From Stability to Mobility: The Changing Goals, Reputational Orientations, Antisocial Behaviour and School Connectedness of Adolescents from African Refugee Backgrounds Following Transition to Mainstream Schooling

by

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The University of Western Australia,
The Graduate School of Education
2018
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I, Sashya Gunasekera, certify that:

This thesis has been substantially accomplished during enrolment in the degree.

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Abstract

Adolescents from refugee backgrounds are a particularly vulnerable population who appear to experience significant adverse changes in behaviour as they transition from their initial placement in Australian Intensive English Language Centres (IEC) to mainstream secondary school classrooms. Anecdotal evidence from teachers and a limited number of qualitative studies have suggested that as many of these young people progress through mainstream schooling they struggle to adapt to the dominant culture (i.e., peers), become more disruptive and non-conforming and consequently set goals that are less academically oriented. The present research sought to determine the goal setting, reputational orientations, delinquent activities, patterns of aggression, and levels of school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds prior to and following transition into mainstream schooling. To achieve this, four separate yet inter-related studies were conducted.

Study One was a preliminary exploratory study and comprised a series of focus group interviews involving 26 students (ages 13-17 years) from African refugee backgrounds who had transitioned to mainstream schooling. When asked to reflect on their first experiences in Australian education, almost all highlighted the challenges and difficulties they faced during the initial IEC placement. However, after a short period of time this placement became a very positive experience, primarily because of the teacher and peer relationships they developed. Almost all of the adolescents set academic and/or career goals in IEC’s, but on transitioning to mainstream classes these goals changed once the realization emerged regarding how hard it would be to achieve their ‘dreams’ in mainstream education. Concomitantly, socially conforming behaviour in the IEC became non-conforming in mainstream school classes and feelings of connectedness to school
and teachers soon diminished. The main reason for this ‘readjustment’ was attributed to mainstream schoolteachers who had unrealistic expectations of them, little time to assist them in their endeavours, and limited understanding about their cultural background and needs.

*Study Two* was a cross sectional empirical survey, which sought to build on the findings of Study One. To this end, three groups were recruited and compared: Adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in Australian Intensive English Centre’s (IEC; n = 60), Adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who had transitioned from an IEC into mainstream schooling (n = 60), and Age and Sex matched non-African Australian mainstream school adolescents (n = 60). Adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in IEC’s set goals commensurate with an Academic Image and a conforming reputation, whereas African adolescents in mainstream schooling set goals in line with non-conformity and the attainment of a Social Image. The young people in the IEC setting also had significantly more commitment to achieving their goals. A series of Multivariate Analyses of Variance (MANOVA) using Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels revealed significant multivariate and univariate interactions and main effects across goals, reputational orientations, delinquent activities, aggressive behaviours and levels of school and teacher connectedness. A series of 22 separate multiple-mediation models were then tested and the pattern of results suggested that school connectedness was a particularly important mediator of the demonstrated effects across group membership. Altogether, the findings from Study Two appeared to show that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds had a transitory disaffection with school and that this may have been part of socio-cultural adaptation to the dominant culture (mainstream peers).
Study Three was longitudinal in nature and built on the Study Two findings. By employing paired samples $t$ tests with 95% Confidence Intervals and Effect sizes this study sought to investigate how the goal setting, reputational status, and associated behaviours of the 60 students from African refugee backgrounds in IEC’s changed following their transition into mainstream schooling. By comparing their initial IEC placement data with that collected again within six months of transitioning into mainstream school classes significant differences were clearly evident. Goals changed from academic to social, delinquent and aggressive behaviours increased significantly, connectedness to school and teachers declined significantly, and reputations became significantly more socially non-conforming in orientation. These findings add some support to the conclusions of Study Two that these young adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are in a state of transition and social adaptation.

To develop a more comprehensive understanding of this transition phase Study Four generated empirical based profiles of four individual case studies. These adolescents from African refugee backgrounds had evidenced significant changes in behaviour from IEC to mainstream school classrooms. These profiles were supplemented by the findings from semi-structured interviews. Overall, it was clear from the four individuals that their initial placement in IECs was positive. Teachers were very understanding and this fostered great hope in terms of their fulfilling future goals and aspirations. On transition to mainstream school classes this soon changed, however, primarily because mainstream school teachers were unhelpful and did not understand their needs. This quickly led to their realisation that the academic and career goals set in the IEC would not be achieved in mainstream classes. Consequently, feelings of disconnectedness with school and teachers arose. It also appeared that gaining respect from peers in mainstream school classes (i.e., the
dominant culture) assumed greater levels of importance and to achieve this required
public displays of socially non-conforming activities. The reputation arising from this
was in many ways the result of socio-cultural adaptation.

The findings from the four studies in this thesis raise the important question of what is
the optimum amount of time that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (and all
young people from refugee backgrounds) should be kept in IEC settings before
transitioning to mainstream school classes.

The findings from the four research studies are discussed in the light of the literature
reviewed and implications are then drawn for researchers and educators. The limitations
of the research are acknowledged and finally recommendations for future research are
suggested.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Stephen Houghton for his continuous support and encouragement throughout my PhD candidature. This research would not have been possible without his enthusiasm and guidance. Right from the beginning, Steve provided me with a strong sense of direction and so freely and generously shared his immense knowledge and expertise. He has become a great mentor to me both on a professional and personal level. I doubt that I will ever be able to convey my appreciation fully, but I owe him my eternal gratitude. I am also very grateful to Dr Ken Glasgow for his co-supervisory support. Ken has been an invaluable source of encouragement and advocacy right throughout my professional life and I truly appreciate all the support he has given me over the years.

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## Authorship Declaration: Co-Authored Publications

This thesis contains work that has been published.


**Location in thesis:** Chapter Five: Study Three

**Student contribution to work:** In collaboration with my supervisors, I liaised with schools and obtained all consents from students and parents. I assisted in the preparation of the measures and their administration. This is a longitudinal study and required repeated test administrations over two years. I collected all data and in collaboration with my supervisors entered the data for analysis. The data analysis was collaborative with the other authors. I was heavily involved in the drafting of the manuscript and its revised versions.

**Co-author signatures and dates:**

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**Location in thesis:** Chapter Four Study Two. The version reported in this thesis is considerably longer than that published.

**Student contribution to work:** I liaised with schools (in conjunction with my supervisors) and obtained all consents from students and parents in this very large cross-sectional study. I assisted in the preparation of the measures and conducted the pilot administration. I then worked with all other authors to analyse the pilot data and amend the measures. I collected all data and in collaboration with my supervisors entered the data for analysis. The data analysis was collaborative with all of the authors contributing specialist data analytic techniques. I conducted all of the interviews in the follow up. I was involved in the drafting of the manuscript and its subsequent revisions.

**Co-author signatures and dates:**

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I, Dr Ken Glasgow certify that the student statements regarding their contribution to each of the works listed above are correct.

Student signature:  
Date: 28.11.2017

Coordinating supervisor signature:  
Date: November 28, 2017
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In 1951 the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) formally defined a refugee as a person who,

“Owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it” (p. 14).

In 2015, approximately 60 million people were displaced globally, including 13.9 million people newly displaced in the past year and 19.5 million refugees (i.e., individuals granted humanitarian protection, seeking asylum and from refugee-like backgrounds who have migrated through other channels such as family reunion) (UNHCR, 2015). Of particular relevance to this present research is that currently more than 50% of refugees are children and the number of unaccompanied or separated children seeking asylum is now the highest since records began (see Graham, Minhas, & Paxton, 2016; McNeely, Morland, Doty, Meschke, Awad, Husain, & Nashwan, 2017). Research shows that almost 40% of children from refugee backgrounds “have suffered serious limitations in crucial areas of life such as their schooling” (Schouler-Ocak, Wintrob, Moussaoui, Bayardo, Zhao, & Kastrup, 2016, p. 8). The language difficulties (e.g., non-English speaking) and preflight traumas (e.g., exposure to direct or indirect trauma) experienced by these young people,
along with the cumulative challenges of adapting to new physical and cultural environments further impact negatively on their wellbeing (Horyniak, Higgs, Cogger, Dietze, & Bofu, 2016). Nightingale, Goodman and Parker (2017) referred to the current refugee situation as a crisis.

For those who arrive in new countries as adolescents, the impact can be more significant because compared with younger refugees they (i.e., adolescents) will have fewer years in schooling to master the English language. Even though many adolescents from refugee backgrounds arrive with a strong drive to achieve in schools, very few, appear to do so. For example, only 8% of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in USA mainstream public schools graduate (McNeely et al., 2017). In specialised newcomer programs in New York City, the success rate is estimated at 46% (McNeeley et al., 2017). Even though these figures are alarming - and it is known that high school failure is a long term risk factor generally (and especially among those who immigrate as children) - the complex and varied mechanisms, interactions and pathways through school are yet to be understood (Morland & Birman, 2016). Indeed, the potential risk and protective factors linked to these pathways through school lack clarity, and as highlighted by McGregor, Melvin and Newman (2016), it is no wonder that the refugee experience is indeed “inherently complex” (p. 348).

For many young people from refugee backgrounds the pre-flight traumas they experienced are diverse and severe (Mwanri, Okyere, & Pulvirenti, 2017; Sullivan & Simonson, 2016) and when coupled with the difficult circumstances associated with resettlement this can often lead to substantial problems at home, school and in the wider society. Indeed, when families relocate as refugees, additional stressors are brought to
bear as they negotiate their needs within “foreign” social structures and with limited support (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010). Undeniably, a complex dynamic is presented within which the children and/or adolescents of these families are expected to enter and negotiate new educational environments and multiple transitions (e.g., friendships, schooling, community, culture, and identity: Correa-Velez et al., 2010). While research clearly demonstrates that within this dynamic educational success is generally fundamental in the overall context of wellbeing, this is particularly the case for adolescents from refugee backgrounds (Cassity & Gow, 2005; Earnest, Housen, & Gillieatt, 2007; Graham et al., 2016; McNeely et al., 2017). The research is unequivocal that most adolescents from refugee backgrounds have experienced disrupted educational backgrounds in their country of origin and onwards and that this creates further disadvantage for their educational or employment prospects in their new country of settlement (see Lloyd & Wilkinson, 2016).

The Refugee Experience: The Important Role of Schools

Schools as primary care institutions are well positioned to help refugee children and youth, primarily because they are often the first, and primary institution of socialization with which refugee students interact (Sullivan & Simonson, 2016; Wilkinson, 2002). They also provide a stable source of social support for refugee youth as they acclimate to Western society (see Sullivan & Simonson, 2016). School not only forms a large part of the daily lives of adolescents per se it also shapes their future opportunities and is critically important to psychological wellbeing and development (de Heer, Due, Riggs, & Augoustinos, 2016). The importance of schools was recognized by McNeely et al. (2017) in their investigation of how schools can promote healthy development for newly arrived immigrant and refugee students. Applying the Child Health and Nutrition
Research Initiative (developed from the input of 132 experts) McNeely et al. (2017) identified that the most highly prized priority in terms of essential research, was ensuring the effectiveness of newcomer programs.

For newly arrived adolescents such as those from refugee backgrounds, school assumes increased importance because these young people are likely to face additional social vulnerability (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). Researchers have demonstrated that bonding or feeling connected to school reduces adverse outcomes in adolescence such as delinquency and academic failure, and increases academic achievement and academic expectations (see Bower, van Kraayenoord, & Carroll, 2015). Moreover, school provides opportunities for acceptance and integration among peers (Corsano, Majorano, & Champretavy, 2006; McNeely et al., 2017) and developing quality teacher-student relationships, both of which are key determinants of social emotional wellbeing during adolescence (Hattie, 2012). However, as recently argued by Amthor and Roxas (2016) despite the exponential growth of research studies across disciplines, there are still significant gaps in knowledge pertaining to young people from refugee backgrounds, particularly regarding their actual school experiences, identities, and sense of belonging. This was a point highlighted some five years earlier by Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes and Milburn (2009) in their examination of the importance of school based positive relationships on adaptation of newly arriving young people.

Therefore, if as Fruja Amthor and Roxas (2016) suggested that “a quality education and school experience for immigrant and refugee youth should remain a central concern for educators and community stakeholders” (p. 155), then it is crucially important that as
comprehensive an understanding as possible, regarding the transitionary process through mainstream schooling, is developed. To date, however, this has not been forthcoming. This is not to say that studies have not been conducted. For example, a recent “qualitative content analysis” using MAXQDA 11 software by Makarova and Birman (2016) systematically reviewed the abstracts of research papers (representing national educational systems across different countries) published between 2000 and 2013 in peer-reviewed journals, on acculturation in the school context. Three hundred and forty eight articles were initially identified for review and based on specified inclusion criteria this was reduced to 74 qualitative articles. Overall, the findings revealed, “some commonalities in the issues that schools as societal institutions face as they struggle to integrate minority youth” along with “similarities across national educational systems in the adaptation challenges experienced by youth based on their minority status” (p. 11). The areas identified, included self-perception and self-evaluation, self-esteem, self-doubt, self-confidence, self-worth, feelings of alienation, transitional school experience, description of schools’ response to minority students’ adaptation, adaptation challenges in the school of the host country, school-based programs, resources to address youths’ adaptation, and experiences in the curriculum. These areas are of special relevance to the present research. That there was consistency and consensus among studies (even though the review was limited to abstracts) reinforces the earlier contention of Davies (2008) who strongly proposed that the school context of the receiving country not only exposes youth to the cultural transition, but is also an important setting that shapes youths’ adaptation in the host country.

Research involving young people from refugee backgrounds has highlighted other important elements pertaining to their school experience, including a shortage of school
based support in the form of institutionalized programs or resources; schools being inert and disengaged (Mansouri & Trembath, 2005); the absence of mechanisms, strategies, language programs, and/or committed teachers to integrate these young people into school (Castro-Vazquez, 2009;; Oikonomidoy,2007; Teixeira, & Li, 2009). If young people from refugee backgrounds are to be successfully integrated then these concerns must be addressed.

While schools frequently develop and implement special programs to assist young people from immigrant/refugee backgrounds to integrate into school contexts, research has drawn attention to the potential negative impact such institutionalized programs can sometimes have with regards to adaptation in schools. For example, in Quebec, Canada one intensive host-language learning program that sought to prepare overseas newcomer students for entering mainstream classes was perceived as a barrier rather than a facilitator (see Makarova & Birman, 2016). Other programs have resulted in newcomer students becoming disconnected from the curriculum content (see Berhanu, 2008; Teixeira, & Li, 2009).

Makarova and Birman (2016) argued that acculturation in the school context of the host country implies adaptation to the mainstream culture at large as well as to the school culture in particular, and providing the appropriate support is therefore crucial. However, as Graham, Minhas, and Paxton (2016) cautioned, developing an understanding about the educational needs of young people from refugee backgrounds is primarily essential if the appropriate response is to be given. This is crucial because “features of the school context have an impact on the ways that minority youth acculturate at school and in the larger host society” (Makarova & Birman, 2016, p. 2).
In Australia, a number of states have implemented Intensive English Language Centres (IELC) or Intensive English Centres (IEC) in an attempt to improve the transition of students from refugee backgrounds through their formal schooling. The location of these IEC’s is generally within the grounds of a mainstream school and their primary emphasis is on the acquisition of English language in order to facilitate social interaction.

In Western Australia (WA), where the present research was conducted the aim of the IEC is also to assist young people from refugee backgrounds to adapt to their new schooling experiences through familiarization with the physical layout of the school and the routines inherent in the school. Young people from refugee backgrounds are enrolled in WA IECs for up to 24 months so that they might successfully settle into the education system prior to transitioning into mainstream schooling. However, the research to date has shown that for many students from refugee backgrounds transition to the mainstream school setting is associated with emotional and behavioural problems and increases in non-conformity and aggressive behaviour (Brown, Miller, & Mitchell, 2006; Hillier, 2002; Jackson, 2007). This is especially the case for young people from African refugee backgrounds (Lloyd, 2006; Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Poppitt & Frey, 2007; Ziaian, de Anstiss, Antoniou, Baghurst, & Sawyer, 2012). The reasons for this are not definitive, primarily because almost all of the research undertaken to date has been qualitative in nature, comprised small samples, and the focus of the research has been on English language skills and academic achievement (de Heer et al., 2016; Makarova & Birman, 2016).

**Adolescents from Refugee Backgrounds: Adapting to the New Host Society**

Lacking the necessary skills to successfully engage in the new and more dominant culture (mainstream classes) following transition from the initial host culture (the IEC) may be why these young people experience such difficulties in their everyday social encounters
(see Masgoret & Ward, 2006 for a review; McNeely et al., 2017). Indeed, the importance of just how well immigrant youth and youth from refugee backgrounds manage their daily lives in personal, social, and academic areas, particularly in relation to school adjustment and behaviour problems within their intercultural setting (i.e., sociocultural adaptation) was highlighted in a study involving 7,997 adolescents (5,366 immigrants aged 13-18 years) from 26 different cultural backgrounds (13 immigrant-receiving countries) (see Berry, Phinney, Sam and Vedder, 2006).

In another study using a qualitative approach with 43 adolescents from refugee backgrounds, McGregor et al. (2016) identified the centrality and importance of peer relations in the adaptation process. However, the characteristics of relationships between the adolescents from refugee backgrounds and Australian peers versus those with peers of similar ethnic backgrounds were described in qualitatively different ways; it was hypothesized this may reflect the process of integration as espoused by Berry (1997). Specifically, relations with Australian peers tended to be comparatively instrumental, whereas mutual understanding and commonalities often characterized those with peers from similar ethnic backgrounds.

There are many other mechanisms however, that influence the ways in which adolescents from refugee backgrounds adapt to their new host society. According to Due and Riggs (2010) and Sam and Berry (2006) having to re-establish their lives and adapt to new concepts, examine their original values and cultural beliefs and modify them as a result of integrating within the host culture may be why increases in problematic behaviour occur. Amoah (2014) argued that children of African immigrant families face confusion about who they are, because they are expected to behave as their country of origin expects,
but at the same time compete and succeed as their new country of settlement dictates. Indeed, research suggests that individuals from refugee backgrounds are faced with continually changing circumstances and associated uncertainties, which pose numerous threats to their identity and self-concept (McGregor et al., 2016). Contemporary cross-cultural psychology has highlighted the difficulties in maintaining the heritage culture while adopting the host culture (see Mkaarova & Birman, 2016) particularly in the context of subsequent psychological adjustment (e.g., Birman & Simon, 2014).

Schools are very important for adolescents from refugee backgrounds because they are the setting where much of the process of adaptation unfolds and the impact of this on them can be profound. Davies (2008) went so far as to argue that the school context shapes refugee youth’s adaptation to the host country. Research has shown unclear requirements regarding behaviour in school (e.g., Berhanu, 2008), teacher authority (e.g., Goldblatt & Rosenblum, 2007; Li, 2010), teachers’ perceptions of refugee youth and their interactions with them (e.g., Li, 2009), teaching styles (Kanu, 2008), lack of appreciation of academic ability (Sepulveda, 2011), isolating refugee youth (e.g., Allen, 2007) and a feeling of not being safe in school (McBrien, 2005) all negatively affect the well-being and development of youth from refugee backgrounds.

With reference to African students from refugee backgrounds in particular, low teacher expectations have been found to result in demotivation to pursue academically challenging programs (Bitew, Ferguson, & Dixon, 2008; Rana, Qin, Bates, Luster, & Saltarelli, 2011; Uptin, Wright, & Harwood, 2013). Consequently, for many, sport becomes a focus and while this discourages academic endeavour in some, in others it encourages it (see Rana et al., 2011; Uptin et al., 2013).
Integrating into Mainstream Schooling: The Dilemma!

From the studies conducted (see Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010) it is clear that schools struggle to integrate youth from refugee backgrounds, and that subsequently many of these young people disconnect from school. Moreover, many face an “acculturation dilemma” (Makarova & Birman, 2016, p. 11). There appears to be no denying that the area of education (and behaviour) pertaining to young people from refugee backgrounds is complex and that important gaps in the literature remain (Graham et al., 2016). The extensive work of Carroll and colleagues which has examined the motivational and social determinants of behaviour in school settings (for a comprehensive review see Carroll, Houghton, Durkin, & Hattie, 2009) and resulted in Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory (REG: Carroll, Houghton, Hattie, & Durkin, 2001) has provided strong support for the relationship between academic and social goals and the ways in which young people behave. To date, this has not been examined in the context of young people from refugee backgrounds, yet such an approach may provide an understanding of the apparent changes in the aspirations and behaviours of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds as they transition the high school trajectory (i.e., from Grade 7 to 12).

Two major types of goals, namely academic and/or social goals, the latter of which can be further divided into conforming or non-conforming social goals are evident among adolescents (see Carroll et al., 2009). The choice of these academic, conforming social, and/or non-conforming social goals are critical in the orientation, development, and management of adolescents’ peer reputations (Carroll Houghton, Durkin, & Hattie, 2012). Individuals deliberately choose the particular reputation they wish to present to their audience and endeavour through attainment of their goals to enhance and sustain
this reputation (Emler, 1984). For most adolescents, goals are congruent with those of their school, but for others who are delinquent these types of goals are rejected or devalued. There are also other adolescents, who are in an intermediate transitional state and are “at risk” of delinquent or non-conforming status. For these “at risk” individuals the setting of and commitment to alternative goals (i.e., non-conforming, delinquency goals) is becoming more attractive. Thus, adolescents are the architects of their own reputations through the way in which they present their desired reputation to others. The reason for this being that acquiring or striving for a reputation has implications for how an adolescent regards himself/herself and for how others perceive him/her (Emler & Reicher, 1995). This is particularly important for young people in their daily school interactions with teachers and peers.

This may be applicable to adolescents from African refugee backgrounds as they attempt to integrate into and within mainstream schooling. For example, those who feel connected to school will adopt the school’s values, norms and expectations and for this reason will refrain from engaging in behaviours that are inconsistent with the schools expectations (Lopukas & Pasch, 2013). Indeed, school connectedness, which has been defined as students’ experiences of belonging and closeness with others at school (Resnick, Bearman, Blum, Bauman, Harris, Jones et al., 1997) may be a protective factor, because those who are connected are likely to have good quality interpersonal relationships with teachers (Whitlock, 2006). Research demonstrates teacher connectedness and school connectedness are positively associated with adolescents' motivated behaviour, prosocial behaviour, academic success, enhanced social and emotional development, mental health and well-being (Cook, Purdie-Vaughns, Garcia, & Cohen, 2012; Oldfield, Humphrey, & Hebron, 2015; Waters, Cross, & Shaw, 2010; Zhao & Zhao, 2015). In line with this,
young people from refugee backgrounds have consistently reported that supportive peer friendships are protective against adverse outcomes (Graham et al., 2016).

There are other young people, however, that experience a dissonance between their cultural (origin) identity and that required for the new social group within mainstream school (see Sam, 2000). Supportive of the latter, Steele (1997) found that African American adolescents who perceived the academic domain to be not supportive “disidentified” with school and sought other outlets through which to feel positive about themselves. In this instance, a lack of school connectedness arises and this predicts, among other things, dropout, low academic performance, high risk behaviours, and poor mental health (Bond, Butler, Thomas, Carlin, et al., 2007; Cook et al., 2012; Millings, Buck, Montgomery, Spears, & Stallard, 2012).

As clearly demonstrated by Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory (Carroll et al., 2001) mainstream school provides increased and routine contact with like-minded peers and hence the audience necessary to initiate, enhance and maintain the reputation an individual chooses to pursue. For those who wish to claim a delinquent identity, they must be seen to break rules and regulations and become deliberately nonconforming (Hopkins & Emler, 1990). To date, there is evidence suggesting this might be the case for African adolescents from refugee backgrounds as they move through the high school system (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Lloyd, 2006; Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Poppitt & Frey, 2007; Ziaian et al., 2012).

Although there is an absence of empirical evidence to support this contention, it has been shown via small-scale qualitative studies that for adolescents from African refugee
backgrounds school represents the setting where many of their hopes materialize (Earnest et al., 2007). Moreover, many of these young people place a high priority on education and have high expectations of the education system (Cassity & Gow, 2005). Focus group interviews with 45 adolescent students from African refugee backgrounds from IECs revealed that career aspirations included being a: journalist, nurse, scientist, doctor, computer expert, pilot, lawyer, engineer, electrician or teacher (Earnest et al., 2007). However, many of the students in these focus groups commented that they soon became discouraged when they transitioned to mainstream classrooms because their career aspirational outlook looked somewhat forlorn. While research such as this by Earnest et al. (2007) is important, it appears to have focused only on career goals. Goals, however, are generally organized around matters of social and personal identity, education, career, sport and leisure, and material development (for a comprehensive review see Carroll et al., 2009). Furthermore, adolescents rarely pursue only one goal, rather they have multiple goals (Louro, Pieters, & Zeelenberg, 2005).

The empirical evidence pertaining to the link between goals and reputations in explaining the institutional adjustments that African adolescents from refugee backgrounds experience in their transition from IEC’s to mainstream classes appears to be non-existent. The anecdotal evidence, along with the limited qualitative research conducted, appears to support the arguments put forward by researchers regarding changes that occur following transition to mainstream schooling (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Lloyd, 2006; Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Poppitt & Frey, 2007; Ziaian et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the question remains as to whether the goals and reputations of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are different to their African and Australian mainstream school counterparts when they first arrive in the education system (i.e., in an IEC) and then transition to
mainstream schooling. This present research seeks to answer this question. Furthermore, the research enquires whether the goals and reputations of newly arrived adolescents from African refugee backgrounds change as they transition into mainstream classes and whether these (i.e., goals and reputations) underpin any changes.

**Significance of the Research**

The research is highly significant because at present no research has examined the full range of goals and reputations of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. Nor has any research tracked adolescents from African refugee backgrounds to determine how their goals and reputations (and associated behaviours) change as they transition the mainstream education setting. That is, from their initial placement in Intensive English Centres (IEC) through to being integrated into mainstream school classrooms. This present research will be the first to do so. Second, the research will be the first to determine differences in the goals, reputational orientations, delinquent and aggressive behaviours, and levels of school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in IEC settings, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who have transitioned into mainstream classes from IECs, and non-African Australian mainstream adolescents. Third, it will employ multiple-mediation models to test the patterns in key variables among these three adolescent groups. Fourth, comprehensive profiles of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who make significant changes in their behaviour (not necessarily in the desired directions) following transition to mainstream classes will be generated to complement the empirical findings. Fifth, this research will advance theoretical understanding of the importance of goals and reputational orientations in the lives of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds and in doing so will provide information which may assist educators and policy makers.
in enhancing the experiences of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds as they transition the high school education process.

**Structure of the Thesis**

The following chapter (Chapter Two) provides a critical review of the literature. This chapter begins with an overview of the refugee experience and is followed by the refugee experience within the school context. Media reports of problem behaviour among young Africans from refugee backgrounds are then presented within the wider context of aggressive and delinquent behaviour and school connectedness. Given the reported proclivity of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds towards aggressive behaviour, the forms (i.e., Physical versus Verbal) and functions (i.e., Proactive versus Reactive) of aggressive behaviour are detailed. The process of acculturation and adjusting to school is described. Goal Setting Theory, which includes goal types and commitment towards goals, is then presented. The theories of Reputation Enhancement and Reputation Enhancing Goals are then covered in greater detail since they are a primary focus of the research presented in the thesis. These two theories, in conjunction with theories of delinquency, are advanced to explain why young people become involved in non-conformity. To conclude the literature review, the evidence regarding the importance of school connectedness is examined. A series of research questions are then presented at the conclusion of this chapter.

Chapter Three, which reports Study One, describes the methodology and results of an exploratory study which employed focus group interviews to obtain a preliminary overview of the types of goals that mainstream adolescents from African refugee
backgrounds (N = 26) set in IECs and how these goals changed from the time they were first enrolled in the IEC through to their transition into mainstream schooling.

Chapter Four provides details of Study Two, which examined the goals, reputations and associated behaviours (delinquency, aggression and connectedness) of three separate age and sex matched groups: adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in Australian Intensive English Centres (N = 60), adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who have transitioned from an IEC into mainstream schooling (N= 60), and non-African Australian mainstream adolescents (N = 60). A cross sectional comparison through Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory, an approach congruent with sociocultural adaptation, was conducted by employing Multivariate statistics and a series of multiple-mediation models.

The principal aim of Study Three (Chapter Five), was to examine how the goals, reputational orientations, delinquency, aggression and social connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in IECs changed following their transition into mainstream schooling. To this end, the instruments which were completed by the 60 adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in the IEC (in Study Two of this thesis) were readministered six months post mainstream transition. These data were then compared with the IEC data and changes were examined using a series of paired samples t tests.

The final study of the thesis, Study Four, is reported in Chapter Six. This study presents the case study profiles of four adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who evidenced significant changes in their behaviour (not necessarily in the desired directions)
following transition to mainstream classes. The purpose of this study was to compare the empirical profiles generated of these individuals at T1 (IEC) and T2 (mainstream classes) and then employ complementary semi-structured interviews with these individuals to develop as comprehensive an understanding of each case as possible.

Although each thesis chapter which presents a study concludes with a discussion, Chapter Seven of this thesis presents a general discussion in which the results obtained from all four studies are interpreted in the light of the research questions generated and the literature reviewed earlier in the thesis. The limitations of the research are acknowledged and directions for future research are suggested.
The Refugee Experience

Correa-Velez, Gifford, and Barnett, (2010, p. 1,399) eloquently and concisely summarized the refugee experience as one “of being cast out, of being socially excluded, and where belonging to family, community and country is always at risk”. The refugee experience is indeed inherently complex and the continually changing circumstances and associated uncertainties in their new home country can impose unique stressors (McGregor et al., 2016). The traumatic environments and persecution from which most refugees have fled makes them a particularly vulnerable and victimized group (Halevi, Djalovski, Vengrober, & Feldman, 2016; King, Heinonen, Uwabor, & Adeleye-Olusae, 2016; Molsa, Kuittinen, Tiilikainen, Honkasalo, & Punamaki, 2016). Such pre-flight experiences are diverse and severe (e.g., witnessing violence, the loss of a parent or loved one, abject poverty, abuse) and can be an additional burden for some, especially during childhood and/or adolescence. Sometimes, such experiences result in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and while the vast majority of refugees do not develop clinical levels of psychopathology, a comprehensive meta-analysis found 11% of children and adolescents did meet diagnostic criteria for PTSD (this is higher than rates in age-matched general populations) (see McGregor et al., 2016). It should come as no surprise then, that newly arrived refugees in Australia (and elsewhere) often experience severe difficulties in adapting to their new homes, especially when they have come from African refugee backgrounds (Akinsulure-Smith, Mirpuri, Chu, Keatley, & Rasmussen, 2016; Due & Riggs, 2010; King et al., 2016; Woodgate, Busolo, Crockett, Dean, Amaladas, & Plourde, 2017).
According to Murray, Davidson and Schweitzer (2008) adolescents are particularly susceptible to the cumulative nature of earlier traumatic events (e.g., family separation, inter-generational violence) and post-resettlement difficulties with the host culture (e.g., entering and negotiating new educational environments). This often impacts on their settlement within school and educators are not prepared for how to deal with this challenge. Although research has informed policy makers of how best to address the “educational experience” of young people from refugee backgrounds, problems remain (see de Heer, Due, Riggs, & Augoustinos, 2016; Due & Riggs, 2010). Nevertheless, as demonstrated by ‘The Good Starts Study’ (see Gifford, Correa-Velez, & Sampson, 2009) - one of the most important longitudinal studies to examine the resettlement experience of “refugee youth” in Australia – “school is a critical domain and is an important reflection of a young person’s sense of belonging in the first context outside of their immediate family” (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010, p. 1405).

Supportive of this assertion is a body of research demonstrating the critical importance of schools as a protective factor in the lives of children and adolescents from refugee backgrounds (e.g., Fazel, et al., 2012; Renzaho, Dhingra, & Georgeou, 2017). Indeed, school is especially important because young people from refugee backgrounds have to negotiate multiple identities as they move between cultures seeking to establish a sense of connection to their new Australian peers and the broader Australian community (Mwanri, Okyere, & Pulvirenti, 2017). While a number of important studies have been conducted in Australian schools, most have tended to be qualitative in nature with relatively small samples. Furthermore, few studies if any have examined the goal directed behaviour of young people from refugee backgrounds and how this might act as an
underlying mechanism in the pursuit of a particular identity or reputation - an important element in inclusion and acceptance.

**Adolescents from African Refugee Backgrounds and the School Context**

Approximately 290,000 Sub-Saharan African-born residents reside in Australia and just over half of these migrated from countries of Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa in the early-mid 2000s under Australia’s humanitarian migration program (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2014). Data show that among the African-born population in Australia, 23% are aged 10-24 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). This is an important age group for fostering acceptance and inclusion (Due & Riggs, 2010). However, of the studies conducted with the African refugee population, the majority have been conducted because of concerns within the (African refugee) community itself about the use of alcohol and illicit drugs, especially among those disengaged from education and employment (see Foundation House and Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2013; Khawar & Rowe, 2013; Lee, Sulaiman-Hill, & Thompson, 2013). These studies tend to foster suspicion and exclusion, however.

In one recent study, Horyniak, Higgs, Cogger and Dietze (2017) interviewed 16 males aged 18-30 years from the African refugee community and found that aspects of social inequality and hierarchy, respect and the links between respect, social status, and power were important drivers of their behaviour. Comparatively little research has examined the school-based adolescent population from African refugee backgrounds, however (Poppitt & Frey, 2007) which is somewhat surprising given that school can be an important protective factor against future adversity.
The focus of this present research is adolescents from African refugee backgrounds and specifically their behaviour and the difficulties they experience in settling within Australian mainstream school contexts as argued by qualitative researchers (Brown et al., 2006; Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2014; Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010; Lloyd, 2006; Nunn, McMichael, Gifford, & Correa-Velez, 2014; Poppitt & Frey, 2007). The findings from qualitative research is unequivocal that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are among those who have experienced the most severely interrupted schooling and very few have knowledge of school routines (Brown, Miller, & Mitchell, 2006; Schouler-Ocak et al., 2016). Consequently, many young people from African backgrounds ‘disidentify’ with school and seek other outlets through which to feel positive about themselves (Steele, 1997), and this often involves aggressive and disruptive behaviour in the classroom and school settings (Brown et al., 2006; Hillier, 2002; Jackson, 2007). Moreover, as these adolescents progress through the education system they become at even greater risk of aggressive behaviour and adverse outcomes (Poppitt & Frey, 2007). Limited empirical evidence pertaining to the behaviours of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in schools exists, however.

Many of the counterparts to adolescents from refugee backgrounds (i.e., young people not from refugee backgrounds) who are involved in delinquent and/or antisocial activities often do so aggressively (see Carroll et al., 2009). In a relatively recent study of delinquency among Western Australian high school adolescents (Houghton et al., 2013) males were involved in aggressive acts of delinquency significantly more so than females. The anecdotal evidence currently available from teachers and researchers suggests this is also the case with African adolescents from refugee backgrounds, particularly on transition to mainstream classes where restlessness and aggression (often violent) become
evident (Brown et al., 2006; Lloyd, 2006). According to Poppitt and Frey (2007) older adolescents from refugee backgrounds are at even greater risk of aggression and hence adverse outcomes, while Milner, Karla Khawaja and Nigar (2010) highlighted that aggression at the family and community level, along with changing power dynamics during relocation, is a particular adaptation complexity encountered by adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in Australia.

It may be as postulated by Lopez, Perez, Ochoa and Ruiz (2008) that negative interactions with peers lead to the development of attitudes of rebelliousness and hence aggressive behaviour, particularly in boys. Moreover, it is well documented that adolescents who show negative attitudes and who look for social recognition as being powerful and rebellious are more likely to participate in aggressive and antisocial activities (see Carroll et al., 2009 for a comprehensive review; Carroll, Green, Houghton, & Wood, 2003; Emler & Reicher, 2005). Anecdotal evidence from teachers suggests that this is the case for adolescents from African refugee backgrounds as they transition to mainstream classes. The present research will therefore investigate what happens to young people from African refugee backgrounds following their transition to mainstream schooling.

Understanding aggressive behaviour in children and adolescents is important, and the construct (of aggression) has undergone conceptual changes in the past two decades particularly given that multidimensionality has become a key issue (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Fite et al., 2010; Houghton et al., 2009; Pulkkinen, 1996; Raine et al., 2006; Vitaro, Brendgen, & Barker, 2006). The present research recognizes this and examines subtypes of aggression differentiated according to their various forms (e.g., direct, overt, and physical aggression vs. indirect, covert, verbal, and relational aggression) and functions
(e.g., proactive and instrumental aggression vs. reactive and defensive aggression: see Fite, Stauffacher, Ostrov, & Colder, 2008; Houghton et al., 2010; Little, Jones, Henrich, & Hawley, 2003; Vitaro et al., 2006). The importance of differentiating between physical and verbal aggression, and its proactive or reactive nature in adolescents, was demonstrated by Houghton et al. (2010), with reference to management and treatment programs.

**Aggressive Behaviour**

Aggressive behaviour is usually defined as behaviour intended to inflict injury or discomfort upon another individual (Berkowitz, 1993; Olweus, 1978). It is a major source of referral to school psychologists and child and adolescent mental health clinicians (Rutter et al., 2009; Sanders O’Connor, Carroll, Houghton, & Donovan, 2016). Economic modelling shows that individuals presenting with aggressive behaviour can cost society up to 10 times more than their healthy peers in aggregate health care and social service expenditures (Blair, 2013). The outcomes of aggression are far reaching for both perpetrators (e.g., multiple social problems, isolation, criminal behaviour, unemployment in adulthood) and victims (e.g., development of PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicide) (see Brugman et al., 2017).

**Forms of Aggression: Physical versus Verbal Aggression**

Generally considered to be multidimensional and heterogeneous (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Raine et al., 2006) aggression is frequently distinguished as being reactive or proactive (see Smeets et al., 2017). The developmental course of physical aggression tends to be characterised by an initial increase during the first years of life and a steady decrease thereafter (Vitaro et al., 2006). Findings from longitudinal research demonstrate that
physical aggression decreases with age in most children (Brame, Nagin, & Tremblay, 2001; Cote, Tremblay, Nagin, Zoccolillo, & Vitaro, 2002; Lacourse, Nagin, Tremblay, Vitaro, & Claes, 2003; Nagin & Tremblay, 1999). It is only in a small minority of cases (i.e., life-course persistent offenders) that aggression remains stable and persists through childhood and on into adolescence (Moffitt, 1993). In a review of the literature regarding the subtyping of aggression, Vitaro et al. (2006) hypothesised that as children grow older aggressive behaviour may not decline, but rather it may change its form. That is, alternate forms of aggression, such as relational aggression, may replace physical aggression particularly because they are more socially acceptable for youth to achieve their desired goals or seek revenge.

With regard to verbal aggression, considerable conceptual overlap occurs in the aggression literature, especially with reference to the terms “verbal aggression” and “relational aggression” (i.e., the purposeful manipulation or damage to peer relationships with the intent to harm others: Crick, 1996). Generally, verbal aggression is defined as name calling, mocking, teasing, and the use of verbal threats (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006) and tends to be subsumed under the aggression categories of “direct verbal” (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992), “direct, overt” (Scheithauer, Hayer, Petermann, & Jugert, 2006), or “direct” or “overt” aggression (Golmaryami & Barry, 2010). On the other hand, indirect use of verbal aggressive behaviour (e.g., gossiping, spreading rumours, and telling lies to hurt others), has been considered as “indirect” or “covert” forms of aggressive behaviour (Card, Stucky, Sawalani, & Little, 2008) or classified as “relational aggression” (Scheithauer et al., 2006).
There is growing research evidence suggesting that boys are more likely to use physical and overt aggression (e.g., kicking, hitting, and threatening) whereas girls use relational aggression (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992; Crapanzano, Frick, & Terranova, 2010; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Ostrov & Keating, 2004). Girls also tend to employ more non-relational (direct) verbal aggression than boys (e.g., name calling and racist remarks; Scheithauer et al., 2006). According to Scheithauer et al. (2006), the forms of aggressive behaviour may have different implications for males and females during adolescence. That is, females may use relational aggressive behaviour to influence social relationships within their peer group while males may seek to enhance their social status within their peer group through visible overt-physical and domineering forms of aggression. The research evidence suggests that examining different forms of aggression is an important consideration in research with adolescents particularly in terms of links to reputation enhancement. To date, however, it appears this has not been investigated in adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, nor has how it changes following transition to mainstream school been examined.

**Functions of Aggression: Proactive versus Reactive Aggression**

It is important to differentiate between subtypes of aggression based on their underlying functions or motivation (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Vitaro et al., 2006). *Proactive* aggression (also known as instrumental, predatory aggression) has been defined as an “unprovoked aversive means of influencing or coercing another person and is more goal-directed than reactive aggression” (Price & Dodge, 1989, p. 456). It has also been described as “calculated” (Fite et al., 2008) and is consistent with social learning theory (that is, aggression is driven by reinforcement (e.g., anticipated rewards) that comes with the perpetration of aggressive acts; Vitaro et al., 2006); it helps one to attain a desired goal.
or elevates one’s status, Emler, 1984). Proactive aggression, also known as premeditated, or cold blooded aggression (Blair, 2006; Kempes, Mattyhs, de Vried, & van Engeland, 2005), usually occurs in the absence of a strong emotional response (Glenn & Raine, 2009).

In contrast, Reactive aggression is thought to be “a defensive reaction to a perceived threatening stimulus and is accompanied by some visible form of anger (e.g., angry facial gesture or verbalizations)” (Price & Dodge, 1989, p. 456). Reactive aggression is an impulsive, hostile, and emotional-driven reaction in response to a perceived threat or provocation (e.g., in the context of a heated argument; Glenn & Raine, 2009). Reactive aggression is therefore unplanned and often accompanied by anger, but more importantly, it is initiated without regard for any potential goal or object (e.g., obtaining possessions of victims or elevating one’s status within the hierarchy; Blair, 2008).

Considerable overlap has been found between both forms of aggression (see Dodge & Coie, 1987), with systematic reviews reporting correlations up to \( r = 0.87 \) (see Card & Little, 2006). Polman, Orobio de Castro, Koops, van Boxtel, and Merk (2007) also reported a high correlation \( (r = .64) \) from a meta-analysis of 51 studies focusing on children and adolescents. However, behavioral, neurocognitive and treatment profiles exist between the two forms, which suggest a clear distinction. Reactive aggression is related to problems with anxiety, depressive symptoms, suicidality, emotions, peer relationships, and problem solving, while proactive aggression is associated with delinquency, lower levels of victimization, lack of moral emotions, and higher levels of self-efficacy regarding aggression (Blair, 2013; Cima & Raine, 2009; Fite, Stoppelbeing, & Greening, 2009; Smeets et al., 2017; Vitaro et al., 2006).
Factor analytic studies (e.g., Little et al., 2003; Poulin & Boivin, 2000) also support a distinction between reactive and proactive aggression. A recent study (Smeets et al., 2017) analyzed data from 587 clinically referred Dutch adolescents with differing levels of aggression. Using a variable based approach yielded a three-factor solution: proactive aggression; reactive aggression due to internal frustration; and reactive aggression due to external provocation. However, the researchers acknowledged they did not recruit a general population sample (71.6% were male) and forms of aggression (i.e., physical or verbal) were not examined.

There is very limited evidence available pertaining to aggressive behaviour among adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, however. There is anecdotal evidence from teachers that suggests these young persons are highly conforming and academically oriented on entering Intensive English Centres (IECs), but on transitioning to mainstream schooling, soon become aggressive and involved in delinquent activities. While being wary and mindful of “media driven agenda”, both print and electronic media reports appear to provide support for this assertion of increasing aggressive and delinquent behaviour among African youth in the community. Moreover, such media reports seem to highlight the proactive nature of any aggressive behaviour, along with the wide array of delinquent activities pursued, and the reputational status attached to these activities. For example, the major Australian media sources have reported:

*At the weekend dozens of Sudanese youths rampaged through a family festival, punching and kicking people and stealing their belongings. It started as the odd home invasion or carjacking ... But what we are seeing now has gone past that. We have gangs of these people [taking part in] planned attacks. They deliberately target people and want to cause mayhem and hurt people* (News.co.au; February 15, 2017).
Police have made several arrests after two-armed street gangs stormed Melbourne’s CBD, brawling in Federation Square before moving to Swanston St, shutting down the area. Many gang members were of Sudanese descent ... it is made up predominantly of Africans who are refugees or the children of refugees (Herald Sun, March 13, 2016).

African youths are causing a crime wave in Victoria ... Gangs of teenagers have been contributing to a surge in crimes, particularly in Melbourne’s east where car jacking’s, burglaries and theft are on the rise. But one of the defining characteristics of the young offenders is boldness and apparent indifferent to consequences. The first night the gang came, about six weeks ago, one youth pulled out a pistol with a laser sight and shouted: “I’ll f**king shoot you boys. The young men came back two weeks later - they always come back, say locals - and were so bold their car stopped out front with the window down while one made a phone call (The Australian, July 26, 2016).

Some no more than 12 years of age, from a hitherto little known gang living out their dreams of a “Fast and the Furious” lifestyle (News.co.au; May 24, 2016).

In line with the research literature on adolescent risk-taking that has shown criminal actions in adolescence are far more likely to be committed in the company of groups rather than alone (see Carroll et al., 2009 for a comprehensive review), adolescents from African refugee backgrounds appear also to do so. Furthermore, the presence of peers increases a person’s readiness to behave in an antisocial fashion (Steinberg, 2008). Studies on delinquency in young people have consistently found that the delinquency of a person’s friends has the strongest association with that person’s own delinquent behaviour (Fergusson, Swain-Campbell, & Horwood, 2002; Fite, Colder, & O’Connor, 2006). Reputation plays a major role in this and substantial evidence exists showing many adolescents become involved in delinquent and antisocial activities in order to initiate, enhance and maintain a reputation of choice (see Carroll et al., 2009). The media reports highlighted seem to suggest that this may also the case with adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. However, little, if anything, is known about the delinquent activities and reputations of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds.
Juvenile Delinquency

Delinquent behaviour impacts heavily the world over and is “one of the most serious problems of modern society with multiple negative effects on health, educational, financial, vocational, and judicial systems” (Kofler-Westergren, Klopf, & Mitterauer, 2010, p. 33). To date, there appears to be no empirical research specifically examining the involvement of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in delinquent activities. This is somewhat surprising given it has been argued that adolescents from refugee backgrounds are the most vulnerable population to fall prey to delinquent and criminal activities, including drugs and prostitution (Hummer, Karnik, Voelkl-kernstock, et al., 2011). Moreover, the examples of media reports cited earlier suggest that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are participating in a wide range of delinquent activities for a specific purpose (i.e., to gain a notoriety).

In Australia, data from the Australian Institute of Criminology (2010), show that the offending rates of juveniles (i.e., ages 10 to 17 years) from 1996/1997 to 2007/2008 have generally been twice that of adult offenders. In 2013, the offending rate for people aged 15 to 19 years was three times that of all other offenders, at 5,340 per 100,000 compared with 4,479 per 100,000 for those aged 20 to 24 years. In terms of sex differences in these offending rates, Australian male involvement declined by 13% from 1996/1997 to 2007/2008; conversely, the offending rates for female juveniles increased by 43% during the same period. The delinquent activities in which juveniles most frequently engaged (in Australia) included property damage (25.5%), burglary and theft (21.8%), offences against the person (10.9%), against good order (9.2%, e.g., breaches of orders and resisting arrest), driving and motor vehicle offences (6.5%), and drug offences (4.9%; Fernandez, Walsh, Maller, & Wrapson, 2009). According to the Australian Institute of
Criminology (2015) 10-17 year olds commit more property crimes than violent crimes, and generally commit less serious types of crimes such as graffiti, vandalism, shoplifting, fare evasion, motor vehicle theft, unlawful entry and road traffic offences. The most recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017) show that from 2014-15, after adjusting for population growth, there was little change in the national offender rate with 2,023 offenders per 100,000 persons aged 10 years and over (compared to an offender rate of 2,027 in 2014-15).

Similar trends have been reported among young people in the UK. The most commonly reported offence categories among young people in England and Wales aged 10 to 25 years, are assaults (committed by 12%) and thefts (10%), followed by criminal damage (4%), drug selling offences (3%), and vehicle-related thefts (2%); burglary and robbery accounted for one per cent or less (Roe & Ashe, 2008). Males were more likely than females to have offended in the last 12 months: 26% of males compared to 17% of females. In the United States, Puzzanchera (2009) reported 15% of arrests were attributable to juveniles (defined as individuals under age 18 years). Furthermore, juveniles accounted for 16% of arrests for Violent Crime Index offences (includes murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) and 26% of arrests for Property Crime Index offences (includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft). In terms of specific offence categories, arrest statistics revealed that juveniles were the alleged offenders for 47% of arson arrests, 38% of vandalism arrests, 28% of disorderly conduct arrests, 27% of robbery arrests, 27% of burglary arrests, 26% of larceny-theft arrests, 25% of motor vehicle theft arrests, 23% of weapons law violation arrests, 11% of drug abuse violation arrests, and 10% of murder arrests (Puzzanchera, 2009). In 2013, 25% of juveniles in residential placement (i.e., assigned a bed in a juvenile
residential custody facility) had violent crimes listed as their most serious offence, and 19% had property crimes as their most serious offense. One percent had committed criminal homicide, while 7% had committed drug-related offenses, and 11% had disturbances to the public order (National Center for Juvenile Justice, 2015).

Comparative data are not available for African youth and adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. There is evidence from Australian researchers demonstrating cultural based gang and group-based delinquency has a strong component related to physical prowess or toughness and reputation (see Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth, 2008). For example, in Sydney, Australia some young Lebanese Australians presented themselves as a group or ‘gang’ in order to gain a measure of ‘respect’ i.e., a way to affirm social presence and to ensure mutual protection (Collins, Noble, Poynting, & Tabar, 2000). While evidence appears non-existent regarding adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, the importance of presence and the pursuit of a reputation was argued by Wood in the “Conversation” (January 13, 2017). According to Wood, the media reports of the delinquent behaviours of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds can increase their lawbreaking behaviour and their own online self-promotion (“uploading footage of their illicit exploits for kudos”), may be a source of pride and an inducement to offend. It has been noted that the sensationalism of delinquent acts by the news media can make celebrities of individuals, and this may be why people seeking notoriety frequently imitate crimes (Carroll et al., 2016).

In some ways the news reports and anecdotal evidence from police and community workers about community based antisocial behaviour supports what is being reported by teachers in high schools i.e., adolescents from African refugee backgrounds becoming
aggressive and pursuing a specific reputation, which changes as they progress into mainstream classes. The extensive array of research on reputation and delinquency by Emler and colleagues and Carroll and colleagues over the past 30 years examining the outcomes of the actions of adolescents as they attempt to cultivate a delinquent reputation provides a strong platform for the present research.

In summary, delinquency is complex and multi-determined (Carroll et al., 2009) while reputation is a complex social phenomenon arising from social processes within a community of individuals, which link people to particular social identities. Research demonstrating the links between the two is extensive (e.g., Buelga, Musitu, Murgui, Pons, & Howard, 2008; Carroll, Baglioni, Houghton, & Bramston, 1999; Carroll, Green, Houghton, & Wood, 2003; Carroll, Hattie, Durkin, & Houghton, 2001; Carroll, Houghton, Hattie, & Durkin, 1999; Emler & Reicher, 1995). As Emler and Reicher (1995) so eloquently argued, the motivations of adolescents and the trajectories they pursue to achieve their desired reputation involves a range of deliberate choices and decisions which they must make. Moreover, “reputation is a consequence not a cause of action … people do not merely have reputations, they also seek to manage their reputations” (p. 104).

For almost all adolescents, the management and promotion of their desired reputation centres on associations with like-minded peers (see Carroll et al., 2009). For adolescents from African refugee backgrounds their initial associations are with peers from similar cultural backgrounds in the relative stability of an IEC, a place where connections between students and teachers are strong (see Due & Riggs, 2016). It is known that when adolescents have strong connectedness to school they are less likely to affiliate with
deviant peers (see Carroll et al., 2009). Their reluctance to compromise good relationships with teachers and peers is reinforced by maintaining this strong connection with school. Conversely, individuals who have low school connectedness receive limited social reinforcement in school settings for positive conventional goal pursuit, and therefore engage in deviant peer relationships that optimise negative social reinforcement (Oetting & Donnermeyer, 1998). Social connectedness, or conversely a lack thereof, in the school setting, may be critical in the formulation of goals and the development and maintenance of conforming or non-conforming reputations/social identities.

**School Connectedness**

School connectedness refers to a student’s relationship to school and his/her feelings about school (Libbey, 2004). Research shows that students who experience positive school connectedness enjoy school life. They also believe they are cared for and supported by their teachers and peers (Due & Riggs, 2016). Girls tend to report higher levels of school belonging than boys and this is consistent across a range of student ages (Gillen-O’Neel & Fuligni, 2013). Although a number of studies have predicted that young people from ethnic-minority backgrounds report lower school belonging than their ethnic-majority peers, the findings have been mixed (Booker, 2007; Goodenow, 1993; Voelkl, 1997), with no empirical evidence to date pertaining to adolescents from African refugee backgrounds.

One longitudinal study in which ethnicity was a variable (Gillen-O’Neel & Fuligni, 2013) found that over the course of high school, “girls’ school belonging tended to decline, whereas boys’ school belonging remained the same; by the end of high school, the gender difference in school belonging had disappeared” (p. 687). With reference to students from
“ethnic minority groups”, ethnic group membership alone was not associated with mean levels of school belonging or with changes in school belonging across the high school experience. Of particular note, school belonging was found to operate similarly across students from different ethnic backgrounds across the course of high school. While these findings are important, whether any students within the study’s ethnic minority sub groupings were from refugee backgrounds was not reported.

School connectedness is also powerful predictor for adolescents’ physical, educational, and socio-emotional well-being (Anderman 2002; Catalano, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Resnick et al., 1997). Oldfield, Humphrey and Herbon (2015) argued that connectedness is related to the satisfaction of an individual’s need to belong and has been defined across the continuum from, simply belonging or participating in the school through to more complex definitions incorporating the schools’ support of students’ academic interests, personal health and wellbeing and provision of a safe school environment (see Oldfield, Humphrey, & Herbon, 2015). It is clear then that connectedness is more than just the immediate network to which a young person belongs (Pinkerton & Dolan, 2007) and has implications for the way in which young people present themselves to others.

According to Connell and Wellborn (1991) the ecological characteristics of structure (clarity of expectation), autonomy support (provision of choice), and involvement (interest and support of individuals) help young people to achieve their three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. These, they argued, create highly connected students. One study examined the extent to which the characteristics of schools themselves create opportunities for students to become involved and connected.
Waters, Cross and Shaw (2010) reported that structural characteristics (i.e., school size, number of year levels, leadership support for pastoral care and school sector), functional characteristics (i.e., intangible policies and procedures which influence the way in which students interact and include clear, consistent expectations of behaviour, student involvement in decision making, high expectations for learning/academic achievement and pastoral care strategies), and the school’s built environment (i.e., physical characteristics of school ecology such as the amount of gardens and the presence of graffiti) were associated with school connectedness. The research also found that the extent to which students were connected to their teachers and peers was related to their feelings of connection to their school, particularly when students were new to the school environment. This seems particularly relevant to adolescents from refugee backgrounds because school is often the first point of interaction outside of their family (see Due & Riggs, 2016).

In examining the importance of school characteristics in determining adolescent levels of school connectedness Waters, Cross and Shaw (2010) found that smaller class sizes and more highly trained teachers were associated with greater levels of students’ feelings of school connectedness. The authors hypothesized that smaller class sizes may create greater opportunities for young people to become connected to teachers and school and create more time for pastoral care in the timetable, which may in turn lead to greater feelings of connectedness to teachers. It was then posited that students with very low teacher connectedness have most to gain from targeted school based strategies to help them engage with their teachers and ultimately protect them from problem behaviours.
School connectedness is also an important domain of school climate (Zullig, Koopman, Patton, & Ubbes, 2010) and has been conceptualised as the affective and interpersonal aspect of the school experience which includes students’ sense of safety, belonging at the school, and teacher fairness and support (see Loukas & Pach, 2013). It is said to exist when a person is actively involved with another person, object, group or environment and that involvement promotes a sense of comfort, wellbeing and anxiety reduction (Hagerty et al., 1993). Considerable evidence exists which suggests that school connectedness is a powerful predictor for adolescents’ physical, educational, and socio-emotional wellbeing (e.g., Anderman 2002; Catalano et al. 2004; Resnick et al. 1997). Furthermore, evidence demonstrates that adolescents who are connected to the school’s norms, values and expectations will refrain from engaging in behaviours inconsistent with the schools expectations, including risk taking behaviours and delinquency, and drug and alcohol use (Dornbusch, Erickson, Laird, & Wong, 2001; Loukas, Ripperger-Suhler, & Horton, 2009; Resnick et al., 1997).

With reference to connectedness to teachers, the evidence demonstrates that young people who are more connected to an institution elicit more positive reactions from teachers (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). It is known that positive relationships between students from refugee backgrounds and peers and teachers are critically important for developing a sense of belonging, improving academic outcomes, and for facilitating peer relationships (de Heer, 2016). In contrast, individuals who are disconnected from school tend to receive less positive support from teachers, and are more likely to associate with disengaged peers (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). These students tend to become increasingly disengaged as they progress through high school (Yazzie-Mintz, 2007) with many likely to experience academic failure, school dropout, and a host of negative psychosocial outcomes (Li &
In addition, these young people tend to seek sustenance in problem behaviours and associate with delinquent friends, which may in turn exacerbate their lack of connection and alienation from school (Bachman, 2008; Morrison, Robertson, Laurie, & Kelly, 2002; Wang & Fredricks, 2013). Furthermore, this often provokes negative interpersonal interactions with teachers, which inevitably lead to further disconnection from school (Bachman, 2008).

In one study conducted by Loukas and Pasch (2013) being close with teachers explained the protective effects of school connectedness, however, this was only for girls. That is, girls who were connected to school were found to deviate less from school expectations, were less aggressive and obtained the emotional support they needed to cope with any negative experiences. Conversely, boys who lacked a strong school connectedness experienced increases in their conduct problems and aggressive behaviour. This interplay between dissipating school connection and problem behaviours is said to shape the development of the individual’s social identity and influences his/her decisions regarding goals (see Wang & Fredricks, 2013).

According to the relatively limited research conducted to date, adolescents from refugee (and immigrant) backgrounds have trouble in their efforts to develop school connectedness, irrespective of country of settlement (Abu-rayya, 2013). Although Gillen-O’Neel and Fuligni (2013) reported that school belongingness operates similarly across the course of high school for students from different ethnic backgrounds, their sample participants did not transition from one school placement (IEC) to another (Mainstream) during the course of high school. Consequently, it may be that for adolescents from refugee backgrounds, the transition from IEC to mainstream schooling exacerbates
feelings of dissonance between their cultural (origin) identity (which may be maintained in an IEC) and that required for the new social group within the mainstream school (see Sam, 2000) and as a result school connectedness decreases.

Students from Refugee Backgrounds in the Education System

The education systems in Australia appear to be not well equipped or coordinated to address the issues presented by adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (Due et al., 2016; Due et al., 2015; Olliff & Couch, 2005; Zwi et al., 2007). School practitioners are an important influence in supporting young people from African refugee backgrounds especially in helping them to harness their internal resources to cope with the demands of resettlement (Cameron, Frydenberg, & Jackson, 2016). This is an important consideration because the impact that school has on adolescents from African refugee backgrounds also has a significant long-term impact which affects the new country of residence; specifically “the features of the school context have an impact on the ways that minority youth acculturate at school and in wider society” (Makarova, & Birman, 2016, p. 2).

Given the importance of school, it is crucial to understand how Australian states provide for the educational needs of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. Currently, this varies from state to state. Some Australian states have implemented Intensive English Centres (IEC) while others have Intensive English Language Centres (IELC) (referred to collectively as IECs hereafter), to which students can enter on a continuous rolling basis. IECs aim to facilitate English language development and assist young people from refugee/migrant backgrounds (who have been in Australia ≤12 months) to successfully settle into the education system prior to transitioning to mainstream schooling. IECs are generally located within the grounds of a mainstream school, to which student’s transition
following their IEC placement. As such they also seek to improve the transition process itself.

In Western Australia, where the current research was conducted, students from refugee backgrounds may (initially on arrival) spend up to 24 months in an IEC prior to transitioning to mainstream schooling. The findings from research focusing on this process has led some researchers such as Olliff and Couch (2005) to question whether the length of time that young refugee people spend in IECs is adequate. It has been argued that 6 to 12 or 24 months of ESL services for newly arrived migrants is not sufficient for young people with disrupted schooling backgrounds (Olliff & Couch, 2005). Moreover, such inadequate levels of service can lead to immediate frustrations for teachers and students, as well as an increased risk of poor future education (Olliff & Couch, 2005). Brown et al. (2006) argued that up to 24 months is an inadequate period of time for young people with significant disruptive schooling, especially when they face the daunting task of acquiring English in the mainstream community. According to Garcia (2000) while three to seven years is necessary to achieve initial stability and familiarity with the system for non-refugee students, up to 10 years is required for those with interrupted schooling. Moreover, a review of the capacity of youth language programs in Australia to respond to the needs of refugee youth (see Bond et al., 2007) recommended there be more focus on health within the teaching curriculum, increased contact hours for young people, increased partnerships between sites, and an increased focus on vocational support through linking with employment support services.

To date, there appears to be a very limited evidence-base, built on empirical research, from which to make definitive recommendations regarding the amount of time that should
be spent in IECs prior to transitioning to mainstream schooling. What is known is that the
time spent in an IEC is beneficial and the importance of the IEC, especially for academic
involvement, school attachment, belief in the school, and relationships with peer and
teachers is clearly shown through a number of qualitative based studies (e.g., Due et al.,
2015; de Heer, et al., 2016). What happens when these young people from refugee
backgrounds transition to mainstream schooling from an IEC is relatively unknown,
however. For many students from African refugee backgrounds transition to the
mainstream setting appears to be associated with increased emotional and behavioural
problems (Brown, Miller, & Mitchell, 2006; Lloyd, 2006; Milner & Khawaja, 2010;
Poppitt & Frey, 2007; Ziaian et al., 2012) and increases in non-conformity and aggressive
behaviour (Brown et al., 2006; Hillier, 2002; Jackson, 2007). In the school context young
people from refugee (& migrant) backgrounds are faced with additional and continually
changing circumstances and associated uncertainties, which pose numerous threats,
particularly to their identity and self-concept (McGregor et al., 2016).

According to Carrasquillo, Kucer and Abrams (2004) many students from refugee
backgrounds compare themselves to English-speaking peers, and in doing so evaluate
themselves as not competent and therefore avoid any social interactions. Research (Due
& Riggs, 2010) conducted with a small sample of N = 29 African primary school students
tends to support this. Over a period of eight weeks, the researchers conducted an
ethnographic study, with observations conducted of students from refugee and non-
refugee backgrounds. These interactions focused on the schoolyard and the students’ use
of the playground space. In addition to the observations a questionnaire was completed
by teachers regarding school policies pertaining to the ‘New Arrivals Programmes’
(NAP), the school environment, and the use of space in the school yard. Findings revealed
that limited interactions took place between NAP individuals and mainstream children, even when NAP and non-NAP students were seen playing in the same space. Rather, NAP and non-NAP students typically played in distinct groups with little interaction between the two. Furthermore, the field notes taken by the researchers suggested that in addition to sometimes playing in the same space as non-NAP students (though not with them), NAP students often played on the edges of the main play areas. The data from the completed questionnaires suggested that teachers perceived much higher levels of shared play between NAP and non-NAP students than was actually observed, thus highlighting a considerable gap between the perceptions that teachers have of instances of shared play and those observed.

Based on these findings the authors hypothesized that the division in playground space and its usage was related to power between students from mainstream groups and students from ethnic backgrounds. (A similar point was made by Kuriloff & Reichert [2003] in their investigation of how males of different class and colour negotiate the academic and social geography of an elite independent school.) Anecdotal evidence from teachers and findings from some small-scale exploratory studies (e.g., Due & Riggs, 2010) suggest that the division of space and the issue related to power is further compounded among African adolescent from refugee backgrounds when they transit into mainstream school.

Many adolescents from African refugee backgrounds place a high priority on education and have high expectations of the education system (Cassity & Gow, 2005). Unfortunately, very few are armed with the necessary strategies for resolving the conflict in which they inevitably become involved (Earnest et al., 2007) and consequently, their hopes are dashed only to be replaced with despondency as they transition through
mainstream schooling (Earnest et al., 2007). Although what transpires across the IEC - mainstream schooling trajectory is unknown, ‘time’ has been cited elsewhere as a key feature when considering what factors in the host community predict wellbeing for individuals from refugee backgrounds (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). Drawing data from ‘The Good Starts Study’ (see Gifford et al., 2009) which examined the resettlement experience of “refugee youth” in Australia, Correa-Velez et al. (2010) highlighted the importance of the transition period from first arrival in Australia through the first three years, especially in terms of social status in the host community.

In the education system, transition from IEC to mainstream classes is also important because it is a setting where the important process of acculturation unfolds (Makarova & Birman, 2016), a two-dimensional process underlined by the cultural maintenance of the culture of origin and contact and participation with the host culture (Berry, 1997). The combination of these two dimensions leads to integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization, all of which have substantial consequences for the health and wellbeing of young people across the lifespan.

**Students from Refugee Backgrounds: Acculturation and Mainstream Schooling**

According to Ahern (1997), as cited in Tempany (2009) culture is a learned behaviour that is shared and transmitted from one generation to the next for the purpose of human adjustment and adaptation. It encompasses institutions, roles, values, beliefs and learned behaviours. On arriving in a new country, individuals have to re-establish their lives and adapt to new concepts. They generally go through a process of examining their original values and cultural beliefs and modifying them as a result of integrating within the host culture (Sam & Berry, 2006). This complex pattern of continuity and change that occurs
is the process of acculturation. This has been variously described as: a process that involves one culture trying to adapt to another, usually the dominant culture (Kim & Abreu, 2001); culture change that can affect both or either of the groups who come into contact (Berry, 2002); or “as the meeting of cultures and the resulting changes” (Berry, 2005, p. 698). Although in practice it induces more changes in one group rather than the other (Berry, 1997).

The importance of how well immigrant and refugee youth manage their daily lives in personal, social, and academic areas, particularly in relation to school adjustment and behaviour problems within their intercultural setting (i.e., sociocultural adaptation) was highlighted by Berry, Phinney, Sam and Vedder (2006) in a study involving 7,997 adolescents (5,366 immigrants, ages 13-18 years) from 26 different cultural backgrounds (13 immigrant-receiving countries). A cluster analysis revealed four distinct profiles or ways of acculturating. The largest number of young persons (36.4%) sought to acculturate by being involved with both their heritage culture and the national culture (the integration profile). The second largest group (22.5%) sought to acculturate by being primarily oriented towards their own ethnic group, with limited involvement with the national society (the ethnic profile). Both of these profiles involved links to one's heritage culture, and provided substantial support for cultural maintenance during the process of acculturation. The third profile (the diffuse profile) (22.4%) (almost equal to the ethnic profile) comprised young people with a clear orientation who appeared to be marginalised and confused. The fourth profile (the national profile) (18.7%) indicated that assimilation tendencies were limited among these young persons.
The results from this study suggested that local ecology is important in influencing how young immigrants acculturate. The findings also revealed that males adapted slightly better “psychologically” (sic) than girls, but had poorer sociocultural adaptation, which supports other work that females may be more at psychological risk for acculturation problems than males (see Carballo, 1994). Furthermore, being involved in neither culture nor being confused about one’s situation (diffuse profile) undermined psychological and sociocultural adaptation.

In the school context, young people from refugee backgrounds are faced with additional and continually changing circumstances and associated uncertainties, which pose numerous threats, particularly to their identity and self-concept (McGregor et al., 2016). This was raised by Berry et al. (2006) some 10 years earlier who highlighted the importance of ensuring teachers and therapists and those who are counseling immigrant youth undergoing acculturation. Berry et al. (2006) concluded that

the core message for individuals is to seek ways to follow the integrative path (i.e., be involved with both their heritage culture and the national culture) as much as possible (p. 328).

Furthermore,

teachers, therapists, and parents may all profit from knowing that the integrative way of acculturating is likely to lead these young people to more satisfactory and successful transitions to adulthood in their culturally diverse societies (p. 329).
Studies in New Zealand (Humpage, 1999) and in Canada (Hyman, Vu, & Beiser, 2000) have found that adjusting to school is one of the most difficult experiences for young people from refugee backgrounds. In both of these countries, research found that difficulties were primarily because of “marginalisation through lack of English fluency, feeling different from others, as well as teachers causing stress by asking other students to ‘be nice’ to refugees” (see Naidoo, p. 262). With reference to the students from African refugee backgrounds, the cultural conflict among these students results from experiencing a more authoritarian student–teacher relationship, for example in Sudan than in Australia (Naidoo, 2009). This exacerbated when the students wanted to integrate more with their peers in school but lacked the language and social skills to do so (Humpage, 1999).

Research has shown that language is a key factor for environmental mastery (Khawaja et al., 2008), and where there are difficulties in language acquisition poor adaptation is compounded (McNeely et al., 2017; Rousseau et al., 1996). Indeed, language provides a means of integration through communication and enhances the understanding between two or more cultures (Poppitt & Frey, 2007). Conversely, language and communication barriers in school contexts can lead to aggressive behaviour because of feelings of anxiety and frustration about not being able to read, write, and communicate with others (see McMichael & Manderson, 2004; The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, 2005).

The barriers that are encountered by young people from refugee backgrounds in their attempts to successfully complete secondary education were investigated by Brough et al. (2003) who interviewed 123 young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. The
supportive roles the young people took at home and the associated issues related to their disrupted education or lack of education in their home countries of origin made schooling in Australia very challenging. Cassity and Gow (2005) similarly found that limited educational background and the pressures of supporting family in Australia and in the Sudan made schooling in Australia very difficult for high school students from Southern Sudanese backgrounds living in Sydney. Similar difficulties and barriers to success in tertiary education were also identified by Joyce, Earnest, de Mori, and Silvagni (2009) via focus group interviews with 18-36 year old students from refugee backgrounds.

There is no doubt that disruptions in schooling negatively impact the adaptation process in the country of resettlement (King, Heinonen, Uwabor, & Adeleye-Olusae, 2016) and the stresses associated with this are known as acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987; Correa-Velez et al., 2010; Gifford et al., 2009; Williams & Berry, 1991). Research has shown that the traumatic events experienced by young people from refugee backgrounds (but not all young people) often induce particularly high stress, and in doing so place them at greater risk for adverse psychological outcomes (Halevi et al., 2016). How well young people from refugee backgrounds manage these circumstances in personal, social, and academic areas of their daily lives, especially in relation to school adjustment and behaviour problems, within their intercultural setting is important in the acculturation process (Berry et al., 2006). Having to accommodate the culture of the homeland in their memories, along with the culture of the new country, as well as the culture of refugee resettlement and the struggles with emerging identity formation (particularly in the context of dual cultural membership) is an issue of great importance highlighted since at least 25 years ago (see Phinney, 1990).
According to Berry (1990), the immigrant identity is developed amid the confluence of the host majority and other newcomers. This is generally seen as in-group and out-group contact. Berry’s (1990) (see Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006) acculturation model yielded four major constructs of acculturation through which the immigrants/refugees own culture begins to experience acculturative changes due to forces in the new culture. These constructs include: Integration strategy, in which individuals form positive relations with the other ethnic groups or the dominant culture and this is accompanied by maintenance of the ethnic identity and traditions; Assimilation strategy where individuals do not desire to retain their ethnic identity and adopt the dominant culture; Separation strategy where individuals have a strong affiliation with their own culture and avoid contact with other groups; and Marginalisation which occurs when individuals lose cultural and psychological contact with their own ethnic group and the host or dominant society.

A significant challenge for young people from refugee backgrounds, therefore, is the need to construct a positive ethnic identity within a multiethnic context and to deal with different expectations from their cultural community and the wider society of settlement (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). Amoah (2014) elaborated on this in an eloquently argued paper entitled “The Identity Question for African Youth: Developing the New While Maintaining the Old”. Set in the context of the United States of America, Amoha (2014) posited that children of African immigrant families face confusion about who they are, because they are expected to behave as their country of origin expects, but at the same time compete and succeed as their new country of settlement dictates. Unfortunately, school and family contexts work against congruous (agreeable) acculturation, especially so it seems as young people transition the high school system.
The IEC-High School Transition

During their initial placement in IECs young people from African refugee backgrounds are said, by educators, to be diligent, hardworking and to have high academic aspirations. Indeed, students from African refugee backgrounds place a high priority on education and have high expectations of the education system (Cassidy & Gow, 2005; Perry, 2008); they see it as a pathway to future employment (Cassity & Gow, 2005). Anecdotal evidence from researchers (see Brown et al., 2006; Lloyd, 2006) suggests that the strong feelings of optimism demonstrated by these young people during their IEC placement is only a temporary feature of early settlement, however and on transition into mainstream schooling this earlier optimism falters and is replaced with restlessness and aggression.

Brown, Miller and Mitchell (2006) raised the important question of what happens to African adolescents from refugee backgrounds when they transition to mainstream classrooms following a period of time in an IEC. This is an important issue to be resolved because according to Earnest, Housen and Gillieatt (2007) if young people from African refugee backgrounds are to attain their goals and regain a sense of self-worth then the education system must maximise resources to aid their learning outcomes. Young people exposed to a supportive environment where positive emotional attachments are fostered, where there is an availability of attachments, and a perception of social support from teachers and peers are at a reduced risk of numerous adverse outcomes (Stewart, Sun, Patterson, Lemerle, & Hardie, 2004). Indeed, Stewart et al. (2004) demonstrated that the sense of feeling a connection to adults and teachers, having good peer relationships, and having a strong sense of autonomy and self-capacity, and parent recognition of a supportive school environment are influenced by the degree to which schools support its students.
Based on the evidence that is currently available (see Gunasekera, Houghton, Glasgow, & Boyle, 2014) it appears that on transition from IECs to mainstream schooling, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds experience challenges, which subsequently leads to changes in their behaviour, and consequently to adverse behavioural outcomes. It may be that this “transition period” is a sensitive acculturation period as posited by Cheung, Chudek, and Heine, (2010) and as such requires investigation because schools provide opportunities for acceptance and integration among peers and for quality teacher-student relationships (Velasquez et al., 2013) - both of which are key determinants of social emotional wellbeing during adolescence (Hattie, 2012). Indeed, friendships are important for all young people, and especially those from refugee backgrounds, at all stages of their transition (de Heer et al., 2016). Furthermore, positive relationships between students from refugee backgrounds and teachers are critically important for the development of sense of belonging and positive academic outcomes, and for facilitating peer relationships (de Heer et al., 2016).

Why adolescents in general become involved in delinquent and/or aggressive behaviour has been greatly debated and to date a number of theoretical models have been developed to explain this. These include, cultural deviance theories, strain theories, control theories, social learning theories, rational choice theory, symbolic interactionist theory, and developmental theories of delinquency. It is beyond the scope of the present thesis to examine all of these but it would be remiss not to mention the most dominant ones (albeit very briefly) since they may offer an explanation for why adolescents from African refugee backgrounds turn to delinquent and antisocial behaviour when they enter mainstream classrooms. These include social learning theories, control theories, and developmental theories of delinquency.
Theories of Delinquent and Aggressive Behaviour

**Social Learning Theories**

*Differential Association Theory:* According to social learning theories criminal behaviour is learned primarily through exposure to others (Kubrin, Stucky, & Krohn, 2009). Differential association theory (Sutherland, 1947; Sutherland & Cressey, 1978) explains deviance in terms of an individual’s social relationships. That is, the primary mechanism for acquiring criminal behaviour is from one's interaction and communication with others, through a process of differential association with deviant and conventional individuals (Akers, 1996). According to the principles of differential association, close interpersonal association with criminal peers inevitably increases an adolescent's criminal propensity by providing behavioural models that facilitate deviant attitudes and pursuits; further, both techniques and motivations for crimes are learned through these social transmissions. Although numerous studies have examined Sutherland's differential association theory and highlighted the significance of peer influence the theory does not specify the learning process (e.g., operant, classical conditioning, or modelling) involved in differential association (Akers, 1973, 1977) nor does it elucidate what motivates that learning and why many individuals learn the attitudes at the same life stage (Moffitt, 1993).

**Control Theories**

*Social Control Theory:* Social control theory posits that delinquency is the consequence of an individual’s failure to bond to society (Hirschi, 1969, 2004). In making decisions an individual takes into account four dimensions of social bond, namely: **attachment** (corresponds to the emotional ties which youths form to significant conventional people (e.g., parents, teachers, friends) or institutions (e.g., schools,
churches, youth organisations; the greater the attachment, the less likely the individual will engage in deviant behaviour); **commitment** (investment of time and energy in conforming activities e.g., going to college; when one deliberates on a delinquent act, one would have to consider the possible consequence on one’s accrued conforming actions); **involvement** (involvement, relates to activities but focuses on a person’s participation in noncriminal pursuits e.g., familial activities, school events, leisure pastime; involvement of time and effort to these conventional activities deprives a person of opportunities for deviancy); and **belief** (related to moral validity of the common social value system as greater acceptance of social rules increases the likelihood of conformity to social norms).

Conformity towards conventional goals is highly dependent on the strength of one's social relationship with society. Strong bonds increase the chances of compliance with conformist ideals and norms, but a weak bond (or absence) raises the probability of transgression (Junger-Tas, 1992). An individual weighs the benefits and costs of conformity versus transgression and ultimately selects the course of action, which appears most beneficial (Hirschi, 1969).

Although social control theory has been empirically supported in the research literature, motivational factors of young people towards crime and deviance are not addressed (Church, Wharton, & Taylor, 2008). Furthermore, while the absence of positive social bonds or reasons to be good allows transgression, it does not ensure delinquency as deviant behaviour requires its own conditions (Emler & Reicher, 1995).
**Developmental Theories**

*Developmental Theories:* The timing at which delinquency commenced and the developmental progression to increasingly serious disruptive behaviours are the key features which determine the severity and continuity of antisocial behaviour and its association with psychosocial and individual problems (Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Loeber, 2000). Developmental theories of delinquency place emphasis on the importance of developmental trajectories, pathways, and transition of antisocial behaviour and specially underscore the need to incorporate a life-course view (Moffitt, 1993, 2006; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1998), a dimension which is inherently lacking in some other prominent theories (Carroll et al., 2009).

According to the highly influential work of Moffitt (1993, 2006), and based on the anecdotal evidence, *adolescent-limited* antisocial behaviour, appears to most appropriately fit the actions of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. That is, their behaviour is motivated by a discrepancy between their biological maturity and social maturity. Despite feeling biologically mature, *adolescent-limited* offenders are unable to access the rights and privileges of adulthood (e.g., entry into adult-only leisure settings, sexual relationships, or spending money) and as such the associated power and status. In order to access adult's mature status, *adolescent-limited* offenders are motivated to mimic their antisocial peers who are more adept at deviance and thus able to attain the desired adult possessions.

One theory, based on extensive work examining the motivational and social determinants of adolescents’ behaviour in school settings (for a comprehensive review see Carroll, Houghton, Durkin, & Hattie, 2009) is *Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory* (REG:
This appears to be highly applicable to adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, and particularly for examining the IEC-Mainstream School Transition process they experience.

**Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory**

During adolescence, important processes of reputation formation, decisions about educational opportunities, consolidation of developing social values, and the construction of plans for one's future are all salient. Some adolescents, who are connected to school will adopt the school’s values, norms and expectations and for this reason will refrain from engaging in behaviours that are inconsistent with the schools expectations (Lopukas & Pasch, 2013). There are others, however, (identified as “at risk” in other research) who are in a transitionary state. These young people experience a dissonance between the skills required for their host setting (perhaps for example in the case of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, the IEC) and that required for the new dominant social group within the mainstream school (see Sam, 2000). It may be as posited by Steele (1997) that some adolescents with refugee backgrounds “disidentify” with school and seek other outlets through which to feel positive about themselves, especially through their reputations.

While it is known that similarities and differences exist between the relative importance of different goals and reputations among groups of adolescents in the general population (see Carroll et al., 2012; Carroll et al., 2016) little, if anything is known about the goals and reputational orientations of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. Given that these young people face a multitude of problems associated with adjusting to institutional change, examining how their behaviour changes from the IEC through to
mainstream classes is important. REG provides an opportunity to do so and to make comparisons with adolescents in general. However, before presenting Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory, the separate components making up this theory (i.e., Goal setting theory and Reputation enhancement theory) will be described.

**Goal Setting Theory**

Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1984, 1990) is based on the proposition that conscious goals regulate human behaviour and describes the relationship between goals and behaviour, with the focus being on the goals a person chooses, their motivation to achieve the goals, and the likelihood that the goals will be achieved (Latham & Locke, 2006). Adolescence is a critical period for the formulation of goals, and the *content of the goal* (that is related to its specificity and difficulty) and the *intensity of the goal* (which is related to the effort required, the importance or priority it is given, and a person’s commitment to the goal) are *the* two major components (Locke & Latham, 1990a).

Important processes of identity formation, decisions about educational opportunities, the consolidation of developing social values, and the construction of plans for one's future are all very salient during adolescence (see Carroll et al., 2009). The decisions and directions taken by adolescents have long-term implications and therefore goal setting is important (Durkin, 1995; Hechinger, 1992; Henderson & Dweck, 1990; Nurmi, 1991a; Salmela-Aro, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2007).

Goals in adolescence are largely organized around issues of social and personal identity (Berndt, 1979; Durkin 1995), education (Nurmi 1987; Wentzel, 1994), career (Langan-
Fox 1991; Nicholls 1989), sport and leisure (Agnew & Petersen 1989; Morash 1983; Sugden & Yiannakis 1982), and material development (Steinberg & Silverberg 1986).

The type of goal, difficulty or challenge presented by the goal, the commitment of the person to that goal, and the feedback received, are key elements of goal theory. They are also important to adolescents’ goal directed behaviour (Carroll, 1994; Carroll, Durkin, Hattie, & Houghton, 1997; Carroll, Gordon, Haynes, & Houghton, 2012; Carroll, Hattie, Durkin, & Houghton, 2001; Carroll et al., 2001; Carroll et al., 2002). The challenge that goals present to individuals and the composition of the audience who witness the individual’s actions in the pursuit of these goals, are key influences in fostering the types of social identities and reputations an individual strives to establish and subsequently maintain. Indeed, there is extensive research evidence showing that goals are important for the attainment of the social identity desired (see Carroll, Houghton, Durkin, & Hattie, 2016; Carroll et al., 2009).

Type of Goal or Content of goals varies qualitatively (i.e., people have different goals, such as career goals, educational goals, personal goals, and/or sporting goals), and quantitatively, (i.e., a person has either a single goal or multiple goals) (Locke & Latham, 1990). For many young people the focus is educational and career goals (Nicholls, Patashnick, & Nolen, 1985; Nurmi, 1989; Wentzel, 1989), with interpersonal, reputational, and self-presentation concerns also prominent among adolescents’ goals (see Carroll et al., 2009 for a comprehensive review; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Goldsmith et al., 1989; Hoge, Andrews, & Leschied, 1996; Hopkins & Emler, 1990). Other goal content identified in research has included freedom/autonomy goals (e.g., Goudas, Biddle, & Fox, 1994; Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986; “to get my own way”, “to be able to
do whatever I want”) and physical goals (Duda, 1989; Duda & Nicholls, 1992; Goudas et al., 1994; e.g., “to be a member of a sports team”, “to be good at sport”).

According to Carroll et al. (2009) sizeable individual differences exist in the clarity of young people’s goals and the importance they attach to them during this phase of educational and personal development. For example, for some adolescents, goals are related to illegal activities (e.g., “to break the rules/law”; “to have money for drugs”; see Carroll, 1995, 2002; Carroll et al., 2001; Carroll et al., 2012; Goldsmith et al., 1989; Houghton et al., 2008). These goals were clearly evident in a study conducted by Carroll et al. (2013) involving 1,328 high school students and 132 institutionalised youths (722 males, 738 females) ranging in age from 12.7 to 17 years. The sample was categorised as (i) the delinquent group – these adolescents set predominantly interpersonal goals (30%) (e.g., “get a woman and have kids”) and career goals (23%) (e.g., “to have a job”), and fewer freedom/autonomy (1%) and educational goals (4%); (ii) the at-risk group – who set career goals (31%) (e.g., “to get a good job”) as the highest and delinquency goals (e.g., “to rip others off”; “to cheat and steal”) as the lowest; and (iii) the not at-risk group – who set primarily career type goals (38%) (e.g., “to become a nurse”) and educational goals (29%) (e.g., “to get good marks at school and university”) with delinquency goals (0%) and freedom/autonomy goals (1%) being the least frequently cited. Discriminant function analyses revealed that that best predictors for distinguishing between the three groups were educational goals, delinquency goals, and interpersonal goals (see Carroll et al., 2013).

Age has been strongly identified as an important factor in the types of goals set, especially as individual’s transition from early adolescence into late adolescence. In the latter phase,
young people also set goals, which considered their future educational, occupational, family, and property-related issues. This is commensurate with the types of goals pursued by young adults who expect to finish their education, get a job, get married, and acquire materials for later life (see Nurmi, 1989a, 1989b, 1991a, 1991b; Nurmi & Pulliainen, 1991; Salmela-Aro et al., 1991, 2007).

To date, very little is known about the goal setting of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, particularly from an empirical perspective. In what appears to be the only study specifically undertaken with adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, Earnest et al. (2007) conducted six separate focus group interviews with 45 students from Intensive English Centers (IEC). Career aspirations included to be a journalist, nurse, scientist, doctor, computer expert, pilot, lawyer, engineer, electrician and teacher. While these goals demonstrated high expectations, they did not last long. Many of these students said when they transitioned to mainstream classrooms their career aspirational outlook became desolate and they soon became discouraged from pursuing them.

While this research is important for advancing knowledge and understanding, it only focused on career goals, and as stated earlier adolescents rarely pursue only one goal, rather they have multiple goals (Louro, Pieters, & Zeelenberg, 2005). Goals are generally organized around matters of social and personal identity, education, career, sport and leisure, and material development (see Carroll et al., 2009). In addition, students’ commitment to attaining their goals and how they change as they (i.e., the students) progress through education is important and to date this has received little attention. For young people from African refugee backgrounds who are known to set aspirational goals on first contact with the Australian education system very little is known about their subsequent goal setting as they transition to mainstream school classrooms. To fully
understand the goal setting of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds when they first arrive in IECs (and how they change when they transition to mainstream classes) the potential differences that might exist between them and adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who have already transitioned to mainstream schooling and non-African mainstream adolescents must be examined.

Adolescents rarely pursue a single goal, rather they have multiple goals (Carroll et al., 2013). From a review of 94 studies pertaining to mainstream school adolescents, Massey et al. (2008) reported that many adolescents formulated multiple long-term and short-term goals. However, the competition demands placed upon the individual as a result of setting multiple goals requires effective management, principally through effective goal coordination (Wentzel, 1999). To achieve this, the individual must employ self-regulatory strategies that enable multiple goals to be attained (Wentzel, 1999) and for some this is not possible. In summary, the characteristics of effective goal setting are specificity, commitment, challenge, and motivation to achieve the outcome (Austin & Vancouver 1996; Carroll et al., 2009, 2013).

With reference to goal difficulty or the challenge presented by a goal(s) research suggests it is linear, with performance levels increasing as the goal becomes more challenging (see Locke & Latham, 1990). Findings from research clearly show that the more challenging a goal is, then the greater the performance, as individuals are thought to be more motivated and prepared to try harder to attain the goal (Carroll et al., 2009; Hunter & Schmidt, 1983; Locke & Latham, 1990; Wood, Mento, & Locke, 1987). Because vague goals are ambiguous, this allows individuals to justify to themselves that they have tried “hard enough” at a point that falls lower than the performance level of someone who is trying for a specific and challenging goal (Locke & Latham, 1990). Consequently, higher
performance results from specific, hard goals than “do your best” or vague goals. Specific goals contain more information and serve as a clearer focus for behaviour and for seeking and receiving feedback. They also provide a measure by which to evaluate performance. According to Locke and Latham (1990) this process allows individuals to change strategies if satisfactory progress towards a goal is not being obtained.

An individual’s attachment or determination to reach a goal, (which has a direct impact on goal performance) is referred to as goal commitment. The higher the specificity of the goal, the more likely the goal will be achieved, and the higher the commitment to achieve the goal, the more likely it will be achieved (see Carroll et al., 2009, 2013; Locke & Latham, 2006). Goals that are specific and challenging lead to high performance, especially when individuals are committed to them (Locke & Latham, 1984, 1990). Commitment to goals is affected by: Authority figures, peers, peer pressure, role models, valence, publicness of goals, and ego involvement (e.g., see Bandura, 1986; Carroll et al., 2009, 2013; Hollenbeck, Williams, & Klein, 1989; Locke & Latham, 1984; Wright, George, Farnsworth, & McMahon, 1993). School peers are known to influence goal commitment through pressure, modelling, and competition (Carroll et al., 2013; Earley & Kanfer, 1985) and public commitment to goals has a greater effect than private commitment (Hayes et al., 1985; Hollenbeck et al., 1989). The research is clear that the higher the specificity of the goal, the more likely the goal will be achieved, and the higher the commitment to achieve the goal, the more likely it will be achieved (Locke & Latham, 2006).

*Goal feedback* refers to the action taken by others to provide information regarding aspects of the individual’s performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In terms of Goal
Theory, the aim is to *eliminate* any discrepancy between performance and goals by changing behaviour so as to maintain or enhance the goals. This suggests that the individual can repeat the task and in doing so eliminate the discrepancy, reject the feedback, or abandon his/her commitment to the goal. As a result of feedback, increased attention to the task can occur, along with more effort to attain the goal, reject the feedback message, and attention to the self. The reactions of others also exert a strong influence on this process (Leary, Haupt, Strausser, & Chokel, 1998).

Of great importance to goal setting is the *peer audience*, in that the goals adolescents set are very much motivated by the desire to present the self to the peer community in a particular way (see Carroll et al., 2009, 2013, 2016; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Houghton et al., 2008; Piehler & Dishion, 2007). This is clear from the extensive research focusing on delinquents and adolescents at risk. It has also been demonstrated in bullying research. For example, Houghton, Carroll, Tan, and Nathan (2013), Houghton, Nathan, and Taylor (2012), Nathan, Houghton, Tan, and Carroll (2011) and Rigby (2008) have all shown that bullies set a specific goal of generating an audience of peers in a public arena to impress with their overt bullying. Even where *covert* bullying is involved (e.g., leaving messages written in highly visible locations or through texting peers), these also involve visibility and an audience, although in delayed mode. According to Reputation Enhancement Theory (Emler, 1984) a peer audience is extremely important to adolescent goal setting because companions, whether in crime or conformity, often generate and facilitate shared expressions of interest.
Goal Setting: Concluding Comments

Goals are mental representations of desired outcomes and there is extensive evidence showing the growing importance of goals in the lives of young people as they get older. This is particularly true of social goals, which have been linked to adolescents’ social lives, a sense of belonging and acceptance by peers (Li & Wright, 2014). As they get older, adolescents pay more attention to their social standing among their peers and become highly motivated to pursue peer status (Bukowski, Buhrmester, & Underwood, 2011; Rubin, Wojlawowicz, Rose-Krasnor, Booth-LaForce, & Burgess, 2006). This pursuit of peer status and acceptance is often highly related to adolescents’ aggressive and pro-social behaviours (Cillessen & Mayeux, 2004). However, research has also shown that different types and functions of aggression (i.e. verbal, physical, proactive, reactive) are differentially related to adolescents’ peer status (Rose et al., 2004). To date, however, it appears that no research has examined different types and functions of aggression in relation to peer status.

Goals are extremely important in the lives of adolescents, but the type and/or content of goals varies among individuals according to their interests, activities, relationships, and images. Findings from longitudinal research comparing delinquent (institutionalized) and non-institutionalised youths (Lanctot, Cernkovich, & Giordano, 2007) revealed the importance of understanding the goal directed behaviour of young people during their formative schooling years because many choose to pursue delinquent and antisocial behaviours at this time. Whether this applies to adolescents from African refugee backgrounds is unknown. Given the anecdotal evidence from students and teachers suggesting that many of them choose delinquent and antisocial behaviours as they transition to mainstream classes, developing a clearer picture is critical.
Although there is extensive evidence regarding the goal setting of adolescents, to date, very limited information is available on the goals that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds set, and even less is to be found on the type and content of the goals these young people set. Moreover, how these goals change on transitioning from IEC to mainstream settings appears to be non-existent. It is known that higher performance levels result when specific, challenging goals are set rather than vague or easy goals, (Locke & Latham, 1990) and a direct, positive effect on performance occurs when there is a strong commitment to goals and feedback is provided, particularly from peers and authority figures. Level of commitment has yet to be examined among adolescents from African refugee backgrounds.

Finally, the presence of a peer audience is paramount to the individual who strives to achieve his/her goals and this then translates into the attainment of the desired reputation of choice. With reference to reputations there is a substantial body of research among mainstream children and adolescents (see Carroll et al., 2009, 2013 for comprehensive reviews). However, the reputational orientations of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds is yet to be investigated. Some related work has been conducted, most notably by Abu-rayya (2013) who drew attention to the need of adolescents from refugee backgrounds to construct a positive ethnic identity within a multi-ethnic context. Setting goals to attain a specific reputation of choice is important among adolescents per se and it is posited here that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are no different in regards to this.
Reputation Enhancement Theory

A reputation is the estimation in which a person is held by others, such as their peers, neighbours, or some broader community (Carroll et al., 2012, 2016). Reputations are collective phenomena and products of social processes, not just the impressions that individuals hold of themselves (Emler, 1990). Reputation Enhancement Theory (RET: Emler, 1984; Emler & Reicher, 1995), is a dominant theory explaining the behaviour of young people and this posits that individuals deliberately choose an image or social identity which they present and promote in their community. They then enhance and maintain this image or social identity by performing visible actions to an audience in their community. Prosocial or antisocial action is not only a means of acquiring a conforming or deviant reputation among outsiders but is also a means of proving one’s credentials to the in-group to sustain one’s self-identity (Carroll, 1994; Carroll et al., 1999, 2001, 2003, 209, 2016; Emle, 1984; for a review, see Emler & Reicher, 1995; Houghton et al., 2008; Tan, Houghton, & Carroll, 2009).

A fundamental argument of RET is that the social goal of an individual’s behaviour is to have a public reputation (Emler, 1990). Therefore, individuals communicate their social identities through intentional, visible behaviour in order to persuade others that they belong to a particular social category (see Carroll et al., 2009). The enhancement and maintenance of a reputation is vital to all adolescents because it attributes credit to the individual and influences his/her ability to attain goals and secure material benefits (Emler, 1984). Research has proven unequivocally that reputation plays a central role in the lives of children and adolescents whether in conformity (Buelga, Musitu, Murgi, & Pons, 2008) or crime (Carroll et al., 2009, 2012; Tan et al., 2009).
Although very little is known about the reputations that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds seek, the anecdotal evidence from teachers suggests that they initially follow the typical adolescent developmental course for reputation enhancement and management. However, it seems that transitioning from the IEC to mainstream schooling (i.e., from stability to mobility) results in changes in reputation enhancement and management and goals that are set. The extensive research focusing on “typical” adolescents (i.e., delinquent, non-delinquent, at risk) has identified the final years of primary school (10 years of age onwards) as important for the initiation of a reputation (see Carroll et al., 2009; Nathan et al., 2013). That is, children designated as ‘at risk’ (i.e., individuals involved in risk taking behaviour that is defined as volitional behaviour for which the outcome is uncertain and which entails negative consequences: Pat-Horenczyk, Abramovitz, Peled, Brom, Daie et al., 2007) ideally wish to be perceived and described by others as non-conforming. They also describe themselves and ideally wish to be described as non-conforming, and admire socially deviant activities, including bullying. For non-delinquents, the opposite is true with activities and perceptions centering on conformity. Carroll et al. (2009) have shown that although reputation is detectable prior to transitioning to adolescence, it is not established until the early high school years.

In the case of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, the initial move into mainstream school classes from an IEC may mark the initiation of (in their case) a new reputation, the establishment and maintenance of this is then furthered in the mainstream high school setting. This seems to parallel the typical RET scenario in which there is movement of individuals beyond the supervision and protection of their homes, from small to big schools, and from parent to peer relationships. In the case of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, individuals move from a smaller group of peers and
teachers and the stability of the IEC to the mobility and diversity of mainstream school classes. Once in mainstream schooling adolescents from African refugee backgrounds have the choice to adapt (or not to adapt) to another dominant culture (i.e., mainstream peers) and this requires a re-evaluation of the goals they set, the reputations they choose, and the manner in which they pursue them.

It is posited here that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds deliberately choose to pursue a non-conforming reputation on transition to mainstream classes because the prospects of achieving their goals within the prevailing social order or school system becomes restricted or even closed. So, like their mainstream adolescent counterparts, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds seek to establish a self-enhancing reputation through other means and with reference to other criteria. This pathway is attractive because not only does it create a certain (tough) reputation amongst outsiders, but it also provides the condition for group membership (Elmer & Reicher, 1995), and offers a route to self-protection and standing among the peer community that would be otherwise denied (Agnew, 1991). Of course, to enhance and maintain the desired reputation they choose to pursue requires visibility of actions – an element within the anecdotal evidence supplied by teachers to date.

**RET: The Importance of Visibility and an Audience**

Reicher and Elmer (1986) emphasised the visibility of rule breakers’ conduct in fostering a reputation. Extensive research with adolescents at risk or adolescents already involved in non-conforming activities (such as conflict with teachers, delinquency, aggression) has consistently demonstrated that gaining or consolidating peer status is a powerful motivation (see Carroll et al., 2009, 2016). In this context, an individual’s reputation is
developed out of evidence accrued both directly and indirectly over time within the social environment. A reputation is shaped not only by an individual’s actions but also by the constant processing of this raw information through what the individual and others say about what he/she has done, as the individual and others interpret new evidence and try to match that to the existing social identity (Emler & Reicher, 1995).

The visibility of actions to others is therefore a key tenet of RET. Specifically, an audience (to whom the individual performs their identity) in very important because without the social support of a group within the community (inside/outside of the IEC and classroom or school), a delinquent or non-delinquent reputation is hard to sustain. According to RET, for the non-delinquent, social support and feedback comes from families and teachers, whereas for the delinquent, parents or teachers do not sustain their reputation and thus these individuals seek out alternative audiences such as peers that positively reinforce and approve of their behaviour (thus strengthening their social identity and status). The mainstream high school context provides numerous opportunities and preferred audiences for individuals to receive highly visible feedback that establishes reputations. In one of their earlier studies, Houghton and Carroll (1996) interviewed 30 male at risk high school students who had been suspended during the school year for their inappropriate behaviour (e.g., continual disruption of teaching, threatening other students, aggression against teachers and students). Twenty-six of the 30 participants stated that they got in trouble deliberately and that their actions were purposely highly visible to their peer audience in order to enhance their non-conformity. This non-conformity was endorsed by the peer audience.
Although the Houghton and Carroll (1996) findings align with the anecdotal evidence about adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, not all adolescents from African refugee backgrounds pursue delinquent non-conforming reputations as they transition from the IEC to the main school trajectory. There is no empirical or qualitative evidence to suggest that this is the case. Indeed, similar to their mainstream peers, some adolescents from African refugee backgrounds appear to pursue a law-abiding, conforming reputation because it is supported and approved by their peer audience. However, there is increasing evidence of growing teacher concerns within mainstream school contexts over the aggressive and overt non-conforming behaviour of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2014; Lloyd, 2006; Nunn, McMichael, Gifford, & Correa-Velez, 2014; Poppitt & Frey, 2007). As argued by Passini (2017) adolescents behave in a transgressive way because they want to communicate something about themselves to the people around them. In this sense, deviant actions (as well as law-abiding behaviour) correspond to a strategy that individuals adopt so as to build and preserve a certain reputation within the social context within which they interact and that reflects their orientation towards formal authority.

In the light of Passini’s (2017) words it may be these young people have chosen a particular reputation to pursue for their new mainstream school context as a goal and to achieve this they have to promote themselves before an audience of their peers. The feedback received from the audience then assists the individual to develop and maintain this reputation of choice within the mainstream school community. This has a close fit with the function of visibility of actions within RET; these are key elements on which the psychology of reputation has been built (Emler, 1984). To gain social visibility there has to be direct witnessing of the acts by others, and/or self-disclosure through gossip and
exchange of information (Emler & Reicher, 1995). The most common immediate audience are an individual’s peers and therefore peers are the basis of “social visibility” for all conforming and/or deviant behavioural choices made.

Research conducted with specific groups such as female delinquents, bullies, binge drinkers, and loners, suggests RET may be consistent with the actions of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. For example, to explain female mainstream students’ pathways into delinquency Kerpelman and Smith-Adcock (2005) gathered data from 188 Grades 7 - 11 female adolescents. The findings demonstrated that “reputation enhancement was both a strong and direct predictor of delinquency” (p. 192) and that “girls’ social groups, or approval of girlfriends, was influential in their delinquent activities” (p. 194).

Similarly, with bullies reputation is important. Nathan, Houghton, Tan and Carroll (2011) compared the reputations of 132 Western Australian 10-12 year old primary school children, 38 of whom had official records of suspension from school for bullying peers. The empirical evidence revealed significant differences between bullies (who were highly non-conforming) and non-bullies (who were highly conforming) in their reputational orientations. In a follow up study, 28 of the 38 bullies were interviewed about how they initiated, promoted, and then maintained their reputation via their bullying. Overall, bullying was a deliberate choice to attain a non-conforming reputation and was initially promoted through visibility of actions (i.e., physical bullying). These actions became more covert, particularly among girls, during the reputation promotion phase. Sex differences were most marked in the maintenance phase. While both boys and girls used cyber bullying to deliberately induce a sense of apprehension and fear, boys also
deliberately damaged their victim’s houses and gardens outside of school hours to induce a greater sense of fear and hence maintain their non-conforming reputation.

Binge drinking among adolescents has also been found to be associated with reputation enhancement. Passini (2017) recruited 166 adolescents (mean age = 16.71 years, SD = 1.66) and found that “showing off” in front of peers was a deliberate act in order to preserve a reputation and that this explained the propensity of binge-drinking behaviours and drinking motivations. Moreover, this was especially so when adolescents attached importance to a law-breaking reputation. Passini (2017, p. 129) concluded “it is specifically the value given to the ‘bad’ reputation of a law-breaking adolescent that in part pushes adolescents to engage in binge-drinking behaviors”.

In another study, reputation was found to be a key element in the behaviours of adolescent “loners”, Houghton, Carroll, Tan and Hopkins (2008) posed the question, how can reputation enhancement be viable with loners if they commit antisocial acts without the presence of an audience? Two sequentially linked studies were conducted. In the first, 1,328 high school students and 132 institutionalized youth were classified as either loners or non-loners. An initial multivariate analyses of variance revealed main effects of loner status for reputational orientations. In the second study, of the 113 participants identified as loners (75 male, 38 female), 98 were age and gender matched with non-loners. Multivariate analyses of variance revealed loners reported higher levels of involvement in physical aggression, stealing offences, and vehicle-related offences. Overall, the reputational orientations of loners were suggestive of individuals who wished to be non-conforming but desired this to be of a private nature. In this context visibility of actions and an audience were not necessarily key elements. Nevertheless, even without a direct
audience to witness their delinquent activities, peers knew about them and the acts being committed. In this sense, antisocial activity and the knowledge of it by others was still a social mechanism (Demuth, 2004; Kreager, 2004) towards the pursuit of a reputation.

**Reputation Enhancement: Concluding Comments**

An individual’s reputation is developed out of evidence accrued both directly and indirectly over time within the social environment. To have a reputation, people must be directly connected in some way to others (i.e., through an audience), except in the case of loners. This connection can be achieved through direct interactions among mutual acquaintances or more indirectly, through gossip, rumour, media reports, and other communications (Carroll et al., 2012, 2016). Adolescents are therefore major architects of their own reputations through the way in which they present their desired self-image to others. This influences their choices and interactions with peer groups with whom adolescents associate. Peer groups therefore play a fundamental role in the initiation and development of social reputations during adolescence and exert a great deal of control over the type of reputation an individual chooses, along with the behaviors in which he/she indulges to achieve this reputation (Carroll et al., 2012). Furthermore, the peer group is crucial in the maintenance of the reputation through the social support it offers.

According to RET, a reputation is a complex social phenomenon arising from social processes within a community of individuals which link persons to particular social identities (Emler, 1984). Acquiring or striving for a reputation therefore has implications for how a young person regards himself or herself and for how others perceive him or her (Brown, 1990; Campbell, 1993; Carroll et al., 2009; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Passini, 2017; Price & Dodge, 1989). Furthermore, the way in which adolescents elect to be seen
by others (as conforming or nonconforming), influences the behaviours (delinquent, non-delinquent) in which they indulge. This influences the peer group with which the adolescent associates (Passini, 2017). Whether this will substantiate and support the anecdotal evidence from teachers and students regarding the changing nature of the behaviour of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds is unknown. As Emler and Reicher (1995) so eloquently argued, the motivations of adolescents and the trajectories they pursue to achieve their desired reputation involves a range of deliberate choices and decisions which they must make. Moreover, “reputation is a consequence not a cause of action … people do not merely have reputations, they also seek to manage their reputations” (p. 104).

Reputation enhancement alone, however, is not sufficient to explain the behaviours in which adolescents (in general) indulge, in order to attain their conforming or non-conforming reputation of choice (Carroll et al., 2010). There is also a purpose to the seeking of reputations, a form of goal directedness, a striving that accounts for the mission and deliberateness that many adolescents display that leads them to act. Emler and Reicher (1995) posited that adolescent behavior was motivated by social goals and purposeful reputation enhancing strategies, but the relationship between goals and behavioral choices went unexplained.

**Reputation Enhancing Goals (REG) Theory**

Reputation Enhancing Goals (REG) (Carroll et al., 2001), developed in 2001, is based on the established theories of reputation enhancement and goal setting and it is this theory that may have greater traction with the school based experiences of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. The REG model (see Figure 2.1) is based on the premise
that adolescents experience many events and interactions that influence the types of goals they choose. According to the REG model, many adolescents stake their images or reputations on social goals. (Academic and social sets of goals are not mutually exclusive, and not all adolescents who do not value academic goals become delinquents.) There are two propositions concerning delinquents: Individuals may become dissatisfied, and this leads to drug abuse, and/or aggression for example, because they fail to achieve their academic goals. Second, because these individuals do not desire to achieve academic or community accepted social goals they set alternative goals and challenges for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a specific delinquent or non-conforming reputation. The REG model supports the latter proposition and a growing body of evidence (see Carroll et al., 2009, 2016) exists to support the notion that to have a nonconforming social reputation is the social goal of a delinquent adolescent.

Figure 2.1. The integrated model of reputation enhancing goals (reprinted with permission).
In conclusion, there is compelling justification for the present research and for this to be conducted in the light of Reputation Enhancing Goals. Given the refugee population aged under 18 years worldwide is predicted to increase and countries of origin for resettled refugees are frequently changing due to shifting zones of conflict, the challenge facing schools and teachers is set to become even greater. Schools are critically important for young persons from refugee backgrounds and are a protective factor in relation to their wellbeing (e.g., Due & Riggs, 2016; Fazel, et al., 2012). They are also especially important because they are the setting where the important process of acculturation unfolds (Makarova & Birman, 2016) and this has far-reaching implications for wider society.

To date, no research has examined the goals, reputational orientations, delinquent and aggressive behaviours, and levels of school connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. Moreover, no research has determined how these variables change as these young people transition from their first school placement (i.e., IEC) to mainstream schooling. The choices that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds make, irrespective of whether they become involved in delinquent/non-conforming or conforming behaviours is yet to be examined in the context of the high school and the IEC-Mainstream transition trajectory. Anecdotal evidence from a range of sources, with some recent qualitative research findings, appear to show that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds become disillusioned and disconnected with school and their future goals and aspirations (which seem to evaporate over time) play a significant role in this and in the future choices they make. Reputation Enhancing Goals (REG) Theory appears to be particularly relevant to examine the changes experienced by African adolescents from refugee backgrounds. To date, no empirical evidence appears to exist pertaining to
the goals and reputations and associated behaviours of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. This research seeks to address this.

**Research Questions**

Based on the aims of the proposed research and in view of the literature reviewed, the major research questions to be addressed in this research are as follows:

*Research Question 1*: Were adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (now in mainstream classes) goal oriented in the IEC and was this the case through their transition into mainstream schooling? (Study 1)

*Research Question 2*: How do adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (now in mainstream classes) differentiate their IEC and mainstream school context experiences? (Study 1)

*Research Question 3*: What are the goals, reputational orientations, levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of matched samples of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (in IEC), adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (in mainstream classes) and Australian adolescents? (Study Two)

*Research Question 4*: Are there differential patterns of goals, reputational orientations, levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of African refugee backgrounds (in IEC), adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (in mainstream classes) and Australian adolescents?
backgrounds (in mainstream classes) and Australian adolescents according to age and gender? (Study Two)

*Research Question 5:* Are there potential indirect effects of group membership (i.e., African refugee backgrounds in IEC, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in mainstream classes, and Australian adolescents) on goals, reputational orientations, and levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness? (Study Two)

*Research Question 6:* Do the goals, reputational orientations, and levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds change following their transition from IEC into mainstream schooling? (Study Three)

*Research Question 7:* What are the profiles regarding goals, reputational orientations, and levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who evidence the most significant changes in their behaviour following their transition into mainstream schooling? (Study Four)
CHAPTER THREE

STUDY ONE: AN EXPLORATORY FOCUS GROUP STUDY OF THE GOALS, REPUTATIONS, AND DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR OF AFRICAN ADOLESCENT REFUGEES IN MAINSTREAM CLASSES

The main aims of the focus group interviews in this first preliminary exploratory study were to obtain a preliminary overview of whether adolescents from African refugee backgrounds set goals, what type of goals they set (academic or social), were these goals specific, how important were these goals, and did they perceive these goals to have changed from the time they were enrolled in the IEC to their transition into mainstream schooling.

METHOD

Participants
The sample comprised N = 26 (13 males, 13 females) mainstream students from African refugee backgrounds ranging in age from 13-17 years. These students, who attended one state Government high school (that had an IEC) in Perth, the capital city of Western Australia were currently in mainstream classes having recently (within the past 3-12 months) transitioned from the IEC context into their mainstream classes. Of the 26, 6 were in Year 8 (13 years old), 6 in Year 9 (14 years old), 6 in Year 10 (15 years old), 8 in Year 11/12 (16-17 years old) and these participated in sex specific (i.e., male only/female only) focus group interviews. The primary reason for adopting sex specific groups was that females reported feeling intimidated (and to some extent) dominated by their male counterparts and this would curtail their opportunities to freely provide
information. Thus, the current focus groups were facilitated in line with Krueger’s (1988) suggestion regarding the importance of creating a permissive and nurturing environment that encourages different perceptions and points of view, without pressuring participants to vote, plan or reach consensus. In total, there were four focus groups each comprising of six or eight participants, all of whom had transitioned into mainstream classes during the past 3 to 12 months.

According to Kreuger (1988) focus groups should be characterized by sufficient variation to allow for contrasting opinions (unless interaction across these groups is what is driving the study). In the present study the researcher recruited students from differing family backgrounds in terms of geographical origin, size of family, and differences in their educational achievement, and behaviour within the school setting.

**Settings**

The participating state Government high school was located in a low socio-economic-status area as indexed by its postal codes from the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas within Western Australia (2011). Of the 500 students on roll at the school, approximately 80% are from migrant and refugee backgrounds, and of these (80%) approximately 65% are from African refugee backgrounds. The school has an on-site IEC in which students from refugee backgrounds who have experienced limited or interrupted schooling are initially enrolled for up to two years prior to transitioning into mainstream schooling. (In the majority of cases students complete the full two years before transitioning to mainstream classes.)

All focus group sessions were held in the same room, which had been set aside for this specific purpose. All participants were seated around a table in a semi-circular formation,
with the moderator (the present researcher) seated at the end, but to one side, of the table. An audio recorder was placed in the middle of the table in full view of the participants. (The moderator also took field notes during the focus groups.) All of the participants were informed about this prior to the interviews beginning. Light refreshments were provided for all participants prior to beginning the focus group sessions to create a relaxed setting.

**Focus Group Interviews**

Focus group interview is a qualitative methodology frequently used to obtain data about feelings and opinions of small groups of participants about a given problem, experience, service or phenomenon (Basch, 1987). They are useful in understanding how or why people hold certain beliefs about a topic or program of interest. This usually involves a small group of subjects being asked a series of progressively harder open-ended questions by a trained person in a non-threatening supportive climate that encourages all group members to share their views. A focus group is defined as a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics, brought together by a moderator, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue(s) (Krueger, 1988). In addition, sampling the lived experiences of the participants rather than having pre-determined hypotheses to be tested using a quantitative approach is said to be advantageous (Allender, Cowburn, & Foster, 2006).

Focus group interview methodology has been widely used as a method for generating ideas and solutions pertaining to various social problems, and for encouraging participants to disclose behaviour and attitudes that they might not consciously reveal in an individual interview situation (Basch, 1987). Focus groups are particularly suited to this as the interaction between group members encourages participants to query and
explain, allowing their reasoning to emerge (Barbour, 2008). The interactions also enable the extent of consensus and range of diversity to be determined (Barbour, 2008).

This approach has been utilised to explore a range of issues, including for example: adolescents’ perceptions of patterns and contexts of depression and insomnia (Conroy, Czopp, Dore-Stites, Dopp, Armitage, Hoban, & Arnedt, 2017), caffeinated and non-caffeinated energy drink use (Costa, Hayley, & Miller, 2014; McCrory, White, Bowman, Fenton, Reid, & Hammond, 2017), positive mental wellbeing (Navarro, Montserrat, Malo, González, Casas, & Crous, 2017), problematic and risky Internet use (Jelenchick, Eickhoff, Christakis, Brown, Zhang, Benson, & Moreno, 2014), peers’ prosocial behaviours (Bergin, Talley, & Hamer, 2003), academic dishonesty (Mcnabe, 1999), exploring stimulant treatment in ADHD (Charach, Yeung, Volpe, & Goodale, 2014), the meaning of maturity (Tilton-Weaver, Vitunski, & Galambos, 2001), knowledge, beliefs and behaviours regarding hepatitis B and vaccine preventable diseases (Slonim, Roberto, Downing et al., 2005), traffic safety (Basch, DeCicco, & Malfetti, 1989), barriers and facilitators to treatment participation (Oruche, Downs, Holloway, Draucker, & Aalsma, 2014), the non-use of contraceptives (Kisker, 1985), using active video games to prevent excessive weight gain (Simons, Chinapaw, van de Bovenkamp, de Boer, Seidell, Brug, & de Vet, 2014), tobacco use prevention and cessation programmes (Heimann-Raitain, Hanson, & Perego, 1985), sexual abuse prevention (Charlesworth & Rodwell, 1997), volatile solvent use (Carroll, Houghton, & Odgers, 1998), tattooing and body piercing (Houghton, Durkin, & Carroll, 1995), and physical activity (Wright et al., 2003). It is an appropriate approach to use with adolescents in the current study.
A question often asked is how many focus groups should be conducted in a study? According to Guest, Namey and McKenna (2017),

70 years after the method was introduced, researchers must still rely on rules of thumb and personal judgment when deciding how many focus groups to include in a study (p. 3).

Guest et al (2017) reviewed 62 text books covering general qualitative research and focus group methodology and reported 42 provided no guidance about number of focus groups, six recommended saturation, and 10 provided some form of numeric recommendation ranging from 2 to more than 40 (see Guest et al., 2017). In an attempt to determine the required number of focus groups necessary for a successful research study Guest et al. (2017) conducted a thematic analysis of 40 focus groups on health-seeking behaviours of African American males. Results revealed that more than 80% of all themes were discoverable within two to three focus groups and 90% of themes could be discovered within three to six focus groups. This was taken in to account in the present research.

Materials

A standardised focus group format comprising 11 open-ended questions (which are reproduced in Table 3.1) was developed to primarily elicit participants’ views pertaining to their goals, experiences of school in Australia, and the changes in their goals and experiences as they transitioned from the IEC into mainstream schooling. Other issues were explored if and when they arose.

All focus group sessions began with the moderator welcoming participants and engaging them in general conversation in order to create a more informal and relaxed atmosphere.
When the moderator gauged that participants were sufficiently at ease she stated “I’m really interested in finding out about your experiences of schooling in Australia and how it has changed since your arrival. To do this I would like to ask you a few questions”. It was clarified that confidentiality would be adhered to and that no information would be given to anyone else and that only the moderator would see or hear any information that was provided. When all participants were assured of anonymity of responses, the moderator introduced the first of the 12 interview questions.

### Table 3.1. Focus group discussion interview questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> What was it like when you first went to school in Australia, that is when you were in the IEC?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> What were the best things about being in the IEC?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> What were the not so good things about being in the IEC?</td>
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<td><strong>4.</strong> What were your goals in the IEC?</td>
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<td><strong>5.</strong> Were you happy or worried about going into mainstream schooling?</td>
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<td><strong>6.</strong> What were mainstream classes like when you first got there?</td>
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<td><strong>7.</strong> What is the best thing about mainstream schooling?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong> What are some of the things that are not so good about mainstream schooling?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong> Do you feel different about school now you are in mainstream schooling compared to when you were in the IEC?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong> Do many African kids get into trouble in and out of school? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong> What do you think we should change in school to make things easier for students from refugee backgrounds?</td>
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</table>
Procedure

Prior to the research being conducted, ethics approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Western Australia and the Department of Education, Western Australia. Following this, permission was obtained from the principal of the participating school to approach students and their parents/guardians to elicit their interest in being involved. It was decided to purposively select six students (three male, three female) from each year group represented within the IEC. But because there were smaller numbers available for the older students in years 11 and 12, it was decided to integrate these two years and select eight students (four from each year). The focus groups were further refined by including male only and female only groups representing the time periods of < 3 months, 3-6 months and 12 months integration into mainstream classes from the IEC.

Students who were invited by the researcher to participate in the study received verbal and written information pertaining to the focus group discussion that was to take place and all 26 agreed to be involved. The researcher then visited the families of these students to explain the study and to obtain written parental consent. Once this had been obtained the interviews were arranged to take place at a mutually agreed time and venue. All participants were present on the day of the focus group discussions.

All focus group interviews were conducted by the researcher, who met the participants at the designated room. Initially, there was general conversation over refreshments to put the young people at ease. After rapport had been established, the purpose of the research was explained and each participant was given the option of not participating. All participants agreed to continue assisting with the research. The interviewer then pointed
to the audio-recorder and asked if there were any objections to it being used to record the conversations. Confidentiality of responses was emphasized. None of the participants objected to this. It was explained that notes would also be taken about the content of the conversations, but no one except the researcher (and perhaps one other person who would check the researcher’s accuracy) would see these. Participants were reminded that they could leave the interview at any time without prejudice.

The participants were encouraged to put forward their ideas and to discuss points of view with each other for each of the questions asked. On obtaining responses and ensuring that nothing new would surface even after probing, the researcher moved to the next question. If participants digressed from the question they were allowed to continue for a time before being guided back to the original point. On average each focus group session lasted approximately 30-40 minutes.

Data Analysis

In analyzing qualitative data, most researchers use a combination of approaches (Green & Thorogood, 2004). To manage the large amount of qualitative data collected from this exploratory focus group interview study, data analysis began first with the researcher becoming familiar with the data by listening to the audio tapes, reading the subsequent transcripts several times and reading the field notes written immediately after the interviews. Major themes started to emerge during this process. Second, a thematic framework was identified by writing memos in the margin of the text in the form of short phrases, ideas or concepts arising from the text and categories began develop (see Guest et al., 2017; Rabiee, 2004). Third, indexing which includes sifting the data, highlighting and sorting out quotes and making comparisons both within and between cases was
undertaken. Finally, charting that includes lifting the quotes from their original context and rearranging them under the newly developed themes was undertaken.

**Results**

**Moderator: What was it like when you first went to school in Australia, that is when you were in the IEC?**

Most participants expressed a high level of anxiety about their first month of schooling in an IEC. They highlighted the many challenges and difficulties they faced, particularly the process of becoming immersed in a new culture and having to learn a new language. However, all participants described the IEC as a very positive and supportive environment that assisted them greatly in their transition to the “Australian way of life”. Some of the comments made in support of this were:

*It was very scary at first, it was hard to get used to a new country and language* (Female 12 months in mainstream)

*I EC teachers were very helpful and friendly – they made it easier* (Male 3-6 months)

*Being in the IEC felt like being part of a family* (Female <3 months)

**Moderator: What were the best things about being in the IEC?**

There was a consensus among participants that their time in the IEC was very positive, where they received a lot of support and assistance from IEC staff who were very understanding and accommodating of their needs and language difficulties. Many participants also reported that being in the IEC felt like belonging to a family, a feeling they attributed to being with one teacher and in one class all of the time. They were clear in their views that this was far better than having to move around to different classes and be with many different teachers. Some of the comments made by participants were:
Having one teacher and being in the same class all the time meant the teacher got to know you very well and really cared about you (Female 3–6 months)

Lots of one-to-one assistance (Female 12 months)

Teachers know that you don’t know English very well so they repeat things a lot and show you how to do things. They make sure that you understand without making you feel dumb. In mainstream you have to ask if you don’t get it and this makes you feel dumb but in the IEC the teachers always ask you questions to make sure that you understand and if you don’t, they show you what to do (Male 12 months)

IEC was very good, we got a lot of help and learnt a lot (Male >12 months)

What were the not so good things about being in the IEC?

All participants described their experiences in the IEC as being very positive and most were unable to recall any negative aspects of being in the IEC. On probing some individuals commented on the difficulties they experienced trying to learn a new language but they did not attribute this to any bad experiences relating to their time in the IEC. The typical comments, which seem to sum up the consensus, of the participants included:

Nothing. Being in the IEC was very good (Female 12 months)

Can’t remember any bad things about the IEC! It was all very good (Male 12 months)

What were your goals in the IEC?

Most of the participants reported having academic goals during their time in the IEC, such as studying hard, learning English well and going to university. Many participants reported having the goal of going to university and were able to articulate a more specific professional/vocational outcome or profession, such as becoming an engineer, doctor, teacher or scientist.
Participants expressed at this time that their goals had changed and when asked about this stated they had changed from more academic type goals (in the IEC) to social based goals in mainstream schooling. For example, the social goals now included being a

- hair dresser (Female 3-6 months)
- actor/model (Male 3-6 months)
- singer (Female < 3 months)
- air hostess (Female 3-6 months)
- musician (Male 12 months)
- actor (Female 12 months)
- rap artist (Male 12 months)
- soccer player (Male < 3 months)

This change in goal orientation was particularly apparent in students who had been out of the IEC for > 3 months. Many of the individuals who experienced a change in their goals were unable to clearly articulate the reasons for this. Some stated that going to university was too hard and that TAFE was a more likely option.

**Were you happy or worried about going into mainstream school classes?**

Most participants reported having high levels of anxiety and concerns about transitioning into mainstream schooling. Many reported not being able to make friends and fit in with mainstream students as worrying to them. Another frequently reported concern was not being able to keep up with the class work in mainstream. Many participants reported that they feared that mainstream class work would be too difficult for them. Some male participants reported feeling anxious about encountering students with aggressive behaviour in the mainstream setting. Some of the direct responses for adolescents were:

- I was very worried that I wouldn’t fit in with other students (Female 12 months)
- I was worried that I wouldn’t make any friends (Female 3-6 months)
- I was scared that I wouldn’t be able to keep up with the class work (Male < 3 months)
- We were worried that the work would be too hard for us (Female 3-6 months)
We didn’t want to go to mainstream. We wanted to stay in the IEC. We thought that mainstream would be hard and the work would be very hard (Male 12 months)

Worried because we feel that we didn’t know enough English (Male 3-6 months)

Worried because there were some bad kids in mainstream - kids that get very angry and hurt other kids (Male 3-6 months)

**What were mainstream classes like when you first got there?**

Most participants did not describe their initial experience in mainstream as being positive. Many participants commented that class work was particularly challenging and difficult and there was a lack of support and assistance provided to them in mainstream classrooms - as opposed to the IEC. Some participants reported that a number of mainstream teaching staff lacked an understanding of and willingness to accommodate the language and cultural barriers encountered by students from refugee backgrounds. Many participants also reported feelings of failure and inadequacy in mainstream classes and some of them attributed this to the amount of “catch-up” work they felt they had to do (e.g., doing Yr 5 work in Yr 9). Others reported feeling “dumb” because they had to ask questions all of the time, and they also reported that IEC teachers always checked for understanding, whereas mainstream teachers assumed their instructions were understood. Some of the comments made by participants were:

*Mainstream was hard. The work was hard.* (Female 12 months)

*You had to get used to moving around a lot and there were a lot of new teachers that you had to get used to* (Male 12 months)

*Some of the teachers in mainstream are not as understanding as in the IEC - they don’t explain things well; they expect us to learn things very quickly. They get angry when we ask them to repeat things, they think we didn’t listen but really we don’t understand what they want us to do.* (Male 3 - 6 months)
Sometimes we feel very stupid because teachers say that we should be able to do work that we can’t do. We also feel dumb because teachers give us Yr 5 work to do when we are in Yr 9 (Male 3 - 6 months)

IEC teachers know that you don’t know English very well so they repeat things a lot and showed you how to do things, they make sure that you understand without making you feel dumb. In mainstream you have to ask if you don’t get it and this makes you feel dumb but in the IEC the teachers always ask you questions to make sure that you understand and if you don’t, they show you what to do (Male 12 months)

What is the best thing about mainstream schooling?

Most participants commented the one aspect of mainstream schooling they liked best was the new friendships they established. Some participants also reported that the variety of subjects undertaken was a positive about mainstream schooling. Others also commented that they found some mainstream teachers very helpful and supportive:

The best thing about mainstream school is the new friends you make (Male 3 - 6 months)

You have a lot more friends in mainstream (Female 3 - 6 months)

Some of the teachers in mainstream are very nice, they care about you and try to help you (Female > 12months)

You get to try many different subjects (Male 12 months)

What are some of the things that are not so good about mainstream schooling?

The majority of the participants reported issues pertaining to mainstream teaching staff failing to understand the cultural and language barriers that students from refugee backgrounds face when accessing the mainstream curriculum. According to the participants this lack of understanding resulted in unrealistic expectations of students’ ability to understand and successfully complete class work. Most participants commented on the lack of support found in mainstream classes compared to that in the IEC classroom. The majority of participants also reported issues relating to a high level of student disengagement and behaviour problems (e.g., fighting, non-compliance, defiance etc.) in
mainstream classrooms, which led to further interruptions in the learning process. Typical comments included:

Some of the teachers don’t understand that we are just learning English and they expect us to be able to do work that we can’t do (Male 3 - 6 months)

You don’t get as much help as you do in the IEC (Female 3 - 6 months)

A lot of kids don’t go to class because they feel that there is no point. They feel that they can’t do the work, don’t understand the work, don’t like the teachers (Male 12 months)

Some kids in mainstream are very bad - they are mean to the teachers, they swear at them and they don’t care about learning. Because it is cool, because you can get away with it and suspension does not hurt them. Teachers always have to yell at the bad kids and this stops the rest of the class from learning (Male < 3 months)

Fights - lots of fights in mainstream compared to the IEC (Male 12 months)

We don’t understand what the teachers want sometimes and the teachers get angry when we ask them to repeat things (Male 12 months)

We don’t get enough help with class work (Female 12 months)

The teachers don’t care about you – they pass you even if you fail. This is not good. In Africa you don’t graduate if you don’t pass (Male 12 months)

In mainstream it is cool to be bad and there are a lot of bad kids in mainstream (Male 3 - 6 months)

Too much catch-up work (e.g., doing Yr 5 work in Yr 9) (Female 3 - 6 months)

**Do you feel different about school now you are in mainstream schooling compared to when you were in the IEC?**

The majority of participants’ responses related to the idea of a gradual shift in the function of schooling from one with educational purposes (when they were in the IEC) to one with ‘socialising’ purposes (as they spent more time mainstream schooling and classes). This idea was particularly evident in the students that had been out of the IEC for longer periods of time. Many participants reported that when they were in the IEC, they came to school to pursue academic goals (e.g., “to learn”, “to get better at English”) however, in
mainstream schooling they came to school to pursue social goals (e.g., “to be with friends”, “to socialize”). Typical views included:

When we were in the IEC we came to school to learn stuff, we wanted to learn English but in mainstream, we come to school to be with our friends and socialize (Female 12 months)

IEC was far better for learning, but mainstream is better for friends (Male 12 months)

Do many of the African kids get into trouble in and out of school and if so why?
Most participants agreed that African students from refugee backgrounds got into a lot of trouble. Although most participants experienced difficulties articulating any real clear reasons for this observation, many cited issues related to disengagement from the education system and the need to have and maintain a certain reputation (e.g., “it’s cool to be bad”). Some of the participants’ responses included:

Yes, especially the boys: they try to act cool and impress their friends by getting into trouble (like getting into fights, joining gangs, stealing and doing stuff like drugs) (Male 12months)

Because they think it’s cool and they stop listening to their teachers and their parents and hang out with the wrong people (Male 12months)

They fail school so they can’t get jobs and earn money. They don’t go to TAFE or uni. They just stay at home, get bored and get into trouble (Male 3 - 6 months)

Some kids wag school because they think that school is boring and then they make friends with bad kids. (Female 3 - 6 months)

Some girls get into trouble too. The girls hang out with the bad boys. Some girls get pregnant because they think that having sex is cool. They want to act all grown up (Female 12 months)

What do you think we should change in school to make things easier for students from refugee backgrounds?

The majority of the participants reported that having more time in the IEC (i.e., staying longer than the two years) would make things much easier for students from refugee
backgrounds. Many responses also contained the idea of providing greater support for them following their transition to mainstream schooling and classrooms. Some participants also reported that mainstream teachers needed to be more understanding of the difficulties that refugee students in general faced and adjust their expectations and teaching methods accordingly. Some of the participants’ suggestions included:

- More time in the IEC so that we can learn more (Female > 3 – 6 months)
- More time to learn English in the IEC (Male > 3months)
- More help in mainstream classes (Male 3 - 6months)
- Only pass a subject if you have learnt what you need to know (Male 12months)
- Some teachers need to become more helpful. They need to show more understanding and not treat us like we are stupid - we just don’t understand stuff sometimes but if you explain it better we get it (Female 12months)

Summary

This first study was exploratory in nature and sought to elicit the views of African adolescents from refugee backgrounds who had transitioned from IEC to mainstream school settings, especially about their IEC and mainstream experiences. In conducting this first study, focus group interviews were conducted because they are frequently used as a method for generating ideas and obtaining data about opinions and feelings of groups of participants about a particular experience, problem, or service (Basch, 1987). This study also offered some direction for the subsequent multi-study mixed methods sequence of studies to be conducted in this thesis.

Generally, participants expressed some initial anxiety about being located in an IEC in Australia and this concern was also evident prior to their enrolment. However, this anxiety was quickly allayed after a short period of time in the IEC because of the level of support offered by its teachers. Indeed, these adolescents from African refugee backgrounds
perceived the IEC very positively and as a vehicle for helping them in their transition, to mainstream schooling and the community in general, particularly because they had a single teacher in one classroom. This stability gave them an identity, which some individuals suggested resembled being part of a family. The information generated also showed that academic goals and career aspirations figured prominently during the IEC experience. However, on transition to mainstream schooling these goals appeared to change to align with social aspects of school and peers. From what participants said, teachers in mainstream classrooms contributed to this because of the way in which they interacted with them. Consequently, school took on a different role as did that of peers.

The findings of the present study appear to offer some support for the small scale research and anecdotal evidence from teachers that changes in behaviour do occur following transition to mainstream schooling (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Lloyd, 2006; Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Poppitt & Frey, 2007; Ziaian et al., 2012). It also supports the limited evidence that young people from African refugee backgrounds place a high priority on education and have high expectations of the education system (Cassity & Gow, 2005). Of concern, however, is the finding that these young people seemingly disengage from school, because school connectedness (i.e., students’ experiences of belonging and closeness with others at school: Resnick, Bearman, Blum, Bauman, Harris, Jones et al., 1997) is a protective factor against school failure and dropping out.

Study Two of this thesis will investigate the goals, reputations and associated behaviours, of African adolescents from refugee backgrounds who are in various stages of their school experience, along with their school and teacher connectedness, to identify potential differences that may exist. As argued in the literature reviewed in Chapter Two of this
thesis, the role of Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory will guide the research because this has direct relevance to the acculturation process through which these adolescents proceed. In doing this, important information about young vulnerable people who appear to experience significant adverse changes as they progress through the educational system will be obtained.
CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY TWO: A COMPARISON OF GOAL SETTING, REPUTATIONAL ORIENTATIONS, ASSOCIATED BEHAVIOURS, AND SCHOOL AND TEACHER CONNECTEDNESS OF ADOLESCENTS FROM AFRICAN REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS IN INTENSIVE ENGLISH CENTRES AND MAINSTREAM SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

While it is known that similarities and differences exist between the relative importance of different goals and reputations among groups of adolescents in the general population (Carroll et al., 2009, 2012, 2016) little, if anything is known about the goals and reputational orientations of adolescent students from African refugee backgrounds. The purpose of Study Two was to compare the goals, reputations, behaviours and levels of school and teacher connectedness of three groups: Adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in Australian Intensive English Centres (IEC), Adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who had transitioned from an IEC into mainstream schooling, and Australian mainstream school adolescents. It was posited that the need for adolescents from African refugee backgrounds to identify with the dominant social group within the IEC and mainstream settings is important for the goals they set, the reputations they choose, and the manner in which they pursue them. To this end, a cross sectional comparison through Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory, an approach congruent with sociocultural adaptation, was conducted.
Method

Participants and settings

The total sample comprised 180 high school adolescents aged 12.1 to 16.2 years of age ($M_{age} = 14.03$, $SD = .80$). Of these 120 were from an African refugee background, primarily Liberian and Sudanese (Liberian $n = 60$, Sudanese $n = 40$, Congolese $n = 12$, Ethiopian $n = 8$); 60 ($M_{age} = 14.0$, $SD = .88$, 53% male) attended an Intensive English Centre (IEC) attached to a high school and 60 ($M_{age} = 14.01$, $SD = .82$, 52% male) had transitioned from an IEC into mainstream high school classes. In addition, 60 ($M_{age} = 14.1$, $SD = .79$, 51% male) non-African Australian born adolescents were matched as closely as possible to the sex and age (i.e., to within 6 months) composition of the African student groups. An Analysis of Variance performed on Age yielded a non-significant result: $F(2, 177) = 0.287, p = .751$, partial $\eta^2 = .003$, 95% CI [13.91, 14.15], indicating comparability in Age.

The participants were recruited from two high schools, one school situated in a low-middle socio-economic status area (SES) and one in a low SES area as indexed by their postal codes from the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas within Western Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Both schools included an IEC, in which students from refugee backgrounds enrol for a period of approximately 24 months prior to transitioning into a mainstream school setting. The function of these centres is to enable students (the majority of whom have minimal to no history of formal education) to become more conversant with the English language and become accustomed to general Australian school routines.
**Instrumentation**

A description of the instruments administered, along with the internal reliabilities for the present study, is provided. Given the multifaceted nature of the Reputation Enhancement Scale, however, a separate description is presented in Table 2.1.

The types of goals set by adolescents were measured using *The Goal Types Scale* (Carroll, 1995). This asks participants to list up to eight life goals and then rank them in order of importance. Previous research has identified a variety of goals that are important to many young people (Nurmi, 1991), with some more prominent than others. Depending on the risk or delinquent status of the young person the goals can be educational or career, interpersonal or reputational, and connected to legal or illegal activities (see Carroll et al., 2009 for a review). The Goal Types Scale provides participants with the opportunity to think about a range of goals they may have rather than restricting them to a limited number (e.g., one or two). These goals are subsequently categorised by researchers as educational, career (e.g., to get a job), interpersonal (e.g., to make or keep friends), sporting (e.g., to be good at sports), traditional/family (e.g., to get married), freedom/autonomy (e.g., to be able to do whatever I want), delinquency (e.g., to break the rules or law) or reputational (e.g., to be a member of the "in" group). In addition, the scale provides data on the number of goals set (ranging from 0 to 8). In the present study, the main goal was the focus of the data analyses because participants set a varying number of goals (range 1 to 8).

To ensure accuracy in the goal classifications the researcher and one other person (a registered psychologist with over 20 years of experience) independently assigned 30% of the goals to categories. These assignments were then compared and where there were discrepancies (in 5 cases) a discussion ensued about the reasons for assigning that goal to
a particular category. Consensus was then reached as to the appropriate category. Interrater agreement was determined by calculating the frequency of agreement out of the total possible agreement and then converting it to a percentage. There was an overall 83% agreement among the raters in assigning goals to the categories. Specifically, there was 88% agreement for the Education category, 80% for Career, 72% for Interpersonal Goals, 78% for Freedom-Autonomy, 70% for Delinquency, and 86% for Reputational.

The Importance of Goals Scale (Carroll, Durkin, Hattie, & Houghton, 1997) involves participants being presented with 43 goals distributed across the goal categories represented in the Goal Types Scale and asked to rate how important each goal item is to them. The response format is a 3-point scale, with each point on the scale being anchored with the words not important, sometimes important, and very important. Extensive research (see Carroll et al., 2009) demonstrates The Importance of Goals Scale factors reflect a Social Image (Delinquency, Freedom-Autonomy goals) and an Academic Image (Educational, Interpersonal Goals). A similar inter-rater agreement procedure to that used in The Goal Types Scale produced a 91% agreement for the Academic Image category and 88% for the Social Image category.

Goal Commitment was measured via a nine item self-report scale adapted from Hollenbeck, Williams and Klein (1989). For each of the nine item statements, participants are asked to respond on a four-point pictorial/word Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree to how committed they feel about their most important (main) goal with five of the nine items requiring reverse scoring. Examples of items include “I really want to get this goal”, “I don’t care if I get this goal” and “I am willing to put a lot of effort beyond what I’d normally do to get this goal”. Responses are subsequently
averaged over the nine items to create a mean commitment score for the participant’s primary (main) goal. The measure was found to have satisfactory reliability $\alpha = .78$

In addition, participants are asked “How long will it take you to achieve your goal?” to which they can respond: one week, one month, one year, more than one year. A second item then enquires,” How much control do you have in achieving this goal? to which participants respond either no control at all, some control, a lot of control, or total control.

The Adapted Self-Report Delinquency Scale (ASDS; Carroll et al., 1996) items measure a broad range of frequently reported delinquent activities. These range from minor misdemeanours to more serious offences: Abuse of Property (seven items, e.g., Deliberately damaged things in public places - telephone boxes, street signs, road lamps, etc; $\alpha = .87$); Hard Drug-Related Offences (five items, e.g., Used amphetamines [such as speed, ecstasy, uppers], LSD - also called acid, or other hallucinogens; $\alpha = .74$); Physical Aggression (three items, e.g., Deliberately hurt or beat up someone; $\alpha = .88$); Stealing Offences (five items, e.g., Stolen money of $10 or more in one go; $\alpha = .82$); School Misdemeanours (seven items, e.g., Disrupted the class by calling out or by being out of your seat; $\alpha = .88$); Soft Drug (five items, e.g., Used marijuana [also called grass, dope, hash, pot, weed, mull]; $\alpha = .84$; and Vehicle-Related Offences (nine items, e.g., Driven an unregistered car) $\alpha = .88$. Furthermore, one item reporting police warnings and one item reporting court appearance are included in the scale to gain a measure of self-reported official delinquency status. Additionally, four “lie” items are interspersed among the delinquency items to verify reliability (Mak, 1993). Participants’ report the frequency with which they engaged in delinquent acts during the last 12 months using a 6 point
scale: Never; 1-3 times; 4-6 times; Once a month; More than once a month; and More than once a week.

The Adolescent Scale of Aggression (ASA: Tan, 2011) measures four distinct dimensions: Physical-Proactive Aggression (six items, e.g., I start physical fights to get what I want; $\alpha = .84$), Verbal-Proactive Aggression (five items, e.g., I verbally encourage others to be aggressive to get what I want; $\alpha = .83$), Verbal-Reactive Aggression (five items, e.g., I become verbally angry when told I cannot have what I want; $\alpha = .87$), and Physical-Reactive Aggression (four items, e.g., I react physically against others when they bump into me; $\alpha = .88$). Participants respond on a four point scale ranging from definitely not true (score 0) to definitely true (score 3).

School Connectedness and Teacher Connectedness were measured using the five items (e.g., I feel part of this school, I feel close to people at this school; $\alpha = .88$) and the six items (e.g., there is a teacher at the school who: cares about me; tells me when I do a good job; listens when I have something to say; $\alpha = .84$), respectively from the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS: see Austin & Duerr, 2004; WestEd, 2008). Participants respond on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The CHKS has excellent psychometric properties (see Gilreath, Astor, Estrada, Johnson, Benbenishty, & Unger, 2014; Sharkey, You, & Schnoebelen, 2008).

The Reputation Enhancement Scale (RES; Carroll, Houghton, Hattie, & Durkin, 1999), is a 150-item self-report scale with five major dimensions assessing group affiliation, admiration for law abiding and law-breaking activities, self-perception and ideal public self, self-description and ideal private self, and communication of events (see Table 4.1).
Three dimensions were used in this present study: (a) the **Social Desirability** scale that examines admiration of law-abiding and law-breaking activities, the underlying value of reputation, and conformity or deviance to social norms. It comprises four sub factors which separately measure male and female perceptions separately: Girls and boys self-perceived social deviance norms (e.g., If a girl/boy steals, I would admire him/her); Girls and boys self-perceived social conformity norms (e.g., If a girl/boy gets good school marks I would admire him/her); Girls and boys evaluative reactions to others social deviance (e.g., If a girl/boy drinks alcohol most kids my age would admire him/her); and Girls and boys evaluative reactions to others social conformity (e.g., If a girl/boy gets good school marks, most kids my age would admire him/her); (b) the 30 item **Social Identity** scale measuring participants’ self-perception and how they would ideally like others to view them. It has four sub factors: Non-conforming self-perception (e.g., My friends think that I break rules); Conforming self-perception (e.g., My friends think that I can be trusted with secrets); Non-conforming ideal public self (e.g., I would like my friends to think that I am a troublemaker.); and Conforming ideal public self (I would like my friends to think that I get along well with other people ); and (c) the **Self-Identity** scale, which measures how participants describe themselves and how they would ideally like to be described in terms of power (i.e., strong-weak; tough-soft) and activity (i.e., mean-kind; nasty-friendly) attributes. It has four sub factors: Activity self-description (e.g., mean-kind; nasty-friendly); Power/evaluation self-description (e.g., strong-weak; leader-follower); Activity ideal private self (e.g., mean-kind; nasty-friendly); and Power/evaluation ideal private self (e.g., strong-weak; leader-follower).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reputation Variables</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Response Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Desirability Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Affective Evaluative Reactions)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls self-perceived social deviance &amp; social conformity</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>How much they, their friends and most kids their age admire boys/girls who engage in activities (e.g., using drugs, stealing, drinking alcohol, obeying parents, good at sport, getting good school marks).</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6-point: Not at all; Very little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Very much; and Completely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls evaluative reactions to others social deviance &amp; social conformity</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys self-perceived social deviance &amp; social conformity</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys evaluative reactions to others social deviance &amp; social conformity</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Identity Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conforming self-perception</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>How participants want peers to view them and would ideally like to be viewed in terms of reputational status.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6-point: Never; Hardly ever; Occasionally; Sometimes; Often, and Always.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonconforming self-perception</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>Person believes: friends think they perform conforming behaviour; non-conforming behaviour.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conforming ideal public self</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>Person ideally wants friends to think they perform conforming behaviour; non-conforming behaviour.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonconforming ideal public self</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Identity Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power evaluation self-description</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>Measures ideal-self/present-self discrepancies according to how participants describe themselves in terms of power attributes.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6 point semantic differential anchors ranging from one extreme of a relevant variable (e.g., I think I am a leader) to the other (e.g., I think I am a follower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power evaluation ideal private self</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>Person thinks they have certain powerful attributes e.g., a leader-follower.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity self-description</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>Person thinks they would really like to have certain powerful attributes e.g., would like to be a leader-follower.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity ideal private self</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>Person thinks that they have certain activity attributes e.g., they break rules – don’t break rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedure

Approval for the research was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committees of the University of Western Australia and the relevant gatekeepers. Two senior metropolitan high schools in Perth, the capital city of Western Australia that enroll all students from refugee backgrounds in IECs prior to transitioning to mainstream schooling were approached to participate in the research. The principals of both schools agreed to participate and so an information sheet explaining the purpose and nature of the research along with an invitation to participate and consent form and an assurance of confidentiality was sent to the parents of all students from African refugee backgrounds (IEC and mainstream) and all Year 8 to Year 10 Australian mainstream students. In addition, the parents of the African students were invited to attend an information session at which the present researcher explained the research and answered any questions that they might have. Interpreters were also present at this session so that any language difficulties could be addressed.

From the 150 information letters sent to the parents of students from African refugee backgrounds an affirmative return of 120 (80%) was obtained, while of the 200 to the Australian mainstream students a return of 150 (75%) was obtained. From the Australian student returns, 60 were selected that matched as closely as possible to the sex and age (i.e., to within 6 months) composition of the two African student groups to form a comparison group. Mutually convenient times were then arranged for the administration of the instruments in each of the schools and IEC’s.

Homeroom teachers administered all instruments to participants in their regular classrooms, with each administration taking between 35 and 60 minutes. The instruments
were administered to the non-African Australian students in groups of 15 under examination conditions. Teachers had been asked to observe examination like conditions to ensure the results reflected the thoughts of the individual and not a social consensus. The mainstream African school students were administered the instrument in groups of six to cater for their relatively lower levels of language and literacy skills. During these sessions the instrument instructions were read to the groups verbatim by the teacher. For the African IEC based students, the instruments were administered to smaller groups of two or three students and the questions were read verbatim to participants to address any potential language and literacy issues. An interpreter was also present during these sessions for IEC students should the need arise.

**Hypotheses**

Given that these young people face a multitude of problems associated with adjusting to institutional change, it is hypothesised that there will be differences in the goals and reputations of these young people, along with the behaviours in which they indulge to promote their goals and reputations. Specifically, African adolescents in the IEC will score higher than Australian and African students who are in Mainstream schooling, respectively on goals and reputations associated with conformity. They will also report lower levels of delinquency and aggression and higher levels of connectedness to school and teachers. Conversely, the African adolescents in Mainstream schooling will score higher than the Australian Mainstream and African IEC adolescents, respectively on goals and reputations associated with non-conformity. They will also report higher levels of delinquency and aggression and lower levels of connectedness to school and teachers.
Results

Descriptive statistics are presented for the types of goals, the number of goals, the amount of control over goals and the level of commitment towards goals. Following this, a series of Multivariate Analyses of Variance (MANOVAs) are presented for each of the scales. Each MANOVA investigated participant’s goals (7 goal types) and Reputational Orientations (16 Variables), for Group (African IEC, African Mainstream, and Australian Mainstream students) and Sex (male and female). Multivariate and Univariate $F$ values were considered as significant utilising more stringent Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels of 0.007 (goals), 0.003 (reputation), 0.007 delinquency, 0.0125 (aggression), and 0.025 (school and teacher connectedness) to control for Type 1 errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Effect sizes and power estimates are reported. Scheffé post-hoc comparisons were also conducted to examine mean differences, and are reported where there were significant differences between means. The significant indirect effects arising from a series of separate multiple-mediation models are then presented.

Goals: Number, Types, Control and Commitment

The maximum number of goals set was four and this was by two participants in the IEC and two in the Australian Mainstream group. The most striking difference was in the number of participants setting one single goal where there were 28 Mainstream Australian students compared to only two in each of the IEC and mainstream school African groups. Only five Australian Mainstream group participants set three goals compared to the 25 and 29 IEC and Mainstream African participants, respectively.

The IEC African students set goals such as study hard, go to university, be a doctor, be a teacher, be a scientist, whereas the goals of Mainstream African adolescents included be
a rap artist, hairdresser, sports star, make friends, and socialise. The Australian Mainstream participants set a mixture of similar goals. Table 4.2 shows that of the goals in *The Importance of Goals Scale*, almost all of the IEC African students set Academic goals (and very few Social goals) compared to Mainstream African participants who set predominantly Social goals, and Australian mainstream participants who presented an approximate even split between Academic and Social goals. The greatest discrepancy between academic and social goals was for the IEC group (19 and -19) and Mainstream African (-16 and 16), respectively. The differences between the groups was significant ($\chi^2 = 41.92$, df = 2, $p < .001$, Cramers $V = .48$).

Table 4.2
Frequency of Academic and Social Goals by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Category</th>
<th>African IEC</th>
<th>African Mainstream</th>
<th>Australian Mainstream</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked “How long will it take to achieve your main goal?” 93% of the African IEC adolescents, 100% of African Mainstream adolescents and 91% of Australian Mainstream adolescents respectively, responded “more than one year”. In terms of the amount of control that participants believed they had over achieving their main goal, there were discrepancies between the three groups. Of the 60 African IEC adolescents, 52 believed they had “total control” over achieving their goal compared to seven of the African Mainstream adolescents and 19 of the Australian Mainstream adolescents (see Table 4.3).
The greatest levels of commitment to achieving their main goal came from the African IEC group with \( n = 47 \) recording the maximum commitment score (i.e., 24) compared to 13 in the African Mainstream and 9 in the Australian Mainstream groups. (See Table 4.4.)

Table 4.3

The Amount of Control in Achieving the Main Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>African IEC</th>
<th>African Mainstream</th>
<th>Australia Mainstream</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some control</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot of control</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total control</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4
Total Goal Commitment Score Toward Main Goal by Each Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment Score</th>
<th>African IEC</th>
<th>African Mainstream</th>
<th>Australian Mainstream</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Importance of Goals**

Participants goals were assigned to one of seven goal categories based on previous work (see Carroll et al., 2009). A $3 \times 2$ (Group × Sex) between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.007 revealed a significant multivariate interaction effect for Sex × Group $F(14, 316) = 2.981, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .12$. This interaction suggested that in some goal categories African Mainstream group males scored higher than African Mainstream group females, whereas...
for the Australian Mainstream group, females scored higher than the males. When the
Univariate $F$ tests were examined the Sex $\times$ Group interaction was not evident for any of
the goal categories; none reached levels of significance using the adjusted alpha levels.

There were significant multivariate main effects for Group, $F(14, 316) = 26.39, p < .001,$
partial $\eta^2 = .54$ and Sex $F(7, 158) = 30.04, p < .001,$ partial $\eta^2 = .57.$ The Univariate $F$
tests (using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of $p < .007$) and observed means for the
main effect of Group are shown in Table 4.5. For Group there were significant main
effects in the importance attached to goals in all goal categories. Scheffe post-hoc
statistics and follow up means show significant differences ($p < .007$) in the importance
attached to these goals by Group in Table 4.5. As can be seen, all three groups differed
on Delinquency and Academic goals. For Delinquency the African Mainstream group
scored highest, followed by the Australian Mainstream and IEC groups, respectively. For
Academic goals the African IEC group scored highest, followed by the African
Mainstream and Australian groups, respectively. For Freedom and Reputation goals the
African Mainstream group scored higher than the African IEC group. No differences were
evident between the African IEC and Mainstream Australian groups. For Sex the only
main effect was for Sporting goals with males ($M = 3.17, SD .93$) scoring higher than
females ($M = 2.01, SD .74$) $p < .001,$ partial $\eta^2 = .34.$
Table 4.5. Univariate F Statistics, Observed Means, and Standard Deviations for the Importance of Goals Categories with Group as the Independent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Category</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>African</th>
<th>African Mainstream</th>
<th>Australian Mainstream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency</td>
<td>12.60</td>
<td>47.196</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.98 (0.21)</td>
<td>1.90 (0.60)</td>
<td>1.42 (0.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>13.798</td>
<td>61.440</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.53 (0.17)</td>
<td>4.43 (0.33)</td>
<td>3.69 (0.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>18.260</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.89 (0.22)</td>
<td>3.45 (0.26)</td>
<td>3.10 (0.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>44.760</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.91 (0.05)</td>
<td>4.90 (0.06)</td>
<td>4.30 (0.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>44.757</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.77 (0.35)</td>
<td>4.53 (0.46)</td>
<td>3.44 (1.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>16.07</td>
<td>31.604</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.04 (0.71)</td>
<td>2.96 (0.88)</td>
<td>2.91 (1.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>19.83</td>
<td>67.939</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.99 (0.04)</td>
<td>4.34 (0.58)</td>
<td>3.79 (0.78)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Means within rows having no common subscripts differ at $p < .01$. 

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Reputation Enhancement

A 2 × 3 (Sex by Group) between-subjects MANOVA was performed on the 16 dependent variables of the *RES*. Using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.003, there was a significant multivariate interaction effect for Sex × Group $F(32, 288) = 3.62, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .29$. When the Univariate F tests were examined the Sex × Group interaction occurred for one of the 16 variables, namely *boys self-perceived social deviance norms* (bспd: $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .10$) with African IEC males ($M = 1.09, SD .08$) and African Mainstream males ($M = 2.35, SD .09$) scoring higher than their female counterparts ($M = 1.07, SD .08$) and ($M = 1.83, SD .07$), respectively. However, for the Australian Mainstream group the opposite was true, with females ($M = 1.55, SD .09$) scoring higher than the males ($M = 1.33, SD .10$).

![Figure 4.1. Sex × Group interaction for boys self-perceived social deviance norms](image)

Figure 4.1. Sex × Group interaction for boys self-perceived social deviance norms
There were significant multivariate main effects for Group, $F(32, 288) = 41.590, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .82$ and Sex $F(16, 144) = 3.27, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .27$. The Univariate $F$ and observed means for the main effect of Group are shown in Table 4.6. Using the Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.003, 15 of the 16 reputation categories reached statistical significance for Group. For Sex none of the reputation categories reached significance using the adjusted alpha levels. Scheffe post-hoc statistics and follow up means are presented for each of the RES dimensions in Table 4.6. As shown in Table 4.6 the clear differences between the three groups were for the conforming and non-conforming reputation variables. That is, for self-conforming reputation the African IEC group scored highest (Bopsc, Gspsc), followed by the African Mainstream and Australian Mainstream groups, respectively. Conversely, for non-conforming reputation the African Mainstream group scored highest (Bopsd, Gopsd, Gspsd, NConsp), followed by the Australian Mainstream and IEC African groups, respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>African IEC Mean (SD)</th>
<th>African Mainstream Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Australian Mainstream Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bspsc</td>
<td>36.81</td>
<td>158.68</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.64 (.19)$^a$</td>
<td>4.42 (.27)$^b$</td>
<td>3.05 (.87)$^{ca}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bopsd</td>
<td>36.808</td>
<td>186.35</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.66 (.18)$^a$</td>
<td>4.42 (.27)$^b$</td>
<td>3.06 (.77)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gspsc</td>
<td>26.84</td>
<td>114.15</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.58 (.22)$^a$</td>
<td>4.33 (.27)$^b$</td>
<td>3.20 (.86)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gopsd</td>
<td>25.84</td>
<td>136.10</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.58 (.23)$^a$</td>
<td>4.34 (.27)$^b$</td>
<td>3.23 (.73)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bspsd</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bopsd</td>
<td>54.60</td>
<td>172.87</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.21 (.16)$^a$</td>
<td>3.10 (.59)$^b$</td>
<td>2.52 (.81)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gopsd</td>
<td>40.74</td>
<td>175.33</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00 (.01)$^a$</td>
<td>2.61 (.55)$^b$</td>
<td>2.17 (.67)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gopsd</td>
<td>8.98</td>
<td>40.33</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00 (.02)$^a$</td>
<td>1.78 (.66)$^b$</td>
<td>1.35 (.49)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nconsp</td>
<td>9.62</td>
<td>71.08</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.09 (.16)$^a$</td>
<td>4.35 (.28)$^b$</td>
<td>4.40 (.60)$^{cb}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nconips</td>
<td>4.197</td>
<td>18.53</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.91 (.07)$^a$</td>
<td>5.93 (.12)$^{ab}$</td>
<td>5.42 (.89)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nconips</td>
<td>21.33</td>
<td>25.48</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.29 (.08)$^a$</td>
<td>2.49 (1.29)$^b$</td>
<td>1.87 (.91)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activsdp</td>
<td>8.19</td>
<td>19.29</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.59 (.05)$^a$</td>
<td>2.33 (.74)$^b$</td>
<td>1.92 (.89)$^{ca}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activesd</td>
<td>12.04</td>
<td>47.58</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.99 (.22)$^a$</td>
<td>4.10 (.54)$^b$</td>
<td>4.71 (.68)$^{ca}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powesd</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>8.49</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>3.61 (.28)$^a$</td>
<td>3.93 (.49)$^{bc}$</td>
<td>3.92 (.61)$^{cb}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activips</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>54.33</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00 (0.01)$^a$</td>
<td>5.54 (.25)$^{bc}$</td>
<td>5.57 (.41)$^{cb}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powevips</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>15.78</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>5.98 (.06)$^{ab}$</td>
<td>6.00 (0.0)$^{ba}$</td>
<td>5.58 (.79)$^c$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Means within rows having no common subscripts differ at $p < .003$.

**Bspsd** - the only row with no common subscript.
Self-Reported Delinquency

A $2 \times 3$ (Sex $\times$ Group) between-subjects MANOVA on the seven dependent variables of the ASD using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .007 revealed a significant multivariate interaction effect for Sex $\times$ Group $F (14, 312) = 3.66, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .14$. Univariate F tests showed the interactions were for soft drug use $F = 5.21, p = .006$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$, property abuse $F = 5.85, p = .004$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$, physical aggression $F = 10.69, p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .12$, and hard drug use $F = 12.16, p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .13$. (See Figure 4.2 to 4.5 for interactions.)

![Graph](image)

Figure 4.2. Sex $\times$ Group interaction for soft drug use
Figure 4.3. Sex × Group interaction for abuse of property

Figure 4.4. Sex × Group interaction for physical aggression
Specifically, for soft drug use African IEC group males and females scored the same ($M = 0.0$) and African Mainstream group males ($M = 1.48, SD = 1.07$) scored higher than females ($M = 0.79, SD = 0.67$), whereas Australian Mainstream females ($M = .60, SD = .86$) scored higher than males ($M = 0.56, SD = .74$). For property abuse African IEC group males and females scored the same ($M = 0.20, SD = .11$) and African Mainstream group males ($M = 0.47, SD = .52$) scored higher than females ($M = 0.13, SD = .24$), whereas Australian Mainstream females ($M = 0.33, SD = .59$) scored higher than males ($M = 0.25, SD = .31$). For physical aggression African IEC group males and females scored the same ($M = 0.0, SD = .10$) and African Mainstream group males ($M = 0.94, SD = .90$) scored higher than females ($M = 0.30, SD = .43$), whereas Australian Mainstream females ($M = 0.32, SD = .61$) scored higher than males ($M = 0.10, SD = .21$). For hard drug use African IEC group males and females scored the same ($M = 0.0, SD = .09$) and African Mainstream group males ($M = 0.25, SD = .30$) scored higher than females ($M = 0.03, SD = .10$), whereas Australian Mainstream females ($M = 0.03, SD = .16$) scored higher than males ($M = 0.0, SD = 0.05$).
There was also a significant multivariate main effect for Group, $F(14, 312) = 16.902, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .45$. Using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .007, six of the delinquency categories reached statistical significance, two of which were not impacted by the interaction effect (i.e., stealing offences and school misdemeanours). The Univariate $F$ tests, Scheffe post-hoc statistics and follow up means for the main effect of Group are shown in Table 4.7. What is evident is that for stealing offences and school misdemeanours, the Australian Mainstream group scored highest, followed by the African Mainstream and IEC groups, respectively. In both delinquent activities, males scored higher than females, except in the IEC group where males and females were the same.
Table 4.7. Univariate F Statistics, Observed Means, and Standard Deviations for the Self-Reported Delinquency Variables (df = 14, 314) with Group as the Independent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>African IEC Mean (SD)</th>
<th>African Mainstream Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Australian Mainstream Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuse of property</td>
<td>71.97</td>
<td>13.71</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.36 (.96)</td>
<td>1.38 (.79)</td>
<td>1.61 (.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard drug-related offences</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.17 (.73)</td>
<td>1.06 (.29)</td>
<td>1.21 (.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical aggression</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>22.68</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.71 (1.31)</td>
<td>1.37 (.79)</td>
<td>1.69 (1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing offences</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>22.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.0 (.96)$^a$</td>
<td>1.32 (.67)$^b$</td>
<td>1.53 (.83)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School misdemeanours</td>
<td>71.97</td>
<td>81.38</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.24 (1.33)$^a$</td>
<td>2.28 (1.43)$^b$</td>
<td>3.03 (1.49)$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drug use offences</td>
<td>19.27</td>
<td>40.54</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.22 (.52)</td>
<td>1.47 (.99)</td>
<td>2.18 (1.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle-related offences</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>1.21 (.80)</td>
<td>1.10 (.54)</td>
<td>1.34 (.70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Means within rows having no common subscripts differ at $p < .007$. 

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Aggression

A $2 \times 3$ (Gender $\times$ Group) between-subjects MANOVA was performed on the four dependent variables of the ASA. Using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of 0.0125, there were no significant interaction effects or main effects of Sex. There was, however, a significant multivariate main effect for Group, $F(8, 322) = 9.53, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .19$. All four aggression categories reached statistical significance. The Univariate $F$ tests, Scheffe post-hoc statistics and follow up means for the main effect of Group are shown in Table 4.8. What is clear is that the African Mainstream group scored highest on each of Physical Proactive, Verbal Reactive and Physical Reactive Aggression followed by the Australian Mainstream and African IEC groups, respectively. For Verbal Proactive Aggression the Australian Mainstream group scored highest, followed by the African Mainstream and African IEC groups, respectively.

School and Teacher Connectedness

A $2 \times 3$ (Gender $\times$ Group) between-subjects MANOVA was performed on the two dependent variables of the Connectedness scale (i.e., teacher connectedness and school connectedness). Using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of $p < 0.025$, there were no significant interaction effects or main effects of Sex. There was, however, a significant multivariate main effect of Group, $F(4, 328) = 68.65, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .46$. Using the Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of $p < 0.025$, both of the categories reached statistical significance. The Univariate $F$ tests and Scheffe post-hoc statistics and follow up means for the main effect of Group are shown in Table 4.9. What is evident is that the African IEC group scored highest on both school and teacher connectedness, followed by the Australian Mainstream and African Mainstream groups, respectively.
Table 4.8 Univariate F Statistics, Observed Means, and Standard Deviations for the Aggression Variables (df = 4, 330) with Group as the Independent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>Power estimate</th>
<th>IEC African</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Mainstream African</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Mainstream Australian</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical-Proactive</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>17.64</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4a</td>
<td></td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.58b</td>
<td></td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.30ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal-Proactive</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>12.973</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0ac</td>
<td></td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.29b</td>
<td></td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.25abc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal-Reactive</td>
<td>15.01</td>
<td>29.317</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.23a</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>.95b</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.78bc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical-Reactive</td>
<td>9.57</td>
<td>28.397</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.84b</td>
<td></td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.60bc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means within rows having no common subscripts differ at $p < .0125$.  


Table 4.9

Univariate F Statistics, Observed Means, and Standard Deviations for the Connectedness Variables with Group as the Independent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>Power estimate</th>
<th>IEC African</th>
<th>Mainstream African</th>
<th>Mainstream Australian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IEC African</td>
<td>Mainstream African</td>
<td>Mainstream Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School connectedness</td>
<td>21.59</td>
<td>128.50</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.17$^a$</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher connectedness</td>
<td>37.27</td>
<td>158.71</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.01$^a$</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$p < 0.0125.$
Using the PROCESS (Hayes, 2008) macro in SPSS 22, a series of 22 separate multiple-mediation models were tested. Using bootstrapping methodology, PROCESS has the capacity to test mediation models with several mediators. Each analysis used PROCESS Model 4, which allows for more than one indirect pathway to be tested at one time. In all analyses, goals, control over achieving main goal, teacher connectedness, and school connectedness were entered as potential mediators. The first 11 analyses examined the effects of dummy variable African IEC vs. combined Australian and Mainstream African (coded 1 and 0 respectively) on each of the outcome variables. The second 11 analyses examined the effects of dummy variable Mainstream African vs. combined Australian and African IEC (again, coded 1 and 0 respectively) on each of the outcome variables. Given the number of analyses, significant indirect effects where the mediator did not predict the outcome are not reported. Such effects can occur because the indirect path is testing a product of two paths and so one strong effect combined with a weak, non-significant, effect can produce a significant product. For more on this issue, see Hayes (2009).

**African IEC vs. Combined Australian and Mainstream African**

There were no indirect effects upon school misdemeanours, soft drug use offences, hard drug use offences, abuse of property, stealing offences, physical aggression, physical proactive aggression, or physical Reactive aggression. There was a significant indirect effect via school connectedness upon vehicle-related offences, $b = -0.19$ (95% CI: 0.00, 0.62). Together, all the predictors accounted for almost 7% of the variance ($R^2 = .0673$). Those in the African IEC group had higher school connectedness scores, $b = 0.98$ (95% CI: -1.13, -0.83), $p < .001$, and school connectedness was negatively associated with the outcome, $b = -0.20$ (95% CI: -0.35, -0.04), $p = .015$. 

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There were significant indirect effects upon both verbal reactive aggression \((R^2 = .2478)\) and verbal proactive aggression \((R^2 = .1263)\), though via different routes. For verbal reactive aggression, the negative effect, \(b = -0.21 (95\% CI: 0.03, 0.43)\), was via control. Those in the African IEC group had higher levels of control, \(b = 0.90 (95\% CI: -1.09, -0.71)\), \(p < .001\), which in turn was negatively associated with verbal reactive aggression, \(b = -0.24 (95\% CI: -0.42, -0.05)\), \(p = .014\). For verbal proactive aggression, the positive indirect effect (\(b = 0.09 (95\% CI: -0.19, -0.02)\)) was via school connectedness. Those in the African IEC group reported higher levels of school connectedness, \(b = 0.98 (95\% CI: -1.13, -0.83)\), \(p < .001\), which in turn was positively associated with verbal proactive aggression, \(b = 0.10 (95\% CI: 0.01, 0.19)\), \(p = .038\).

Thus, young people in the Africa IEC group reported lower levels of vehicle related offences and verbal reactive aggression, with these evidencing indirect effects via school connectedness and control, respectively. However, the Africa IEC group also reported higher levels of verbal proactive aggression, with an indirect effect via school connectedness.

**Mainstream African vs. Combined Australian and African IEC Groups**

There were no indirect effects upon school misdemeanours, soft drug use offences, abuse of property, stealing offences, physical aggression, verbal proactive aggression, or physical proactive aggression. There was a significant indirect effect via school connectedness upon vehicle related offences, \(b = 0.15 (95\% CI: -0.45, -0.00)\). Together, all the predictors accounted for almost 9\% of the variance \((R^2 = .0856)\). Those in the Mainstream African group reported lower levels of school connectedness, \(b = -0.81 (95\% \)
CI: 0.64, 0.97), \( p < .001 \), and school connectedness was negatively associated with vehicle related offences, \( b = -0.18 \) (95% CI: -0.33, -0.04), \( p = .016 \).

There was a significant indirect effect via control upon verbal reactive aggression, \( b = 0.21 \) (95% CI: -0.40, -0.04). Together, all the predictors accounted for almost one-quarter of the variance in this outcome (R\(^2\) = .2409). Those in the Mainstream African group reported lower levels of control, \( b = -0.83 \) (95% CI: 0.63, 1.02), \( p < .001 \), and control was negatively associated with verbal reactive aggression, \( b = -0.25 \) (95% CI: -0.44, -0.06), \( p = .009 \).

Goals scores were an indirect pathway for physical reactive aggression, \( b = -0.06 \) (95% CI: 0.00, 0.14). The predictor variables here accounted for more than a fifth of the variance (R\(^2\) = .2247). Those in the Mainstream African group reported higher Goals scores, \( b = 0.44 \) (95% CI: -0.69, -0.20), \( p < .001 \), and goals scores were negatively associated with physical reactive aggression, \( b = -0.13 \) (95% CI: -0.25, -0.01), \( p = .037 \).

In summary, young people in the Mainstream African group engaged in more vehicle related offences and part of this effect is accounted for by school connectedness. This group also engaged in more verbal reactive aggression with an indirect effect via control. Finally, this group engaged in less physical reactive aggression, and there is an indirect pathway here via their reported goals.

**Discussion**

To date very little research, if any, has examined the goals of adolescent school aged students from African refugee backgrounds at different stages of their schooling. This is
somewhat surprising given the strong relationship between goals and behaviour (i.e., a person’s choice of goals, their motivation to achieve the goals, and the likelihood that the goals are achieved: see Carroll et al., 2009, 2012; Carroll et al., 2001; Li & Wright, 2014; Locke, & Latham, 1990). Furthermore, individuals deliberately choose the particular reputation they wish to present to their audience and endeavour through attainment of their goals to enhance and sustain this (Emler, 1984).

Based on some of the previous smaller scale research conducted it was hypothesized that there would be differences between the African adolescents in IECs and African and Australian Mainstream school students on goals, reputations, delinquency, aggression and connectedness to school and teachers. By carefully matching the samples on age and gender for a cross-sectional comparison the hypotheses were tested and found to be substantiated.

Previous research suggests that young people from African refugee backgrounds place a high priority on education and have high expectations of the education system (e.g., Cassity & Gow, 2005). The present empirical findings show that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds on first enrolling in Australian IECs set specific academic conforming goals and exhibit high levels of commitment to achieving these goals, which is supportive of Cassity and Gow’s (2005) assertions. Furthermore, the goals (e.g., be a doctor, teacher, engineer) set by both the male and female African adolescents in IECs are representative of normal developmental tasks of adolescence such as pursuing education and gaining a career (see Chang et al., 2006). These young people also had good perceptions regarding the control they had over their goals and the time frames for attaining them. What the present findings also seem to demonstrate is that they soon
become discouraged on transitioning to mainstream school when they realize their goals are becoming difficult to attain in mainstream school contexts (Earnest et al., 2007). Subsequent, these goals tend to shift towards less academically challenging goals, like becoming a hairdresser (female), a model (male), or musician (male and female). African students in the IEC set over three times as many academic goals and five times fewer social goals as their African mainstream counterparts. By means of comparison, the Australian mainstream students had an equal split between academic and social goals. That the African students who had transitioned to mainstream classrooms are setting predominantly social goals is supportive of Reputation Enhancing Goals theory. That is, they are attempting to adapt to another dominant culture by setting alternative goals while facing confusion about their identity (Amoah, 2014; Carroll et al., 2009). Moreover, because there may be feelings of insecurity as a consequence of leaving the relatively homogeneous context of the IEC and transitioning to mainstream schooling, differentiation in identity occurs (see Grant, 2007). The magnitude of the difference between the African IEC and African mainstream students, along with the evenness of spread between academic and social goals portrayed by the Australian mainstream students seem to support this contention.

African students from refugee backgrounds are faced with a dilemma, that is, the need to identify with the culture of the IEC and that of their new social group within the mainstream school (Carroll et al., 2009; Sam, 2000) and this may be an important factor in the development of the reputations and the goals that are selected. Social goals have been shown to be the underlying mechanism in an individual’s striving to attain a conforming or nonconforming reputation, the latter being driven by the individual’s involvement in nonconforming and delinquent activities (see Carroll et al., 2009; Emler
& Reicher, 1995). In the present study, the African IEC students were motivated to attain a conforming academic reputation, whereas their African mainstream counterparts sought to establish a nonconforming and delinquent reputation. This is very much in line with Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory (Carroll et al. 2009), which demonstrates the choice of academic, conforming social, and nonconforming social goals are critical in the orientation, development and management of adolescents’ reputations of choice.

It may be, as shown by the extensive findings of Carroll and colleagues over the past 15 years (see Carroll et al., 2009 for a comprehensive review) that like Australian students “at risk”, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are also in an intermediate transitional state whereby high levels of commitment to age-related developmental goals are diminishing and the setting of and commitment towards alternative (delinquent) goals are becoming more attractive as they transition to a more dominant culture in mainstream classes. However, for these young people from African refugee backgrounds there appears to be a dose response relationship in terms of the process of institutional adjustment. Not only are these young people trying to adapt to another culture in wider society and deal with the threats and insecurities that come with it for themselves and their families (Berry, 2005; Kim & Abreu, 2001), but they are also having to manage these issues as they transit from the relative stability of the host institutional setting (i.e., the IEC) to the more dominant culture of mainstream classrooms.

Previous research (see Carroll et al., 2009) has shown that nonconformity is a choice and it is well established that individuals wishing to claim a delinquent identity must be seen to break rules and regulations and become deliberately non-conforming (Hopkins & Emler, 1990). Therefore, the significantly higher rates of school misdemeanours and
stealing reported by the adolescents from African refuge backgrounds in mainstream schooling (compared to their African IEC counterparts) could be interpreted as an indicator of their seeking/attaining a nonconforming reputation (Carroll et al., 2009). However, the Australian mainstream group scored highest of all three groups on delinquency, and had the lowest scores on aspects of conforming reputation enhancement and academic goal importance. Thus, it may be that following transition to mainstream classes from the IEC the students from African refugee backgrounds are making a positive sociocultural adaptation as posited by Berry et al. (2006) in their large scale 13 country study of national and immigrant youth.

There is no doubt that reputations play a central role in the lives of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (whether in conformity or crime) just as they do in adolescents in general (Buelga et al., 2008; Lopez-Romero & Romero, 2010). Reputation is also a strategy of self-protection and redress (Agnew, 1992; Toro, Urberg, & Heinze, 2004) and this may also apply to adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. Previous research has shown that African students become increasingly more aggressive as they transition into mainstream schooling (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Poppitt & Frey, 2007). In the present study the African mainstream school adolescents scored higher than their IEC counterparts on all aspects of aggression. However, it was only on proactive physical aggression that they scored higher than their Australian mainstream counterparts. This supports the notion of goal directed behaviour in pursuit of a particular reputation and to some extent may be interpreted as successful sociocultural adaptation.

The significantly different levels of school and teacher connectedness that were evident clearly show that African mainstream school students were less connected to school and
teachers than their IEC peers (who reported the highest) and their Australian mainstream peers (who scored around midpoint). Research clearly shows that adolescents who are connected to school will adopt the school’s values, norms and expectations and for this reason will refrain from engaging in behaviours that are inconsistent with the schools expectations (see Lopukas & Pasch, 2013). Furthermore, students who feel teachers are supportive of them, do better (Libbey, 2004). Conversely, as seems to be the case in this present study - a lack of school connectedness predicts high risk behaviours (Bond et al., 2007; Cook et al., 2012; Millings et al., 2012).

From the analyses of potential indirect effects, the pattern of results suggests that school connectedness is a particularly important mediator of the effects of group membership on the outcomes assessed. The African IEC group engaged in less vehicle related crime, and the Mainstream African group engaged in more, and both these effects include indirect effects via school connectedness. For the former group, school connectedness was higher and this led to lower vehicle crime; the opposite was true for the Mainstream African group. Maintaining and encouraging high levels of school connectedness may therefore play an important role during adolescents from African refugee backgrounds transition from IEC to Mainstream schooling, at least in terms of reducing vehicle related crime. The details of these effects may need to be unpicked further though as it was also true that the African IEC group engaged in more proactive verbal aggression as a result of their higher levels of school connectedness.

The amount of control over the most important goal showed exactly the same pattern as school connectedness, but with respect to reactive verbal aggression. Again, the African IEC group engaged in less reactive verbal aggression, and the Mainstream African group
engaged in more, and both these effects included indirect effects via control. As control increased, reactive verbal aggression decreased. The Mainstream African group reported lower control (hence, higher reactive verbal aggression) whereas the IEC group reported higher control (hence, lower reactive verbal aggression). The critical issue here again seems to be the transition to mainstream schooling, and the question is how schools might maintain the high levels of control that these young people report during IEC schooling and which is subsequently reduced in mainstream schooling.

As with most research there are limitations which must be acknowledged. For example, the sample size for each group was relatively small and participants were recruited from only one state in Australia. Recruiting samples of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds across a range of Australian states would provide greater diversity, which in turn would enhance grounds for generalization of the findings. Furthermore, the inclusion of students from refugee backgrounds from a range of countries would generate a larger sample of adolescents and also permit a more detailed examination of the goals, behaviours and reputations of young people from a range of disrupted backgrounds. It is also acknowledged that all of the data were generated by self-reports and, while this is powerful by providing the first person perspective, multiple informants such as parents and teachers may be beneficial.

Although the present study did not attempt to construct any longitudinal arguments there are potential cohort effects that need to be considered. For example, although it was important to recruit groups of similar ages for the comparisons, this inevitably meant a disparity in the ‘real developmental ages’ for comparison. That is, the mean age of the adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in Mainstream schooling was 11 years
when they first arrived in Australia and commenced IEC, which means they were approximately two years developmentally younger than the current IEC students in the sample. This is a limitation which future research should seek to address. It is also conceivable that the cohorts compared in this study had unique experiences in their home country and these may have occurred at different ages thereby producing a confounding cohort effect on goals, reputation, delinquency, aggression and connectedness. Indeed, coping with trauma and stress at 11 or 12 years old is likely to be more disruptive to development than at 14 or 15 years old. Finally, the research was cross-sectional in design and as such provided information at that point in time. Longitudinal investigations would be helpful in facilitating an understanding of the critical periods of goal formation and in doing so assist in the development of interventions for young people from refugee backgrounds.

Future research should seek to ask adolescents from refugee backgrounds the reasons why they selected the goals they did because it is possible that some goals could be related to other goal categories for personal reasons. Fuligni (1997) argued that some educational goals might in fact be family goals because parental expectations are the underlying motivating mechanism. Interviews or written narrative may clarify any potential ethnic differences in goals and also why such differences exist in different educational settings (i.e., IEC and Mainstream) and this may be an avenue for future investigation.

In conclusion, sociocultural adaptation is a gradual process whereby those from refugee and/or immigrant backgrounds change due to contact with the host (in this study the IEC) culture and subsequently with their new more dominant culture (mainstream classes), as well as through interactions with their own culture (Chang, Tracey, & Moore, 2005). For
the adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in the school system in the present study there was evidence of successful sociocultural adaptation following transition to mainstream classes. However, there was also evidence of a transitory disaffection with school - a time when goals become more aligned to aspects of psychosocial motivation (delinquent, freedom, reputation) and assume much greater importance in their lives (see Carroll et al., 2009 for a comprehensive summary). Berry et al. (2006) highlighted the importance of schools as organisations along with the teachers within them in facilitating successful transition, not only within school but also in the larger society. School connectedness and the control adolescents had over their goals was important to the young people in the present study. Therefore, as argued by Morrice (2007) it is crucial that schools ensure that interactions are positive so that individuals do not become isolated and disconnected. The challenge for educators is to determine the ideal period of time adolescents from refugee backgrounds should spend in host IEC settings before they transition into mainstream settings, and then to ensure additional support is available for these students so their sociocultural adaptation can be fully optimized. Only then might the academic and career aspirations initially expressed by these young people be realized and not lost in the process.
CHAPTER FIVE

STUDY THREE. FROM STABILITY TO MOBILITY: HOW AFRICAN REFUGEE ADOLESCENTS’ GOALS, DELINQUENCY, AGGRESSION, REPUTATIONAL ORIENTATIONS, AND SCHOOL AND TEACHER CONNECTEDNESS CHANGE FOLLOWING TRANSITION TO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLING

The principal aim of Study Three was to examine how the goals, delinquency, aggression, reputational orientations, and school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds change following transition from the IEC into mainstream schooling. To this end, the instruments which were completed by the African IEC sample of 60 students (in Study Two of this thesis) were readministered at six months post their mainstream transition. These data were then compared with the original IEC data and changes were examined using a series of paired samples t-tests.

Method

Participants and settings
The participants were 60 high school adolescent students from African refugee backgrounds (Mage = 14.0, SD .88), specifically Liberia, Sudan, the Congo, and Ethiopia. These participants were the same 60 who were recruited to form the IEC comparison sample in Study Two of this thesis. All attended one state government senior high school in Perth, the capital city of Western Australia, which is responsible for the IEC enrolment of students from refugee backgrounds. The school is situated in a low socio-economic status area as indexed by its postal code in the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas within
Western Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). For the purpose of the present study these 60 participants were assessed six months following their transition to mainstream schooling.

**Instrumentation**

The instruments, which were previously administered in Study Two while the sample was based in the IEC (internal reliabilities [Cronbach alphas] or inter rater reliabilities for the IEC and subsequent transition to mainstream schooling are shown in parentheses, respectively) were re-administered following transition to mainstream schooling. These instruments were described in detail in Study Two:

*The Goal Types Scale* (Carroll, 1995) requires participants to list up to eight life goals and then rank them in order of importance. These goals are then assigned to previously established goal categories (Carroll, 1995; Carroll et al., 2009). To ensure accuracy in the goal classifications the researcher and one other person independently assigned 30% of the goals to categories. (This was the same process as used in Study Two.) These assignments were then compared and where there were discrepancies (in 3 cases) a discussion ensued about the reasons for assigning that goal to a particular category. Consensus was then reached as to the appropriate category. Inter-rater agreement was determined by calculating the frequency of agreement out of the total possible agreement and then converting it to a percentage. There was an overall 86% agreement between the two raters in assigning goals to the categories. Specifically, there was 91% (IEC Study Two) and 87% (six months following transition to Mainstream schooling Study Three) agreement for the Education category, 84% and 82% for Career, 77% and 81% for Interpersonal Goals, 73% and 76% for Freedom-Autonomy, 88% and 93% for
Delinquency, and 83% and 86% for Reputational. In addition, the number of goals set by participants is recorded.

*The Importance of Goals Scale* (Carroll, Durkin, Hattie, & Houghton, 1997) presents 43 goals distributed across the goal categories represented in the *Goal Types Scale*. Participants rate how important each goal item is to them on a 3-point scale, anchored with the words *not important, sometimes important*, and *very important*. The *Importance of Goals Scale* factors reflect a Social Image (Delinquency, Freedom-Autonomy goals) and an Academic Image (Educational, Interpersonal Goals). Inter-rater agreement produced 86% and 81% agreements for the Academic Image category and 82% and 87% for the Social Image category.

*The Goal Commitment Scale* (Hollenbeck, Williams, & Klein, 1989) is a nine-item self-report scale with a four-point response format ranging from “*strongly disagree*” (a score of 1) to “*strongly agree*” (a score of 4). The scale measures how committed individuals feel towards attaining their most important (main) goal. Responses are subsequently averaged over the nine questions to create a mean commitment score for each participant’s primary goal. (The overall $\alpha = .90$ [IEC Study Two] and .86 (six months post transition Mainstream schooling Study Three).

Participants were again asked “How long will it take you to achieve your goal?” to which they could respond: one week, one month one year, more than one year and "How much control do you have in achieving this goal? to which participants responded either no control at all, some control, a lot of control, total control.
The Reputation Enhancement Scale (RES; Carroll et al., 1999) was described in detail in text and Table 2.1 in Study Two. The three dimensions used in this present research along with internal reliabilities were: (a) the 32 item Social Desirability scale: Girls self-perceived social deviance norms (α = .83 [Study Two IEC] and .74 [Study Three Mainstream]); Girls self-perceived social conformity norms (α = .79 and .81); Girls evaluative reactions to others social deviance (α = .88 and .83); and Girls evaluative reactions to others social conformity (α = .82 and .79); Boys self-perceived social deviance norms (α = .90 and .84); Boys self-perceived social conformity norms (α = .82 and .88); Boys evaluative reactions to others social deviance (α = .88 and .79); and Boys evaluative reactions to others social conformity (α = .86 and .87); (b) the 30 item Social Identity scale measuring participants’ self-perception and how they would ideally like others to view them: Non-conforming self-perception (α = .84 and .88); Conforming self-perception (α = .78 and .73); Non-conforming ideal public self (α = .88 and .79); and Conforming ideal public self (α = .78 and .81); and (c) The Self-Identity scale: Activity self-description (α = .78 and .80); Power/evaluation self-description (α = .78 and .73); Activity ideal private self (α = .84 and .85); and Power/evaluation ideal private self (α = .76 and .78).

The Adapted Self-Report Delinquency Scale (ASDS; Carroll et al., 1996), a self-report scale covering a wide spectrum of frequently occurring delinquent activities: Abuse of Property (seven items, α = .87 [Study Two IEC] and .90 [Study Three Mainstream]); Hard Drug-Related Offences (five items, α = .74 and .71); Physical Aggression (three items, α = .88 and .83); Stealing Offences (five items, α = .80 and .83); School Misdemeanours (seven items, α = .86 and .89); Soft Drug Use (five items, α = .84 and .90); and Vehicle-Related Offences (nine items, α = .88 and .74).
The Adolescent Scale of Aggression (ASA: Tan, 2011), a brief 20-item self-report inventory with four distinct dimensions: Physical-Proactive Aggression (six items, \( \alpha = .88 \) [Study Two IEC] and .79 [Study Three Mainstream]), Verbal-Proactive Aggression (five items, \( \alpha = .86 \) and .80), Verbal-Reactive Aggression (five items, \( \alpha = .80 \) and .86) and Physical-Reactive Aggression (four items, \( \alpha = .84 \) and .85). The overall \( \alpha = .92 \) and .88.

The five items of the School connectedness subscale (items B1-B5, \( \alpha = .86 \) [Study Two IEC] and .76 [Study Three transition to mainstream]) (and the six items from the School assets subscale (B6 – B11: relationships with teachers, \( \alpha = .80 \) and .84) of the California Healthy Kids Survey and Protective Factor Scale (CHKS: see Austin & Duerr, 2004) were also administered again.

**Procedure**

Approval for the research was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committees of the University of Western Australia and the relevant gatekeepers. The principal of the senior metropolitan high school that enrolls students from refugee backgrounds met with the researcher and after discussing the proposed follow up study agreed to once again participate. An information sheet explaining the purpose and nature of the research along with an invitation to participate and a consent form and an assurance of confidentiality was then sent to the parents of all IEC students from African refugee backgrounds. The parents of the African students had previously attended an information session at which the researcher had explained the research and answered any questions that they might have. Interpreters had also been present at this session so that any language difficulties could be addressed. The letter highlighted the importance of the follow up study and consequently all 60 students (from Study Two) participated again. Mutually convenient times were then arranged for the administration of the instruments. All instruments were
administered to participants in small groups of between three and five students by homeroom teachers; each administration lasted approximately 45 minutes. An interpreter was also present during these sessions to cater for any unexpected instances of poor literacy or language understanding.

**Results**

According to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006), the *t*-test assesses the statistically significant difference between two independent sample means for a single dependent variable, and works with small group sizes. In the present study paired samples *t* tests were conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in group means on each of the dependent variables from T1 (initial IEC enrollment) to T2 (six months post transition to mainstream schooling) using SPSS version 20.0. To ensure that the probability of one or more Type I errors was controlled Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels were utilized for each of the dependent variables, respectively. Multiple testing and its impact on the Type I (and Type II) error rates have been frequently discussed in the research literature and a range of views are available on Bonferroni adjustments (e.g., Field, 2009; Hochberg, 1988; Holland & Copenhaver, 1987, 1988; Hommel, 1988, 1989; Mundford, Perrett, Scaffer, Piccone, & Roozeboom, 2006; Olejnik, Supattathum, & Huberty, 1997; Rom, 1990). All are in agreement, however, that the Bonferroni adjustment is one of the most commonly used methods for adjusting the significance levels of individual tests when multiple tests are performed on the same data (Mundford et al., 2006).

In the present research the Bonferroni adjustment was derived by dividing the nominal significance level (α) by the number of tests being performed simultaneously, to prevent
the overall level of significance from exceeding the nominal level. Benjamini and Hochberg (1995) argued that a strict Bonferroni correction for a number of multiple significance tests at joint level is $\alpha / n$ for each single test, while Mundford et al. (2006) contended that the adjusted level of significance should be used to conduct each of the individual tests. According to Field (2009, p. 374) Bonferroni is “generally conservative, but if you want guaranteed control of the Type I error rate then this is the test to use”. Furthermore, the correction can also be used to ensure that all confidence intervals will simultaneously contain their target parameters with 95% confidence. (Tables 5.1 to 5.4 in the present study also show the 95% Confidence Intervals [CI] and Effect sizes.)

**Goals: Number, Type, Importance, Commitment, Control and Time**

At T1 (IEC) 51 participants set Academic goals, but at T2 (mainstream school) this decreased to 24. Conversely, at T2 more participants set Social goals ($n = 36$) compared to T1 ($n = 9$). Table 5.1 shows the mean scores (and standard deviations) at T1 and T2 for the importance that participants attached to goals. Using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.0625, there were significant reductions from T1 to T2 in the importance attached to Academic goals and Traditional goals. There were also significant increases from T1 to T2 for Delinquent goals, Freedom goals, Reputational goals, and Sporting goals. There was no change for Interpersonal goals from T1 to T2.

Using Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels of <.01 there was no significant change evident from T1 to T2 for both goal commitment and time taken to achieve goal. There was, however, a significant reduction from T1 to T2 in the amount of control participants reported having over achieving their main goal (See Table 5.1).
Self-reported Delinquency and Aggression

The means and standard deviations, levels of significance, Cohen’s $d$, and 95% CI for self-reported delinquency (Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.007) and aggression (Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.0125) are shown in Table 5.2.

There are many reasons to examine aggression and delinquency separately. Specifically, they show interrelated, but differential developmental paths; and differences in correlates of aggressive and delinquent behaviours have been reported for a number of variables (van der Voort, Linting, Juffer, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & van IJzendoorn, 2013). Furthermore, aggression is not a unitary term and differentiating not only between physical and verbal forms of aggression, but also the proactive or reactive nature of these is important because they show different associations with several theoretically important variables (Marsee & Frick, 2007). Moreover, according to Moffitt (1993) specific forms of aggression are associated with severe forms of delinquent behaviour, which further supports their separation.

There were statistically significant increases in six of the seven delinquency activities from T1 to T2. The exception was for hard drug use where there was no significant difference from T1 to T2 (see Table 5.2).

For aggression there were statistically significant increases from T1 to T2 in all four types of aggression.
Table 5.1. Time 1 and Time 2 Observed Means, Standard Deviations, Effect Size and 95% Confidence Intervals for Importance of Goals, Commitment, Amount of Control and Time Taken to Achieve Goal Variables showing Significant Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>T1 IEC M</th>
<th>T1 IEC SD</th>
<th>T2 Mainstream M</th>
<th>T2 Mainstream SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
<th>CI 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Goals</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-14.45</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Goals</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>7.55</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency Goals</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>-14.66</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-1.90</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Goals</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>-13.52</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-1.70</td>
<td>-0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputational Goals</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>-11.47</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-1.50</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goals</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>-7.61</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>-1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Goals</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>0.297</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>-.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>8.470</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Taken</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-1.35</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-.124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2. Time 1 and Time 2 Observed Means, Standard Deviations, Effect Size and 95% Confidence Intervals for the Delinquency and Aggression Variables showing Significant Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>T1 IEC M</th>
<th>T1 IEC SD</th>
<th>T2 Mainstream M</th>
<th>T2 Mainstream SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
<th>CI 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Misdeemeanours</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>-7.45</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-1.69 - 0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Drug Use</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-6.67</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-0.87 - 0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing Offences</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-3.59</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>-0.08 - 0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse of Property</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-5.08</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>-0.23 - 0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Aggression</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-4.87</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.39 - 0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Related</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-2.95</td>
<td>0.005*</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>-0.08 - 0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Reactive Aggression</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-8.13</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-1.07</td>
<td>-1.32 - 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Proactive Aggression</td>
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<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-4.15</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>-0.55</td>
<td>-0.32 - 0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Reactive Aggression</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-7.78</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
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<td>-0.96 0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Proactive Aggression</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-3.09</td>
<td>0.003*</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>-0.13 0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reputation Enhancement**

A Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.003 was used for the Reputational variables. As can be seen in Table 5.3, for **Social Desirability** (i.e., admiration of law-abiding and law-breaking activities) there was a significant reduction from T1 (IEC) to T2 (Mainstream schooling) in the law-abiding variable of Boys evaluative reactions to others social conformity (Bopsc). There were also significant increases in the law breaking variables of Boys self-perceived social deviance (Bpsd), Boys evaluative reactions to others social deviance (Bopsd), Girls self-perceived social deviance (Gpsd), and Girls evaluative reactions to others social deviance (Gopsd). There were no significant changes from T1 to T2 for the law-abiding variables of Boys self-perceived social conformity (Bspsc), Girls self-perceived social conformity (Gspsc), and Girls evaluative reactions to others social conformity (Gospc).

For **Social Identity** (i.e., participants’ self-perception and how they would ideally like others to view them) there was a significant reduction from Time 1 to Time 2 in Conforming self-perception (Consp). There was no significant change in Conforming ideal public self (Conips). There were statistically significant increases from T1 to T2 in Non-conforming self-perception (Nconsp) and Non-conforming ideal public self (Nconips).

For **Self-Identity** (i.e., how participants describe themselves and how they would ideally like to be described in terms of power and activity) there were significant reductions from T1 to T2 in Activity self-description (Activsd) and Activity ideal private self (Activips). There were also statistically significant increases in Power/evaluation self-description (Powesd) and Power/evaluation ideal private self (Powevips).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reputation Variables</th>
<th>T1 IEC</th>
<th>T2 Mainstream</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
<th>CI 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bspsc</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bopsc</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bspsd</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bopsd</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gspsc</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gospc</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gspsd</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gopsd</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conspr</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nconsp</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nconips</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activsd</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powesd</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activips</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powevips</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bspsc: Boys self-perceived social conformity; Bopsc: Boys evaluative reactions to others social conformity; Bspsd: Boys self-perceived social deviance; Bopsd: Boys evaluative reactions to others social deviance; Gspsc: Girls self-perceived social conformity; Gospc: Girls evaluative reactions to others social conformity; Gspsd: Girls self-perceived social deviance; Gopsd: Girls evaluative reactions to others social deviance; Conspr: Conforming self-perception; Nconsp: Nonconforming self-perception; Conspr: Conforming ideal public self; Nconips: Nonconforming ideal public self; Activsd: Activity self-description; Powesd: Power/evaluation self-description; Activips: Activity ideal private self; Powevips: Power/evaluation ideal private self
Table 5.4. Time 1 and Time 2 Observed Means, Standard Deviations, Effect Size and 95% Confidence Intervals for School Connectedness and Teacher Connectedness showing Significant Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>T1 IEC</th>
<th>T2 Mainstream</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
<th>CI 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Connectedness</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Connectedness</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School and Teacher Connectedness

A Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of <.025 was used for school and teacher connectedness. As can be seen in Table 5.4 there were statistically significant reductions in both types of connectedness from T1 to T2.

Discussion

The difficulty with this present study is that there appears to be no other studies with which meaningful comparisons can be made. This is somewhat surprising because it is now more than 10 years since Brown et al. (2006) raised the important question of “what happens to adolescent students from African refugee backgrounds when they are placed in mainstream classrooms?” The present study has provided some answers to Brown et al.’s. (2006) question. In summary, it appears that following transition into mainstream school classes from the relative stability of an IEC, they modify the goals they set (from academic to social), remain just as committed towards achieving them, but believe they have less control over attaining them. Furthermore, in line with these goals, they seek to attain a non-conforming reputation and correspondingly become more involved in delinquent activity and aggressive behaviours. Around the same time, levels of connectedness to teachers and school (known protective factors: Whitlock, 2006) decrease. The importance of reputation and the emergence of associated aggressive and criminal behaviours in the lives of young people from African refugee backgrounds was previously highlighted by Collins et al. (2000) and Wood (2017).

The research evidence demonstrating the relationships that exist among goal setting, reputation, and delinquent behaviours in adolescents is extensive. Reputation Enhancement Theory (Emler, 1984) posits that individuals choose a particular self-image
they wish to promote before an audience of their peers, and this audience then provides feedback so that the individual develops and maintains this social identity within a community (see Carroll et al., 2012). The adolescent students from African refugee backgrounds in the present study initially (i.e., T1 during their time in the IEC), placed a high priority on academic goals. This was also a finding of Cassity and Gow (2005). However, following transition to mainstream schooling (T2), social goals assumed greater importance. Furthermore, these goals were primarily non-conforming in nature. The research evidence is clear that at-risk and delinquent adolescents attach greater importance to delinquency and freedom/autonomy goals, goals associated with law-breaking activities, exemption from adult control, and independence. These goals are more related to attaining a Social Image (Carroll et al., 1997, 2009, 2016). Therefore, it may be that these adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are in a state of transitory disaffection with school – a time when goals become more aligned to aspects of psychosocial motivation (delinquent, freedom, reputation) and assume much greater importance in their lives (Carroll et al., 2009). Indeed, delinquent activities are a social mechanism through which individuals attain a specific reputation (Buelga et al., 2008; Emler, 1984; Emler & Reicher, 1995). Adolescents from refugee backgrounds are particularly vulnerable (see Halevi et al., 2016; King et al., 2016; Molsa et al., 2016) and because of cumulative social adaptation pressures at this time, be more susceptible to factors influencing reputation and social image.

There is also extensive research showing that the goals which adolescents set are motivated by the desire to present the self to the peer community in a particular way (Emler & Reicher, 1995; Piehler & Dishion, 2007; Toro et al., 2004). According to Kerpelman and Adcock-Smith (2005) reputation enhancement is a strong and direct
predictor of delinquent activities. In IEC (T1) the adolescents from African refugee backgrounds reported that they openly admired law-abiding activities and those who were involved in them and wished to be perceived in this same way by their peers. They also wished to be perceived as powerful, kind, friendly, hardworking and as a leader. Following transition to mainstream schooling (T2), however, these same adolescents still wished to be socially conforming but now also admired socially deviant or delinquent activities and those involved in them and wished to be seen in this way themselves. It is well known that if individuals wish to claim a delinquent identity, they must be seen to break rules and regulations and become deliberately non-conforming (Hopkins & Emler, 1990). In line with this, the adolescents in this third study reported greater involvement in delinquent and aggressive behaviours following transition to mainstream schooling. Thus, it appears that reputations play a central role in the lives of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, just as it does in the lives of adolescents in general - whether in conformity or crime (Buelga et al., 2008; Carroll et al., 2009; Kerpelman & Smith-Adcock, 2005; Lopez-Romero & Romero, 2010).

School is an ideal context for young people to attain a (conforming or) non-conforming reputation (Houghton & Carroll, 1996; Houghton et al., 2008) because there is an increased and routine contact with like-minded peers and it is this contact that provides the necessary audience by which to enhance a non-conforming reputation (Reicher & Emler, 1986). School was also emphasized as a critical domain reflecting a young person’s sense of belonging in the first context outside of their immediate family by Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett (2010) by one of the most important longitudinal studies of the resettlement experience of “refugee youth” in Australia. Indeed, as argued Mwanri et al. (2017) school is particularly important for young people from refugee
backgrounds because they negotiate multiple identities as they move between cultures seeking to establish a sense of connection to their new Australian peers and the broader Australian community. It is this latter point which appears to have great salience because these young people tend to gravitate away from parent/family ties to peers as they transition to mainstream schooling and it is this that helps to explain why there is a steep rise in delinquency at this time: Emler, 1984). This movement from the IEC to mainstream schooling provides numerous additional opportunities for contact with a wider audience.

There is also a reduction in connectedness with teachers and school by these adolescents as they maneuver the transition. Transition from a specialist provision (IEC) to that of mainstream schooling is fraught with difficulties both from the perspective of students and also from that of teaching staff. Teachers are increasingly tasked with supporting an ever growing diverse student population with, on many occasions in public schooling, a lack of resources to adequately perform this role. Boyle, Topping, Jindal-Snape, and Norwich (2012) demonstrated that peer support amongst staff was the most important factor for teachers working in an inclusive mainstream environment. If teachers are adequately resourced or at least supported in working with recently transitioned IEC students then the more negative behaviours which appear may be countered and provide better student outcomes.

Teachers should not lose sight, however, of their own importance in this whole process. School is often the first point of interaction outside of their family (see Due & Riggs, 2016) and quality teacher-student relationships are a key determinant of social emotional wellbeing during adolescence (see Hattie, 2012). Moreover, developing feelings of
connectedness to school among young people reduces delinquency and academic failure, and increases academic achievement and academic expectations (Bower, van Kraayenoord, & Carroll, 2015). This may also go some way to countering the emerging nonconformity among Africans from refugee backgrounds highlighted by Woods (2017).

The research is clear that adolescents at-risk of or involved in delinquency have higher levels of aggression (Carroll et al., 2009; Fabrega, Ulrich, & Loeber, 1996) and are more likely to be proactively aggressive (Pulkkinen, 1996) since their peer audience endorse it (Emler, 1984). The adolescents in the present study self-reported significant increases in all four aspects of their proactive and reactive physical and verbal aggression following transition to mainstream schooling. It may be, as argued by Emler and Reicher (1995),that this non-conforming reputation characterized by delinquent and aggressive acts that adolescents actively seek to attain is a deliberate strategy of self-protection and redress for the individual and for the group. In this case the transition into mainstream schooling and the need to “survive” in a new environment of the dominating culture requires both overt and covert proactive and reactive aggressive behaviour.

It must be acknowledged that the first data collection point was at entry to the IEC and the second point was six months after entry to mainstream classes, and therefore a degree of caution in the interpretation of the findings is warranted. For example, the students may have changed their goals (even multiple times) within the IEC and subsequently again after the transition to mainstream classes. Indeed, access to the formalised education structure in the IEC may have been the motivating factor for change, especially given that they were in the IEC for two years and mainstream for only six months between data collections. Nevertheless, the importance of this third study should not be lost. It is a key
part of a cohesive research design, set out to address questions that up to now have remained unanswered.

In conclusion, adolescent students from African refugee backgrounds set academic conforming goals in order to pursue a conforming reputation on entry to an IEC. Following transition to mainstream schooling, however, it transpires that a non-conforming reputation becomes a more desired alternative identity for many of these individuals. The goals which these individuals then set themselves and the manner in which they engage in behaviours (public or private) to attain these goals allows them to develop this reputation of choice. That connectedness to school and teachers decreases on entry to mainstream schooling may be a crucial finding because connectedness is known to be a protective factor. The final study (Study Four) presented in Chapter Six describes a series of interviews conducted with a small number of students to more fully explore the IEC-Mainstream Schooling transition process.
CHAPTER SIX

STUDY FOUR: CASE STUDY PROFILES OF ADOLESCENTS FROM AFRICAN REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS FOLLOWING TRANSITION TO MAINSTREAM CLASSES

This final study of the thesis sought to generate the profiles of four adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who appeared to experience substantial changes in their behaviour (not necessarily in the desired directions for all variables) following transition to mainstream schooling. The purpose of this was to compare the empirical profiles of these young individuals at T1 (IEC) and T2 (mainstream classes) and then employ follow up semi-structured interviews with these adolescents to develop as comprehensive an understanding of the transition as possible.

Case Studies

Briefly, case studies enable the researcher to make a detailed examination of an individual, a group, or a phenomenon (Yin, 2003). With the potential to generate rich subjective data, case studies aid in the development of theory and empirically testable hypotheses (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). In this present study, the IEC-Mainstream transition profile was generated and then a semi-structured interview was undertaken to gather the adolescent’s views about the transition. This method of semi-structured interviewing allowed the researcher and the adolescent to engage in a dialogue whereby the interviewer was guided by a schedule of topics or questions but was able to explore and probe interesting areas which arose (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). This method is particularly useful in eliciting information of attitudes, opinions, values, beliefs, or behaviours (Gillham, 2000). The guiding questions for the semi-structured interviews
were based upon the measures administered in Study Three (Chapter Five) and on the empirical profiles arising from them.

**Case Study 1**

Case 1 is a Year 10, 15 year old female student. During her time in the IEC she had a 100% attendance record, but since transitioning to mainstream school, official records revealed a 20% increase in non-attendance. Official school records also indicated a substantial increase in incidents of school based misbehaviour following her transition from the IEC into mainstream schooling. There were no records showing periods of suspension from school. The empirical profiles generated for Case 1 from the Study Three (IEC - Transition to Mainstream Schooling) instruments are shown in Figures 6.1 to 6.5. These are supplemented by the data obtained from the interviews with the case.

**Empirical Profile and Interview Findings**

As can be seen in Figure 6.1, it is evident that following transition to mainstream schooling the number of goals that this young female set and the amount of control (GC) that she believed she had over them decreased considerably. However, her commitment (AC) to achieving these goals remained the same.

Case 1’s level of self-reported involvement in delinquent acts during her time in the IEC was zero for all seven types of activities. As shown in Figure 6.2, on transition to mainstream classes the only change that occurred was a slight increase in involvement in school misdemeanors. The remainder of self-reported delinquency categories remained at zero.
With reference to aggression, this young female’s aggressive behaviours increased substantially following her transition to mainstream schooling. Specifically, as can be
seen in Figure 6.3 there were increases in all four types of aggression, with the greatest increases coming in verbal reactive and physical reactive aggression.

Figure 6.3. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Aggression.

With regard to reputational orientations, Case 1 presents an interesting profile. As is evident in Figure 6.4, there appears to be very little difference from T1 (IEC) to T2 (Mainstream) in any of the reputation variables. The profile reveals little change from IEC to Mainstream, with a clear expression of a high level of admiration for both boys and girls who engage in socially conforming activities (Bspsc and Gspsc; Bopsc and Gopsc) in both contexts. A similar profile is evident for Case 1’s perceptions of how she sees herself and also how she ideally would like to be seen by others (Consp and Conips; Nconsp and Nconips). While in the IEC and following transition into Mainstream classes Case 1 demonstrated high levels of conforming self-perception and conforming ideal public self, suggesting that she sees herself as a highly conforming individual and actually wants her peers to see her in this same light. On closer inspection of Figure 6.4 small increases are evident in the conforming aspects of social identity. For the non-conforming
aspects of social identity (Nconsp and Nconips), Case 1 evidenced a small increase in her self-perceptions. However, her ratings suggest that she does not wish to be seen in a non-conforming light by others.

The greatest change from IEC to Mainstream in Case 1’s profile is in the connectedness variable (i.e., school connectedness and teacher connectedness). It is clear from Figure 6.5 that on transition to Mainstream classes this young female experienced a substantial change in her levels of connectedness, with the greatest reduction coming in connectedness to teachers.

**Case Interview**

Initially, when enrolled in the IEC (T1), Case 1 set academic oriented goals, specifically she wanted to be a teacher. This was in line with the type of goals that the majority of the other students from African refuge backgrounds within the IEC set. However, once this young female transitioned to mainstream classes (T2) her goals changed markedly and
they became very much more socially oriented goals. For example, she wanted to develop her skills in dancing to pursue a career as a professional dancer, rather than becoming a teacher.

![Figure 6.5. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Connectedness.](image)

When asked why such a change had occurred she responded “Learning is hard in mainstream. I don’t know why. It just is”. When asked about specific types of goals Case 1 was able to articulate the reasons why she changed. With reference to the increasing importance of goals relevant to gaining a reputation (how you see yourself, what others think about you and how they see you) she specified:

*When I first came to Australia, going to school was about learning and getting a good education but now it is also about how you feel about yourself and how other people see you - the way you dress and act. People judge you by what they see. You have to look right otherwise they think you are a loser.*

Image and social identity appear to have become increasingly important for this young female when she joined her mainstream peers. This is seen through the importance that she attached to sporting goals following her transition to mainstream. Becoming more
involved in sporting activities seemed to connect to her personal image, reputation and feelings of wellbeing. This change in goals, however, also reflected contextual differences in education. As this young female articulated:

*In Africa school wasn’t about sport. We went to school to learn English and how to read and write. But here we play sport and do dance and drama. It’s fun. I feel good when I play. It’s also good for exercise; it keeps you fit and makes you look good.*

When asked about specific aspects of reputation and how her views might have changed on transitioning to mainstream classes (i.e., “now that you are in mainstream: What do you think about boys and girls in mainstream who get good grades/behave themselves in school? Do you feel the same way about African students?) Case 1 was able to communicate her perceptions. In terms of Social Desirability (i.e., admiration of law-abiding activities i.e., Bpsc, Bopsc, Gspsc, Gopsc) this young female had some clear points regarding socially conforming norms. That is with reference to students who adhered to socially conforming norms and obtained good grades:

*I think that they are smart. Sometimes I think that some teachers favour students and that is why they do well. Most African students get into trouble because they don’t understand teachers. If teachers were more understanding like they are in the IEC then kids wouldn’t get into so much trouble.*

Conversely, when asked about students who misbehaved, played truant and/or got into trouble (e.g., fights), and whether she felt the same way about students from African backgrounds she had equally clear views. Specifically, for aspects of Social Desirability related to admiration of law-breaking activities - (i.e., Bpsd, Bospd, Gopsd, Gspsd) she stated

*Sometimes school can be so boring so some kids wag school. Some classes and some teachers are really very boring. Some African students wag class because they don’t understand the subjects, or it is a boring subject or sometimes the teacher is mean. The teacher yells at you and treats you like an idiot. Both African and Australian and other kids get into fights. I don’t think that this is right.*
When asked which type of student she preferred to be, she responded

_I want to get good grades but it is hard. Sometimes I am a bit lazy too but sometimes teachers make it hard. They just yell and treat you like you are dumb so you fight back by wagging and sometimes talking back and then you get into trouble._

Case 1 also had very clear viewpoints about the qualities she admired in her fellow students and also what other students admired in their school friends. That is, she “admired kids that are cool”, because “they are fun to be around and confident and they don’t take crap from other people”. She also believed that these peers “stick up for themselves”. When asked how other students in school saw her and how she really wanted other students to see her, she replied: “I think that they think that I’m a pretty good person. I want them to see me as cool and confident”. Case 1 also asserted that she wanted her fellow students from African backgrounds to see her in this way. When this line of enquiry was further pursued this young female believed that when African students transitioned into mainstream school classes “they act tough because they are scared. They aren’t really tough but they act tough so the people - kids and teachers - don’t hassle them or treat them unfairly”. According to Case 1 the students from African backgrounds ideally want others to see them as nonconforming. That is, that they are someone who breaks rules and is a trouble maker, and tough. Being seen as a leader was also important:

_Most popular African students are tough. They don’t take crap from other students or teachers. They stick up for themselves and other students that are getting picked on. That’s what leaders do._

When asked about the increases in incidents of aggressive behaviour following transition from the IEC to mainstream schooling, Case 1 explained

_I don’t think that I am more aggressive. I feel sometimes that I have to stick up for myself more in mainstream. Kids in mainstream can be pretty mean so I sometimes have to stick up for myself. In the IEC everyone was pretty nice and friendly so you didn’t have to protect yourself too much._
Finally when asked to comment on the differences in her feelings of connectedness to her school and teachers since leaving the IEC and transitioning into the mainstream school environment, Case 1 outlined some very clear reasons for her relative reduction in school connectedness in the mainstream school environment:

*In the IEC it was good because there was only one class and one teacher. We became close and the teacher got to know you really well so you felt really close to the teacher and the class. But in mainstream it is different. In mainstream you have many different classes and teachers. The teachers don’t know you and they don’t really understand where you are coming from.*

**Case Study 2**

Case 2 is a 13 year old Year 8 female student. Since leaving the IEC, school records indicate that her school attendance decreased by 24% and that on a number of occasions she failed to attend scheduled classes. This is in contrast to her 100% attendance record when she was in the IEC. School records for Case 2 also indicated a substantial increase in school based misbehaviour following her transition from the IEC into mainstream schooling. While this student has been internally suspended (removed from class to a withdrawal program within the school) on several occasions since leaving the IEC, there were no records showing periods of official suspension from school. The empirical profiles generated for Case 2 from the Study Three (Repeated Measures) instruments are shown in Figures 6.6 to 6.9. These are supplemented by the data obtained from the interviews with the young female student.

**Empirical Profile and Interview Findings**

**Type of Goals and Commitment to Main Goal**

Figure 6.6, which shows the T1 and T2 empirical profiles for both the amount of control (GC) and commitment (AC) to achieving goals, was very similar for both IEC and following transition to Mainstream school classes.
Initially, when enrolled in the IEC, Case 2 set academic oriented goals, specifically she wanted to go to university and become a lawyer or a doctor. This was in line with the type of goals that the majority of the other students from African refugee backgrounds within the IEC set. However, once this young female transitioned to mainstream school classes her goals changed markedly and they became very much more socially oriented goals. For example, she expressed the goal of becoming an actor and reported that her primary purpose of attending school is for “socialising” with her friends and “having a good time”. When asked why such a change had occurred she responded “The hard work (in mainstream) makes you think that becoming a doctor or lawyer is pretty impossible unless you are really, really smart and get very good grades”.

The level of self-reported delinquent acts during Case 2’s time in the IEC was zero for all seven types of delinquent activities, except for School Misdemeanors. Following
transition to mainstream schooling, Case 2 reported increases in three of the seven types of activities, namely school misdemeanors, soft drug-use and physical aggression.

Figure 6.7. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Reputational Orientations

As shown in Figure 6.7 there were some differences from T1 (IEC) to T2 (Mainstream) in the reputation variables. The profile reveals minor changes from IEC to Mainstream schooling with higher levels of admiration for both boys and girls who engage in socially conforming activities (Bspsc and Gspsc; Bopsc and Gopsc). However, there were more marked changes in admiration for boys and girls who engage in socially deviant activities (Bspsd and Gspsd; Bopsd and Gopsd). A similar increase from IEC to Mainstream schooling is also evident for the non-conforming aspects of social identity (Nconsp and Nconips), suggesting that following transition Case 2 wishes to attain a non-conforming reputation.
With reference to aggression, Figure 6.8 shows this young female’s verbal and physical reactive aggression increased substantially following transition to mainstream schooling. There was also a slight increase in verbal proactive aggression.

Figure 6.9. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Connectedness.
The levels of connectedness to school and teachers decreased markedly (see Figure 6.9) following transition to Mainstream schooling, with the greatest reduction coming in connectedness to teachers.

**Case Interview**

Case 2 was able to articulate the reasons behind the increasing importance of goals relevant to her gaining a reputation (how you see yourself, what others think about you and how they see you):

*It is important to have a good reputation because that is how people judge you. You have to act strong, cool and confident. If you act and look weak and dumb (like you don’t know anything and you can’t stick up for yourself) then you won’t get anywhere.*

Image and social identity appeared to have become increasingly important for this young female after she joined her mainstream peers, as is seen through the importance that she began to attach to sporting goals. Becoming more involved in sporting activities seemed to be important to her personal image, reputation and feelings of wellbeing.

*I like sport more in mainstream. I have gotten better at it. It is good to play sport. It keeps you fit and healthy.*

When asked to elaborate about specific aspects of reputation that changed on transitioning to mainstream classes (i.e., now that you are in mainstream: What do you think about boys and girls in mainstream who get good grades and behave in school [i.e., Bspsc, Bopsc, Gspsc, Gopsc]. Do you feel the same way about African students?) Case 2 was able to communicate her perceptions clearly. In terms of **Social Desirability** (i.e., admiration of law-abiding activities - Bspsc, Bopsc, Gspsc, Gopsc) this young female had some points regarding socially conforming norms:

*They are probably really smart and the teachers like them because they are smart so they don’t get into trouble. Yes, I feel the same way about African students.*
Conversely, when asked about students who misbehaved, played truant and/or got into trouble (e.g., fights), whether she felt the same way about African students she also had clear views. Specifically, for aspects of Social Desirability that were related to admiration of law-breaking activities – (i.e., Bpsd, Boschd, Gospd, Gspsd) she stated

Some students (both African and Australian) misbehave and get into fights and wag because they think that it is cool to do this. I think that it is ok to get into fights if you are sticking up for yourself. But otherwise fighting is not good. Some kids wag classes because the subject is boring and the teachers are mean. I think that teachers need to care about kids more and make subjects more interesting.

When asked which type of student she wanted to be, she responded

I want to do well at school. I want to get good grades but sometimes it is really hard.

Case 2 also had very clear opinions about the qualities she admired in her fellow students and what other students admired in their school mates. She admired “kids that are smart but cool”; she believed that these students “don’t just do what everyone tells them to do. They think for themselves”. When asked how other students in school saw her and how she really wanted other students to see her, she replied:

Most of the students in my year think I am pretty nice and friendly and this is what I want them to think.

Case 2 also asserted that she wanted her fellow African students to see her in this way. When this line of enquiry was pursued this young female believed that following transition into mainstream school classes students from African backgrounds think

being tough is being cool. They think that if they are tough/strong then no one will mess with them.

According to Case 2, the African students ideally want others to see them as nonconforming - that they are someone who breaks rules and is a trouble maker, and tough: “They want to seem tough so that others won’t pick on them or put them down”.
Case 2 also drew parallels between being a leader and being tough and articulated that being seen as a leader was important in the Mainstream school setting:

*Yes it is very important to be a leader (in mainstream). If you are a leader you will be respected. African students are leaders if they don’t take shit from others. They are tough and they can stick up for themselves.*

When asked about the increases in her negative behaviour (getting into trouble) since leaving the IEC for Mainstream school classes, Case 2 articulated some very clear explanations:

*I get into trouble more in Mainstream than in the IEC because the teachers in the IEC don’t pick on you. Mainstream teachers pick on you all the time. There are so many rules in mainstream not like in the IEC. Like in mainstream you have to be quiet all the time and you get into trouble when you don’t wear your uniform. In the IEC you were allowed to talk in class as long as you did your work and if you didn’t wear your uniform you just had to go and get changed into a spare one. You didn’t get into trouble or get suspended and stuff.*

When asked if there was anything in the IEC that helped her not get into trouble, Case 2 responded:

*Yes, the teachers were more friendly and helpful. I think it’s because they really got to know you and cared about you. You only had one class in the IEC so the teachers got to know you really well and it felt like being part of a family.*

Finally, when asked to comment on the differences in her feelings of connectedness to school and teachers since entering the mainstream school environment, Case 2 outlined clear reasons for why she felt more disconnected. However, she also commented that any reductions in teacher connectedness did not extend to her feelings of connectedness to school friends:

*I still feel connected to my friends at school but I don’t feel as connected to my teachers. The teachers in the IEC were really nice. In mainstream we have some nice teachers but there are some mean ones too. The mean ones always yell and don’t explain things very well. They make you feel stupid.*
Case Study 3

Case 3 is a Year 10, 15 year old male. Official school records show that since transitioning from the IEC to Mainstream schooling his school attendance had decreased by 28% (patterns of absence were not present in the IEC). These records also showed this student breached the School Code of Conduct by engaging in misbehaviour substantially more so after transitioning out of the IEC. In total, Case 3 incurred six days of suspension (i.e., six x 1 day suspensions) from school since transitioning into Mainstream schooling, the reasons for this being: continually refusing to follow staff instructions and being verbally abusive towards others (staff and students).

Empirical Profile and Interview Findings

As can be seen in Figure 6.10, following transition from the IEC to Mainstream schooling this young male reported approximately the same levels of commitment (AC) to achieving his goals, but the amount of control (GC) he believed he had over these goals decreased slightly.

![Figure 6.10. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Control (GC) and Commitment (AC) to Achieving Goals.](image)
Initially, when enrolled in the IEC, Case 3 set academic oriented goals, specifically he wanted to “go to university” and “become an engineer”. This was in line with the type of goals that the majority of the other students from African refugee backgrounds within the IEC set. However, once this young male transitioned to mainstream classes his goals changed markedly and they became very much more socially oriented.

As can be seen in Figure 6.11, Case 3 self-reported that his involvement in delinquent activities remained at a very low level following his transition to Mainstream schooling, which in many ways is antithetical to the changes in his goal setting (i.e., to more socially oriented goals). According to the empirical data his involvement in school misdemeanours declined following his transition from the IEC and into mainstream classes.

Figure 6.11. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Self-Reported Delinquency.
As can be seen in Figure 6.12, this young male’s levels of verbal and physical reactive aggression increased following transition to Mainstream schooling, the former quite substantially. The levels for both forms of proactive aggression remained at zero.

![Figure 6.12. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Aggression](image1)

![Figure 6.13. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Reputation Orientations.](image2)
With regard to reputational orientations, Case 3 appears to present with very limited changes, as is evident in the profile presented in Figure 6.13. From T1 (IEC) to Time 2 (Mainstream) the main changes appear to be in his expressions regarding admiration for both boys and girls who engage in socially non-conforming deviant activities (*Bspsd, Bopsd, Gspsd*). The greatest change appears to be in his admiration of his own self-perceived deviancy (*Bspsd*). Case 3’s perceptions of how he sees himself and also how he ideally would like to be seen by others (*Consp, Conips, Nconsp, Nconips*) remained approximately the same, with very high levels expressed for the conforming (*Consp and Conips*) compared to the non-conforming variables (*Nconsp and Nconips*). While in the IEC and following transition into Mainstream classes Case 3 demonstrated high levels of conforming self-perception and conforming ideal public self (*Consp and Conips*), suggesting that he sees himself as a highly conforming individual and wants his peers to see him in the same light.

Figure 6.14. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Connectedness.

The greatest change in Case 3’s profile following his transition from IEC to Mainstream schooling for Connectedness was for teacher connectedness. It is evident from Figure
6.14 that on transition to Mainstream classes this young male appeared to experience a substantial reduction in levels of connectedness to teachers. There was also a reduction in reported school connectedness, but this was relatively small.

**Case Interview**

Following transition to mainstream classes Case 3’ goals changed and they became socially oriented. When asked to explain the change of original goal of going to university to the mainstream goal of becoming a rap artist, he said the first goal did not seem to be as important anymore:

“They are still important but it is going to take a long time to get there. In the IEC you think that if you go to school you will learn but it is going to take a lot of hard work to go to university and become an engineer or whatever”.

Case 3 also articulated the reasons behind the increasing importance he gave to goals that were relevant to gaining a reputation (how you see yourself, what others think about you and how they see you). When asked about this he responded:

*It is important to look and act cool in mainstream. Cool means that you act confident and you can stand up for yourself. If you don’t act cool then people will pick on you and you won’t be respected.*

During the interview it became evident that image and social identity had become increasingly important for this young male following his transition to mainstream classes where he mixed with his new (dominant) peer group. This was illustrated in the importance that he began to attach to sporting goals, primarily because sporting activities seemed to be connected to his personal image and reputation – “I like sport. People like you if you play sport and you are good at it”. When probed with further questions about
specific aspects of reputation that changed on transitioning to mainstream classes (i.e., now that you are in mainstream: What do you think about boys and girls in mainstream who get good grades and behave in school - Bspsc, Bopsc, Gspsc, Gopsc) and (Do you feel the same way about African students?) Case 3 was able to communicate his perceptions quite clearly. In terms of **Social Desirability** (i.e., admiration of law-abiding activities - Bspsc, Bopsc, Gspsc, Gopsc) this young male made some clear points regarding socially conforming norms:

*I am happy for them. They probably work very hard but they also must be pretty smart because the work in mainstream is pretty hard. Most African students find the work in mainstream pretty hard. They don’t get all the help that they used to get when they were in the IEC so they end up getting into trouble sometimes because they can’t do the work and the teachers aren’t very understanding. So I think that it is much harder for African kids to get good grades.*

Conversely, when asked how he felt about students who misbehaved, played truant and/or got into trouble (e.g., fights), and whether he felt the same way about African students, he also had clear views. Specifically, for aspects of **Social Desirability** that were related to admiration of law-breaking activities - (i.e., Bpsd, Bospd, Gopsd, Gspsd) he stated

*It depends on the reason. If they get into fights and wag because they are getting picked on or because school is boring then I think that it is ok. But if they just fight because they like fighting then it is not ok.*

When asked what type of student he really desired to be he was clear in that he wanted to be a good student, but if he had to protect himself and be *“hard”* then he would:

*I want to be good at school and learning but I’m also going to stick up for myself if other people pick on me or treat me unfairly.*

Case 3 also had very clear opinions about the qualities he admired in his peers and what other students admired in their peers:

*“I admire students that are smart and funny and strong and tough and that can take care of themselves. I think that other students admire the same thing.”*
When asked how other students in school perceived him and how he really wanted other students to see him, he replied:

*I think that other kids see me as strong and tough and they respect me. I want them to see me that way.*

Case 3 also asserted that he wanted his fellow students from African backgrounds to see him in this way. When this line of enquiry was pursued this young male believed that following transition into mainstream school classes African students “*don’t want to be seen as troublemakers*” but rather

*They want to be seen as tough because they think that this will protect them and get them respect.*

The was a clear relationship between being a leader and getting into trouble (including engaging in aggressive behaviour) according to Case 3, and he stated that being seen as a leader was important in Mainstream settings:

*Yes it is important to be a leader in mainstream. The African students think that being tough and independent makes them leaders so they sometimes get into trouble and fights to show how tough they are.*

The concept of leadership was inextricably tied to protection and setting examples to others, particularly in relation to aggressive behaviour. For instance, when asked about the increase in his engagement in aggressive behaviour following transition from the IEC to Mainstream schooling, he responded:

*I have become angrier in mainstream because you have to stick up for yourself more. If someone bumps into me accidentally, I don’t mind, but if they do it on purpose then I will push them back. If they say something I don’t like then I will tell them to stop and if they don’t I will have to do something about it like make them stop. I don’t think that I was like this in the IEC. In the IEC I didn’t feel I had to be tough because everyone respected each other and treated each other well - Both teachers and students.*

Finally when asked to comment on the differences in his feelings of connectedness to school and teachers since entering the mainstream school environment, Case 3 attributed this to the change that occurred in how teachers cared for him. However, this was attributed
to the different structures of the two environments (i.e., the stable nature of the IEC environment versus the more mobile nature of the Mainstream school setting):

In the IEC teachers really understood you and cared about you so you felt much more connected to them but in mainstream they don’t care about you as much and they don’t get to know you well because you have many teachers in the mainstream but not in the IEC where you only have one.

Case Study 4

Case 4 is a 15 year old Year 9 male student. Since leaving the IEC, official school records indicate that he has developed a pattern of non-attendance at mainstream classes. These records also indicate a reduction in his overall school attendance by 18% since leaving the IEC. In addition, school records for Case 4 show that the number of negative behavioural incidents in which he has been involved has increased and that he has also accumulated a total of eight days suspension from school (one x 2 day suspension and six x 1 day suspensions) over a period of approximately nine months. The reasons for suspension include continually refusing to follow staff instructions and being verbally abusive towards others (staff and students). This number of suspensions can be put into perspective in that the school in which the student is enrolled does not use suspension as a behaviour management strategy unless it is deemed necessary. The empirical profiles generated for Case 4 from Study Three (Repeated Measures) are now presented.

Empirical Profile and Interview Findings

Initially, when enrolled in the IEC, Case 4 set academic oriented goals, but following transition to mainstream classes changed markedly to more socially oriented goals. However, as can be seen in Figure 6.15, the same levels of commitment (GC) to achieving goals and the amount of control (AC) that he believed he had over these goals remained at approximately the same levels.
As shown in Figure 6.16, Case 4’s self-reported delinquency remained at very low levels following his transition from IEC into Mainstream schooling, however, there was a substantial reduction in school misdemeanours.

Figure 6.15. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Control (GC) and Commitment (AC) to Achieving Goals.

Figure 6.16. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Self-Reported Delinquency.
There were some changes in Reputational Orientations for Case 4 following transition to Mainstream schooling.

An examination of Figure 6.17 shows the main changes appeared to occur with regard to Case 4’s expressions regarding admiration for himself and others who engage in socially conforming activities (Bspsc; Bopsc; Gspsc; Gopsc). That is, he expressed a greater desire to attain a more socially conforming reputation following his transition to Mainstream schooling. The remaining reputational orientations appear not to have changed from T1 (IEC) to T2 (Mainstream). The high levels of conforming self-perception and conforming ideal public self (Consp and Conips) expressed while in the IEC were maintained following transition into Mainstream schooling, suggesting that Case 4 still saw himself as a highly conforming individual and wanted his peers to see him in the same light.

Figure 6.17. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Reputation Orientations.
Although Case 4 expressed more socially conforming desires his levels of all four types of aggression increased following transition from the IEC to Mainstream schooling; the verbal and physical reactive types of aggression increased most markedly.

Figure 6.18. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Aggression.

Case 4’s empirical profile seemed to change from the IEC to Mainstream schooling. There were reductions in both connectedness to school and to teachers, with the reduction for the latter being the largest (See Figure 6.19).

Figure 6.19. T1 and T2 Empirical Profiles for Connectedness.

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Case Interview

Initially, when enrolled in the IEC, Case 4 set academic oriented goals (to learn English, go to university and get a good job). However, once this young male transitioned to mainstream classes his goals changed to being more socially oriented (i.e., becoming a musician or a professional sportsman). When asked to explain this change and why his original goal of going to university did not seem to be so important anymore he responded:

*In the IEC you have a lot of confidence in learning. The teachers are very helpful; they encourage you and understand you so you feel like you can achieve those goals. But in mainstream it is hard. You realise how behind you are and you get much less help so those goals aren’t so important anymore because you don’t think that you can achieve them.*

Image and social identity appeared to become increasingly more important for this young male when he joined Mainstream school peers, as is demonstrated through the importance that he began to attach to sporting goals. Becoming more involved in sporting activities seemed to be connected to his striving to attain a specific personal image and reputation.

*I like sport because it is fun and not boring. I get it and I am good at it. You are respected if you are good at sport.*

Case 4 was also able to articulate the reasons behind the increasing importance of goals that were relevant to his gaining a reputation (how you see yourself, what others think about you and how they see you). Specifically, he stated:

*How you see yourself and how others see you is very important because that is what it is all about. If you act like you are stupid or silly then people think that you are stupid and silly. But if you act smart and tough and confident, people think that is what you are and they respect you.*

When asked about specific aspects of reputation that had changed following his transition to mainstream classes (i.e., now that you are in mainstream: What do you think about boys and girls in mainstream who get good grades and behave in school - Bspc, Bopsc, Gspc, Gopsc) and (Do you feel the same way about African students?) Case 4 was able
to communicate his opinions regarding social conformity very clearly. In terms of Social Desirability (i.e., admiration of law-abiding activities - Bspsc, Bopsc, Gspsc, Gopsc) this young male student commented:

*I think that most boys and girls (African and non-African) that behave and get good grades are smart and therefore the teachers like them. It is hard for kids that are not so smart because the teachers don’t like them.*

Conversely, when asked how he felt about students who misbehaved, played truant and/or got into trouble (e.g., fights), and whether he felt the same way about African students involved in such activities he had clear views. Specifically, for aspects of Social Desirability that were related to social deviancy and admiration of law-breaking activities – (i.e., Bpsd, Bospd, Gopsd, Gspsd) he stated:

*I think that some students that misbehave, wag, get into fights because are bad and they like to do bad things. But some good African kids also do these things because they are just trying to stick up for themselves or get out of class because it is boring or the teacher doesn’t treat them with respect.*

When asked which type of student he wanted to be, he responded “I want to get good grades but I also will stick up for myself if people treat me like crap”.

Case 4 also had clear views about the qualities he admired in his fellow students and what other students admired in their school mates, commenting

*I admire students that are smart and friendly and fun to be around. I think that other students admire the same things.*

When asked how other students in school saw him and how he really wanted other students to see him, he replied:

*I don’t really know how they see me. I hope that they think that I am nice and that they respect me.*

When this line of enquiry was pursued Case 4 stated he believed that following transition into mainstream school classes African students:
Just want to be respected. Sometimes they do things like breaking the rules and getting into fights (especially the boys). They do this so that their friends think that they are tough and will respect them.

Case 4 also spoke about the relationship between being a leader and getting into trouble (including engaging in aggressive behaviour), believing that being seen as a leader was important now he was in the Mainstream school setting:

It is important to be a leader in mainstream. It is important because then people see you and respect you otherwise they pick on you or ignore you. Some African kids try to become leaders by doing things that get them into trouble (like breaking rules, getting suspended, getting into fights). They think that this makes them look cool and other kids will like and respect them.

When asked about the increase in his aggressive behaviour since exiting the IEC and entering the Mainstream school setting, Case 4 responded:

If I feel I need to stick up for myself then I will. Nobody sticks up for you in mainstream so you have to do it for yourself. I don’t think that I would hurt someone who bumps into me accidentally though. In the IEC it was different because people always took the time to listen and try and help you so you didn’t need to act all tough but the teachers in mainstream just tell you off and get you into trouble.

Finally when asked to comment on the differences in his feelings of connectedness to school and teachers since entering the Mainstream school environment, Case 4 said:

Yes I do feel much less connected to the teachers in mainstream than I did in the IEC. In the IEC the teachers took time to get to know you and they cared about who you are and what you were doing but in mainstream most teachers don’t have the time to get to know you. They don’t seem to care about you; they don’t care if you pass or fail.

In conclusion, the final study in the present thesis explored the changes in the pre and post transition behaviour of four adolescents from African refugee backgrounds. All made substantial changes in their behaviour after exiting the IEC (original placement) and entering Mainstream schooling. It appears that the changing of goals aligns with the new kinds of reputational orientations sought. There was a theme that transitioning to Mainstream schooling required a reputation that portrayed non-conformity and in some
cases a “hardness”. At the same time the goals changed from being academically orientated to more socially oriented, which is very much in line with Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory (see Carroll et al., 2009). Commensurate with this, were increases (in most cases in aggressive behaviour), particularly the forms of reactive aggression. This may be typical for some adolescents in general as they respond to the daily interactions with peers which occur in Mainstream schooling. For these adolescents from African refugee backgrounds, however, they were not only transitioning across settings (i.e., IEC-Mainstream) they were also transitioning in terms of their identity with the dominant culture (i.e., mainstream peers).

Of great concern is the reduction in levels of connectedness to teachers and school. The interview information gathered suggested that teachers have a major role to play in preventing this ‘disconnection’ via their classroom academic and social behaviours. Many of the adolescents viewed teachers as unhelpful and as not understanding their academic and cultural needs.

The findings from Study Four certainly support claims made that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds experience difficulties settling within Australian mainstream school contexts (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2014; Correa-Velez et al., 2010; Nunn et al., 2014) and that as a result many of them ‘disidentify’ with school (Steele, 1997). As highlighted in the earlier chapters of this thesis, schools are a primary institution of socialization that provide a stable source of social support for young people from refugee backgrounds as they acclimate to Western society (see Sullivan & Simonson, 2016). Furthermore, they are critically important to psychological wellbeing and development (de Heer et al., 2016). The findings in this
study highlight that the initial placement in IECs appears to have many benefits to adolescents from refugee backgrounds, but this can easily become unraveled following transition to Mainstream schooling.
CHAPTER SEVEN

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The four separate, yet inter-related studies conducted as part of the thesis are now discussed in this final chapter. At the conclusion of each of these studies a relatively brief discussion was presented regarding the key findings and their implications. To further develop, interpret and understand the findings as a coherent whole, this final chapter presents a general discussion which seeks to interpret and then juxtapose the overall findings into the literature which was critically reviewed in Chapter Two.

Overall, the research presented in this thesis details the link between goals and reputations in explaining the sociocultural institutional adaptation that adolescents from African refugee backgrounds experience in their initial educational contexts (i.e., the IEC) and following their transition to Mainstream school classes. To understand this link, exploratory data were initially gathered through interviews and this was followed by empirical evidence from cross-sectional and longitudinal studies which included matched groups of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds and Australian mainstream contexts. Finally, empirical profiles of pre and post transition to Mainstream schooling were developed for a small number of cases (i.e., adolescents) from African refugee backgrounds. These profiles were then supplemented by findings from interviews. The findings from these studies will be discussed, the educational implications of the findings will be presented, along with an acknowledgement of the potential limitations. Possible directions for future research are then offered.
The findings overall provide strong support for Due and Riggs (2016) who argued that how best to meet the significant needs of young people from refugee backgrounds is proving particularly challenging to Australian schools (and those worldwide). Governments and educators must face the realization that this challenge will become even more difficult to overcome given the ever accelerating rate of the refugee population aged under 18 years worldwide (see Gadeberg & Norredam, 2016; Graham et al., 2016). Furthermore, the increasing ethnic diversity of students in classrooms as a result of countries of origin for resettled refugees frequently changing due to shifting zones of conflict (Kaplan et al., 2015) adds further challenge. Thus, the research conducted in this thesis is both timely and important.

A series of research questions were posed. **Research Question 1** asked: *Were adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (now in mainstream classes) goal oriented in the IEC and was this the case through their transition into mainstream schooling?* To answer this question, a series of focus groups were conducted with male and female adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in mainstream classes. These young people had transitioned from the IEC context. Sex specific interview groups were conducted to allow females the opportunity to freely provide information. With reference to goal orientations almost all participants (male and female) reported they had set academic based goals during their time in the IEC, with many wishing to pursue further studies at tertiary level (e.g., going to university) in order to take up employment in professional roles such as doctors, teachers and engineers. Thus, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are goal oriented during their initial placement in IECs. This provides support for the earlier focus group research findings regarding the academic career aspirations of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (see Earnest et al., 2007). Furthermore, they also support
the respective assertions of Perry (2008) and Cassity and Gow (2005) that education is viewed as important and as a pathway to future employment. However, these academic goals shifted considerably to more social oriented ones once these young people had transitioned into mainstream schooling. Furthermore, these social goals tended to be oriented towards a non-conforming reputation, which is contrary to that sought in the IEC context. But, in the context of the first research question, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are still goal oriented following their transition into Mainstream schooling. The importance of this shift in goals must not be lost, however, given that goal setting is inextricably linked to reputational status, which in turn is intertwined in behaviour that can be socially conforming or non-conforming. This may in some part explain why many adolescents from African refugee backgrounds are said to experience increases in behavioural problems and aggressive behaviour following transition to mainstream classes (see Brown et al., 2006; Hillier, 2002; Milner & Khawaja, 2010).

Research Question 2 sought to explore how adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (now in mainstream classes) differentiate their IEC and mainstream school context experiences? What was quite clear was that although they faced numerous challenges, as highlighted in previous research (e.g., Adeyinka et al., 2016; Due & Riggs, 2010; King et al., 2016; Woodgate et al., 2017; Ziaian et al., 2012), all participants recalled that the IEC was a positive and supportive environment. This was a clear differential and is supportive of earlier research findings regarding IEC positive experiences (Due, Riggs, & Mandara, 2015). The extensive support and assistance from teachers in the IEC who understood their unique needs, along with the stability provided by having the same teacher and peers was particularly highlighted as a stand out feature of life in the IEC. This was in stark contrast to life in mainstream classes. Due, Riggs and
Augoustinos (2016) in their comprehensive review of school belonging for children with refugee backgrounds clearly identified the importance of the IEC, especially for academic involvement, school attachment, belief in the school, and relationships with teachers. All participants in the present research were clear in their views that being taught in IECs was far better than having to move around to different classes, with many different teachers and peers that they now experienced in mainstream schooling.

Having supportive others, along with feeling connected to teachers and peers, is known to reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes (Petit et al., 2007; Stewart, Sun, Patterson, Lemerle, & Hardie, 2004). However, in the case of the adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in the first exploratory study it appears that on transitioning from the relative stability of the IEC to the mobility of the mainstream setting, supportive others may actually contribute to the development of a non-conforming reputation (see Carroll et al., 2009). The discussion between adolescents in the focus groups highlighted that establishing new friendships in mainstream classes was perceived by them as a positive, above and beyond disengagement and misbehaviour in mainstream classrooms. Therefore, just as Brown et al. (2006) and Lloyd (2006) highlighted over 10 years ago - transition to mainstream schooling from the IEC setting is accompanied by increased restlessness and misbehavior. However, the underlying mechanism for this was not explored at the time and appears not to have been since.

Another variable which the adolescents from African refugee backgrounds indicated differentiated the IEC and Mainstream school experience (and was especially challenging) was the perceived lack of support and assistance, particularly from teachers. There was a consensus this was a strong differentiating factor between IEC and
mainstream classes. Mention was also made about the language difficulties they experienced when in mainstream classes. Although participants did not report experiencing problems in the IEC regarding language, a number cited difficulties trying to learn a new language, especially on transitioning to mainstream classes. This has been shown to compound poor adaptation (Rousseau et al., 1996) because individuals from refugee backgrounds see themselves as not competent compared to their English speaking mainstream peers and in doing so avoid any social interactions (Carrasquillo et al., 2004). This is, in some ways, antithetical to the requirements of Reputation Enhancement where an audience and social interactions are important. Conversely, communication has been shown to enhance understanding between cultures (Poppitt & Frey, 2007) and in doing so enhance integration. Research (Humpage, 1999; Hyman, Vu, & Beiser, 2000) has shown that marginalisation through lack of English fluency and the failure of mainstream teachers to check if their instructions has been understood is frequently cited as a negative aspect of mainstream classrooms.

That adolescents from African refugee backgrounds can differentiate their IEC and mainstream school experiences, and clearly articulate these experiences leads to an important question, which poses something of a dilemma. Specifically, how long should these young people spend in IECs prior to mainstream schooling? Some researchers (e.g., Olliff & Couch, 2005) have questioned whether 12-24 months is sufficient, while others have recommended up to 10 years (Garcia, 2000). Although Due et al. (2016) identified the importance of the IEC for young people from refugee backgrounds it may be that transition to mainstream schooling is required earlier to facilitate integration with mainstream peers. On the other hand, given what the adolescents in this present research reported about their experiences in mainstream classes it might be advantageous to extend
their stay in the IEC setting. What is clear from the first exploratory study, is just as Brown et al. (2006) and Lloyd (2006) highlighted some 10 years ago - transition to mainstream schooling from the IEC setting is accompanied by faltering optimism and increased restlessness and changes in behaviour.

The first quantitative study in this thesis was conducted in an attempt to answer Research Question 3, which asked What are the goals, reputational orientations, levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of matched samples of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (in IEC), adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (in mainstream, classes) and Australian adolescents? To answer this, two groups of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds and one group of non-African Australian born adolescents were recruited. Of the “African” group, one comprised adolescents enrolled in Intensive English Centres and the other, adolescents who had transitioned from an IEC into mainstream high school classes. The three groups were carefully matched according to age and sex. Given that a discussion was generated at the end of each study in the previous chapters in this thesis Research Question 4 which asked Are there differential patterns of goals, reputational orientations, levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of African refugee backgrounds (in IEC), adolescents from African refugee backgrounds (in mainstream, classes) and Australian adolescents according to age and gender? (Study Two) will be addressed simultaneously.

In summary, the African adolescents (both groups) tended to set multiple goals, whereas their Australian counterparts tended to set a single goal. The greatest discrepancy was between academic and social goals for the African adolescents in the IEC and the African
adolescents in Mainstream classrooms. The former set many more academic goals and the latter far more social goals. The adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in the IEC had a main focus on educational and career goals, which is similar to adolescents in general (see Carroll et al., 2009; Nurmi, 1989a, 1991a; Wentzel, 1989). Correa-Velez et al. (2010) also found that older Australian resettled refugee youth identified education as important for their future wellbeing, while Due et al. (2016) reported 5-13 year olds from refugee backgrounds had goal-related educational aspirations. Thus, young people across a wide age range who arrive in Australia from refugee backgrounds appear to place great importance on academic matters.

However, it appears that once in mainstream classes African adolescents’ goals change to social goals and this is highly similar to findings showing that adolescents who are in a transitory state because of their disappointment or disaffection with school are similarly disposed (see Carroll et al., 2009). In this present research the African Mainstream group attached greater levels of importance to delinquency goals, and freedom and reputation goals, whereas the African IEC group viewed Academic goals as more important. In line with this, the IEC based African adolescents sought a self-conforming reputation while the African Mainstream group sought a non-conforming reputation. If, as Reputation Enhancing Goals Theory demonstrates, then adolescents from refugee backgrounds should also present with differential profiles in their behaviours commensurate with the type of reputations they strive to achieve. This was indeed the case. That is, the African adolescents who had transitioned into mainstream schooling reported significantly higher rates of antisocial behaviour (compared to their IEC counterparts) suggesting they might be seeking a nonconforming reputation and hence adapting to their host culture (i.e., mainstream school). Supportive of this, the Australian mainstream group scored highest
of all three groups on antisocial behaviour, and had the lowest scores on aspects of conforming reputation enhancement. It may be, therefore, that the African adolescents in mainstream schooling were in a transitional phase of their adaptation.

Warikoo and Carter (2009) highlighted the role of the school as a cultural actor that bolsters status hierarchies amongst social groups through its pervasive ideologies, rules and codes and that minority youth within educational systems of the host country face an acculturation dilemma. That is, some young people form positive relations with other ethnic groups or the dominant culture and maintain their ethnic identity/traditions. Others do not desire to retain their ethnic identity and adopt the dominant culture, while some have a strong affiliation with their own culture and avoid contact with other groups or lose cultural and psychological contact with their own ethnic group and the host or dominant society. In this present research it seems that following transition into mainstream schooling the adolescents from African refugee backgrounds tend to adapt to the dominant culture (i.e., mainstream peers) by setting different goals while facing confusion about their identity (Amoah, 2014; Carroll et al., 2009). According to Grant (2007) the differences in profiles and the changes that occur following transition may be down to the consequence of leaving the relatively homogeneous context of the IEC for the heterogeneous and multiple identity mainstream classroom. Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007) argued that schools have a unique and influential impact on the lives students from refugee backgrounds, especially as they learn to navigate their new environments - as is the case in the new mainstream schooling context.

It is also known that reputation is a route to self-protection and standing among the peer community (Agnew, 1991; Carroll et al., 2009) and group membership (Elmer & Reicher,
1995; Urberg, & Heinze, 2004). To enhance and maintain a reputation requires visibility of actions and a need to indulge in non-conforming behaviours. This has been found in young Lebanese Australians as they endeavoured to affirm social presence and ensure mutual protection (Collins et al., 2000). The African Mainstream group scored highest on physical proactive, verbal reactive and physical reactive forms of aggression in the cross-sectional study and it may be they were exerting their presence in mainstream schooling. Conversely, it may be that even after spending two years in the IEC (with limited integration in mainstream schooling) they still had little knowledge of school routines (Brown et al., 2006; Schouler-Ocak, et al., 2016) and may not have interpreted their aggressive and disruptive behaviour as inappropriate (Jackson, 2007).

The cross-sectional study also showed that African adolescents in the IEC had the highest levels of school and teacher connectedness, with the African Mainstream group having the lowest levels.

Schools are crucial for promoting the healthy development of refugee students (McNeely et al., 2017) and when feelings of connectedness to school decline, delinquency and academic failure increase (see Bower, van Kraayenoord, & Carroll, 2105). On the other hand when such feelings are increased - acceptance and integration among peers also increase (Corsano et al., 2006; McNeely et al., 2017). Gifford et al. (2009) highlighted that in the case of newly arrived adolescents (aged 12-18) from refugee backgrounds enrolled in English Language schools, feeling connected or belonging was especially important.
It appears from this cross-sectional study that connectedness does not carry through to mainstream classes from IEC placements. Sam (2000) and Steele (1997) both argued that when young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds experience a dissonance between their host (IEC) setting and that required for the new dominant social group within the mainstream school they “disidentify” with school. The findings that African adolescents in mainstream schooling had differential profiles compared to their African IEC counterparts suggests that they might indeed be adapting to their host culture (i.e., mainstream school). In other words, they are making a positive sociocultural adaptation as posited by Berry et al. (2006). With reference to Sex differences in these profiles the picture was not at all clear. In all of the variables investigated, there were significant multivariate and or Univariate interactions.

The findings from the analyses suggested that teacher and school connectedness was a particularly important mediator, along with goals, and control over achieving the main goal. To answer Research Question 5 - Are there potential indirect effects of group membership (i.e., African refugee backgrounds in IEC, adolescents from African refugee backgrounds in mainstream classes, and Australian adolescents) on goals, reputational orientations, and levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness? a series of separate multiple-mediation models were tested. Supportive of the pioneering work of Gifford et al. (2009) and Correa-Velez et al. (2010) in Australia and the subsequent important and extensive work of Due and Riggs, this finding shows school connectedness is a particularly important mediator. More specifically, it seems that for providing a stable source of social support and being a protective factor IECs are especially important, just as posited by Due, Riggs and Augoustinos (2016). These same authors recognized that this might not always be the case, however, and questioned
whether the positive experiences of adolescents from African refugee experiences continue following transition into mainstream schooling.

In line with the question posed by Due, Riggs and Augoustinos (2016) Research Question 6 asked *do the goals, reputational orientations, and levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds change following their transition from IEC into mainstream schooling?* (Study Three). The findings from the longitudinal study (Study Three) clearly demonstrated that there are substantial changes in all of these variables after these young people have transitioned. Moreover, it is fair to say that for many adolescents from African refugee backgrounds the positive experiences of the IEC do *not* continue after they have transitioned into mainstream schooling. (However, some of the students might argue that the experiences become *more* positive as they [i.e., the experiences in their opinion] assist them to adapt to the dominant mainstream culture.)

What is clear is that Makarova and Birman’s (2016) systematic review on acculturation in the school context which identified (among other things) self-perception and self-evaluation, feelings of alienation, transitional school experience, adaptation challenges in the school of the host country is supported to a large extent by the longitudinal study conducted here. Similarly, the centrality and importance of peer relations in the adaptation process (McGregor et al., 2016) identified) is supported.

An issue which must be acknowledged, is that although differences were evident following transition to mainstream schooling these changes might have been on-going during the 24 months in the IEC prior to transition. Furthermore, whether the changes in
the various variables examined are predictive of future changes (either in themselves or across other variables - or vice-versa) was not examined. For this to be achieved a Random Intercept Cross Lagged Panel Model (see Hamaker, Kuiper, & Grasman, 2015) would be required. For the present study the sample sizes were not sufficient for such a model. Nevertheless, the significant changes identified warrant such an investigation in the future.

Research Question 7 asked What are the profiles regarding goals, reputational orientations, and levels of delinquency and aggression, and school and teacher connectedness of adolescents from African refugee backgrounds who evidence the most significant changes in their behaviour following their transition into mainstream schooling? (Study Four). A small number of case studies were conducted in an attempt to address this enquiry. The empirical profiles generated had a number of similarities in terms of pre and post transition, but it was the interviews that revealed the most telling issues. For example, difficulties were experienced by all four of the adolescents in settling within mainstream school classes and teachers were identified in playing a role in this. This also provided some support for the Study Three findings. Specifically, although causality could not be attributed to the pre to post transition changes in behaviour, the adolescents cited teacher unhelpfulness and patience and lack of understanding of their cultural needs in mainstream as important contributing factors in their behaviour change. This may have impacted on their feelings of connectedness to teachers and school, both of which plummeted following transition. According to these adolescents, IEC teachers took time to get to know them and built positive relationships. This has implications for mainstream school teachers who, based on the interview findings, appear to be poorly
prepared for the increasingly diverse classrooms, especially where students have complex backgrounds of trauma and limited previous education (Chapman et al., 2013)

**Limitations of the Research**

Although the present research was conducted in a highly systematic and rigorous manner, there are limitations which must be acknowledged. For example, Study One was focus group interview based and the sample relatively small. Nevertheless, the participants discussed issues relating to their everyday functioning that they may have been reticent to talk about. That the researcher established rapport with the participants and because focus groups were conducted on the basis of separate single sex groupings may have allayed this concern. The information that was generated from the focus group interviews demonstrated some consistency across groups.

It must also be acknowledged that in the cross sectional second study the sample size for each group (i.e., age and sex matched African adolescents from refugee backgrounds attending IEC’s, African adolescents from refugee backgrounds who had transitioned from an IEC into mainstream high school classes, and non-African Australian born adolescents) was relatively small. However, the close matching procedure was beneficial. This stringent individual matching on age and gender decreases error variance and precludes the matching variables from becoming competing causal factors (Kirk, 1995), and to some extent addresses the issue of sample size. All data were self-reported in Study Two and while providing unique first person perspectives the preferred design is to collect data from multiple sources. This was also the case in Study Three, which was longitudinal in design. Furthermore, the data collection comprised a single time point in the IEC and also (subsequently) in the mainstream school context and it is possible that participants
began modifying their goals and reputations prior to moving into mainstream classrooms. The interviews conducted with participants did, however, suggest that it was following transitioning to mainstream school classes that facilitated these changes. It is recognized here that although no longitudinal arguments were put forward to explain the findings, there may have been potential cohort effects that needed to be considered. Finally, a small number of case studies were conducted to shed further light on the transition process from IEC to mainstream school classrooms. Although a small number of cases were interviewed some key findings emerged in support of the previous extensive empirical evidence.

**Directions for Future Research**

On the basis of the four research studies conducted in the present thesis, a number of recommendations can be put forward for future research. First, as proposed by Due, Riggs, and Augoustinos (2016), it is vitally important that resettlement countries have an evidence base when providing support to young people from refugee backgrounds, especially in educational contexts. The research reported in this thesis goes some way to adding to an evidence base by providing what appears to be the first empirical evidence highlighting the importance of the transition into mainstream school from IECs. Indeed, it can be argued this transition period is the critical period for risk and change. This is important because pinpointing key times of change on the transition trajectory is crucial for maximising school and community outcomes because the “features of the school context have an impact on the ways that minority youth acculturate at school and in wider society” (Makarova, & Birman, 2016, p. 2). However, as highlighted earlier, if these critical times of change are to be pinpointed then longitudinal research which incorporates multiple assessment points along the transition trajectory (i.e., in IEC and mainstream
school) are necessary. This would also facilitate the development of more timely and potentially efficacious intervention strategies for dealing with the various and cumulative challenges which confront young people from refugee backgrounds as they transition the high school process. However, what is clear is the need for a more supportive culture in mainstream schools, which has stronger connections for enhancing school connectedness.

Future research should also seek to recruit samples of adolescents from a range of refugee backgrounds from different countries to enhance generalization of findings. When doing this researchers might also pay attention to the crucial issue of ‘age’. As discussed earlier, although a careful matching procedure for ‘chronological age’ was conducted in the present research, the participants in the IEC’s were ‘developmentally younger’ than the Mainstream African refugee adolescents who had already spent two years in mainstream education. This is an important area to address in future research studies.

Future research should also consider a qualitative approach so that the unique lived experiences that adolescents underwent in their home country and continue to undergo in the IEC and mainstream school setting can be examined in greater detail. However, a degree of caution is warranted. Future researchers should bear in mind that raising memories of earlier traumatic events such as family separation along with the post-resettlement difficulties with the host culture (e.g., negotiating new educational environments, friendships, community, culture, identity), makes these young people especially vulnerable to adverse mental health outcomes (see Halevi et al., 2016; Murray, Davidson, & Schweitzer, 2008). Nevertheless, it is important to understand these issues because such experiences and the manner in which young people cope with them at different ages and at different points in the transition through the IEC and high school
have great potential to produce confounding effects. Talking with and listening to adolescents is an approach that may uncover important information that would undoubtedly add to what the empirical and qualitative evidence in this present research has shown.

This previous point resonates with suggestions regarding collaborative qualitative research with participants from cultural minorities. For example, future researchers might consider collaborating with the cultural communities so that they (i.e., the cultural communities) might formulate their own research questions. This takes into account such important issues as who will benefit from the research, whose lived reality is represented, who has authority over the data and who has control over knowledge distribution (see Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

Future research might consider utilising social network analysis to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the friendship patterns and reciprocal-non-reciprocated relationships of adolescents from refugee backgrounds as they transition their educational process. Social network analysis is a method for capturing, mapping, and measuring the complexity (or absence) of social relationships between people, groups, and organisations (see Hawe, Webster, & Shiell, 2004). This is important because children and adolescents from refugee backgrounds enter and negotiate new educational environments and multiple transitions which comprise initiating and maintaining friendships and supportive peer friendships are a protective factor against psychological adversity (Graham et al., 2016). Moreover, positive peer relationships enhance social and academic outcomes, and social emotional functioning (Sullivan & Simonson, 2016).
In conclusion, this present thesis has reported four separate yet inter-related studies focusing on the role that goals and reputations play in the lives of African adolescents from refugee backgrounds – just as they do in the lives of all adolescents (see Carroll et al., 2009). The findings show that when these young people first arrive in IECs (their first school setting in the host country) they are highly goal oriented with specific academic aspirations for future success. They also conform to the social mores of the host IEC culture in terms of their reputational orientations, behave according to the expectations of the IEC and school, and they feel highly connected to teachers and school. However, after they transition into mainstream school classes there appears to be considerable changes in their behaviour and this thesis has shown how these changes align with Reputation Enhancing Goals theory. However, it may be that the complex backgrounds of trauma and limited previous education that many of these young people present with is not congruent with what mainstream teachers are equipped for and they (i.e., the adolescents) present a challenge that the teachers cannot manage. Teachers and administrators must therefore be better prepared to face this challenge, which in turn means that institutions responsible for initial teacher training and professional development for serving teachers must provide comprehensive coverage of sociocultural adaptation. Only then might the full potential of young people from refugee backgrounds be realized and the disadvantage associated with future prospects in the country of settlement alleviated.
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APPENDICES