, singularises and makes himself unique from each one of the chains. According to Kaës, these alliances are the bases of a psychic reality of the link that exist between subjects and the family, group and institution. The author postulates the existence of intersubjectivity as an indispensable aspect of human existence; this being evident in the double status of the subject which implies reciprocity in services offered and rendered between the individual and the society. Kaës establishes the four demands or obligations that this intersubjective link imposes, the first being *“Pour le sujet d’investir le lien et les autres de sa libido narcissique et objectale afin de*

*recevoir en retour de ceux-ci les investissements nécessaires pour être reconnu comme sujet membre du lien*” (p. 115). This obligation forms the model of narcissistic contract and the latter is classified as a primary structural alliance. He explains that the narcissistic contract has the specificity of linking the human assembly which forms the primary relational tissue of every new subject with the group in which he is found and creates his place. The author distinguishes between primary or original narcissistic contract and secondary narcissistic contract.

The original or primary narcissistic contract is the foundation of all alliances and defines the filiation contract. This contract is at the service of investments for auto-conservation of the group and the subject of the group. This contract binds members of a family; it recognises the child as a member of the family group and demands of this child to recognise the family group as that from which ones comes and has to prolong it (Kaës, 2009). The secondary narcissistic contract is established when the subject creates extra familial relationships with different formal or informal social groups wherein, he is a participant. It defines contracts of affiliation, redistributes the investments of the original narcissistic contract and gets into conflict with the latter especially at adolescence (Kaës, 2009).

Recalling the reciprocity of services between the individual and society, Kaës (1988) makes us understand that through the narcissistic contracts, the subject leans on the society and the society accomplishes the role of a meta-framework and configuration of links for the subject. The author explains that the institution (institution here should be understood as the family, group and/or society) precedes the subject and assigns and inscribes (takes note of) him in its discourses; the institution structures the subject and he in return contract with it relations and rapports that support his identity. In institutions, we contract/create links, rapports and relationships that support our identity.

For Kaës (1988), we are confronted in institution with the fact that part of the Self disperses, losses and grows out of the self in an impersonal and desubjectivised manner. This externalisation of an internal space which is ours, part and parcel of the Self is the most anonymous, violent and powerful rapport that we entertain with institutions. We are confronted with the thought that part of our Self is "out of the Self" and that this which is "out of the Self" is the most primitive and undifferentiated part, and the foundation of our being. It is part of the self that we cannot do without, for it is an integral part of us.

Vandecasteele and Lefebvre (2006), relating to the distinction between object libido and ego-libido which defines the double existence of an individual, interrogate the function of social anaclisis in the construction of the self. For the author, social anaclisis provides basic security for the subject and acts as the mediator between the subject and the society. Social anaclisis is also a producer of social links or relationships, which should be understood here as an assembly of belongings, affiliations, links, that unite individuals among themselves and which lead them to have sense of belonging to or membership into the same group and hence, a sense of identity.

Summarily, through the narcissistic contract, the internally displaced person in general and the adolescent in particular, was born and lived in a given context and institution: firstly, family and secondly society, which accorded to the individual, a place among it dwelling, in its functioning, in its system. The adolescent, still in the process of identity construction and consolidation, builds a self for himself, from the elements of anaclisis offered by the institution and growing up within this institution, identifies the self with the institution and sees the latter as an integral part of the self, a self without which he cannot exist. If through the narcissistic contract, the subject leans on the society and the society in return provides a metapsychic framework and configuration of links that support his identity, the question one may ask is to know how migration is experienced as an injured narcissism.

### **2.3.3. The concept of disanaclisis**

To understand the experience of migration as an injured narcissism, it is necessary to convene the concept of disanaclisis which itself, is understandable through the concept of anaclisis. The APA dictionary of psychology defines anaclisis as the dependence on someone for emotional and/or physical support. About support, Kaës (1979) lays emphases on mutual support. He writes: *“Tout étayage a pour caractère fondamental non seulement d’appartenir à un réseau d’étayage, mais aussi d’être en « appui mutuel » ; je veux dire par là que ce qui s’appuie est en mesure de servir à son tour d’appui à ce qui soutient”* (Kaës, 1979, p. 10).

The emphasis on mutual support reiterates an aspect of the narcissistic contract, which is the reciprocity in services rendered between the individual and the society. According to Kaës (1979) this mutual support is necessary for production of psychic formations. It is through anaclisis and mutual support established by the narcissistic contract that the individual psyche is formed; a sense of self, which at infancy is still undifferentiated and as time passes become

separated and distinct from others (Mahler & Dupont, 2013), is formed. Thought distinct from others, still remains an integral part of the self. For Kaës, there is thus a serious psychic disruption when there is an irreparable need for this support, either due to a default in the support system or due to an abolition of the support surface. This introduces the notion of disanaclisis.

The concept of disanaclisis in the writings of Kaës (1979) refers to a default, weakness or failure in anaclisis or mutual support. Kaës introduces an idea of multiple anaclisis which according to him, finds its roots in the works of Freud wherein the latter presents four surfaces of anaclisis: anaclisis on the body, on the mother, on the group (from family group to society) and on the self. A failure in any of these supports or reciprocity of services rendered among these is what is referred to as disanaclisis. According to Kaës, the notion of rupture (or breach) and crisis are fundamental when it comes to disanaclisis for, disanaclisis is a rupture in or a separation from a support and this rupture is experienced as crisis. The general understanding of the idea of crisis here is that of a sudden and abrupt change that arrives in the course of a process.

Migration in general and forced internal displacement in particular, which is the concern of this research, can be experienced not only as a crisis, but also as an injured narcissism and even a crisis of identity. Goldman (2009) and Turpin-Samson (2019) write that displacement forced by armed conflicts and communal violence, like those in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon, do not only involve the violation of one's fundamental rights but also leads to a definite separation from loved object: immediate and distant family members, soil of origin, values and ideals, important social and community ties. These objects, according to Williams (cited in L'Ecuyer 1978) constitute the self and according to Kaës (1988), they constitute the part of our self that is "out of the self" and though "out of the self", it is the most primitive, undifferentiated, the foundation of our being. It is part of the self that we cannot do without, for it is an integral part of the self.

Forced migration is experienced as an injured narcissism and crisis of identity with the loss of or ruptures with the above love objects. Kaës (1979, p. 23) writes:

*Cette expérience de la rupture vient, pour le sujet, mettre en cause douloureusement la continuité du soi, l'organisation de ses identifications et de ses idéaux, l'usage de ses mécanismes de défense,*

*la cohérence de son mode personnel de sentir, d'agir et de penser, la fiabilité de ses liens d'appartenance à des groupes, l'efficacité du code commun à tous ceux qui, avec lui, participent d'une même socialité et d'une même culture.*

These adolescents have been cut-off and have lost the foundations of their self, the most primitive and undifferentiated self and the foundation of their existence. They find themselves in a situation where self continuity and coherence is disrupted, organisation of one's ideals and identifications are disrupted and the coherence of one's personal mode of thinking, acting and feeling is disrupted and the final outcome is a crisis of identity.

Kaës (2019) illustrates with the example that every link includes the negation of violence, division and difference. He explains that a pact silences differences, reason for which statements of violence, difference, division are never evoked, mentioned or formulated; such must remain unconscious. For the author, the pact itself is repressed; the price for the double silence of the link in the mutual interest of both the singular subject and the link or chain.

#### **2.4. DENEGATION PACT**

Generally, the question of negation is reserved to the verbal use of deny. It carries the connotation of judgement and it is from the concept of negation that the different mechanisms of the negative are inferred: repression, foreclosure (or rejection), negation (or denegation), disapproval and denial (Rosa, 2008). All these mechanisms are assembled by Green under the name work of negative, which Kaës (2014) in his conception of unconscious alliances, called denegation pact. The negative is a polysemic term. In one sense, it confronts an active opposition to a positive one in an interchangeable symmetric relation. In another sense, it reflects the notion of absence, of latency, with no manifest content. In a third sense, the negative refers to "nothing"; that is just like something that never existed. These different definitions of the negative take us to the modalities of the negative in the work of Kaës.

According to Kaës (2014) the negative is a constant component in every unconscious alliance notably in the narcissistic contract; it is always present in every link. For the author the negative, in either of its modalities, is present at the origin of the psyche, of the formation and maintenance of link between subjects. Individuals create links or relations not only on the



basis of their desires and aspirations but also on the basis of what they all deny, refuse and reject, called the negative. The author introduced the notion of denegation pact to render account of the various modalities of the emergence of the negative (negativity) in the group link.

Human groupings can only be formed by maintaining zones of obscurity, a common psychic space culturally referred to as a no-go zone in the link/relation. The denegation pact renders account of what, in the analysis of alliances, is unthinkable, unspeakable and considered as “no man’s land”; the aspect of negativity renders account of what is lacking, lost, shortcoming, faces death (reality of death) or what constitutes the dimension of the impossible in a relation/link (Kaës, 2014). For the author, this negativity in its diverse forms must be repressed or denied, rejected and erased, for it is what is at the origin of upsets, disorganisations and illusions in the different configuration of links: couple, groups, families and institutions. Kaës (2019) calls denegation pact, a common intersubjective formation, that accepts vows and devotes to the repression, denial, disapproval and/or rejection of what will put into doubt, upset and disorganise the investments and configurations of link; this is maintained in the unconscious such that it does not attain consciousness in the link, or not realised in consciousness.

The specificity of denegation pact is that it is concluded in order to assure the defence of the link and subjects of the link and assure the proper function of the whole assembly (Kaës, 2014). The denegation pact refers to an accord or agreement between subjects concerned by the establishment of a consensus that aim at assuring the continuity of the investments and benefits related to the link and at maintaining the common psychic space necessary for the sustenance of certain function and formations rooted in intersubjectivity for example the function of the ideal, collective organisation of defence mechanism and formation of identity (Kaës, 2019).

The adolescents in this study have forcefully migrated from their original place of residence and are presently in a new place of residence. What is their original experience of affiliation and disaffiliation in their former place of residence? How does this experience of disaffiliation put into malaise the internally displaced adolescent, destabilises his identity foundations and leave the adolescent with a narcissistic injury and in a situation of identity crisis? Kaës (2014) introduces an aspect every link or alliance that when faced, creates a malaise in the alliance: this is the denegation pacts. The adolescents in this case of rupture or disaffiliation, due to the

emergence of the negative in their links, are said to experience this through the various modalities of the denegation pact: obligation negativity; relative negativity; and radical negativity.

#### **2.4.1. Negativity of obligation**

According to Desmarais and Dubouloy (2010), negativity of obligation consists in suppressing, reducing or modulating the representations that threaten the integrity of the link, or either give up or forego the realisation of personal instinctual goals. For Kaës (2014) negativity of obligation refers to what is very necessary in the alliance for the realisation of her operations and functions. These operations induced by negativity of obligation, aim at preserving the psychic integrity and organisation of both the subjects of the link and the link. The notion of obligation here evokes the duty of the psyche to effect these operations that aim at preserving the integrity of the individual psyche and that of the group.

The adolescent in a situation of rupture and disaffiliation, through the negativity of obligation, is obliged to undergo a number of psychic operations in order to preserve the integrity of the psyche, its organisation, coherence and identity, and that of the link. These psychic operations obliged by negativity of obligation are based on inadmissible representations and experiences that must be repressed and on unacceptable perceptions which must be denied or rejected. For Kaës (2014) repression, denial and rejection are predilection modalities of negativity of obligation. While denial and rejection are at the origin of unconscious processes and organisations that are extrapsychic, repression is at the origin of processes and experiences that are intrapsychic.

According to Kaës (2014), the work of repression is to keep aside and maintain from consciousness that which is susceptible to create a malaise or displeasure to the subject. In a context where that which is unthinkable has surfaced to consciousness, he remarks that this is experienced as a suffering that painfully puts into malaise/danger the continuity of the self, disorganises its identifications and the coherence of one's personal mode of thinking, feeling and acting; a situation whose outcome is a crisis of identity by disconnecting the subjects from their affiliated groups and ties, from their families and loved ones, soils of origin, shared values and ideals and from the mutual support they receive from each other.

The adolescent in this situation in order to preserve the integrity of the psyche and the link, through the operation of repression imposed by negativity of obligation, will have to

effectuate a number of operations that demands repression. They consist in suppressing, reducing or modulating representations (thoughts, images and souvenirs) that threaten the consistency, coherence and integrity of the individual psyche and that of the link and the members of the link; suppress certain individual formations and denounce the realisation of one's instinctual goals in favour of the link.

Kaës (2014) conceives denial in the negativity of obligation is an extrapsychic operation which consists in the rejection and refusal, disapproval and repudiation of unacceptable perceptions for the psyche of the subject and that of the link. The adolescents in a situation of disaffiliation will have to effectuate defensive operations to disapprove and repudiate the reality of the perceptions related to the rupture that are susceptible to create distress and disorganise the foundations of the subject's identity. The adolescent in a situation of disaffiliation also have to abandon certain individual psychic formations, drives and renounce the realisation of direct instinctual goals in favour of the link and the group.

#### **2.4.2. Relative negativity**

Relative negativity permits the containers that contains the subject to remain intact in order to protect the psyche and self from disorganisation and suffering (Rosa, 2008). It permits the function of contenance, transformation and anaclisis of the self of a subject on that of his group. The inscription of absences, losses, as an experience of presence permits to conserve and preserve the object and the self. The negative presents itself here as a process that permits the intrication of the negative with the positive and the positive manifests here as an organiser and preserver of the object, self and link.

Relative negativity according to Desmarais and Dubouloy (2010) corresponds to an experience of expectation or waiting within which the actors maintain open the hope of possibility in the link. It becomes a project of transformation that the subject hopes to realise. This negativity is at the origin of illusions. For Kaës (2014) relative negativity concerns that which has not yet been realised in the link; which remains a source of frustration and suffering; has not found a means through which it can be realised and remains open to the possibility of realisation as a project. For the author, this may involve in other words something that is supposed to be done but yet has not been done or something that has been done but not well done or could have been done differently.

In situation of distress caused by disaffiliation and rupture from the things that constitutes the self and destabilises the foundations of one's identity, the psychic work imposed on the internally displaced adolescents by relative negativity involves that which is aimed at protecting and preserving the subjects and the link (Kaës, 2014). The adolescents remain in the hope of possibility that, experiences that were constituted but disappeared or became insufficient would be one day realised. The adolescents have lost families, friends, soils of origin, shared values and mutual support they benefitted from their community and remain in the hope to recover them. This hope for possibility sustains the potential space of psychic reality.

For Kaës (2014), relative negativity is at the origin of thoughts and projects of action: it instigates the hope for the transformation of reality, a possible return to normal or the advent of different reality. By this, relative negativity entertains rapport with the capacity to create illusions. An effect of relative negativity is utopia: a situation in which the hope for a perfect time where desires shall be realised. The adolescent detached from both human and material objects that make up the self, lives in an illusion that the present reality constituted by suffering will be transformed and another perfect reality will emerge.

### **2.4.3. Radical negativity**

According to Desmarais and Dubouloy (2010), radical negativity is the most destructive, for it is actualised in situations of want or loss or absence. It is on the side of what is empty, blank and extremely painful; it represents that which is not supposed to be accessible to consciousness because it leads to destruction. For Kaës (2014), it is the most destructive of all three modalities of denegation pacts, because it confronts the subject to the impossible, to the reality of death. It is qualified as "*ce qui n'est pas*" [that which is not] and paradoxically an unperceived reality and an uncontained reality. It is also the most destructive because experiences of radical negativity are against psychic organisation and integrity. It is actualised in the encounter with the unknown or the non-encounter of the subject and an object and also in situations of want or absence. By this, adolescents faced with disaffiliation and rupture from objects that make up the self, are at all times confronted with the reality of death. Each time, they are faced with a real or perceived situation of want and absence of these objects, they experience extreme pain and faced with this reality of the impossible and death, the result is extreme pain and a destabilisation of identity foundations (Desmarais & Dubouloy, 2010; Kaës, 2014).

According to Kaës (2014), radical negativity is similar to the primary experience of dereliction and agony which affect subjects subjected to extreme anguish in the most basic psychic functioning. This results from the paradoxical contact of thoughts with that which is not, that which it is not and that which it cannot be. For the author, radical negativity is at the origin of anguish that results from this contact of the thought with the unthinkable and can be experienced as a shock, a terror or an ecstasy. This confrontation with that which exists not, is strange to the self and cannot be tolerated. Kaës writes that the vacuum created by disaffiliation, continues to rob the subject off the self and of objects of the self and compares this experience with that of the absence of God or the Absolute. From this, we understand that at each thought of the loss, which consist in that which do not exist and will no more exist again, the adolescent in a situation of rupture and disaffiliation experiences extreme pain, anguish and agony and experience this as a shock, a terror or ecstasy. Given that these experiences rob the adolescent of the self and objects of the self, they may experience a destabilisation of their identity foundations and a crisis of identity (Kaës, 2014).

Radical negativity questions origin itself (Kaës, 2014). It questions the unknown, the unconceivable, the impossible, the other. It questions existence. These questions concern gender, desires and non-desires. The author supposes that these questions also concern that which does not or has not occur and will not occur and this is constituted in the psyche without any prejudice to constitute the negative. This draws to mind that individuals faced with rupture and disaffiliation, at times questions their origin, their existence and the essence of life. These questions emerge when a symbolic castration is operated in the psyche; that is when these individuals come to the reality of want, absence of and deprivation from their love objects that make the self (Kaës, 2014).

For Kaës (2014), the foundations of radical negativity are the separation and original distress arrives due to the leakage in the operations of repression and denial. When the work of repression and denial fail and this experience of radical negativity arrives consciousness, it confronts the subject to the reality of death, vacuum, emptiness, want which is at the origin of suffering, distress and disorganisation, of not just the integrity and coherence of the subject but also that of the link and the subjects of the link. The anguish that radical negativity creates could be processed or contained in thoughts by the capacity of thoughts to suppress and erase the intolerable. This could be treated by the modalities of negativity of obligation and relative negativity.

We understand here that Kaës (2014) presents the three modalities of denegation pact: negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity as a process or succession of stages in the treatment and processing of the negative. Once the negative is about to make surface in consciousness, in order to avoid or reduce its effects, the operations of repression and denial in the negativity of obligation are imposed on the psyche to deal with the negative. When this fails, the psyche experiences a hope of possibility for desires to emerge and be realised in future; a perfect utopia and illusion which perhaps soothes the situation and reduces anguish. The most dangerous stage is the radical negativity which arrives at the failure of the preceding operations. So then, while negativity of obligation and relative negativity are aimed at protecting and preserving psychic integrity and organisation, radical negativity is that which puts it in malaise, destabilises and destroys psychic integrity.

For Kaës (2019), groups, families, institutions and societies are founded on unconscious organisations and mixed formations or processes that assure both for the subjects and the link, the investments, satisfaction of desires and the protection defences that each subject need in the link/relation. For the author, the institution has as function to maintain a part of the irrepresentable, by concealing it in a system of significance and meaning that it produces and imposes on each subject member of the institution. It puts at the disposal of each one, a body of common representations and codes unique to the group. These systems of significance and meaning, common representations and codes of the group are at the origin of individual identity and group identity and a loss or rupture with these mean a loss of identity.

## **2.5.THEORETICAL MODEL**

The object of study of this research is identity construction but the complexity of the concept of identity drives this study to focus on the different trajectories of identity construction. Erickson (1968) conceptualises and defines identity in an interdisciplinary way; postulating that biological endowment, personal organisation of experience and sociocultural milieu all conspire to give meaning and a sense of sameness and continuity to one's unique existence. He does not elaborate in detail on the social dimension of the psychosocial partnership, though he does stress on the importance of the social context in the formation of identity (Kroger, 1996). It is for this reason that this research convenes the theory of narcissistic contract of Aulagnier (1975) and Kaës (2009; 2014; 2019).

These theories demonstrate the link that exists between the individual (intra-subjective) and the society (inter-subjective and the link itself) and how he became linked to the society. They also demonstrate the role played by the society in the construction of individual psyche and identity. The narcissistic contract is an exchange pact between the subject and the group beginning with the family and simultaneously the larger social assembly (Jaroslavsky, 2013). We convene the narcissistic contract to explain the concept of affiliation, for Kaës (2019) writes that it is foundation of filiation and affiliation identity.

### **2.5.1. The Narcissistic contract in Aulagnier's point of view**

The narcissistic contract is an exchange pact between the subject and the group (familial, and simultaneously social). In his book titled *La violence de l'Interprétation, du pictogramme à l'énoncé*, Aulagnier (1975) developed his conception of the narcissistic contract that exist between and links together the subject and the group. He affirms that the narcissistic contract has as signatories the child and the group (family and later on society). It is the contract that registers the child in the mother-child relationship and in the wider parent-child relationship. This same contract registers the subject in the societal group. This contract assigns to each signatory to each signatory or member, a certain place offered by the group and dictates the conditions of the environment where the subject's "I" is welcomed.

Aulagnier (1975) works on the relationship between the individual and the society and distinguishes three investment spaces for the child:

- the family milieu;
- at adolescence, the school milieu and friends and at adult age, friends and the professional milieu;
- the social milieu or spaces where desires, projects, hopes and aspirations are shared.

He signals that the subject develops within a context, precisely a restraint and limited context (family) composed of parental couple and the child. It is in this context that the self is constructed and wherein the child's "I" is welcomed and authorised. The author also considers that it is important to take into consideration what happens in the extrafamilial scene. That is the influence of the social and cultural milieu on the parental couple and consequently on the psyche of the subject. Just as the family structures the psyche of the subject, sociocultural influence also plays a part in structuring the psyche.

The fundamental aspect of this contract is that it links each subject to the intersubjective assembly where the “I” develops. When a child is born, the group invests the child with her libido as the future voice. The group demands of the child to adhere to and repeat these voices so as to guarantee the qualitative and quantitative permanence of the group. The child grows up to take a place in the group, adhere to the beliefs and fundamental statements of the group and has a mission to guarantee its permanence and continuity. The group passes unto the child a series of basic or foundational or fundamental statements which the child appropriates for himself, invests them as a subject member of the group and they become to him, the statements that establish his position and identity as a member of the group. This illustrates the main function of the narcissistic contract which is to maintain continuity and self-preservation, as investments continue both for the subject and for the assembly which he is a constitutive part.

According to Aulagnier (1975), the narcissistic contract is responsible for and is the foundation of every possible rapport between the intrasubjective and intersubjective, subject and society, individual and assembly, singular speech and cultural reference. For the author, this contract is established thanks to the pre-investments of the child by the group as the future of the group who will occupy the place and the mission assigned to him by the group. He continues that the contract assigns to each signatory or member, a certain place offered by the group and this is evident in the assembly of voices that conformed to the foundational myth of the group even before the arrival of every new member. As the group offers a place to the subjects, it is required that each subject take upon the self, accept and declare the very foundational statements of the group which include ideals and values. It is through this narcissistic investment of the group that the subject becomes connected or linked to grand social assembly.

Aulagnier (1975) gives importance to the metapsychological function of the sociocultural register. By sociocultural register, he refers to the norms, rules and regulations, values and ideologies of social institutions (family, school, etc.). In this sense, he orchestrates the importance of the sociocultural reality on the psyche of the subject by underlining the following:

- the link between the parents and the child carry traces of the link between the parental couple and the social milieu within which they are a constitutive part and share common ideals;



- the statements of the parental anticipate and pre-invest the place of the child in the social register. By this, the parental couple prepare the child for a later integration into the sociocultural milieu (school, friends) at adolescence;
- on the part of the child (future subject), he needs to find in the sociocultural statements, identification references that will permit him to come to the knowledge of the Self, his position in the group and to project the Self in future.

For Aulagnier (1975), access to these foundational statements, which include ideals and values, is an essential factor in the process of identification both in family and sociocultural milieu. He affirms that this access to fundamental statements is indispensable for the child's "I" to attain autonomy and a place, independent of parental verdict. All these offered by the assembly induces the subject to transfer part of his narcissistic libido, already invested in the identification process, to the assembly which promises the subject a brighter place. The position of the child provides a frame, through which the child represents the continuity of the self, faces the problematic of identity and construct his own identity, unique to himself

In summary, the narcissistic contract is an exchange pact between the subject and a group, beginning with the family and later the wider society. The conception of Aulagnier (1975) remains within the family setting and he writes that it is important to take into consideration what happens out of the family setting. For Jaroslavsky (2013), the narcissistic contract for Aulagnier's is a contract that links the child to the family and thus is a filiation contract. Bourguignon and Katz-Gilbert (2018) define the filiation contract as that which links family members and registers the subject as a member in the lineage and offers to him a place. If the narcissistic contract in Aulagnier's theory is responsible for the link between the subject and the family, what then is responsible for the link that exists between the subject and the particular social institutions or groups out of family setting? It is in response to this that we convene the theory of Kaës on the narcissistic contract.

### **2.5.2. The narcissistic contract in the point of view of Kaës**

Inspired by the works of Aulagnier (1975), Kaës (2009; 2014) enlarges the scope of the narcissistic contract and applies it to the group and consequently to every link. The author inscribes the narcissistic contract within his wider concept of unconscious alliances. What is an alliance? Etymologically, alliance, from the Latin verb "Ligare" means "to link"; simply put alliance means the creation of links, bonds or more intimately, ties (Kaës, 2014). For the author,

these alliances are the basis of the constitution of the psychic reality of every individual and every human link and are established in the framework of a general law that works for all humans, that is the prohibition of incest (Kaës, 2009; Jaroslavsky 2013). In this case, different alliances are created among members of a link as the subject passes from a subject of nature to a subject of culture, from a natural to a cultural being.

Kaës (2009) resituates the narcissistic contract in the works of Freud (1914) where Freud writes about the double existential position of the subject: the necessity to serve his own purposes; and the other as a link in a chain, which he serves against his will, or at least involuntarily. From this Kaës constructs the concepts of subject of group and subject of link. He affirms that being at the same time a servant, a beneficiary and an heir to the chain, the subject singularises and constructs the self within the links and alliances within which he grows, in the assembly that he is part and parcel of: the families, groups or institutions. The narcissistic contract presents the specificity of linking the human assembly.

Kaës (2014) distinguishes three categories of narcissistic contract through which the human assembly is linked: the original, primary and secondary narcissistic contract. According to Kaës (2014), the original narcissistic contract is an exchange pact that links the individual to the entire human species; it is based on identification of the Ego to human species. It is a contract of affiliation to the human species and demands mutuality in investments and services rendered for the preservation of the human species and the individual. For the author, this contract is elementary and indispensable for the trans-generational assembly; for it presents a weakness which lies in the fact that the destruction of another means the destruction of oneself and one's belonging to humanity. For Bourguignon and Katz-Gilbert (2018) the original narcissistic contract concerns the sense of belonging to the human species.

The primary narcissistic contract according to Kaës (2009) defines the contract of filiation and recognises the individual as a member of the family group. It is the contract that links blood relations (Jaroslavsky 2013). The primary narcissistic contract is concluded within the primary group. It links the individual to his family through the investment of parental narcissism, who transmit foundational statements, myths, identification references to the individual; and these investments mutually serve both the family assembly and the individual, who is not only a link in the chain but also a servant, beneficiary and heir of the assembly (Kaës, 2014; Bourguignon & Katz-Gilbert 2018).

The secondary narcissistic contract renders account of the links established between the individual and groups out of the family, secondary group, formal or informal social group to which he belongs and participates. Links created with each secondary group are affiliation contract (Kaës, 2009) and are concluded in a rapport of continuity, complementarity and opposition with the original and primary narcissistic contracts (2014). For Bourguignon & Katz-Gilbert (2018), the secondary narcissistic contract is the pact concluded with secondary group, out of the family to which the individual belongs such as school, political movements, sporting teams, social gatherings, religious communities.

Kaës (2014) remarks that, these three narcissistic contracts are at the service of life. The original and secondary are affiliation contracts (links the individual to human species and to a particular group); the primary contract is a filiation contract that maintains family ties. For the author, these contracts are clinched together but they can get into conflict. This occurs when the imaginary and alienating adherences involve in the narcissistic contract prevent the individual from moving from an individual subject to a universal subject, from nature to culture and from individual to universal. Quoting from the author *“Tout changement dans le rapport du sujet à l'ensemble, toute appartenance ultérieure, toute nouvelle adhésion à un groupe remet en cause, et dans certains cas en travail, les enjeux de ces contrats”* (Kaës, 2014, p. 61). This goes in line with Claes (2014), who writes that, the advent of adolescence brings about a reduction in proximity with parents (fall of the primary narcissistic contract) in favour of proximity with peer groups.

The question one may ask is the place of this theory of narcissistic contract in this research work. The soundness or importance of this theory in a study which has identity as object of study can be traced in the role or function of the narcissistic contract as a metapsychic frame and guarantor. As already mentioned according to Aulagnier (1975), the signatories of the narcissistic contract are the individual and the group; when the child is born the group invests the child and passes unto him foundational statements and myths (which include values, ideals and beliefs) which the child or new comer adheres to, invests and appropriates them for himself as a member of the group and they become to him that which establishes his position and identity as a member of the group. For the author, it is in these terms that the function of the narcissistic contract is illustrated which are to maintain continuity and self-preservation both for the subject and the assembly. Again, for Aulagnier, the narcissistic contract gives the child access to foundational statements which are essential factors in the process of

identification; they are indispensable for the child to attain autonomy and independence. In other words, access to foundational statements permits the adolescent to attain an identity for autonomy and independence according to Erickson (1968) is the stage of identity consolidation in the process of identity formation.

The narcissistic contract as a metapsychic frame and guarantor, Kaës (2009) calls metapsychic every process, formation and function that guides the psychic life of each individual; that which is at the innermost part of the individual psyche. For the author, “*Les garants métapsychiques sont des cadres sur lesquels se fonde la vie psychique de chaque sujet, et au premier plan de ces cadres, les alliances inconscientes*” (Kaës, 2014, p. 30). One type of unconscious alliances is the narcissistic contract and the to this Kaës (p.62) writes

Dans sa fonction structurante, le contrat organise les termes d'un échange : il prescrit une place pour le sujet dans l'ensemble à la condition que ce sujet contribue à la continuité et à la conservation de l'ensemble. Il assure la croissance de l'ensemble et les conditions nécessaires à l'ancrage narcissique de la vie psychique du sujet. Enfin, il prélève sur le narcissisme primaire du moi individuel qu'il contribue à fonder, une part qui assure la continuité du groupe, condition de la continuité de soi. Avec ce prélèvement, il met en place (et impose) un idéal du moi partagé et des objets communs à investir narcissiquement.

By this, the narcissistic contract accomplishes an outstanding function in the formation of identity, for it gives to each an opportunity to create one's subjective sense of existence in the assembly by subjectively appropriating a place for oneself, recognising one's place; a subjectivation which can only be produced in a link with another and with a group.

This study is centred on the affiliation contracts which according to Kaës (2009; 2014) are contracts that link the adolescent to groups out of the family, groups that assure the continuity and coherence of the identity trajectory adopted sometimes from the family. This study is as well concerned with adolescents who have been forcefully cut-off from their affiliations in the process of migration as they escape armed conflicts and communal violence.

Not only are they cut-off from their filiations (immediate and distant family members), but they are also cut-off from their affiliations, that is, social and community ties, soil of origin, shared values and ideals. These affiliations and the narcissistic contract initially in the writing of Kaës (1979) reiterate the mutual support and reciprocity in services between the adolescent and different affiliation groups which assure the adolescent's sense of existence, continuity and coherence.

Kaës (1979) reiterates the role of these affiliations in the definition and consolidation of identity in the structural function of the contract which contributes to and assures the conservation, growth and continuity of the group, a necessary condition for the continuity of the self. The adolescents in this study are trapped in the situation wherein they neither exist nor function within the context of their affiliated groups and the author writes this experience of rupture disrupts the continuity of self, the organisation of the adolescent's identifications and ideals, his use of mechanisms of defence, the coherence of his personal mode of feeling, acting and thinking and the reliability of his affiliation to groups; a situation the author called crisis of identity. This injured narcissism and crisis of identity that results from rupture and separation from fundamental supports – that is disanaclisis, could as well be experienced as denegation pacts.

## **2.6. CONCLUSION**

The problematic of internal displacement and disaffiliation and identity construction and trajectory has been and is at the heart of this research. This problematic has been analysed based on two theoretical models: the individual pole with Freud and Erickson and the relational pole with Aulagnier and Kaes, theories which are not contradicting but complementary. Whether the first or second model, both theories put into evidence, the problematic of link in the construction of the psychic life. From the narcissistic contract of Kaes, three fundamental modalities emerge:

- the individual is serving his own purpose and at the same time is a link in a chain, which he serves against his will;
- the family (filiations) and wider community (affiliations) constitute the adolescent and structures who and what he is. They are a constitutive part of him that he cannot do without;
- the self or self-identity is a psychic formation specific to the adolescent and common to a social assembly. This permits to understand and render intelligible the complex

relations that specify, distinguish, oppose and articulate three psychic spaces: that of the subject, of intersubjective link and that of complex assemblies or of configuration of links (family, school, neighbourhood groups, church groups).

As such, the intersubjective link inscribes the subject of the unconscious (the adolescent) within a grand configuration of links (family, school and community at large). The self of the adolescent is thus constructed in an encounter with the psyche of the others. It is in this intersubjective link that common objects, values and ideals that structure the psyche and self of the adolescent. Thus, the adolescent cannot exist without the other or without the link that unites them and without the group that contains and structures them.

It is important to recall that this study is concerned with adolescents who have been forcefully cut-off from their filiations and affiliations in the process of migration as they escape armed conflicts and communal violence. They are cut-off from their filiations (immediate family members) and from their affiliations (social and community ties, soils of origin, shared values and ideals). Forced migration is experienced as an injured narcissism and crisis of identity with the loss of or ruptures with the above love objects. Kaës (1979, p. 23) writes:

Cette expérience de la rupture vient, pour le sujet, mettre en cause douloureusement la continuité du soi, l'organisation de ses identifications et de ses idéaux, l'usage de ses mécanismes de défense, la cohérence de son mode personnel de sentir, d'agir et de penser, la fiabilité de ses liens d'appartenance à des groupes, l'efficacité du code commun à tous ceux qui, avec lui, participent d'une même socialité et d'une même culture.

These adolescents have been cut-off and have lost the foundations of their self, the most primitive and undifferentiated self and the foundation of their existence. They find themselves in a situation where self continuity and coherence is disrupted, the organisation of one's ideals and identifications are disrupted and the coherence of one's personal mode of thinking, acting and feeling are disrupted. The final outcome is a crisis of identity. There is thus a psychic work to be done.



**CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

The previous chapters of this research permitted us to construct the object of study of this research which is identity construction in the context of displacement. This chapter treats the empirical procedures put in place in the realisation of this research work. Its main points include: the description of the hypothesis of research, variables, indicators, indices; the determination of the population of study; instruments of data collection and analysis. But it is first of all important to recall the question that guides this research.

### **3.1. RECALL OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

Whereas the adolescents in this study have been forcefully cut-off from their affiliations in the process of migration as they escape armed conflicts and communal violence and are presently in a situation of disaffiliation. They are cut-off from and have lost their filiations (immediate and distant family members), and affiliations, that is, their families, social and community ties, soils of origin, shared values and ideals.

These adolescents have been cut-off from and have lost the foundations of their Self, the most primitive and undifferentiated self and the foundation of their existence; they neither exist nor function within the context of their affiliated groups and Kaës (1979) writes that this experience of disaffiliation and rupture disrupts the continuity of self, the organisation of the adolescent's identifications and ideals, his use of defence mechanisms, the coherence of his personal mode of thinking, feeling, and acting and the reliability of his affiliation to groups; a situation the author called crisis of identity.

The events surrounding the migration of a displaced adolescent puts him at risk of disorganisation of the psyche, losing a sense of identity and culminating into a psychopathology (Gonzalez et al., 1999). Goldman (2009) and Turpin-Samson (2019) write that displacement forced by armed conflicts and communal violence, like those in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon, do not only involve the violation of one's fundamental rights but also leads to a definite separation from loved objects: immediate and distant family members, soil of origin, values and ideals, important social and community ties. These objects constitute the filiation and affiliation ties of the displaced adolescent.

These filiations and affiliations are evident in the narcissistic contract of Kaës (1979) wherein he reiterates the mutual support and reciprocity in services, between the adolescent and different affiliation groups which assure the adolescent's sense of existence, continuity and coherence. This mutual support is the fundamental characteristic of anaclisis as the author writes that every anaclisis has as fundamental characteristic the desire to belong to a support system and to constantly be in mutual support. These affiliations in the narcissistic contract,



according to the author, accomplish an outstanding role in the construction of identity, for it is the metapsychic frame upon which the individual psyche is built; it gives to the individual an opportunity to create one's subjective sense of existence in the assembly by subjectively securing a place for oneself and recognising one's place; and assures the coherence and continuity of the subject. Kaës (1988) stipulates that filiations and affiliations constitute the part of our self that is "out of the self" and though "out of the self", it is the most primitive, undifferentiated, the foundation of our being. It is part of the self that we cannot do without, for it is an integral part of the self.

This research poses the problem of disaffiliation from one's identity bases in internally displaced adolescents in the context of identity construction and deployment and responds to the research question: "How does the experience of disaffiliation occasioned by the negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity contributes in the process of identity construction evident in identity trajectories?"

### **3.1.1. Hypotheses of study**

#### **3.1.1.1. General Hypothesis**

According to Kaës (1979), the experience of disaffiliation and rupture from one's filiations, affiliations and objects that constitute the self, disrupts the continuity of self, the organisation of the adolescent's identifications and ideals, his use of defence mechanisms, the coherence of his personal mode of thinking, feeling, and acting and the reliability of his affiliation to groups. Hence, disrupts the adolescence sense of self identity. It is from this analyse that the following research hypothesis is derived: the experience of disaffiliation contributes in the construction of identity in an internally displaced adolescents, evident in the identity trajectory he adopts, by mobilising and effecting psychic operations of negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity.

Or the experience of disaffiliation occasioned by the negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity contributes in the identity construction of the adolescent internally displaced in Cameroon.

##### **3.1.1.1.1. Variables of general hypothesis**

The general hypothesis of this research puts into relation two concepts:

- Experience of affiliation (independent variable)
- Identity trajectory (dependent variable)

### **3.1.1.1.2. Operational definition of variables of the general hypothesis**

The general hypothesis implies putting together concepts that are considered significant and pertinent for the study. In this case, we have, through the conceptual frameworks, made a selection of dimensions and significance of concepts according to aspects of the experience of dis/affiliation and identity construction evident through its trajectories in an internally displaced adolescent in Cameroon. The work in this part consists in integrating information of the theoretical framework of Kaës and other authors that preceded him in the comprehension of the problematic of identity construction and deployment. Mgbwa (2009) writes that this work carries pertinent indices that constitute the indicators of the study and are susceptible to take the form of behaviour or an attitude.

### **3.1.1.1.3. Independent variable: experience of affiliation**

- ❖ Modality 1: Negativity of obligation
  - Indicator 1: repression
  - Indicator 2: denial and rejection
  
- ❖ Modality 2: Relative negativity.
  - Indicator 1: field of possibility.
  - Indicator 2: project of action.
  
- ❖ Modality 3: Radical negativity
  - Indicator 1: separation and original distress
  - Indicator 2: dereliction and agony
  - Indicator 3: questioning of origin

### **3.1.1.1.4. Dependent variable: Identity trajectory**

- ❖ Modality 1: Constructive trajectory
  - Indicator 1: ascendant and constructive trajectory
  - Indicator 2: stable and constructive
  
- ❖ Modality 2: Vulnerable trajectory
  - Indicator 1: stable and vulnerable trajectory
  - Indicator 2: descendant and vulnerable trajectory

### 3.1.1.1.5. Hypotheses of research

The operationalization of variables of the general hypothesis into negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity, has permitted us to arrive at the following research hypotheses:

**RH1:** the experience of disaffiliation evident through negativity of obligation contributes in the construction of identity through an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent.

**RH2:** the experience of disaffiliation through a radical negativity contributes in the adoption of an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent.

**RH3:** the experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity contributes in the adoption of an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent.

## 3.2. TYPE OF RESEARCH

This research is inscribed within the framework of a qualitative research. The qualitative research aims at understanding and explaining a phenomenon, giving meaning or significance to the phenomenon (Bioy & al. 2021). The qualitative research seeks to understand human and social happenings by considering that these carry significance for the actor. This research is inscribed within a comprehensive paradigm and a qualitative design, for the objective of the study is to apprehend the significance and meaning given to a phenomenon by the subjects involved. In this study, we seek to understand and get a deeper knowledge on the relatedness of identity construction and trajectory and the psychic work on the negative, on mental health, through the school and home experiences of an internally displaced adolescent in Cameroon.

This research study makes use of the case study method which consists in a method of investigation which aims at an in-depth and detailed analysis and comprehension of an assembly of characteristics of a precise phenomenon as it happens in a particular situation, real or reconstructed, judged to be representative of the object of study (Bioy & al. 2021). This research method has as objective to widen the comprehension of the phenomenon of study, which in study is the experience of dis/affiliation, through a detailed examination of the social entity (internally displaced adolescent) concerned (Fortin & Gagnon, 2010).

In this research, the objective is to improve knowledge on the contribution of disaffiliation from elements that make up the Self to adoption of an identity trajectory in the process of identity construction in internally displaced adolescents. Firstly, the aim is to put

together elements that make up the self and the adolescent's experience of disaffiliation from these elements. Secondly, the objective will be to identify information that explains the trajectory of identity of the adolescent through his experience of disaffiliation. Lastly, the goal is to explore the dimension through which a psychopathological symptom interacts and interferes with the daily functioning of the internally displaced adolescent.

This methodological approach permits to respond to the general research question given that by responding to the specific objectives, the interrelation of the identity trajectory and the experience of disaffiliation, the question of the mental health and the daily school life of the adolescent are also brought to limelight.

### **3.2.1. Justification of the case study method**

The case study method according to Bioy et al. (2021) is a major tool in clinical psychology and psychopathology that permits the work of psychic elaboration and the presentation of the context and psychological functioning of a person.

This study is inscribed within and interrogates the everyday context of the participants, being based on their proper experiences in order to have a better in-depth understand of the cases and also taking into consideration their complexity and their context (Fortin & Gagnon, 2016). In this study, we do not perceive the subject as a social agent, enduring or going through the domination and influence of the social structures and context, but we perceive the individual as a conscious actor fully playing his part.

It is thus a question of gaining an insight of the significance that he gives to happenings. Every analysis in this research is thus based on the meaning and significance that the subject attributes to actions and behaviours including their actions and behaviour. This research, seeking to comprehend the reality of social happenings, brings to limelight the meaning and significance that subjects attribute to their situation and suffering. It is in this light that this study makes use of the very words of the participants, summarised in recitations or verbatim.

### **3.3. POPULATION OF STUDY**

The targeted population of this study constitutes primarily of internally displaced adolescents. The main characteristic of these internally displaced adolescents is that they have lost families, homes, soils of origin, important social and community ties and everything they could call theirs, and now find themselves in a strange land. This experience of loss is always a difficult one to live. This research focuses on a limited number; that is those who are students

at Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Ekounou, who present school adaptation difficulties. The internally displaced adolescent students of GBHS Ekounou constitute the ideal population of this study because they present and fit in the criteria of selection and admission determined (Fortin & Gagnon, 2016). The author writes that these criteria include a list of essential characteristics that determine the targeted population of a research and these are established from the research problem and objective. We recall that this research poses the problem of disaffiliation from the identity constituents and its objective is to understand how the trajectory of identity adopted by the internally displaced adolescent is occasioned by his experience of disaffiliation. To respond to this research objective, the participants must respond to the following selection criteria as defined below:

- Be an internally displaced student in GBHS Ekounou;
- Be an adolescent of age between 18 and 20 years;
- Becoming from the South West or North West region of Cameroon;
- Be registered in the school's social services as a student in precariousness.

### **3.3.1. Recruitment of participants**

This research makes use of the intentional type of sampling to recruit its population of study. The intentional sampling permits the researcher to carry her attention on a reasoned choice. In this case, the choice of participants of this study is oriented to internally displaced adolescents of the crisis in the NW and SW regions of Cameroon, who have lost their homes, soil and everything dear to them and are found in a place that is not their habitual habitat. It is these losses that characterise the participants of this research. These, correspond to the above-mentioned selection criteria and haven accepted to participate in our study, the choice of this technique of recruitment of participants becomes the most appropriate. Fortin and Gagnon (2016) write that this sampling technique is currently employed in qualitative studies for the selection of participants who possess adequate characteristics and rich and significant information and data, and thus demands that a determined number of participants who are able to represent the theme of study, be chosen.

Every experience of affiliation and disaffiliation is personal and subjective. From this perspective, the case subjects of this study could have all witness and experienced the same or similar events, but their subjective experiences are individual, personal and belong to each only (Vermersch, 2014). Weil-Barais (1997) affirms that it is not about elaborating a model based on the observation of a unique case, but to gather and coordinate a network of information from

diverse origin. These diverse origins justify the intentional method of sampling based on reasoned choices.

### 3.3.2. Description/Characteristics of participants

The cases chosen in this study are those who respond more to the objectives of this study. They are chosen following the intentional sampling technique. The subjects retained in this study respond to the theoretical framework of this research and bring out the research problematic of affiliation/disaffiliation and identity disorganisation. As developed in chapter one of this study, the construction of identity according to psychoanalysts passes through several stages made known in different life stages. Freud recognises adolescence (from 12 years to about 18, 19 and 20 years) as a critical period with the re-actualisation of drives, which consequently leads to questioning of one's original identifications (filiations and affiliation) according to Erickson. Adolescence becomes the principal period for the construction and consolidation of identity. It is on these bases that the cases in this study were chosen by intentional sampling.

For reasons of anonymity and confidentiality, the identities of participants have been modified by changing certain information such as their names and without laying emphasis on their place of residence. Thus, we have given to each subject, a pseudo name. The table below presents the characteristics of these cases.

**Table 2: Summary of participants' characteristics**

Cases	ages	Place of residence	Former place of residence	Schools	Classes
Edie	19years	Yaoundé (Nkomo)	Kumba	GBHS Ekounou	Lower sixth
Kanu	18years	Yaoundé (Ekounou)	Babanki	GBHS Ekounou	Lower sixth

### 3.4. INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

This research is applied to a given reality. The psychic life of a given social group, her behaviours, her needs and expectations, her reasons and ways of acting, her manner of being and her aspirations. It has to do with internally displaced adolescents who have been cut-off from the filiations and affiliations due to the war in the NW and SW regions of Cameroon. Data to be collected from the participants must be able to enrich the problem studied, which in

this case is disaffiliation. Data collection in this research was done with the use of a semi-direct interview and with the aid of an interview guide.

### **3.4.1. Interview guide**

Interviews for data collection are conducted with the aid of an interview guide and this collection is based on the experiences, feelings and thoughts of the subjects, with regards to pre-established themes. This research makes explicit themes and sub themes that are exploited by focusing attention on information that throw new light on the phenomenon of study and this information is widened by the use different techniques of probes and probing. The themes and sub themes of the interview guide, that is exploited in individual interviews are as follows:

**Theme 1:** Negativity of obligation

**Sub theme 1:** Repression

**Sub theme 2:** Denial and rejection

**Theme 2:** Relative negativity

**Sub theme 1:** Field du possibility

**Sub theme 2:** Illusion

**Theme 3:** Radical negativity

**Sub theme 1:** Original separation and distress

**Sub theme 2:** Questioning of origin

**Sub theme 3:** Dereliction and agony

**Theme 4:** Identity trajectory

**Sub theme 1:** Constructive trajectory

**Sub theme 2:** Vulnerable trajectory

### **3.4.2. Construction of interview guide**

The interview guide of this research constitutes of four (04) themes and nine (09) sub themes. Its construction was based on the objective of the study which is to analyse the internally displaced adolescent's experience of disaffiliation and how this experience contributes in his adoption of an identity trajectory in the process of identity construction. It should be noted that according to the psychodynamic approach, filiations and affiliations constitute the foundation of internally displaced adolescent's self and existence, the most

primitive and undifferentiated part of the self, his identity. Thus, disaffiliation from these elements of the self, according to Kaës (1979), disrupts the continuity of the self, the organisation of his identifications and the coherence of his personal mode of thinking, feeling and acting. It is also from this psychodynamic perspective, in her pulsional and relational models which permits one to explore the intrapsychic and intersubjective life of the adolescent, that the themes and sub themes of this interview guide were constructed.

### **3.4.3. Framework of interviews**

The subjects of this study are all students and school at Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Ekounou. To meet and recruit these students, we went to the office of the Principal whom in her absence, we deposited our request for the approval of research in the school. It took us two (02) weeks for our documents to be approved and referred to the school's Service of Social Action. At the level of the Social Action Services, the chief of service presented to us the list of internally displaced children who present adaptation difficulties, registered in GBHS Ekounou, from which we selected according to objectives and criteria of selection of participants. We drafted from the register a list composed of names, classes and ages of the selected student, whom the chief of service called from their classes. Given that it was the "rascal week" period, eight (08) students were called. We then proceeded with individual discussions with each one of them in order to finally recruit the participants who respond to the objectives of the research. This process left us with two (02) students, who after freely giving their clear consent, were accepted to become participant and subjects of the study.

Administrative procedures permitted that we get participants of the research. The next step was to envisage the unfolding of interviews, this by first identifying the place where interview will take place within the school compound. This place has to be neutral and well known by the subject and given that it was the "rascal week" period, a period after exams wherein students were almost not coming to school again, we secured a classroom wherein the interviews took place. During moments of interview, the few students were asked to move to the other classes so as to allow the classroom empty for interviews. Together with each participant, we agreed on the dates, days and precise time for interviews. This approach permitted the realisation of interviews which produced excellent information for this research. In order not to leave out any information, we recorded the interviews with the use of audio recorder in our phone.



#### **3.4.4. Development and unfolding of interviews**

Interviews were inspired and based on the interview guide presented to the participants of study and the conduct of interviews was the semi-directive interview, in order to permit the subject to explore all the boundaries/borders of the problematic including those not explicit or omitted by the interview guide.

This interview technique consists in submitting a scope of study or certain characteristics of the scope to reflection. The subjects were presented a wide scope of reflection and we put ourselves in and follow the logic of the interviewee. By this, the subjects were free to go to every direction that appeared to be pertinent to them in this moment of reflection. The subjects directed their discourse, in all freedom, in diverse directions, by tackling this aspect or that other aspect of their history. Some subjects would for example begin their reflection in the present tense and finish in past tense. Albarello (2003, P.72), to this, writes that the interest of the non-directive method is to identify the direction that the interrogated subject takes and subsequently reconstitute the social logic of the directions chosen.

This process is inscribed in the context of a research interview and has as goal to access past situations by mobilising elements of memory. Note was also taken on the way in which subjects relate with the moment wherein they were talking. This work was focused on the descriptive aspect, with the use of probes. Speech and words permitted the discharge of emotions and the re-experiencing of these. This semi-directive procedure that we used permitted that the affects of disaffiliation be verbally discharged and by this, a memory dissociated from its affective charge could be inoffensive. It is in this way that the resistances noted in the beginning of interviews progressively extenuate, as we were able to find means, without entering into chasing information, that are more and more assuring, without also falling in the risk of prejudices and stereotypes.

This research was also attentive to the nonverbal messages. Subjects could for one reason or another, find themselves in a situation of incapacity say certain things but expressed them in their faces and body. These supplementary elements permitted gave access to a completer and more authentic message. Allowing the subjects to express themselves and to transcribe as much as possible, their integral speeches appear to be very important. So, by taking down notes, we referred to the experiences and conducts of the subjects. It is in this light that Schraml (1973, p.64) writes that the alternation between taking down notes and absence of noting, consciously or unconsciously makes the subject to feel what is retained as

particularly significant. Taking notes reinforces the interviews and renders the interviews productive.

References on the cases chosen, the history of the cases for analysis were constructed. The results presented in chapter four (04) are based on a restrain sampling of four (04) participants, with which we conducted six (06) semi-directive interviews. Before aboding the technique of analysis, it is necessary to recall the basis of the constitution of case histories, before insisting on the analysis of results.

### **3.5. CONSTITUTION OF CASE HISTORY**

In the course of interviews, much information was collected which all, could not be included in this final data presentation in this research work. Data collected has been treated to keep aside those that do not align with the objectives of this research and to avoid numerous redundancies and repetitions. Given that the interviews were free, participants had the liberty to direct their speech to whatever direction that seemed pertinent to them or as they arrive in their minds. As such, participants often left their stories to talk about that of others; other times, they talked little or not at all, especially during the first 2 sessions. With time and trust, they expressed themselves freely.

As such, in analysis of the interviews, we withheld only pertinent information for the explanation of the problematic of this research, the research questions and hypotheses. The objective of this study is to analyse the experience of the internally displaced adolescent and to comprehend how this this experience contributes in the adoption of an identity trajectory in his process of identity construction and consolidation. The hypotheses of this study are stated above.

### **3.6. TECHNIQUE OF RESULT ANALYSIS**

This qualitative research was realised with two (02) internally displaced adolescents, on the basis of semi-directive interviews. Data collected in the course of interviews were treated on the basis of the thematic content analysis method of Paillé and Mucchielli (2012). This approach is made explicit and systematic by Albarello (2003, cited in Matene, 2022), in four (04) moments:

- make an inventory, in the material under observation, of the units of meaning which with respect to analysis, turn to recall one another;
- identify elementary dispositions within which these units det their meaning;

- verify associations between units (like what is associated to what? What is in the same direction with what?);
- by doing this, it brings out the links and the graph of the global structure that constitutes and distributes the assembly of the units following a particular model and the meaning of every segment of unit and material observed.

Thus, the main preoccupations in this part of the study consist in:

- laying emphasis on the psychological significance of observed phenomena on the psycho-affective and psycho-cognitive plans;
- identifying the latent and/or manifest contents of the recorded speeches in order to have a better knowledge and comprehension of the interactions that are susceptible to exist between them;
- restitution of the coherence of the stories of the subjects. This includes the restitution of the demonstrative and didactic elements, to be interpreted, of the stories of subjects that appeared freely in the interviews.

The theoretical model developed in chapters 1 and 2 and its operationalization in this chapter has given us modalities, indicators and indices or signs which have permitted us to regroup fragments of the contents following a structural organisation. From this, the focus is to bring out the meaning and significance of information collected, render them communicable in order to render intelligible facts that intermixed with complex and rich situations that could not be possibly apprehended via reading. For Bioy (2021), analysis is based on the wordings of the subjects to bring to light prominent events, coincidences, temporal connections and the manner in which he interprets them. It also has to do with identifying repetitions and unexplorable moments in his history, to analyse the processes of change and to identify what blocks them.

In order to analyse the data collected for this study, the employment of an analysis framework of the elements of subjects' discourse was indispensable in order to assure the presence of indicators and indices already censored to be identified in the subjects through their discourses and expressions, otherwise symptomatology of the subjects (behaviours, attitudes, discourses and body sensations) in the course of interviews. This analysis framework comports the elements of discourse, the nature of these elements and the theme of reference. This analysis framework permits the bringing out to the limelight, the contribution of the experience of disaffiliation in the adoption of an identity trajectory.

In the course of this research, two (02) subjects have systematically been objects of strict observation during individual interviews. Each session of interview was a moment of evaluation of the subjects' profile and permitted to envisage elements of the next session. The raison d'être of this analysis framework is clearly seen as it comes to fill the gap by permitting the exploration of a domain that is less explored until recently: disaffiliation, identity disorganisation and the work of the negative.

### 3.6.1. Analysis framework of elements of discourse

After the identification of elements of subjects' discourse, this part proposes to proceed with the codification of salient themes in order to facilitate a continual content analysis as stated above. The letters of the English alphabet (A, B, C, D), in their uppercase forms codify the themes that are in the interview guide of this study. The same letters in their lowercase forms (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, k) represents the subthemes also called dimensions of discourse. The additional signs (+) stand for the occurrences of every dimension of participants' discourse to facilitate the control of the effects of saturation. This is illustrated in the analysis guide table below.

**Table 3: Guide to the analysis of content of interviews**

Themes	Codes	Subthemes	Codes	Observation				Summary of observation
				0	+	-	+/-	
Negativity of obligation	A	Repression	a					
		Denial and rejection	b					
Relative negativity	B	Field of possibility	c					
		Project of action	d					
Radical negativity	C	Separation and original distress	e					
		Dereliction and agony	f					
		Questioning of origin	g					
Identity trajectory	D	Constructive trajectory	h					
		Vulnerable trajectory	i					

(0) = absent; (+) = present; (-) = present on the opposite sense; (+/-) = doubt

Coming to the end of this chapter, it is clear that the whole work of scientific research relies on the methodological framework mobilised in its realisation. This research is therefore inscribed within the qualitative research framework with a comprehensive approach. We have defined the research hypotheses, operationalised the concepts into modalities and feasible indicators and indices, precise the population that constitute this research, and the method and instrument of data collection and analysis. After data collection in the field, the next chapter shall present and analyse these data in light of the various hypotheses made in this research.

**CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

The experiences of the internally displaced adolescents as recorded in this research are filled with ruptures (rupture from family, social and natural ties), losses (loved ones, possessions, security and psychic harmony), precarious living conditions (little or no protection, security, care, feeding and exchange) and uncertainty about the future. Because of the different risk factors to which they are exposed in the course of their migration, the mental health in general and the coherence of the adolescent's identity in particular is shaken and/or undermined; the *raison d'être*, for their attitudes of suspicion, mistrust, loneliness and devalorisation, as they appeared to be. After collecting data from these subjects, it is imperative for us in this chapter to present and restate the direct words of the subjects. After the presentation of the participants, this research will make use of the verbatim of the subjects collected in semi-structured interviews, to illustrate our analysis and thus unveil the mental functioning of the psychic reality of the two (02) subjects. The subjects of this study just like any other internally displaced person and adolescent have all gone through the potentially traumatic event of the Anglophone crisis. Yet their personal stories and experiences are unique to each one of them.

#### **4.1. PRESENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS**

##### **4.1.1. Subject 1: Edie**

Edie is a young boy of 19 years of age, originating from the South West (SW) region of Cameroon, a Presbyterian and the fourth child out of six children. Edie is presently a lower sixth student in GBHS Ekounou, Yaounde where we met him. Edie lived in a village in Kumba in the SW region where he was born. There he grew up, went to school: primary and secondary school there. Edie lived with his parents until the crisis broke out in 2016 when he was in form four. He had so many friends with whom he grew up, they all went to school together, played together and had experiences together. He was also a member of a football club, given that football was his hobby and favourite extracurricular activity. They were used to organising and gathering for their football games and tournaments and there, he had many friends as well.

When the crisis broke out, it was difficult for him to continue school, given that going to school was prohibited and students seen with uniforms were threatened and this got worse with the kidnap of students by the "ambaboys". The football club and their tournaments became halted, as they could no longer gather for their tournaments and games. Friends started moving from one place to another, group activities became limited and as time passed by, they became annihilated from their agenda.

we went to school every day and when we return home, we would organise our football games and play until the night time meets us with no problem. Football was my hobby and our football club usually take part in a holiday tournament. It was very exciting and together with friends, it was enjoyable. But when the crisis started, all these had to slowdown and finally stop.

Also, it became difficult for his parents to provide adequately their complete needs given that they could no longer vacate normally their duties and activities. This made life the more difficult for Edie and family. It became worse by the threats thrown by the “ambaboyes” on his father, who decided to send him out of Kumba to Douala where he continued life and school. Once in a while, he could visit home and come back to Douala. But when threats accentuated, his father almost kidnaped and mother warned to leave home and go elsewhere, this caused the entire family to scatter abroad to different parts of the country. Parents escaped from Kumba and are currently somewhere in Bafoussam and he is in Yaounde. He can no longer go to his hometown, meet his friends and/or family and can no longer do the things they usually do.

After kidnapping many, it was my father’s turn but that God he had travelled to a village Bafoussam. We called him and told him and since then, he has never set his feet in the village again. Some weeks later, they started threatening my mother that if our father does not come and give them money, they will kidnap her also and take her to the bush... My mother had to run for her life that same evening. She could not even go to the farm. She just stayed home to park her things and left. That was her last day there.

In Douala, he lived with aunty and went to school, completely dependent on his parents. He always looked back to Kumba and always went home whenever he was on holidays from school. There, he found difficulties going to school. His parents could not cater for his needs.



He struggled between raising some money for himself by doing little jobs around and going to school. He was noticed for late coming, absenteeism, not doing assignments and having problems with teachers. Complaints reaching the aunty caused her to send Edie packing to Yaoundé.

In Yaoundé, it was still difficult for Edie to find his way and integrate his new environment. It was difficult for Edie to make new friends as he continued to look back at the days in Kumba where he used to play around with friends and hope that things will one day get better and he will be able to go back home and meet friends. The only way for Edie to move on was to try to forget about the whole situation, he would talk little or not at all about his experience. He would not even want to be identified as an IDP as this always brought back to his mind, the experience he lived.

Well, I just think that that is the best way to let go of the past and focus on the future. The thing is each time I think of the things, I become angry. I just feel that rage within me against the perpetrators (the ambaboyes). But when I am not thinking about it, I am okay, calm and I'm able to do my things well with no problem. People usually say you need to forget about all what happened so that you can live your life and construct a better tomorrow. So, that just what I am trying to do.

Edie at times finds himself in a situation of want, emptiness, desperateness and begins to imagine a reality that is contrary to the real. This leaves him in pains and agony and he begins to ask questions of his origin, gender, why this, why that.

We were all separated. One cannot even go home to see friends and live the normal life that we use to live. With friends, we really long for the day we are all going to meet again physically with one another... Even when you miss your parents, you cannot visit them due to financial difficulty. My parents are in Bafoussam, some of my brothers and sisters are in Douala, and I am here in Yaoundé alone with uncle.

It is very painful ehhh. At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks. At times I ask God why all these, was this supposed to happen?

As time passes by, Edie feels better as he focuses more on his future, having his Advanced Level Certificate.

#### **4.1.2. Subject N° 2: Kanu**

Kanu is a 20 years old girl who lived in the Nso village with parents, sister and cousins. Kanu is presently in lower sixth in GBHS Ekounou, Yaounde where we met her. She grew up in the Nso village where she went to school with her elder sister. Parents went about their activities normally with no stress and were able to carter for the entire family. Very jovial, Kanu would create connections and discordances among siblings and herself, moments of sharing, laughter, play and even discord.

Before the crisis we were altogether six (06) in the house. You can imagine how the house will be hot when everybody is back home chatting, playing, at times shouting and fighting and so on. Life was just wonderful until the crisis breakout.

Life became difficult and even got worse for Kanu and family when the crisis broke out. Parents could no longer carter for children's' needs. Kanu starts been separated from cousins as they regained their parent's homes. Later on, her father, who in other to protect the family was forced to join the "ambaboys" and was later killed in an exchange with the army. This incidence is followed by the loss of her mother, who could not withstand the loss of her husband and stricken by sickness, she gave up.

He was forced to join the "ambaboys" so as to free us... He was later killed in an exchange with the army. We never saw his body and so we remain in uncertainty... Our mother could not withstand it, so after one week she felt sick and having no money to take her to the hospital, she passed away in 2019.

Kanu in her school life, had friends with who whom grew up. They were close friends and their families as well were close. But the outbreak of the crisis dispatched abroad as she was obliged to abandon the village while friends remained there in the village. She continued to communicate with friends until once communications were cut-off. Kanu only learnt later on, of the death of these close friends of hers in different incidences. These incidences left a mark in her mind as she wept for that which they shared together.

Well, I lost my classmate. They short him and his friends ... we don't know who short them. The death touched me. I was like, someone I talked with just yesterday, and today he is no more. Ah No! I also lost a childhood classmate. We went to primary school together and in the secondary he went to technical and I went to grammar school but we were still close friends. He was an elder's son... So, they shot him and just threw him beside a river, just like that. When I got the information, I was sad, really sad. I was like how could he die like that, such an intelligent child. How could he die with such a brain?

Kanu and sister could not continue to stay in Nso and so abandoned their home, lands, soil of origin, friends and migrated to Yaoundé where they were to live with their uncle and his family. In Yaoundé, Kanu lived with her uncle and did not continue school immediately. She worked as "house girl" for a friend of her uncle but was not well treated as she was not paid to the full. She longed to go to school and she was permitted and sent to school the following academic year (2020-2021). One of the things that Kanu also cries of losing is the time she spent home, not going to school back in the village due to the crisis. School was prohibited but her friends and other continued to go to school in assorted clothing and she also wished to continue school with them, a desire which was not admitted and met, a source of anguish, pain and agony, and with these emerged rhetorical questions no one could answer.

One thing that pained me a lot in all this is that, I was forced to stay home for three good years. When it started in 2016, I had registered for GCE Ordinary level but I could not continue school. I begged my

mother that she should send me to school but she refused. My friends also came and begged but she also refused ... I had to stay in the house. It was very painful, I sat and cried. When I saw my classmates going far ahead of me, I cried but I never had a choice. I ask God why. Why was I supposed to be born in Bamenda? Why was I not born in Yaoundé? I could be going to school normally.

In Yaounde, Kanu lived in her uncle's house while going to school. Her daily activities include farming, house chores and schooling. Often in conflict with her uncle's wife, she often had hard times in the house where she was not comfortable but had no choice than to bear until she obtains her Advanced Level Certificate, when she plans to leave the house to a yet an unknown place. The treatment Kanu received in the house caused her temporality, attendance and implication in school work questionable by the teachers.

In school, Kanu was noticed for lateness, a situation which pushed her teachers to questions her implication in school. Filled with indignation and feelings of abandonment, she could only hope on friends who would help her with notes in class. Nonetheless, she only hopes to obtain her certificates and leave to an unknown place. Kanu finds it difficult to conceive a better future wherein she succeeds to achieve her dreams given that her resources persons are nowhere to be found and she has little or no one to give her the support she needs to realise herself.

## **4.2. DATA ANALYSIS**

### **4.2.1. Negativity of obligation**

The outbreak of the crisis in the NW and SW comes with the displacement of population. Individuals are separated from their families, community, from shared and common norms, values and ideals. He is cut-off from his roots and this constitutes an attack to his narcissistic continuity and identity. The psychic impact of such disaffiliation is mainly the disorganisation of the narcissistic contract, the intersubjective link which are the bases of one's sense of Self and identity. In such situation, negativity of obligation permits that psychic formations that threaten the integrity of the psyche be suppressed, reduced, modulated or denied in order to preserve the integrity and organisation of the Self.

The work of repression is to keep aside and maintain from consciousness that which is susceptible to create a malaise or displeasure in the psyche. In a context where that which is unthinkable has surfaced to consciousness, this is experienced as a suffering that painfully puts into malaise/danger the continuity of the self, disorganises its identifications and the coherence of one's personal mode of thinking, feeling and acting; a situation whose outcome is a crisis of identity by disconnecting the subjects from their affiliated groups and ties, from their families and loved ones, soils of origin, shared values and ideals and from the mutual support they receive from each other. The adolescent in this situation in order to preserve the integrity of the psyche and the link, through the operation of repression imposed by negativity of obligation, will have to effectuate a number of operations that demands repression.

As such the words recorded from our subjects tell of the experience of disaffiliation represented by repression. To be separated from family, friends and groups within which one has lived and within which one's life and existence has meaning is a horrible experience to live. The subjective experience of being cut-off and alone in a strange land allows the psyche to experience a horrible and terrifying pain that no one will want to remember. It is as such that the internally displaced adolescents found in a new and strange environment, unconsciously refuse to share or talk about their experience of migration, separation and disaffiliation. They do not even want to remember it or recall anything that has to do with it and they make efforts to forget about them. To this we hear the subject Edie say: *"This is the part I don't like to talk about. It is very painful [Kept quiet for about 8 seconds]"*. The subjects make efforts to forget about the painful experiences lived: *"People usually say you need to forget about all what happened ... So, that just what I am trying to do"* says Edie (Aa (+), Ab (+)).

All these are just to keep out of consciousness that which is able to destroy psychic integrity and organisation and by doing so, they preserve the psyche and Self from all the negative and destructive emotional load of such psychic formations. Of course, the operations induced by negativity of obligation aim at preserving the psychic integrity and organisation of both the subject and the link. These operations maintain inadmissible representations (thoughts, images and souvenirs related to disaffiliation) and inadmissible perceptions (things related to and susceptible to recall souvenirs) out of consciousness by rejection, refusal and disapproval of these. This in order to defend the psyche and self from distress and eventual disorganisation.

This is evident in the life of the internally displaced adolescents as they unconsciously reject these experiences as if they never lived them. They refuse having anything to do with and also avoid remembering or talking about his life and the events lived. This is evident in the wordings of Edie: “I don’t know what really you want me to tell you but well...” This is also seen in Kanu’s sayings “We did not experience anything like running in the bushes, torture, and violence.” In another place, Kanu says “So I was really not touched much by the crisis.” (Aa (+), Ab (+)). Due to the circumstances surrounding the crisis in their homeland, the subjects have been cut-off from their immediate and distant families, from their important social and community ties, from their soils of origin, shared values and ideals. The subjects now find themselves in a new environment, strange to them. In order to preserve the integrity of the psyche, the coherence and continuity of the self, the basis of their identifications and their mode of thinking, feeling and acting, in other words, preserve their identity from a crisis, the subjects are obliged to reject such experiences, and would not want to be remembered of. (Aa (+), Ab (+)).

Negativity of obligation indeed reveals the necessity for the psyche to carry out operations of repression, rejection, denial, disapproval and renouncement of certain psychic formation so as to preserve in a greater interest in organisation and integrity of the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent in situation of disaffiliation. It is by ignoring, denying, rejecting and renouncing his own history that he finds in himself a certain level of peace and continuity. The autonomy and integrity of the Self is preserved and continuity maintained thanks to the putting into silence (maintaining in the unconscious) the negative that existed in him.

#### **4.2.2. Relative negativity**

In the experience of disaffiliation, relative negativity permits that the containers remain intact in order to protect the psyche and self from disorganisation and suffering. Though the internally displaced adolescent is objectively cut-off from the link that connects him to the other or group (his family, friends, neighbouring groups, school), he is subjectively linked to these given that fears, worries, vacuum, emptiness created by the process of migration are transformed into the hope that these will return. By so doing, it is able to contain the subject, the Self and psychic integrity.

Again, relative negativity intricates within the subject the positive with the negative in a symmetric interchangeable relation. It inscribes the experiences of absence, want, vacuum

and emptiness caused by separation, and all his fears and anxieties in the side of the positive by transforming all these into hope. As such, the internally displaced adolescent, faced with the experience of disaffiliation, does not completely remain in the situation of psychic disorganisation. Despite been disarmed and uprooted from the basis of his identification and existence, the adolescent remains hopeful that the experiences that had been constituted but disappeared or became insufficient, will one day again be realised. The internally displaced adolescents have witnessed war and its consequences, have lost all they had and find themselves in a new environment. Each time the elements of his past has access to consciousness, it creates malaise, discomfort, confusion and is able to destabilise his identity bases and puts the adolescent in a situation of doubt and confusion about the future.

The thing is each time I think of the things, I become angry. I just feel that rage within me against the perpetrators (the ambaboy). But when I am not thinking about it, I am okay, calm and I'm able to do my things well with no problem. People usually say you need to forget about all what happened so that you can live your life and construct a better tomorrow. So, that just what I am trying to do (Bc (-), Bd (-))

Losing a loved one (family member, friend) and/or been separated from objects that constitutes one's internal psychic life is a difficult experience to live. The internally displaced adolescent has lived with and among these objects and they constituted his whole existence and exists only because they existed as well. Their encounter, interaction and being together has given place to beautiful experiences or psychic formations that make up the self of the internally displaced adolescent. Found in a strange environment, wherein he is no longer connected to the other part of him (which constitutes the other objects), the only surviving means is the intrication of such painful experiences with a positive one that had been constituted ever since. Given that this intrication is interchangeable, when the positive is active, the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent is preserved and protected from distress. On the other hand, when the negative is active, the psyche is inhabited by death instincts, pain and agony.

This explains the use of the conditional "when" in the wordings of the internally displaced adolescent participants of this study to refer to the different moments of each

experience. On one hand, when life instincts, due to the active positive, inhabit the psyche, the subjects talk of being “okay”, “calm”, “able to do my things with no problem”. The positive here manifests as an organising perspective in a situation of psychic and identity chaos. On the other hand, when death instincts, inhabit the psyche as a result of the overwhelming active negative psychic formations, the internally displaced adolescent talks of feelings of “anger”, “rage”, “emptiness”, “hurts”, “pains”, “tears”.

The pain is too much for the internally displaced adolescent to bear. The work of the psyche is distracted, yet, the adolescents remain in the hope that a new reality will emerge. This hope existed since from their original place of residence and continues to dominate in the psyche even in their new place of residence. We hear the subject Edie say “We were still there for the moment hoping it will not last.” And in another place the subject uses the conditional in this way: “I had no choice than to endure the pains. If only my parents were there, I would not be going through this”.

The question of the disaffiliation and the negative is enlarged in the confrontation of the internally displaced adolescent with destructivity. Faced with destructivity, the psyche has the tendency to project out of the Self to another object, that which is destructive in nature. The negative feelings of anger, rage, abandonment, incertitude, indifference and incomprehension are projected on the several objects: the perpetrators behind their migration process, persons in their close environment (home) and those in their schools (teachers, classmates). By doing this, the psyche gets separated from the negative and an internal destructivity which would push the internally displaced adolescent into auto-destructive actions. As such he is able to survive and integrate this destructiveness from which he has been separated into a creative use.

Relative negativity is also at the origin of creativity in the face of losses, separation, disaffiliation and destructivity. By transforming the fears, anxieties, vacuum, emptiness created by the process of migration into the hope and by intrincating the negative within them with an active positive permits the psyche and self to regain its autonomy and control. This permits the internally displaced adolescent to regain confidence in the self, in the other and in the future and get himself engaged in it.

As such, we observe in the speeches of the subject Edie, the projects of action instigated by their hope for a possible return to normalcy. The subjects hope that experiences will one day be reconstituted and by this, they engage themselves in doing something. Edie says: “it is not easy, this school thing, with the way the crisis, is going, I don’t know if one can be able to



achieve something with education. I just want to have my Advance Level next year” (Bc (+), Bd (+)). This same mode of operation is recorded in the experience of Kanu when she says:

But as they always say everything gets bad for things to be fine; so, I’m still waiting for things to be fine because it’s still bad. So last year, with all the difficulties, I had to struggle and pass my GCE Ordinary levels and now I’m here, Lower sixth. Next year will be Advanced Level (Bc (+), Bd (+)).

#### **4.2.3. Radical negativity**

Being the most destructive of all three denegation pacts, this part has permitted this study to apprehend the basic emotional and sentimental aspects of the internally displaced adolescent in a situation of disaffiliation. Radical negativity corresponds to that which is out of psychic space and is impossible to represent in the psyche. This is based on that which is not, the non-link, the unrepresentable, the blank, the unknown, vacuum and absence. The stories of the subjects all account for experiences of original separation and distress, dereliction and agony and questioning of the origin, as their experience of disaffiliation through the radical negativity.

The internally displaced adolescents from their original place of residence, all through their processes of migration and now in their new place of residence, have constantly been confronted to the reality of death. After all the experiences of war they encountered, losing their families and friends, loved ones and objects, shared values, soils of origin and mutual support benefited from all these, they are constantly subjected to the feelings of emptiness, want, vacuum. They now find themselves in a situation where they exist without the other that constitutes their existence. They have been taken out of their natural environment to a new and strange one wherein they are hardly present but mostly absent (physically present but mindfully absent). They are constantly lost in thoughts as they keep thinking about their previous life, all the protection, security, care and interactions that they use to have, subjects miss all these and pass most of their time ruminating on these.

This experience of separation and disaffiliation of the internally displaced adolescent is likened to the primary experience of distress. This is to bring out the level of psychic pain encountered by the internally displaced adolescent. He is compared to a new born baby who is

deprived of his fulness and paradise in the intrauterine world through delivery (expulsion from the uterus) and the baby expresses his distress in cries and shouts. They internally displaced adolescent constantly feels the same at each access of thoughts of separation and disaffiliation in consciousness. These are the words of the subject Edie: “Yes, due to the crisis, we were all separated. One cannot even go home to see friends and live the normal life that we use to live. It is very painful ehhh. At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks” (Ce (+), Cf (+))

Not only have they been separated from family, friend, groups and community, the internally displaced adolescents have also lost the hope that could sustain their potential psychic space given that they cannot even go back home at any time. There is no hope of returning to their homes, meeting family and friends again and returning to their normal communal life shared before.

The internally displaced adolescent is constantly confronted to the reality of death. His psyche is inhabited by destructivity that is unable to be projected outside. This inability to project this destructivity outside explains their constantly rumination and lost in thoughts. They can not be separated from these thoughts, images and souvenirs and so they continued to be inhabited by the painful and distressing emotions that accompany them. Because these representations are not separated from the psyche, it remains with an internal destructivity that pushes to auto-destructive actions and the subject cannot integrate his destructiveness into a creative use (Rosa, 2008). This is what Edie says: “I think things are getting better; I am not over thinking again about all the crisis things, like before; I am trying now to focus on school” (Ce (-), Cf (-)).

The pain is so excruciating that their stories further testify of the primary experience of dereliction and agony, as the subjects are constantly subjected to extreme pain and anguish. At each thought of the loss, subjects become again and again conscious of that which is missing, which they will not see again, that which does not exist again. They become conscious that the experiences of protection, security, care and interactions which they once had, which constituted the basis of their existence will no longer be found. Not only are the subjects subjected to and express feelings extreme pain, their stories also express a situation of doubt, confusion and uncertainty about their existence and future. The psyche remains fixed on this experience of loss, constantly obsessed with overwhelming intrusive thoughts and imaginations that make it difficult for subjects to reinvest his energy and integrate a new

environment (like school), the reason for their difficulties in school. Each time these thoughts arrive consciousness, the subjects find it difficult to overcome, to an extent that one could say a person drowning, or beating round the bush. He does not know what to do, how to do anything, sees no way out and is in prison and the future is uncertain.

This is what Edie says: “The thing is each time I think of the things, I become angry. I just feel that rage within me against the perpetrators (the ambaboyes). But when I am not thinking about it, I am okay, calm and I’m able to do my things well with no problem” (Ce (+), Cf (-)). He continues:

The most aching part of it is that these boys are the same people whom my father has always helped. They use to come to our house and my mother will prepare food and give theirs. They are persons we all grew up together with and we use to play together with them, but it was so disheartening and painful that those you use to call your people are the ones that betray you and want till kill you (Cf (+)).

Edie is very critical and uncertain about his tomorrow and expresses it this way: “I don’t know. I wanted to be an architect but I don’t know if really, I will be able. There are times that I just sit and tell myself that I will make it. This is when I am calm like I said before. The other times, when I think of the whole crisis issue, I really doubt if will be able.”

The pain is too much for the internally displaced adolescent to bear. The work of the psyche is distracted and cannot put words on emotions. The work of mental elaboration is completely blocked and full of regrets the internally displaced adolescent expresses himself using conditional statements. The subjects use the conditional “IF” to express themselves. We hear the subject Edie say “*I had no choice than to endure the pains. If only my parents were there, I would not be going through this*” (Cf (+)).

The verbatim of the subjects also attest of a profound or deep pain, a terrible internal suffering. The internally displaced adolescent suffers like an animal, the pain remains difficult to express, secret and unsuspecting. Separation, loss and death have taken away their power to understand and express their feelings. So, they only have rhetorical questions to ask: “Why?”, “Why me?”, “why this or that?”, “What have I done?” and so on. This is the only way to

express their grief. Subjects constantly question existence, origin, the *raison d'être* of happenings and the essence of their lives, haven't taken consciousness of the loss and separations they lived, in the expression of their pain. Edie puts it this way: "It is very painful eehh. At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks. At times I ask God why all these, was this supposed to happen? Though I have not lost family member, the separation alone is too much to bear. I miss them a lot" (Cf (+), Cg (+)).

The subject Kanu expresses her grief in these words "... I won't go to school. I had to stay in the house. It was very painful, I sat and cried. When I saw my classmates going far ahead of me, I cried but I never had a choice. I ask God why. Why was I supposed to be born in Bamenda? Why was I not born in Yaoundé? I could be going to school normally" (Cf (+), Cg (+)).

The psyche of the internally displaced adolescent is put to a rude test. The psyche remains fixed on this experience of loss, constantly obsessed with overwhelming intrusive thoughts and imaginations which rob him off his psychic energy. The subject is unable to reinvest his energy in the new environment (like in school), the reason for all his school difficulties. The subjects suffer and live very painfully this disaffiliation. Each time these thoughts arrive consciousness, the subjects find it difficult to overcome, to an extent that one could say a person drowning, or beating round the bush. He does not know what to do, how to do anything, sees no way out and is in prison.

The specificity of radical negativity is that it is the last resort of the psyche in case where negativity of obligation and relative negativity fail in the internally displaced adolescent. This negativity denotes the endpoint of psyche life, it exposes the most rudimentary part of the psyche. A resort to radical negativity occurs when all resources have failed to sustain the potential space of the subject and the psyche put to the rudest test and is overwhelmed, distracted, its organisation and integrity is shattered. The result is a disorganisation of the Self and identity of the internally displaced adolescent.

#### **4.3. SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS**

The presentation of the case history of the subjects of this research and the analysis of data collected make evident the experience of disaffiliation. The wordings of the subjects show that the adoption of an identity trajectory in the process of identity construction is a result of the constant search for a psychic balance/equilibrium by the unconscious mobilisation of mental operations that aim at working on the negative. The discourses of subjects as revealed

during interviews testify of the experience of loss or separation of one or two parents, separation and/or loss of friends and other close relations, loss of important social and community ties, soils of origin, shared values and ideals, mutual support in analysis and the protection, security, care and interactions that all these provide to the subject. They have lost these and find themselves in a new environment which is different from their former natural home.

Being in a situation of disaffiliation constitutes for the internally displaced adolescent, a source of intense psychic suffering, pain, anguish and agony, that disrupts the basis of one's identifications, one's mode of thinking, feeling and acting, the integrity of the psyche, and the coherence and continuity of the self. In fact, the basis of his identity and thus, a crisis of identity. In this case, the analysis of data collected show that the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent has three psychic operations that aim at dealing with the negative to carry out: psychic operation related to negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity.

Firstly, the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent is submitted to the work of the negative through negativity of obligation. In situation of disaffiliation, the work of negativity of obligation (through repression, denial and rejection) in the psyche aim at preserving the psychic integrity and organisation of both the internally displaced adolescent. These operations maintain inadmissible representations (thoughts, images and souvenirs related to disaffiliation) and inadmissible perceptions (things related to and susceptible to recall souvenirs) out of consciousness by means of repression, rejection, refusal and disapproval of these. They avoid to think, talk or even remember these experiences. They do not want to have anything to do with them and they completely reject them. These in order to defend the psyche and Self from distress and eventual disorganisation

Secondly, the internally displaced adolescent in a situation of disaffiliation has to undergo the work of relative negativity. This permits that that which use to contain him remain intact in order to protect the psyche and self from disorganisation and suffering. This by transforming the fears, worries, vacuum, emptiness created by the process of migration and disaffiliation into hope. Again, relative negativity intricates within the subject an active positive with the negative in such a way that the internally displaced adolescent continues to see positivity in life. This hope and positivity in life preserve the integrity of the psyche and self of the internally displaced adolescent and instigates in him the courage to engage in projects of action.

Lastly, in cases where these have failed, subjects have been confronted to extreme anguish, pain and agony that they could not manage, in the work of radical negativity. Hence, complete disorganisation of the psyche and identity. The adoption of an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent is described or monitored in either of the following ways: Calmness that results from the inaccessibility of material in consciousness; ability to function with no problem; setting goals/projects and working towards their achievement; seeking help and assistance from others. On the other hand, doubt about one's abilities, constant ruminations and thoughts about one's experience and uncertainty about the future with no concrete project of action.

**CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

This study is carried on identity trajectory in the process of identity construction in the internally displaced adolescent after a situation of disaffiliation. Emphases have been laid on the subject's experience of disaffiliation observed through the different modalities of the negative which render account of the different identity trajectory adopted by the internally displaced adolescent. After the presentation and analysis of data obtain, we have at our disposition the clinical material that is sufficiently rich and merits to be interpreted. This chapter has as task to give meaning to results obtained, proceed with its discussion with regards to the predictions previously made, which will give way to theoretical and therapeutic perspectives.

## **5.1. RECALL OF THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL DATA**

### **5.1.1. Recall of theoretical data**

To arrive at this stage of analysis and interpretation, the theoretical framework of this research is built on two complementary psychoanalytical theoretical models: the drive model centred on the singular subject and the relational model centred on the singular subject within a family, group or institution.

The drive model has permitted us to tackle the construction of an internal object of the psychic apparatus as well as the rapport that this object entertains with the demands of the drives. This model stipulates that the starting point of every link is the analysis of the infantile sexuality on the satisfaction of needs and auto preservation drives (Freud, 1914). The intrapsychic experience is the sole condition for being or existence and this experience is deployed from intersubjective experiences. Freud (1921) writes that identification is the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person, a tie which permits the child to construct an internal psychic reality of his own. From birth the child develops a link with the parents and conceives a first model of the self and as time passes, the child discovers that the parents continue to exist even out of his sight; he understands that he constitutes an entity different from the other. Erickson adds that this sense of self (self-identity) at adolescence is a result of the synthesis of childhood skills beliefs and identifications into a more or less coherent unique whole that gives the young adult with a sense of continuity with the past and a direction for the future.

This model is completed by the relational model which stipulates that the foundations and origin of a psychic life, psychic reality, self or identity is found in an interpsychic link (Aulagnier, 1975; Kaës, 2009, 2014). The central notion in the relation model is that of



intersubjectivity, a notion that poses the problem of the acknowledgement and articulation of two psychic spaces with each having its own logic. This notion brings in another notion, the unconscious alliances in its two main forms: The narcissistic contract which reconciles the subject and the group within which he is born and he assure the continuity of the group while the group in return structures his self and identity; and the denegation pact.

Filiation and affiliation in their classical psychological form of emotional tie or link, of feelings and sentiments, love, passion and hatred, dependence and hindrance all favour the encounter of two psychic apparatus: that is that of the adolescent and his family, groups and institutions to which he belongs, which as assure to him an identity that make him unique and distinct from others.

The denegation pact is always unconsciously put to work in psyche in situations of rupture and disaffiliation, like in the case of the internally displaced adolescents of this research, to deal with the negative that has emerged in the link. The denegation pact reminds us that links are also constituted on the basis of that which is unanimously denied, rejected and refused, called the negative which is not supposed to emerge in consciousness or link. The pact is concluded in order to assure the defence of the link and subjects of the link and assure the proper function of the whole assembly. It is aimed at assuring the continuity of investments and benefits related to the link and at maintaining the common psychic space necessary for the sustenance of certain function and formations rooted in intersubjectivity for example the function of the ideal, collective organisation of defence mechanism and formation of identity (Kaës, 2019).

Two poles are to be noted in the denegation pact: one is defensive of the internal intersubjective space (which creates zones of silence, non-transformable zones, intoxications and dirty spaces); the other is organisational of the link and psychic spaces (for complementarity of interest, to assure continuity of the ideals function, of the contract and the Self. (Rosa, 2008). These polarities reflect the three modalities of the denegation pact:

- the first pole refers to negativity of obligation and relative negativity which operate with the aim of protecting and preserving psychic integrity and organisation and hence identity of the subject.
- the second pole makes reference to radical negativity is that which has a duty to defend the psyche. Though its operation so far has been seen to puts it in malaise, destabilise and destroy psychic integrity, hence disorganises one's identity.

### **5.1.2. Recall of empirical data**

Data from the field reveal that war and its impending consequences of death of loved ones, separations and losses, being cut-off from cultural heritage, are all elements that make reference to the appearance of the negative in the establishment of link and construction of an identity. For a better description and comprehension of the experience of dis/affiliation and the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent, this research has resort to three main explanatory modalities. These include: negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity.

Firstly, as for negativity of obligation, being in a situation of separation and rupture from loved objects and cultural heritage has disorganising consequences on psychic integrity socially constituted. It is able to upset and disorganise the psychic organisation and integrity, basic identifications and elements that make up the self. The psyche is then forced to carry out defensive operations that aim at preserving its integrity and the self. These operations have to do with deleting, suppressing or modulating representation or perceptions that threaten the integrity of the psyche. Data registered from subjects of this study express this mental operation wherein the internally displaced adolescent refuses to think and/or talk about his experience for talking about it would mean having to remember all the circumstances and the negative emotions surrounding it. They also turn to deny and reject the existence of such experiences that threaten the integrity of his psyche. They talk as if such experiences never existed before, as if they were never confronted to such realities. This way of treating these negative experiences are the means by which the subject work on the negative in order to preserve the integrity of the psyche, hence, identity.

Secondly, the analysis of data also focused on hope for possibility, which is a source of illusion but helps to entertain/nourish the potential psychic space and the internal intersubjective link. These assure continuity and discontinuity in the psyche, and hope that is a source of projects of action, which all render account of relative treatment of the negative.

The observation of subjects of study shows the intensity of rupture and disaffiliation from cultural heritage, elements of the self and Identity basis. This intensity is made evident not in terms of the objective experience, but in terms of the subjective experience of malaise, discomfort, pain and confusion that disaffiliation bring. Despite these, the internally displaced adolescent shows hope for the possible return to normal. Subjects hope that that which has been wrongly realised in the link shall be re-established. This hope stimulates the psyche of the

internally displaced adolescent even from their original place of residence as Edie says: “*We were still there for the moment hoping it will not last*”. In another circumstance, Kanu says this: “*I hoped and was in fact happy that it is going to be fine in Yaounde...*”

This hope for a possible return to normal, a possible restoration of the integrity of the psyche and one’s identity sustains the potential space of the psychic reality; it sustains the narcissistic and object investments of internally displaced adolescent and permits him to believe again in the self and in a possible future. This sustainability of the potential space permits the subject to get engage in a project of action. “*But as they always say everything gets bad for things to be fine; so, I’m still waiting for things to be fine because it’s still bad. So last year, with all the difficulties, I had to struggle and pass my GCE Ordinary levels and now I’m here, Lower sixth. Next year will be Advanced Level*” (Kanu). Edie on his part says this: “*Here, it is not easy, this school thing, with the way the crisis, is going, I don’t know if one can be able to achieve something with education. I just want to have my Advance Level next year*”.

With regards to radical negativity, the experience of disaffiliation has permitted access to the basic fundamental emotional and sentimental life of the internally displaced adolescent. This results from the failure of negativity of obligation and relative negativity. This radical negativity is articulated around three salient point in the discourses of the subjects. These refer to: original separation and distress, dereliction and agony and questioning of the origin. These render account of the gravity of the disaffiliation experience.

The wordings of the subjects of this study testify of an experience of separation and original distress and dereliction and agony. The internally displaced adolescent through the process of forceful migration has been objectively separated from families, friends, love ones and love objects, soils of origin, mutual support and shared values. At each thought of the deaths, losses, separations, it becomes conscious to the mind that that they will never see again that which is so dear to them. Feelings of protection, security, care and interactions are all gone. This is so terrifying to the internally displaced adolescent that he expresses extreme pain, anguish. This is what Kanu says: “*One other thing that pains me in all these is that my uncles remained silent as if they never knew she was sick. Anyone was quiet in his corner until when it was already late [exclaims: Hmmm and breaths deeply]*”.

The shock of rupture is so overwhelming that the psyche finds it difficult to even express carryout the work of mental elaboration; so, the internally displaced adolescent is in a position of stammering, in a difficulty to speak and express clearly what they feel. What we

observe are rhetorical questions and the constant use of conditionals to express this terrible internal suffering and regret. Expressions like “Why me?”, “why this or that?”, “What have I done?” are very constant. Subjects in the expression of their grief, question origin, they question the *raison d’être* of happening and the essence of their existence. Edie says: *“It is very painful eehh. At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks. At times I ask God why all these, was this supposed to happen?”* Kanu says: *“If only my parents were there, I would not be going through this”*.

## 5.2. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This research inquires on the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent who is in the process of identity construction and consolidation, and based on his navigation through and integration of the experience of rupture and disaffiliation. The results of this research are interpreted on the basis of the correlation between the three modalities of the experience of dis/affiliation, which constitute our research hypotheses and the identity trajectory of our internally displaced adolescents, this brought to light through psychoanalysis. The theory of narcissistic contract of Kaës (2014) who revised Aulagnier (1975) and precisely the denegation pacts of the narcissistic contract are the guide in the interpretation of these results.

In this theory, Kaës (2014) demonstrates that a child is born into a group (family, secondary group, community). He is called to be a subject of the group, the carrier of its missions and to assure its continuity. To assure this continuity, the group must to invest the child with their narcissistic energy and pass unto the child certain foundational statements that assure for the latter, the basis of his identifications and the continuity of the group. The continuity of the group is thus a necessary parameter for the continuity of the identifications and self of the subject. Thus, the family, the group and the community at large guarantee for the subject his identity and that of the other subjects of the group.

If the family, group and community is at the origin of and guides the identity of the subject, through the human and material connections that the subject incorporates into the self and also through shared values and anaclasis, what then becomes the internally displaced adolescent, who is at a problematic stage of life (that of identity construction) and who is cut-off from all these objects that makeup the self? This is the question that this research poses and seeks to respond to it by convening the three modalities of the denegation pact: negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity; and how these determine the different identity trajectories. The adoption of an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent is

described or monitored in either of the following ways: Calmness that results from the inaccessibility of material in consciousness; ability to function with no problem; setting goals/projects and working towards their achievement; seeking help and assistance from others. On the other hand, doubt about one's abilities, constant ruminations and thoughts about one's experience and uncertainty about the future with no concrete project of action (Goyette & Royer, 2009).

### **5.2.1. From negativity of obligation to identity trajectory**

The crisis in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon has devastating consequences on the internally displaced adolescent. This exposes the subjects to the both material and human loss: they have lost families, friends, important community ties, soils of origin, shared values and ideals and all that make up their Self. In this situation of rupture and disaffiliation, the internally displaced adolescent presents a feeling of loss, instability, confusion and anxiety, a remarkable splitting of the Ego and hence, consequences on the sense of identity (Eiguer, 2007). The adolescent in the process of identity construction is found in a situation wherein he has to effect a certain psychic work so as to navigate these situations. It is this psychic work of the experience of disaffiliation through the negativity of obligation that this part of this study seeks to explain in the identity trajectory mobilised in his process of identity consolidation.

Repression, refusal, denial and rejection are unconscious reactions and operations that permit the internally displaced adolescent in a situation of rupture and disaffiliation to deal with the negative and to preserve his identity; for Kaës (2014) writes that experiences occasioned by negativity of obligation are aimed at preserving the self. The psychic work imposed by obligation on the internally displaced adolescents of this study faced with the disorganising thoughts of the rupture, permits the suppression of these psychic formations and this is observed in refusal to even think or talk about them to any person. *"This is the part I don't like to talk about. It is very painful [Kept quiet for about 8 seconds]"* Edie says. In another instance the subject said: *"People usually say you need to forget about all what happened ... So, that just what I am trying to do"*. Subjects do not want to remember or think about these, they even make efforts to forget about these experiences. Allowing these experiences to gain access consciousness would mean to remember the circumstances and negative emotions that come with them; a situation that would put the psyche in total confusion and disorganisation.

The loss of family, loved objects and being cut-off from the group shakes and distorts psychic life. When the circumstances of this loss, rupture and disaffiliation are very challenging, it becomes difficult for the psyche to clearly represent it to consciousness, for its emotional weight is more than the psyche. This results in the rejection of such psychic formations as imposed by the work of the negative through negativity of obligation. The internally displaced adolescent, in his new environment, do not only want to be remembered of these losses, but also completely reject these experiences as if they never existed. Edie mentions this just at the beginning of interview: *“well, I don’t know what really you want me to tell you”*. Subjects rejects certain formations that could be overwhelming to them. Kanu says: *“We did not experience anything like running in the bushes, torture, and violence”* and in another instance, the subject concludes: *“so I was really not touched much by the crisis”*.

The above citations demonstrate the ability of the psyche to deal with the negative by completely cutting off links with it in such a way as to preserve its integrity. The work imposed by this negativity of obligation permits the preservation of psychic integrity and organisation of the subject and that of the other subjects of the link. Psychic operations that keep aside formations such as these experiences of loss, separation, detachment and injured narcissism preserves the continuity of the self of the internally displaced adolescent, the basis of his identifications and ideals, the coherence of his manner of thinking, feeling and acting and hence his sense of identity (Kaës, 1979). This permits the subject to adopt a certain identity trajectory in the process of identity construction and consolidation.

As preservation and organisational processes, the repression, refusal, denial and rejection of the negative experiences of loss and hence the preservation of his psychic integrity and organisation has permitted the subjects to adopt and maintain a link that defines his trajectory in construction and consolidation of their identity. With the negative maintained out of consciousness, the internally displaced adolescent is able to experience a subjective sense of sameness and continuity, a knowledge of where he is coming from and where he is going (Kroger, 1996). This internal life is reflected in the subject’s dealing with the outer world, his commitment to social role and function and his engagement in a constructive project. Listen to Edie: *“I think things are getting better; I am not over thinking again about all the crisis things, like before; I am trying now to focus on school”*. This is how Kanu puts it: *“But again, at this particular stage of life which I have attained, I cannot go back to the way it was because I cannot go back and stay in the village because I’m moving forward and there is no school to accommodate me”*.

The work of repression, denial and rejection releases the psyche of all tension and malaise, permitting it to be able again to remobilise its energy, refocus and regain its direction. The sense of direction which reflects the identity trajectory of the internally displaced adolescent is orchestrated by the integrity of the psyche, which itself is orchestrated by the work of negativity of obligation on the psyche. The treatment of the negative in the internally displaced adolescents of this research has permitted them to remobilise and refocus in their education, as the subjects affirm above. This qualifies the identity trajectory of the subjects as ascendant and constructive, for they have made a great positive step towards a constructive project (Goyette & Royer, 2009).

Negativity of obligation, haven put aside and kept free the psyche from psychic formations that provoke a displeasure, malaise and disorganisation, permits the subject to maintain the link with his social support system (Kaës, 1979; Goyette & Royer, 2009). Kaës writes that the treatment of negativity of obligation via repression and denial is what is necessary and is constantly at work in the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent, for the formation and maintenance of link with the group or support system. This permits the subjects to be able to recreate and maintain links with objects of separation of the subject's former place of residence: *"With friends, we manage to communicate through phone"* (Edie). The work of repression, denial and rejection also permits the internally displaced adolescent to get into contact with his new environment and despite the challenges in the new residence, the subjects keep to maintain the link with the new support group and to create more in school. Kanu says: *"I lived alone with my uncle and family"* and *"worked with as house girl for their friend"*.

The experience of disaffiliation through the obligation of treating/dealing with the negative, defends the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent from the threats occasioned by disaffiliation. By this, it assures the maintenance of a common psychic space necessary for continuity in the investments and Self-expression and realisation between the internally displaced adolescent with both his previous links with whom he reconnects and present links created in the new place of residence. It also permits that the expression of the Self takes a certain constructive tendency/trajectory such as Goyette et Royer (2009) would describe. The constructive identity trajectory as observed in the subjects is thus reflected in the great step ahead and engagement in a positive and constructive project which is their school work, the re-establishment of link with both separated family members and with the new environment and their positive insertion in the domains of transition: residential (new house) and professional (school).

### 5.2.2. From relative negativity to identity trajectory

A rupture in the narcissistic contract and in anaclysis and forceful displacement appear to be at the centre of identity crisis of the internally displaced adolescent. Kaës (1979) makes it clear that rupture and disaffiliation bring about perturbation and disorder in the metasocial and metapsychic guarantors of the psychic life and self of the subject, thus constituting a major dysregulation in his identity. Yet, this dysregulation certainly has its own determinants, its mode of resolution and its significance in the structuring of the psyche. The mode of resolution of crisis is made evident in the work of relative negativity imposed on the psyche (Kaës, 2014) to deal with the emergence of the negative and this passes through hope of possibility and projects of action.

The work of the negative first of all concerns that which has not been realised, which has not found a means through which it can be realised and thus remains open to the possibility of realisation. It also concerns that which has been realised already but could be otherwise different. By this, the subject remains in the hope of the possibility that these experiences, situations or conditions that are part and parcel of him, will one day be recovered. In this sense, the internally displaced adolescent remains in the hope that psychic formations or experiences that were constituted but disappeared or became insufficient, will one day be recovered and realised. To this Edie says:

Before the crisis, we went to school every day and when we return home, we would organise our football games and play until the night time meets us with no problem. Football was my hobby and our football club usually take part in a holiday tournament. It was very exciting and together with friends, it was enjoyable. But when the crisis started, all these had to slowdown and finally stop... We were hoping that it will not take long, that things will come back to normal and we waited like that for three years.

This reveals that the hope instigated by relative negativity inhabited the internally displaced adolescent even before they could migrate from their original place of residence. They wished the negative (the crisis and its effects) could not last but rapidly come to an end



and that their harmony be restored. Kanu on her side regrets and hopes for experiences that she expresses as such:

Before the crisis we were altogether six (06) in the house. You can imagine how the house will be hot when everybody is back home chatting, playing, at times shouting and fighting and so on. Life was just wonderful until the crisis breakout. When it started, my cousins went to their parents who were also just managing life

Losing a loved one (family members, friend) and/or been separated from objects that constitutes one's existence is a difficult experience to live both for adults and adolescents. The internally displaced adolescent has lived with and among these objects and they constituted his whole existence and he exists only because they exist as well. Through encounter, interaction and being together, beautiful experiences or psychic formations that make up the Self of the internally displaced adolescent have been created.

Suddenly found in a strange environment, wherein he is no longer connected to the other that constitutes his existence, the only surviving means is the unconscious intricating of such painful experiences with a positive one that had been constituted ever since in order to preserve and protect the Self from distress (Rosa, 2008). Relative negativity also permits that the contenance function remains intact in order to protect the psyche and self from disorganisation and suffering. This is possible by transforming the fears and anxieties, vacuums and emptiness, created by disaffiliation in a hope for a possible return to normalcy that hence inhabits the psyche. By so doing, it is able to contain the subject and preserve the Self and psychic integrity.

Kaës (2014) writes that this hope for a possible return to normal, a possible restoration of experiences that constitute the integrity of the psyche and one's identity sustains the potential psychic space; it sustains the narcissistic and object investments of internally displaced adolescent and permits him to believe again in the self and in a possible future. This sustainability of the potential space permits the subject to get engage in the next level of treatment of the negative through relative negativity, that is project of action.

But as they always say everything gets bad for things to be fine; so I'm still waiting for things to be fine because it's still bad. So last year,

with all the difficulties, I had to struggle and pass my GCE Ordinary levels and now I'm here, Lower sixth. Next year will be Advanced Level (Kanu).

Edie on his part says this: *“Here, it is not easy, this school thing, with the way the crisis, is going, I don't know if one can be able to achieve something with education. I just want to have my Advance Level next year”*

In the process of identity construction, the identity trajectory adopted by the internally displaced adolescent stems from the projects of action in which the subjects get engaged. Rosa (2008) makes one to understand that relative negativity is also at the origin of creativity in the face of disaffiliation and destructivity. By transforming the fears, anxieties, vacuum, emptiness created by the process of migration into hope and by intrincating the negative within them with an active positive permits the psyche and self to regain its autonomy and control. This permits the internally displaced adolescent to regain confidence in the self, in the other and in the future and get himself engaged in a project of action that ties to his identity.

Claes (2014) writes that a sense of identity is reflected in a flexible and durable engagement in basic and fundamental domains of life (which for our subjects is school) which guarantees for the subjects of this study confidence at the individual level and his integration in the new environment and support system. The subject Kanu talks of her integration in the new environment in these words: *“We woke up every day, went to the farm and when we return from the farm, I would prepare food for the house and wash plates before going to school”*.

Information gathered from the subjects leave one to understand that the work of relative negativity on the psyche guides the subject to a trajectory of identity which according to Goyette & Royer (2009) is qualified as constructive. This is evident in projects of actions that guide the subject to get engage in school work, in the relational dynamics that the subject entertains with the new support system (accepts to live and follow the conditions of the tutor – uncle and wife) despite the difficult nature of it. This confirms what Kaës (2014) says that the work of relative negativity is aimed at protecting and preserving the integrity of the psyche, the Self and one's identity.

The author, Kaës (2014) also writes that alliances created by this relative negativity are alliance for as well as alliances against. In this sense the work of relative negativity on the psyche aims at protecting and preserving the integrity of the psyche as well as they are unable

to protect the psyche. We observe thus that a certain moment in the life of the internally displaced adolescent is marked by confusion and instability in ideas. Though in confusion, the subject still continues to hope for and commit to a possible better outcome. We observe the subject being confused and uncertain about the future yet commit themselves to school and to achieving dreams. Hear what Edie says: *“I don’t know. I wanted to be an architect but I don’t know if really, I will be able. There are times that I just sit and tell myself that I will make it. This is when I am calm like I said before ... But anyway, let me first of all have my advance level”*.

The other subject, Kanu, puts it this way: *“But as they always say everything gets bad for things to be fine; so, I’m still waiting for things to be fine because it’s still bad. ... with all the difficulties, I had to struggle and pass my GCE Ordinary levels and now I’m here, Lower sixth. Next year will be Advanced Level”*.

### **5.2.3. From radical negativity to identity trajectory**

Separation from and loss of one’s relations constitute a heavy burden for the internally displaced adolescent. Radical negativity being the most destructive of all denegation pacts, its permits that the basic emotional and sentimental life of the subjects makes surface in the psychic apparatus. The experiences of separation and loss are a very difficult task for the internally displaced adolescent. To be cut-off from basic elements that supports and guides the Self does not only leave the internally displaced without a reference or model but also confronts the subject to the reality of death (Kaës, 2014). In her modes of analysis: separation and original distress, dereliction and agony and questioning of origin, radical negativity represent that which has made surface in consciousness and in the establishment of link.

Kaës (2014) makes it clear that the subjective experience of separation and original distress arrive due to the failure of the primary psychic operations of repression, denial and rejection together with a leakage in the work of relative negative to keep the negative, the unwanted out of consciousness or contain it. When this negative arrives consciousness, that is at each thought of the circumstances surrounding rupture and disaffiliation, it confronts the internally displaced adolescent to the reality of death. At the thoughts of loss of families and friends, loved ones and objects, soils of origin and mutual support benefitted from his environment, the internally displaced adolescents constantly feel an internal vacuum and emptiness; they are physically present but mindfully absent because they are far in thoughts. This separation, Winnicott compares it to the original distress of a baby who after been deprived

of his internal uterine paradise after birth, expresses his pains in cries and shouts of agony. This is how Kanu expresses her experience of separation and pain:

We never saw his body and so we remain in uncertainty. If at all we saw his body and buried him, maybe it would have been better. Our mother could not withstand it, so after one week she felt sick and having no money to take her to the hospital, she passed away in 2019.

[Tears run down her cheeks].

The pain to which the internally displaced adolescents are confronted is compared to the primary experience of dereliction and agony. This is because the subjects are constantly subjected to extreme pain and anguish in their most inner psychic functioning. The subjects are constantly in a paradoxical contact with that which does not exist again. So, at each thought of the loss, separations and disaffiliation, the subjects become conscious of that which is missing, which they will not have to meet again; they will not meet or experience again that which constituted the basis of their existence. This is experienced as extreme pain, anguish, terror and shock; it is compared to the absence of the God or the Absolute in the life a man. The psyche in shock, finds it difficult to process the overwhelming emotions and intrusive thoughts, it remains fixed on the experience of loss and only overwhelming emotions do emerge. Edie says: *“It is very painful eehh. At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks.”* In another instance, the subject says:

The most aching part of it is that these boys are the same people whom my father has always helped. They use to come to our house and my mother will prepare food and give theirs. They are persons we all grew up together with and we use to play together with them, but it was so disheartening and painful that those you use to call your people are the ones that betray you and want till kill you.

For the subjects, when the source of the negative is external to one's configuration of links or to what one calls his, the impact is relative than when the source of the negative is from that which is yours and constitutes part of you. The reason for this extremity in psychic

suffering in the subject Edie. The subject, Kanu, seeing that which she holds very dear to being taken away from her, puts her story this way:

One thing that pained me a lot in all this is that, I was forced to stay home for three good years. When it started in 2016, I had registered for GCE Ordinary level but I could not continue school. I begged my mother that she should send me to school but she refused. My friends also came and begged but she also refused... I had to stay in the house. It was very painful, I sat and cried. When I saw my classmates going far ahead of me, I cried but I never had a choice.

The arrival of the negative in consciousness reveals the fundamental emotional and sentimental life of the internally displaced adolescents. They terribly suffer and live very painfully their disaffiliation. They suffer like an animal (Matene, 2022). The inability of the psyche to process the thoughts and emotions makes the pain to remain difficult to express. Disaffiliation, separation, loss and death have taken away their power to understand and express their feelings. So, the internally displaced adolescents express their pain in rhetorical questions: “Why?”, “Why me?”, “why this or that?”, “What have I done?”, “Why did it happen this way and not that way?”. The constant use of the conditional “IF” was also a means to express their pain and regrets. *“At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks. At times I ask God why all these, was this supposed to happen?”* (Edie). Kanu expresses herself in these words: *“When I saw my classmates going far ahead of me, I cried but I never had a choice. I ask God why. Why was I supposed to be born in Bamenda? Why was I not born in Yaoundé? I could be going to school normally.”* (Kaës, 2014).

The internally displaced adolescent, in the process of identity construction is a prey to the work of radical negativity in the psyche. Just like the author Kaës (2014) writes that alliances established by radical negativity are aimed at destruction of the integrity and organisation of the psyche, the vacuum, emptiness and want created by disaffiliation, continues to rob the subject off the Self and off objects of the Self. This is observed in the trajectory of identity observed in the internally displaced adolescents.

As destructive as it is, the experience of radical negativity puts the psyche in a difficulty to process the events and thus making it as well difficult to remobilise and redirect psychic

energy to a positive and constructive path. The subjects are in a situation that could be characterised as drowning or beating around the bush or turning around. Confused, in doubt and uncertainty about his own existence, he does not know what to do, how to go about anything, sees no way out, is in prison and the future is uncertain. Here is what Edie says: *“I don’t know. I wanted to be an architect but I don’t know if really, I will be able. There are times that I just sit and tell myself that I will make it. This is when I am calm like I said before. The other times, when I think of the whole crisis issue, I really doubt if will be able.”*

This state of doubt, confusion and uncertainty orchestrated by radical negativity characterises the vulnerable trajectory of identity (Goyette & Royer, 2009) and is often characterised by little or no engagement in (at times withdrawal from) a constructive project, little or no engagement with the support system/new environment or show desire to cut-off links with this. The internally displaced adolescents of this research confirm the position that radical negativity is the destroyer of link and identity. The psyche been fixed on past events of disaffiliation and unable to process this experience, makes it difficult for the subjects to integrate the new environment and be insert in the domains of transition (school and home). In school, the internally displaced adolescents, show discouragement vis-à-vis school work, little interest in interacting with children of the same class and even at home, they desire to leave from home with no concrete project of action. Here is what the subject Edie says:

In fact, going to school is a whole problem. I prefer to stay home and do something that can give me money. It is because of this that I was brought to Yaoundé from Douala, because I had problems in school, due to absences and lateness. I hardly did my assignments and always had problems in class with teachers. My aunty received complaints from school and changed her mind and decided to send me to Yaoundé.

The same subject continues in another instance: *“I don’t really have friends in school. My real friends are those we were in Kumba and they are now my seniors in class though we are not in the same town ... I am in class with little children and I don’t even feel like interacting with them.”*

The subject Kanu on her part, relates: *“Yes. I went to school but, was very difficult. When I became discouraged in schooling especially when I was noticed by the teachers for*

*always being late, I felt like it would have been better I just abandoned the school”*; again, she continues: *“Nobody in school could understand or even believe that it was not my fault and that that is what I was going through. I had been thinking of leaving the house to somewhere else. I just cannot continue there. If not, I’m not sure to accomplish something.”*

The experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity reveals the vulnerable nature of the internally displaced adolescent and positions him in a vulnerable identity trajectory characterised by no project of action, little or no engagement with social support system (but instead desire to withdraw from this) and instability in modes of transition.

In summary, the theory of narcissistic contract and denegation pact of Kaës and the identity trajectories of Goyette & Royer has permitted us to have an insight of the identity trajectory adopted by an internally displaced adolescent, from his experience of rupture and disaffiliation. We understand that for the internally displaced adolescent whose self, whose identity bases, whose sense of sameness and continuity in time and space is threatened by rupture and disaffiliation, the treatment of the negative passes by the three stages to restore and maintain the self to stability. These stages are negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity. Through their operations, that shape the trajectory adopted by the internally displaced adolescent in their process of identity construction. This means that even though the internally displaced adolescent is objectively separated from love objects and objects of the Self, he/she could subjectively remain connected to these given the work of the negative through negativity of obligation and relative negativity. The success of these would structure and guide the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent to a constructive identity trajectory. On the other hand, a failure to keep the negative out of consciousness and/or to contain it within the potential psychic space leads to a destruction in the organisation and integrity of the self, as evident in the vulnerable identity trajectory observed in the internally displaced adolescent.

### **5.3.DISCUSSION AND PERSPECTIVES**

#### **5.3.1. Discussion of results**

The problem that has been at the core of this research is that of disaffiliation in the context of identity construction and the objective is to analyse the experience of dis/affiliation by means of negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity and to understand how this experience renders account of the identity trajectory in an internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW regions of Cameroon, in his process of identity

construction. Data collected from the participants have permitted the arrival to the following results:

Before going into results, it is important to recall that the individual is born and grows up in a family, group or culture as Gonzalez & al. (1999) put it. It is thus this culture that structures, supports and guides the individual's self and identity. So, uprooting the individual from his culture which makes up the Self, constitutes a veritable trauma, a disorganisation of the psyche and may culminate in psychopathology. In situations of rupture and disaffiliation, it is the psychic work of this experience of disaffiliation that determines the way forward from the threats of this experience and the identity trajectory adopted by the subject.

Firstly, this is what Kaës (2014, p. 105) says about negativity of obligation: "*Les opérations psychiques que suscite la négativité d'obligation ont pour but de préserver un intérêt majeur de l'organisation psychique*" [psychic operations instigated by negativity of obligation have as objective to preserve the organisation of the psyche]. He also writes about relative negativity that the operations instigated by this are operations for as well as operations against. This brings together relative negativity and negativity of obligation as modalities of the negative that work for a common good of psychic preservation.

Data collected, analysed, interpreted and presented as results in this research show that the experience of disaffiliation through negativity of obligation and relative negativity work in the same direction to protect and preserve the integrity and organisation of the psyche and the self (identity). By maintaining the negative, that which is not acceptable, out of consciousness through psychic operations of repression, denial and rejection and by containing it in the potential psychic space through the transformation of its affects into hope, permits the psyche to remobilise, regain its autonomy and direct the psychic life of the internally displaced adolescent. By this, maintaining a sense of sameness and continuity; characteristics of self-identity which permits him to get engaged in the life domains that depict a constructive identity trajectory.

These results are in direct line with the research of Gonzalez & al. (1999) which shows that the reaction of the internally displaced person and/or migrant who forcefully leaves their place of residence to a new one, is usually a sense of renewed hope. For the authors, this sense of renewed hope permits the subject to take control over his fate in his new environment. In this research, this hope is orchestrated by relative negativity and together with repression, denial and rejection orchestrated by negativity of obligation, they permit the psyche to reorganise,



restructure and take full control over the Self and thus preserve its integrity and structure the identity of the internally displaced adolescent.

It is also important to mention that the results of the research of Mbatbaina & al. (2022) are also similar to these. For the authors, the death of a parent is a difficult task for the orphan to handle. The orphan is confronted to loss, separation and grief; the loss of a parent is always accompanied by the absence of significance and the orphan is deprived of the warmth provided by the contact with the parent. Faced with this situation or loss, the authors say the orphans comport themselves as if the dead parent has only gone away and will come back. This behaviour is similar to and reflects the work and repression and denial and hope which maintains the negative out of consciousness and sustains the potential psychic space of the internally displaced adolescent.

This approves of the pertinence of the first and second recherche hypotheses of this study which holds that the experience of disaffiliation through negativity of obligation and relative negativity renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent. It is essential to recall that these hypotheses were formulated based on Kaës (2014) who states that the purpose of these negativities is to protect and preserve the integrity of the psyche, a characteristic factor for the enhancement of a constructive identity trajectory.

Secondly, Kaës (2014) writes about radical negativity that it is the most difficult to conceive for it constantly confronts the internally displaced adolescent to the reality of death. The alliances that are instigated by radical negativity are alliances against. The results of this research show that the experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity expresses the worst experience that should ever occur. For radical negativity puts the psyche to the most rudimentary test and brings out the basic emotional and sentimental life of every human. It leads to the disorganisation of the psyche and destabilisation of its integrity, hence a disorganisation of the self and identity, by leaving the subject in doubt, confusion and uncertainty about the Self, the other and the future. This disorganisation in identity is thus reflected in the vulnerable identity trajectory observed in the internally displaced adolescent.

The same researches of Gonzalez & al. (1999) and Mbatbaina & al. (2022), still demonstrate the pertinence of the third hypothesis of this study by being in line with its results. Gonzalez & al. writes that initially in their new place of residence, the forcefully migrated persons present themselves to be powerless and helpless in the presence of this experience, instead of control. This explains the numerous incidences of psychopathology. Mbatbaina &

al. taking about the experience of loss, separation and death of the orphan's parent, makes it clear that what is important for the orphan resides in the corporal presence or absence of the loved object. As such, so long as the absence of the loved object does not take long, it sustains the psychic space and the integrity of the psyche remain intact. The experience becomes traumatising for the little one due to the experience of a prolonged absence of the parent and results from the fact that his need/want/desire for the parent has become uncomfortable, cannot be soothed. The orphan is in a vacuum, deprived of the warmth of his parents, a deprivation that robs the orphan off his capacity to understand and give meaning to events, to express and assert himself. This experience is similar to that of the internally displaced adolescent who has been robbed off of the constitutive elements of the self and he finds no way to run but to experience the most profound pain.

The analysis made above confirms our predictions derived from the theory of narcissistic contract and her negative form, the denegation pact of Kaës (2014, pp. 103-123), according to which the experience of disaffiliation made evident in the various modalities of the denegation pact renders account of the identity trajectory observed in an internally displaced adolescent. With regards to this, separation, loss, rupture and disaffiliation according to Mgbwa (2009, p. 267) is not an illness but a wound or an injury. It can thus be scarred knowing fully well that it will never be completely wiped out. Here, the personality of the suffering internally displaced adolescent, his manner of negotiating and navigation in-between consciousness/unconsciousness and the quality of support offered in his new environment can help the internally displaced adolescent adopt a constructive trajectory of identity and thus positively integrate the new environment.

For Winnicott (as cited in Kaës, 1979), the experience of rupture manifests when cultural heritage is no more able to assure the continuity of one's existence. The subjective feeling of rupture in the continuity of the Self and the environment takes its roots from the experience of the first rupture that the child experience during birth, wherein the child is pushed out and deprived of his symbolic intrauterine paradise and separated from the mother by the cutting of the umbilical cord. The author demonstrated that the consequences of deprivation is based on the subjective time within which the rupture is experienced and on the actively repairing attitude of the mother (environment). This rupture is appeased either by the return of the mother or by the reestablishment of an internal regulation through substitution with an equivalent object. But if the subjective feeling of rupture in the continuity of existence prolongs

for a certain time in the internally displaced adolescent, his capacity to make use of symbols of union ceases and trauma triggers and makes use of his primary defence modes.

In all, the expectations or responses that were formulated from the beginning as objectives/hypotheses can be received. At the same time, they give way to the suggestion in the form of perspectives.

### **5.3.2. Perspectives**

At the end of this research, the predictions formulated from the beginning in the form of objectives have been verified. Consideration of the results give way to making suggestions first on a theoretical or scientific plan and secondly on a clinical plan.

#### **5.3.2.1. Theoretical perspective**

The concept of identity is complex and multidimensional to define given its employment in several disciplines as biology, sociology and psychology. Its complexity is also noted in its usage in psychology as it may be cumbersome to distinguish between personal identity and social identity. The psychoanalytic approach of identity is that which is employed in this research and this approach recognises the profoundly subjective and personal nature of identity. The construction of a subjective or personal identity or again Self-identity is built upon the classical psychoanalytical model that lays emphasis on the vicissitudes of the Id, the negotiations of the Ego and the exigences of the Superego. This construction is also based relational model of psychoanalysis that lays emphasis on the interactions between the individual and the group and how this structure the self of the individual.

The relational model of identity and self construction with Aulagnier (1975) and Kaës (1979; 2009; 2014) make reference to concepts such as psychic space, intersubjectivity, link and a larger concept of unconscious alliances. These concepts come to elucidate one thing: every individual is a subject of links (Kaës, 2010). As Aulagnier says it, a child is born in a group, lives and grows up in the group and establishes with it links that support his identity. Kaës continues in this same light to describe the three levels of links (which he calls narcissistic contract) through which the individual is linked to the group: the original narcissistic contract links the individual to the entire human species; it is based on the identification of the Ego to human species. This contract gives to every human a sense of belonging to the human species and permits one to see another like oneself, to see in another a reality that is similar to ours, though having its own fantasies, psychic spaces and reality (Bourguignon & Katz-Gilbert, 2018).

The second level is the primary narcissistic contract which defines the link that exists between the individual and the family. This is the filiation contract that recognises the individual as a member of a family group. As the child invests and leans on the parental narcissism, the latter transmits fundamental statements, myths and identification references to the child, which serve to build the individual psychic space and prepares this one for a later integration of a larger group or community. The last level of link is in the secondary narcissistic contract which establishes the link between the individual and secondary groups out of the family group, social groups to which he belongs and participates, whether formal or informal such as school, political movements, sporting teams, social gatherings and religious communities. This is the affiliation contract that is concluded in a rapport of continuity, complementarity and opposition of the previous levels of link establishment.

For Kaës (2014), these links are at the service of life. The internally displaced adolescent, before knowing the emergence of the negative in the link, has been created, fashioned and structured into what and who he is. The psychic spaces (group psychic space, individual psychic space and the space of the link) created by the link, become for the adolescent a potential space and a transitional space, where everything takes its significance and meaning from. It is from these spaces that the adolescent gives meaning to his every feeling, thought and action.

The failure of these transitional spaces like in the case of the internally displaced adolescent would mean the loss of basis of giving meaning to events. Once the internally displaced adolescent can no longer understand, there is the tendency to do what to the self, seem to be acceptable even though it may not be for the group. This is what according to Mbole (2022) is at the origin of offensive, wrongful or criminal acts and for Matene (2022), the waywardness and disorientation of the schoolised internally displaced adolescent. There is thus, the need to explore further the role of the potential space and the transitional space in the construction of link, how it structures the identity of an individual and its repercussions when this can no longer assure its function for the group and the subjects of the link.

The notion of identity was complex to define from the very beginning of life, it becomes more complex at adolescence. The works of prominent authors like Freud (1921), Erickson (1968), Marcia (1988; 1993) and the recently Edmond Marc (2005), all conceive identity in terms of stages and statutes, as if the identity in itself was static, and constant. This research approaches the concept of identity in terms of trajectory.

Whereas identity just like Gonzalez & al. (1999) and Drweski (2015) affirm, is not static. Identity changes; it is a process that evolves with respect to different moments of life, environment and how the individual interacts with his environment, how he navigates between the instances of the psyche and how he positions himself among these elements. Drweski writes that there is a divergence in the vision of identity among the disciplines in which the notion of identity is convened yet there is a point of convergence; that modernity puts in tension/stress the ontological nature of identity and this teaches that identity is not established in a definite way. It changes and evolves with respect to the crisis and ruptures that the individual experiences, like the case of the subjects of this research.

If identity changes and evolves according to life events and experiences, it is also relative and variable, from one person and environment to another. It is thus important to approach this concept in terms of trajectory. Given that identity evolves, Goyette and Royer (2009) presents two trajectories of evolution: the constructive and the vulnerable trajectories. On one hand, evolution of identity to a vulnerable path implies a destruction or disorganisation of the psyche and its integrity. This will imply for the individual, a state of confusion about the self, instability and discontinuity in the expression of thought, emotions and actions, a sense of powerlessness and hopelessness about their present and future (Gonzalez et al., 1999) and either engagement in a variety of domains of occupation (due to indecision) or little or no engagement at all in any life domain or again, engagement in a socially unaccepted domain of life (recalcitrant domains). On the other hand, evolution of identity towards the constructive path implies either constancy in the organisation or a reorganisation of the psyche and its integrity, which will imply for the individual a subjective sense of sameness and continuity, stability and coherence in thoughts, emotions and actions, a sense of control over one future and engagement in a significant social domain (occupation) of life.

This way of conceiving identity flows from the fact that at one point in life, an individual may present a vulnerable identity which could evolve to a constructive one depending on the psychic mechanisms put in place to manages experiences of crisis and rupture, as the case may be for internally displaced adolescents of this research.

### **5.3.2.2. Clinical perspectives**

The main objective of this research aims at understanding the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent, how he deploys his identity in a new environment after a tragic event. In other words, this research wants to comprehend the interrelation between the links

that constitutes the Self of the internally displaced adolescent, the migratory path, mental health and integration in the new environment. From the analysis of literature reviews on this subject matter, we have arrived at the conclusion that the psychic work of the negative through its modalities of negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity is an essential element to elucidate this interrelation.

Overwhelmed by the psychological suffering resulting from the experience of loss, separation, rupture and disaffiliation, and from the disorganisation of his self and identity, it becomes difficult for the internally displaced adolescent to mobilise resources and invest his new environment and hereby be y integrated. Inadaptations in the new environment may results from this. Deploying his identity and integrating his new environments (being his new home and school) still mean the encounter of three psychic spaces (the individual psychic space, group psychic space and the link) and this takes its origin from his primary experiences with his previous filiation and affiliation links.

The work of the negative appears to be an essential element in the reconstitution and reorganisation of the Self. By maintaining out of the psyche, representations and perceptions or memories of the loss, rupture and disaffiliation and upholding the potential space, the identity of the internally displaced adolescent is preserved. In his psychic integrity, autonomy and organisation, the internally displaced adolescent can easily mobilise and invest his new environment be it school or home, and make out new psychic experiences that are capable of supporting and fostering his identity.

As Green (cited in Hombourger, 2021) says, the work of the negative makes reference to the “assembly of psychic operations that repression is the prototype and which later on gives birth to distinct variants likes negation, disapproval and foreclosure” (P. 40). For the author, the work of the negative is also that of the intrication of the negative with the positive. By these, not only keeping out of consciousness the psychic formations of malaise, but also sustains the potential space of the psyche. With these, the internally displaced adolescent can then deploy the self in his new environment and in a constructive trajectory. It is therefore this work on the negative, this work of intrication of the negative with the positive, that clinical psychologist and therapist necessarily have to facilitate in internally displaced adolescent.

In a more general perspective, the work of the clinical psychologist and therapist also include the reconstitution and reconstruction of the link, the intersubjective link between the subject of the unconscious and the group. For Kaes (2010a) writes that the sufferings and

pathologies that we have today are those of disorder in the constitution of internal and external limits of the psychic apparatus: borderline disorders, disorders of default in psychic envelopes, disorders of default in the constitution of linking systems, pathologies of the process of transmission of psychic life between generations... In fact, we all have to do with pathologies of link.



**GENERAL CONCLUSION**



This dissertation entitled “the experience of affiliation and identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent of the North West and South West regions of Cameroon” has as objective to analyse the experience of affiliation of the internally displaced adolescent and how it renders account of the identity trajectory in the subject. In other words, this study aimed at a comprehension of the deployment of the identity of the internally displaced adolescent through identity trajectories, this, from his experience of dis/affiliation.

The theoretical models mobilised in this research: psychoanalysis in its drive and relation model have permitted us to have a grasp on the real problematic of this research which is the problematic of the link. The link that exists between the internally displaced adolescent and the family, groups and institutions within which he was born, grew, interacted and established an intersubjective internal space.

Kaës (2009) makes it clear that the internally displaced adolescent is born in a family (wherein filiation links are established), he or she lives and grows up within this context. This context (parents and family) passes unto the child fundamental statements (norms, regulations, values, ideals, desires) that the child appropriates for himself and this in return, structures the Psyche and self of the child. As the child grows up to become an adolescent, the filiation link is gradually transformed to affiliation links now that the adolescent integrates larger groups out of family context (school, social groups). The affiliation link implies that the adolescent has a work to do with respect to the fundamentals of these groups, and as well, the group has something to do as well for the adolescent.

As such Kaës (2010b) distinguishes three positions of every individual, proposing three psychic spaces: he is a subject of unconscious (intrapsychic or intrasubjective space), he is a subject of link (interpsychic or intersubjective space) and a subject of group (transpsychic or transsubjective space). Each of these psychic spaces has its proper mode of organisation and functioning, its proper formations, processes, energy and function.

While the group psychic space (transsubjective space) is the whole entity, the whole assembly that cannot be reduced to the sum total number of subjects that constitute it (here we have the family, school, friendships, neighbourhood and community groups of the internally displaced adolescent), the psychic space of the singular subject or the intrasubjective space makes reference to the psychic reality that constitutes the subject himself. In group, the subject is in a double status as the subject of unconscious and subject of group. Group situations put at work the rapport that the subject entertains with his own unconscious objects, with the

unconscious objects of others and with common objects that already exist or emerge in group situations.

Between the intrasubjective space and the transsubjective space, there is another that links the two: the intersubjective space or the psychic space of the link. This refers to the intersubjective link that is established in the group between members of the group among themselves. It is constructive from the encounter between two subjects or psychic spaces and it connects the unconscious objects of members together in such a way that members are in a relation of accordance, conflict, echo, mirror and support one with another, in rapport with their own internal objects and those of other.

In the logic of the intersubjective link, Kaës (2010a, p. xiv) affirms that “not one without the other, without the link that unites them and without the assembly that contains them and structures them”. The encounter and interaction of the psychic space of one with that of the other results in the creation of shared psychic formations and processes, common to the subject and to the group (family, school or community). These shared and common psychic formations and processes, representations and signifiers, link the subject from within to the general assembly and forms the nucleus of that which makes and remakes the subject’s psychic life and self. These links are therefore at the origin of the sense of self and identity in the subject.

These filiations and affiliations evident in the narcissistic contract reiterate the mutual support and reciprocity in services, between the adolescent and different groups which assure the adolescent’s sense of existence, continuity and coherence. This mutual support is the fundamental characteristic of anaclisis as the author writes that every anaclisis has as fundamental characteristic the desire to belong to a support system and to constantly be in mutual support. By this, the adolescent leans and depends on the group for every support and at the same time, is a support to the group and as such, the group continues to accomplish an outstanding role in the construction of the adolescent’s identity. It constitutes the metapsychic frame upon which the individual psyche is built; it gives to the individual an opportunity to create one’s subjective sense of existence in the assembly by subjectively securing a place for oneself and recognising one’s place; and assures the coherence and continuity of the subject.

Whereas it is so stipulated in the logic of the link and the narcissistic contract, we observe that the internally displaced adolescent who was a member of a group (family, school, neighbourhood and community) and had created subjective links that connected him to the

group, suddenly finds himself in a strange land, alone, no longer in connection with the groups within which he grew. He is cut-off from his filiation and affiliation links that constitute his psychic reality. This rupture in the intersubjective link and this rupture is experienced as disaffiliation.

Kaës (1979) writes that this experience of rupture and disaffiliation disrupts the continuity of Self, the organisation of the internally displaced adolescent's identifications and ideals, his use of defence mechanisms, the coherence of his personal mode of thinking, feeling, and acting and the reliability of his affiliation to groups; a situation the author called crisis of identity. This study thus, poses the problem of disaffiliation in the context of self and identity construction in the internally displaced adolescent.

Matene (2022) affirms that this rupture and disaffiliation is able to break up the internally displaced adolescent into several pieces in order to protect him from anguish. This anguish and suffering meddle and overwhelm the psychic and cognitive resources of the internally displaced adolescent and finally takes control over his environmental life. It becomes difficult, according to the author, to trace a continuity in the expression of the Self of the internally displaced adolescent in his different environment (school and home). Every act or behaviour out of norms, in either of the environments, is seen as a symptom that reflects psychic disorganisation.

In this light, the main question that has directed our reflection is: *how does the experience of disaffiliation through negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent of the NW and SW, in his process of identity construction?* To this research question, there was an anticipated response that also guided reflections in the course of this work. This was: *the experience of disaffiliation renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent, by mobilising and effecting psychic operations of negativity of obligation, relative negativity and radical negativity.* This general hypothesis is broken down to give way to three research hypotheses:

RH1: "the experience of disaffiliation evident through negativity of obligation contributes in the construction of identity through an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent".

RH2: "the experience of disaffiliation through a radical negativity contributes in the adoption of an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent".

RH3: “the experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity contributes in the adoption of an identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent”.

Making use of the clinical method and precisely the case study method, we had access to the subjective experiences of the internally displaced adolescents in relation to the loss separation and general events surrounding their migration and in terms of difficulties encountered in their new environment. The choice of this method is motivated by its character to provide an in-depth comprehension of the situation of the internally displaced adolescent, taking into consideration its complexity and context, a taking the subject as a conscious being fully playing his part (Fortin & Gagnon, 2016). This case study methods permits to bring to light how his experience of disaffiliation interferes and renders account of the trajectory of identity observed in him.

This research is address to two internally displaced adolescent students of the GBHS Ekounou, Yaounde, who constituted the cases of study. These were recruited by the intentional sampling for Weil-Barais (1997) affirms that it is not about elaborating a model based on the observation of a unique case, but to gather and coordinate a network of information from diverse origin. Not forgetting that though diverse, their subjective experiences are individual, personal and belong to each only (Vermersch, 2014). Collection of data was done using of a semi-structure interview and an interview guide. The identities of the cases are modified by substituting their names with pseudonyms, in order to preserve their real identities. Every analysis was done following the thematic content analysis method of Paillé and Mucchielli (2012). The interpretation was done by integrating elements of the theories used in this research and the different elements of interviews notably the wordings of the participants. At the end of analysis and interpretation, the following results were obtained.

Firstly, being in a situation of rupture and disaffiliation from loved objects and the group that makeup one’s psychic reality and existence, constitutes a veritable threat to the organisation and integrity of the psyche and the self of the internally displaced adolescent. There is thus an unconscious mobilisation of psychic operations and resources to deal with the negative through negativity of obligation. Through the psychic operations of repression, denial and rejection orchestrated by negativity of obligation, psychic formations and representations that threaten self organisation and integrity are put out of consciousness and maintained in the unconscious. In this way, it preserves psychic organisation and integrity and therefore directs the trajectory of identity in the internally displaced adolescent in a constructive tendency as it

permits their psyche to remobilise its energy and direct the adolescent to engage in constructive life domains.

These are evident in the refusal of the internally displaced adolescents to share their stories or talk about it to anyone. They don't even want to remember it or be reminded of these experiences they lived before, in the course of and after their migration. They just want to forget about it and move on with life. Through the same work of negativity of obligation, the internally displaced adolescent turns to reject and deny the existence of such life experiences. They constantly use "I was not touched by the crisis", "I don't know what you want me to tell you", to show their rejection. By doing so, they are able to maintain in the unconscious thoughts, images and souvenirs and emotions that if allowed, will destabilise their existence; and they are able to have control and direct their energy and focus on productive activities like school, house duties that depict constructive tendency in identity construction.

Secondly, the results of this research show that the experience of disaffiliation through relative negativity renders account of the identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent by mobilising and transforming the negative into hope and by intricating it with an active positive. In a situation of rupture and disaffiliation, the operations instigated by relative negativity transform the anxieties, fears, feelings of want, emptiness and vacuum of the internally displaced adolescent into a hope for the return to normalcy and this hope sustains his potential psychic space. Results also show that the negative is intricated with an active positive in a way that the adolescent continues to look at life positively despite odds. This hope and positivity in life preserve the integrity of the psyche and self of the internally displaced adolescent and instigates in him the courage to engage in projects of action that reveal the constructive tendency of identity within the internally displaced adolescent.

Lastly, the results of this research show that the experience of disaffiliation through radical negativity renders account of a vulnerable identity trajectory in the internally displaced adolescent. It reveals the basic fundamental emotional and sentimental life of the subject. They frequently experience extreme anguish, pain and agony that they could not manage by negativity of obligation and relative negativity. Through radical negativity, the negative is very present and active in the psyche, it destabilises psychic organisation and integrity, weakens all means of mobilisation of energy and control and leaves the psyche fragmented, powerless and hopeless. The result is pain that is compared to the absence of God in human life (Kaës, 2014,

p. 110). This complete disorganisation of the psyche also results in self and identity disorganisation.

This disorganisation in the self and identity of the internally displaced adolescent is evident in the vulnerable identity trajectory in him marked by either of the following ways: doubt about his own abilities, constant ruminations and thoughts about his experience and uncertainty about the future with no concrete project of action. They also present difficulties in the house and school milieu.

From the above results, one can clearly say that the analysis in this research is in accordance with its predictions which are summarised in that the intrication of the negative with the positive and the maintenance of the negative in the unconscious through various operations accomplish a beneficial role in the psyche of the internally displaced adolescent.

The results of this research have also directed us to make two constataions about the work of the negative in the internally displaced adolescent. The first is that the work of the negative through negativity of obligation and relative negativity all work in the psyche with the same objective: to defend and preserve psyche integrity and organisation and this has organising consequences not only on the identity of the internally displaced adolescent, but also on his integration of his new environment. The second is that the work of the negative through radical negativity is in the side of destructivity. Its effects in the psyche is rather disorganising than organising, destabilising than stabilising. Leaving the internally displaced adolescent in a state of total confusion, doubt about the self and uncertainties about the future. This makes it difficult for the internally displaced adolescent in to fully integrate his new environment, he instead shows inadaptability.

On a scientific plan, the results of this research reiterate one fundamental aspect of the psychic life, of the Self and of the identity of every individual: the link. Psychic reality is no more to be considered on the basis of the classical psychoanalytic method wherein the psychic apparatus is exclusively attached to a subject considered in the singleness of his psychic space (Kaës, 2010a). The individual is hence supposed to be considered in his three dimensions of subject of unconscious, subject of link and subject of group. For it is from the encounter of these three psychic spaces that psychic reality, formations and processes emerge. As such, future researches should consider the individual in these three psychic spaces: the intrasubjective space, the intersubjective space and the transsubjective space.

This research work can be of great use to the psychopathologist and clinical psychologist. This in that the pathologies that internally displaced persons in general and internally displaced adolescents in particular face are disorders that emerge from the constitution of internal and external limits of the psychic apparatus: borderline disorders, disorders of default in psychic envelopes, disorders of default in the constitution of linking systems, pathologies of the process of transmission of psychic life between generations. What we have here are pathologies of link. The method of treatment of these pathologies must take into consideration the individual in his three psychic spaces: the intrapsychic space, the interpsychic space and the transpsychic space. The method of treatment should also involve the facilitation of psychic operations that work on the negative with particular emphases on operations that involve negativity of obligation.

The result of this research can also be addresses to school establishments and every other institution that welcome internally displaced persons in general and adolescents in particular. This in the sense that is permits them to understand that every act or behaviour out of norms is a symptom that reflects psychic disorganisation.



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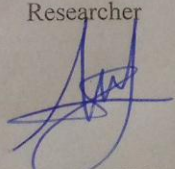
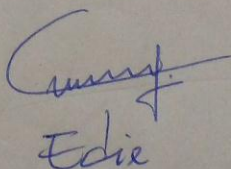
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**ANNEXES**

## Annexe 1: attestation of research

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ----- UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I ----- FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES ----- DEPARTEMENT DE PSYCHOLOGIE -----		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON ----- UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I ----- FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ----- DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY -----
<p><u>ATTESTATION DE RECHERCHE</u></p> <p>Je soussigné, <b>EBALE MONEZE Chandel</b>, Professeur des Universités, Chef du          Département de Psychologie, atteste que, <b>KENTSOP TIOMEZA Odilon</b>, matricule : <b>15K061</b>          a libellé son sujet de Master II, option Psychopathologie et clinique ainsi qu'il suit : "<i>The          experience of affiliation and identity trajectory in an internally displaced adolescent</i>".</p> <p>Ses travaux s'effectuent sous la direction du Prof MGBWA Vandelin.</p> <p>En foi de quoi la présente attestation lui est délivrée pour valoir et servir ce que de droit.</p> <p>Fait à Yaoundé le ..... <b>12 APR 2022</b> .....</p>		
<div style="text-align: center;">   <b>Le Chef de Département</b>    <b>Ebalé Monexé Chandel</b>  <b>Professeur Titulaire</b> </div>		

## Annexe 2: Informed consent form for participants

<p>UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I *****</p> <p>FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES *****</p> <p>DEPARTEMENT DE PSYCHOLOGIE *****</p>		<p>UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I *****</p> <p>FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND SOCIALS SCIENCES *****</p> <p>DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY *****</p>
<p><b><u>CONSENT FORM</u></b></p>		
<p>I, undersigned Mr/Mrs/Miss ... <u>Eddie</u> .....</p>		
<p>Was solicited for the research work of KENTSOP TIOMEZA ODILON, a student in the department of Psychology of the University of Yaoundé I, in view of obtaining a Master's Degree. The research is been carried out on the topic "The experience of affiliation and identity trajectory of internally displaced adolescent in Cameroon". The objective of this research is to analyse the experience of rupture from various affiliations and how this experience contribute in the construction of the adolescent's identity. This work is done under the supervision of Professor MGBWA VANDELIN of the University of Yaoundé I. The only condition to participate in this research is to be an adolescent student in any school in Cameroon and internally displaced due to the crisis in the South West and North West regions of the country. There is no risk in this research but some questions may provoke discomfort and so participation in this research work is completely voluntary and does not imply any payment or remuneration. You have the right not to participate at all or to stop your participation at any time in the research without any reason. Data collected is treated anonymously and confidentially. In case you need more information about this research study, you can contact us through: <a href="mailto:kentsop.odv@gmail.com">kentsop.odv@gmail.com</a> or telephone: 653 45 92 60.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ I have read and understood the objective of this study;</li> <li>❖ I have received answers to all my questions and worries;</li> <li>❖ The risks and benefits were well presented and explained to me;</li> <li>❖ I have understood that I am free to accept or refuse to participate;</li> <li>❖ I have freely accepted to participate in this research.</li> </ul>		
<p>A duly signed copy of this consent form will be given you.</p>		
<p>Done in Yaoundé, on .....</p>		
<p>Researcher</p>  <p>KENTSOP TIOMEZA ODILON</p>	<p>Participant</p>  <p>Eddie</p>	

UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES  
 ET SCIENCES HUMAINES  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 DEPARTEMENT DE PSYCHOLOGIE  
 \*\*\*\*\*



UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS  
 AND SOCIALS SCIENCES  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
 \*\*\*\*\*

CONSENT FORM

I, undersigned Mr/Mrs/Miss KANU.....

Was solicited for the research work of KENTSOP TIOMEZA ODILON, a student in the department of Psychology of the University of Yaoundé I, in view of obtaining a Master’s Degree. The research is been carried out on the topic “The experience of affiliation and identity trajectory of internally displaced adolescent in Cameroon”. The objective of this research is to analyse the experience of rupture from various affiliations and how this experience contribute in the construction of the adolescent’s identity. This work is done under the supervision of Professor MGBWA VANDELIN of the University of Yaoundé I. The only condition to participate in this research is to be an adolescent student in any school in Cameroon and internally displaced due to the crisis in the South West and North West regions of the country. There is no risk in this research but some questions may provoke discomfort and so participation in this research work is completely voluntary and does not imply any payment or remuneration. You have the right not to participate at all or to stop your participation at any time in the research without any reason. Data collected is treated anonymously and confidentially. In case you need more information about this research study, you can contact us through: [kentsop.ody@gmail.com](mailto:kentsop.ody@gmail.com) or telephone: 653 45 92 60.

- ❖ I have read and understood the objective of this study;
- ❖ I have received answers to all my questions and worries;
- ❖ The risks and benefits were well presented and explained to me;
- ❖ I have understood that I am free to accept or refuse to participate;
- ❖ I have freely accepted to participate in this research.

A duly signed copy of this consent form will be given you.

Done in Yaoundé, on .....

Researcher

KENTSOP TIOMEZA  
 ODILON

Participant

KANU

## **Annexe 3: Interviews of participants**

### **Interview 1: Edie**

#### **Identification**

Age: 20

Sex: male

Rang among siblings: 4 out of 6

Class: lower sixth

Religion: Presbyterian

Region of origin: SW

Tribe: Oroko

#### **Subject N° 1**

**Researcher:** thank you for coming and responding positive for this research. If you are okay, we can start

**Participant:** okay

**Researcher:** so, tell me how was life back there in the south west.

**Participant:** well, I don't know what really you want me to tell you but well, I lived in one village in Kumba, SW where everything was going on well until the crisis started. Before the crisis, we went to school every day and when we return home, we would organise our football games and play until the night time meets us with no problem. Football was my hobby and our football club usually take part in a holiday tournament. It was very exciting and together with friends, it was enjoyable. But when the crisis started, all these had to slowdown and finally stop. The "ambaboy" started kidnapping people and asking for huge ransoms and when your family did not give, they will either kill you or get you well beaten and wounded before leaving you. It became worse as we could no longer go to the farm. If they catch you in the farm, they will flog you very well and tell you never to come again. They cut one man I know very well, who is close to my family and asked the family to pay 3 million. Before the family could gather the money, they had beaten and wounded him with cutlasses and knives

that when they liberated him, he died few weeks later in the hospital. His family members began to run to other places. Friends as well left to other towns where they were secured. We were still there for the moment hoping it will not last.

**Researcher:** so, what prompted your leaving Kumba, what actually happened that made you leave?

**Participant:** this is the part I don't like to talk about. It is very painful [Kept quiet for about 8 seconds]. Thank God that my father was not around. He had travelled when the "ambaboy" came to our house to look for him. They came to our house with guns to take my father with them. My father before the crisis had guns. But when the crisis started, the police asked that every person should surrender their guns at the stations, so he did. After kidnapping many, it was my father's turn but that God he had travelled to a village Bafoussam. We called him and told him and since then, he has never set his feet in the village again. Some weeks later, they started threatening my mother that if our father does not come and give them money, they will kidnap her also and take her to the bush. One morning when my mother was preparing to go to the farm, these boys came to the house, met her in the kitchen and told her that if she sleeps in the house that night, they will kidnap her the next morning. My mother had to run for her life that same evening. She could not even go to the farm. She just stayed home to park her things and left. That was her last day there. The most aching part of it is that these boys are the same people whom my father has always helped. They use to come to our house and my mother will prepare food and give theirs. They are persons we all grew up together with and we use to play together with them, but it was so disheartening and painful that those you use to call your people are the ones that betray you and want till kill you.

**Researcher:** you said you don't like to talk about that. How do you do that?

**Participants:** well, I just think that that is the best way to let go of the past and focus on the future. The thing is each time I think of the things, I become angry. I just feel that rage within me against the perpetrators (the ambaboy). But when I am not thinking about it, I am okay, calm and I'm able to do my things well with no problem. People usually say you need to forget about all what happened so that you can live your life and construct a better tomorrow. So, that just what I am trying to do.

**Researcher:** when you were talking about what you don't like to talk about, that is what made you to leave Kumba, it seems you were no more there. Where were you when this was happening?

**Participant:** when the crisis started, my parents could no longer carter for all of us because we were many in the house. So, I went to Douala in 2019 where I was supposed to continue my school. When the crisis just started, I was in form 4 but I could not continue school due to the situation down there. We were hoping that it will not take long, that things will come back to normal and we waited like that for three years until when I decided to move to Douala where I continued school. There in Douala, my parents could still afford my school fees and I wanted to start doing something to assist them but I had to go to school. So, I went to school, repeating the class and the following year, last year, I had my GCE Ordinary Level.

**Researcher:** okay. So how did you reach Yaoundé?

**Participant:** after Ordinary Level exams, I went back home to visit my parents. That was when we were forced to abandon everything and escape. While they went to Bafoussam, I came to Yaoundé following one uncle that we just knew in Kumba. He was a francophone and I had to stay with him and continue my school.

**Researcher:** so how is it going with your friends in school?

**Participant:** I don't really have friends in school. My real friends are those we were in Kumba and they are now my seniors in class though we are not in the same town. This crisis has separated us and our families and while some continued to school, I stayed home and now I have become the least in class among us all. I am in class with little children and I don't even feel like interacting with them. In fact, going to school is a whole problem. I prefer to stay home and do something that can give me money. It is because of this that I was brought to Yaoundé from Douala, because I had problems in school, due to absences and lateness. I hardly did my assignments and always had problems in class with teachers. My aunty received complaints from school and changed her mind and decided to send me to Yaoundé. Here, it is not easy, this school thing, with the way the crisis, is going, I don't know if one can be able to achieve something with education. I just want to have my Advance Level next year.

**Researcher:** you talked of separation, that you were separated from friends and families. Can you tell me more about that?



**Participant:** Yes, due to the crisis, we were all separated. One cannot even go home to see friends and live the normal life that we use to live. With friends, we manage to communicate through phone but we really long for the day we are all going to meet again physically with one another [with a smile]. Some of them even meet in Buea, but my parents completely band me from traveling to meet with them also. Even when you miss your parents, you cannot visit them due to financial difficulty. My parents are in Bafoussam, some of my brothers and sisters are in Douala, and I am here in Yaoundé alone with uncle. It is very painful ehhh. At time, when thinking of all these, I just notice tears going down my cheeks. At times I ask God why all these, was this supposed to happen? Though I have not lost family member, the separation alone is too much to bear. I miss them a lot.

**Researcher:** now you are going to school. So, what are your future plans?

**Participants:** seriously, I don't know. I wanted to be an architect but I don't know if really, I will be able. There are times that I just sit and tell myself that I will make it. This is when I am calm like I said before. The other times, when I think of the whole crisis issue, I really doubt if will be able. But anyway, let me first of all have my advance level. I think things are getting better; I am not over thinking again about all the crisis things, like before; I am trying now to focus on school.

**Researcher:** Thank you very much Edie, for taking part in this research. The information you have given me will be strictly used only for research purposes and shall be treated with all confidentiality and anonymously. Thank you again.

**Interview 02: Kanu****Identification**

Age: 20

Sex: female

Class: lower sixth

Religion: Baptist

Region of origin: NW

Tribe: Bansa

**Researcher:** Kanu, once again thank you for accepting to participate in this study. Once more I assure you that all what you will say here will be used strictly for research purposes and your identity shall not be disclosed. So, if you are ready, we can start.

**Participant:** okay.

**Researcher:** tell me about where you lived, start by telling about life before the crisis.

**Participant:** I lived in Bamenda, in Nso village. I lived there with my parents, sister and cousins until the crisis broke out. Before the crisis we were altogether six (06) in the house. You can imagine how the house will be hot when everybody is back home chatting, playing, at times shouting and fighting and so on. Life was just wonderful until the crisis breakout. When it started, my cousins went to their parents who were also just managing life. We did not experience anything like running in the bushes, torture, and violence. My mother was the one taking care of us. Things started becoming difficult when the crisis started and when it became worse, she could no more carter for us. Like you must have heard about the Nso village in the course of the crisis, it is very dangerous. Not only the “ambaboys” are making life difficult for people, thieves too have entered the thing.

**Researcher:** okay. Can you tell me more?

**Participant:** There was a day that, commercial avenue got burnt and we were asked to remove our things from the house because we thought that the fire could transfer. We didn't

know what caused the fire: whether a current, an electric choc or an attack. Thieves entered and collected laptops and other things. So, I was really not touched much by the crisis.

**Researcher:** So, you were not much touched. It means you were a little touched. Tell me about this little.

**Participant:** Really! Well, I lost my classmate. They short him and his friends. They short them; we don't know who short them. The death touched me. I was like, someone I talked with just yesterday, and today he is no more, Ah No! I also lost a childhood classmate. We went to primary school together and in the secondary he went to technical and I went to grammar school but we were still close friends. He was an elder's (elder in church) son. I heard that he joined these guys and I was shocked. So, they shot him and just threw him beside a river, just like that. When I got the information, I was sad, really sad. I was like how could he die like that, such an intelligent child. How could he die with such a brain?

**Researcher:** so, what made you to live Bamenda?

**Participants:** my father. (Silence)

**Researcher:** okay. What about your father? What happened?

**Participant:** [puts her face down] when things became very difficult, he was forced to join the "ambaboys" so as to free us. Since then, we could see him just once in a while. Later on he wanted to abandon it but they did not accept. He was later killed in an exchange with the army. We never saw his body and so we remain in uncertainty. If at all we saw his body and buried him, maybe it would have been better. Our mother could not withstand it, so after one week she felt sick and having no money to take her to the hospital, she passed away in 2019. [Tears run down her cheeks; a moment of silence].

**Researcher:** oh sorry! If you cannot continue, we can stop here today to continue tomorrow.

**Participant:** It is okay [takes a deep breath]. We can continue. One other thing that pains me in all these is that my uncles remained silent as if they never knew she was sick. Anyone was quiet in his corner until when it was already late [exclaims: HmMMM and breaths deeply].

**Researcher:** so how come you left Bamenda?

**Participant:** My sister and I could not continue staying there. One of our uncles in Yaoundé accepted we come and stay with him and his wife and children. So, in 2019, we came to Yaoundé.

**Researcher:** okay. Tell me how life in Yaoundé has been since then.

**Participant:** while leaving Bamenda, I hoped and was in fact happy that it is going to be fine in Yaoundé, just to arrive and discover another reality. My elder sister had learnt a trade in the village. So here in Yaoundé, she decided to go and work with somebody staying with the person. I lived alone with my uncle and family. Actually, did not know I was coming to do “house girl” work. I did not go to school that year. My uncle and wife decided that I work for their friend as “house girl” that I will go to school the following year. I worked but my uncle’s wife collected part of the money and never gave me. I had no choice than to endure the pains. If only my parents were there, I would not be going through this.

**Researcher:** okay. So, they said you will go to school the following year. What happened?

**Participant:** Yes, I went to school but it was not easy. We woke up every day, went to the farm and when we return from the farm, I would prepare food for the house and wash plates before going to school. All the teachers had noticed and complained about my lateness in school. One thing that pained me a lot in all this is that, I was forced to stay home for three good years. When it started in 2016, I had registered for GCE Ordinary level but I could not continue school. I begged my mother that she should send me to school but she refused. My friends also came and begged but she also refused. One of my friends, they cut his back almost to the spinal cord because she went to school, so with that fear, my mum refused that I won’t go to school. I had to stay in the house. It was very painful, I sat and cried. When I saw my classmates going far ahead of me, I cried but I never had a choice. I ask God why. Why was I supposed to be born in Bamenda? Why was I not born in Yaoundé? I could be going to school normally. But as they always say everything gets bad for things to be fine; so, I’m still waiting for things to be fine because it’s still bad. So last year, with all the difficulties, I had to struggle and pass my GCE Ordinary levels and now I’m here, Lower sixth. Next year will be Advanced Level.

**Researcher:** okay. You started talking about how school has been going here in Yaoundé before coming to talk about this other part of your story. So, can you tell me how school went on as you started the following year?

**Participant:** Yes. I went to school but with all the work, going to the farm, coming back, cooking and cleaning before going to school, was very difficult. When I became discouraged in schooling especially when I was noticed by the teachers for always being late, I felt like it would have been better I just abandoned the school and focus on something else that can better my life. Nobody in school could understand or even believe that it was not my fault and that that is what I was going through. I had been thinking of leaving the house to somewhere else. I just cannot continue there. If not, I'm not sure to accomplish something.

**Researcher:** okay. What do you intend to do after your advanced level?

**Participant:** for now, I don't know but I hope things come back to normal and while hoping, let me have the certificate first (smiles). I wanted to do either law or medicine but my father advised me to do medicine. But now he is no more and nowhere to be found. How can I continue? I'm not sure to make it especially without him or any other person to support me. But again, at this particular stage of life which I have attained, I cannot go back to the way it was because I cannot go back and stay in the village because I'm moving forward and there is no school to accommodate me. I really do pray that one day we all see each other again.

**Researcher:** thank you for your time. I think we are going to stop here. I assure you again of the confidentiality of all what we have said. Thank you.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>LIST OF ANNEXES.....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>RESUME .....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>0. GENERAL INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
0.1. Context and Justification of the study .....	2
0.1.1. Context of the study .....	2
0.1.2. Justification of the study .....	4
0.2. Formulation and Positioning of research problem .....	6
0.3. Research questions .....	9
0.4. Objectives of research .....	9
0.5. Originality and pertinence of the study .....	9
0.6. Delimitations of this study .....	11
0.6.1. Thematic delimitation .....	11
0.6.2. Spatial delimitation .....	13
0.6.3. Temporal delimitation.....	14
<b>CHAPTER 1: ADOLESCENCE AND SELF-IDENTITY .....</b>	<b>15</b>
1.1. Adolescence: A time, a task. ....	16
1.1.1. The concept of adolescence .....	16
1.1.2. Adolescence: a time .....	20
1.1.3. Adolescence: a task.....	23

1.2.	Self-identity.....	28
1.2.1.	The concept of self.....	28
1.2.2.	Types of selves.....	29
1.2.3.	The self at adolescence .....	32
1.2.4.	The construction of self at adolescence .....	32
1.2.5.	Self-esteem at adolescence .....	34
1.3.	Identity status .....	35
1.3.1.	Identity achievement.....	36
1.3.2.	Identity diffusion.....	36
1.3.3.	Moratorium .....	36
1.3.4.	Foreclosure.....	37
1.4.	Models of identity construction.....	37
1.4.1.	Freud’s model of identity construction .....	38
1.4.2.	Erickson’s identity model .....	39
<b>CHAPTER 2: NARCISSISTIC ANACLSIS AND TRAJECTORY OF PERSONS IN SITUATION OF MIGRATION .....</b>		<b>42</b>
2.1.	The Migration phenomenon .....	43
2.1.1.	Migration as a voluntary phenomenon .....	44
2.1.2.	Migration as an involuntary or imposed phenomenon .....	44
2.2.	Trajectory of persons in situations of migration .....	45
2.2.1.	Ascendant and constructive trajectory (+) .....	46
2.2.2.	Stable and constructive trajectory (0+) .....	47
2.2.3.	Stable and vulnerable trajectory (0-).....	47
2.2.4.	Descendant and vulnerable trajectory (-).....	47
2.3.	Migration and injured narcissism.....	49
2.3.1.	Narcissism.....	49
2.3.2.	Psychological contract and narcissistic contract.....	51

2.3.3.	The concept of disanaclisis .....	53
2.4.	Denegation pact.....	55
2.4.1.	Negativity of obligation .....	57
2.4.2.	Relative negativity .....	58
2.4.3.	Radical negativity .....	59
2.5.	Theoretical model.....	61
2.5.1.	The Narcissistic contract in Aulagnier's point of view .....	62
2.5.2.	The narcissistic contract in the point of view of Kaës.....	64
2.6.	Conclusion.....	68
<b>CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>		<b>70</b>
3.1.	Recall of the research question.....	71
3.1.1.	Hypotheses of study.....	72
3.2.	Type of research.....	74
3.2.1.	Justification of the case study method .....	75
3.3.	Population of study.....	75
3.3.1.	Recruitment of participants.....	76
3.3.2.	Description/Characteristics of participants .....	77
3.4.	Instruments of data collection .....	77
3.4.1.	Interview guide .....	78
3.4.2.	Construction of interview guide.....	78
3.4.3.	Framework of interviews .....	79
3.4.4.	Development and unfolding of interviews.....	80
3.5.	Constitution of case history.....	81
3.6.	Technique of result analysis.....	81
3.6.1.	Analysis framework of elements of discourse .....	83
<b>CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....</b>		<b>85</b>
4.1.	Presentation of participants .....	86



4.1.1.	Subject 1: Edie .....	86
4.1.2.	Subject N° 2: Kanu .....	89
4.2.	Data analysis .....	91
4.2.1.	Negativity of obligation .....	91
4.2.2.	Relative negativity .....	93
4.2.3.	Radical negativity .....	96
4.3.	Summary of analysis .....	99
<b>CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS .....</b>		<b>102</b>
5.1.	Recall of theoretical and empirical data .....	103
5.1.1.	Recall of theoretical data .....	103
5.1.2.	Recall of empirical data .....	105
5.2.	Interpretation of results .....	107
5.2.1.	From negativity of obligation to identity trajectory.....	108
5.2.2.	From relative negativity to identity trajectory .....	111
5.2.3.	From radical negativity to identity trajectory .....	114
5.3.	Discussion and perspectives.....	118
5.3.1.	Discussion of results .....	118
5.3.2.	Perspectives.....	122
<b>GENERAL CONCLUSION.....</b>		<b>127</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>		<b>135</b>
<b>ANNEXES .....</b>		<b>IX</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT.....</b>		<b>XXI</b>