Refugee young people (re)forming identities: The role of social networks

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Educational contexts around the world are increasingly characterized by diversity, including a rise in students from refugee backgrounds. Much research has focused on the educational needs of these students and the particular struggles they experience in educational contexts. The increasing number of refugee and asylum-seeking children in Australia calls for rethinking approaches to enhance the acculturation process in ways that build on individuals' prior knowledge and understanding of self.

This paper draws on data from a larger case study that focused on Sudanese young people in regional Australia and investigated their out-of-school activities, networks, and practices and how these contributed to their success across a range of contexts. Drawing on perspectives of identity and theories of social capital, we discuss the role of social networks in generating social capital and what this means in terms of the (re)formation of students' identities in regional locations, and we consider how this can contribute to educational success. We suggest that the resources in regional areas present both a challenge and an opportunity for young former-refugee people in terms of repositioning themselves in new social, cultural, and educational contexts. The paper examines how the young people developed their own momentum, rationality, and legitimacy in their identity (re)formation, and suggests that educational settings need to connect with and understand young people's out-of-school resources to avoid deficit narratives that lead to poor educational outcomes.

Keywords: Identity; refugee young people; education; social capital; resettlement; success

INTRODUCTION

Recent developments and changes in migrant and refugee settlement policies and practices in Australia have resulted in increasing levels of cultural and linguistic diversity in regional and rural areas. From 2003, the Australian government, for example, adopted dispersal policies that saw Humanitarian Entrants settled in regional and rural towns throughout Australia in order to "decrease pressure on major metropolitan areas, contribute to the long-term development aims of Australia's regional towns and cities, and help to address labour shortages in these areas" (DIMIA, 2005, p. 43). Between 2003 and 2011, Humanitarian Entrants from African nations were settled in a significant number in regional Australia. The 2006 census recorded 19,050 Sudan-born people in Australia, an increase of 287.7% from the 2001 census, and a further

20% increase was recorded in 2011 census figures (Department of Social Services, 2016; DIAC, 2012). In the 2016 Census, there were around 24,700 Sudan-born people in Australia (Demographic Analysis, 2019). Until recently, they have represented the majority of refugees settled in regional areas. In addition to formal resettlement policies, there has also been an increase in secondary migration or relocation when refugees have moved away from metropolitan areas to other locations around Australia. Key reasons cited for such moves include employment opportunities, joining relatives or friends, living in a smaller, quieter, safer place, and to access more affordable housing (Boese, 2010; Major, Wilkinson, Langat, & Santoro, 2013; Taylor & Stanovic, 2005).

There are, however, challenges associated with settling refugees in regional and rural contexts. Employment opportunities may not be as good as in large urban centres and housing may be less available, although more affordable. Public transport is often limited, as is access to specialized services such as English language tuition, interpreters, and health services. Refugees may also suffer intolerance and antipathy on the basis of their migration status as well as their "cultural distinctiveness" (Perrin & Dunn, 2007, p. 256). In small, ethnically homogenous regional and rural communities, the racialized bodies of Sudanese families are obvious and become targets for persistent, everyday racism and "disturbing practices of unbelonging" (Edgeworth, 2015, p. 362). Even where host communities in rural and regional areas are welcoming and positive about the arrival of refugees into the community, a lack of resources can lead to heavy reliance on volunteers who may be inexperienced, unfamiliar with the needs of refugees, and "ill prepared to welcome and support new comers" (McDonald-Wilmsen, Gifferd, Wiseman, & Casey, 2009, p. 104).

In the context of education, African students of refugee background have been identified as one of the most underachieving groups in Australia, with educational outcomes significantly lower than other refugee groups (CRC, 2006). Refugee students are commonly characterized as illiterate, lacking appropriate education experiences and skills, and facing ongoing trauma from the refugee experience (Taylor & Sidhu, 2012), and schools and teachers in regional and rural areas may lack the resources and expertise to ensure successful outcomes for their refugee background students (Morken & Skop, 2017). In a review of the literature about school-age students from Sudan in Australia, Sellars and Murphy (2018) assert that the lack of a national strategy and appropriate support structures ensures that the learning needs of students with refugee experiences remain unmet (p. 504). Despite the efforts of some schools to overcome racism, experiences of othering and exclusion dominate research findings related to Sudanese young people in education (Baak, 2019; Edgeworth, 2015; Sellars & Murphy, 2018).

Without wishing to minimize the many obstacles refugee-background young people must overcome as they (re)form their identities and journey towards successful integration into Australian communities, in this paper we focus on stories of success. The three case studies described are part of a larger study that focused on Sudanese young people in regional Australia, and investigated their out-of-school activities, networks and practices, and how these may be contributing to their formal education achievements (Major et al., 2013). Here, we consider three key social networks (church, sport, and friends) that these three young people engaged with, and how these enabled them to build social capital (Putnam, 2000) and construct identities as successful young people within their communities. Of importance in such an analysis are the discursive domains and practices that influence identity formation (Gee, 2001; 2011). We conclude that schools should take up and engage with the social capital and out-of-school resources that young refugee people bring to the education context, rather than constructing them as a visible minority group and often in deficit terms (see, e.g. Baak, 2011; Lenette, 2016).

In the next section, we outline the theoretical frameworks of identity and social capital that provided analytical lenses on the data before explaining the methodology of the study. We then describe the three case study participants and go on to discuss social networks in relation to their identity (re)formation. We finish by considering some implications for education.

THEORETICAL FRAMES – IDENTITY

Drawing on the work of James Gee, including Henri Tajfel's and John Turner's perspectives on social change, we understand "identity" as being multiple, changing, and performative, with its formation shaped by particular discourses or combinations of ways of being, thinking, talking, and interacting in order to be recognized as a certain kind of person (Gee, 2001; 2011; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Identities are also contextualized and "tied to the workings of historical, institutional and sociocultural forces" (Gee, 2001, p. 100). Refugee young people experience a different social, cultural, and historical milieu in Australia to that of their home country, and this requires that they draw on a range of cultural and social resources to negotiate their identity positioning within the new environment.

Gee (2001) identifies four perspectives for thinking about identity: Nature-identity, Institution-identity, Discourse-identity, and Affinity-identity. Nature-identity is identity as a state of being that one has no control over; that is, it is determined by nature; for example, being a twin. Despite the predetermined element of nature-identity (N-identity), it only derives power by being recognized as significant by others, so N-identities are always linked to institutions, discourses, and/or affinity groups. Institution-identity (I-identity) is acquired via an institution; for example, being a Justice of the Peace, or an asylum seeker, or refugee. These identity positions are authorized by institutions and gain their power because of this. However, these identities also are instantiated through related discourses and discursive practices. Discourse-identity (D-identity) is an identity performance that draws on an individual trait or characteristic. It is located within discursive structures and shaped in dialogue with others. For example, a student may position her/himself as a good girl/boy and behave in ways that align with this discourse. However, being recognized by others in an identity position is essential for the formation of D-identities. Affinity-identity (A-identity) relates to experiences that lead to shared practices with a group of like-minded others. For example, being a church-goer or a basketball fan are A-identities based on shared experiences which define membership to that particular affinity group.

These identity perspectives or elements intersect in complex ways; in concert, or antagonistically, to offer identity positions that may be taken up or resisted by individuals. For example, the label of "refugee" is an institutional identity in the first instance, as it is officially designated based on certain conditions (i.e. being outside one's country "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (UNHCR, n.d.). A refugee is a forced migrant who has little choice in the acquisition of this particular label which defines and categorizes in particular ways. This I-identity gives legal power to the state to determine many aspects of life for Humanitarian Entrants, including where they will be settled, and what services they will have access to (OECD, 2017). Being categorized in this way profoundly impacts the process of identity re-formation (Burnett, 2013). In addition, there are also discursive meanings attached to the label of refugee, many of which are negative; for example, victims of violence and trauma, interrupted or poor education, and lack of material resources. Dominant refugee discourses circulating in the country of settlement will shape the identity (re)formation process. In Australia, current prevailing media and political discourses position refugees as economic migrants who take jobs from local people, as highly needy, and as potentially dangerous

politically. Refugees then navigate difficult discursive domains in their quest to reshape identity. An individual may maintain an I-identity as a refugee in order to access services and support and may identify as a refugee within a discursive community of refugees to participate in shared activities (D-identity). Other (former) refugees may reject both institutional and discourse refugee identities and attempt to position themselves in other ways. The interrelationship between these identity perspectives is complex and the boundaries are often blurred, rather like the process of identity formation itself.

In this article, institutional, discourse, and affinity perspectives are taken up as a way of understanding the complex identity work undertaken by the three refugee young people in a range of social contexts. The intersections between these three kinds of identity, within particular social contexts, created strong discursive spaces in which the participants were able to position themselves and experience success.

THEORETICAL FRAMES—SOCIAL CAPITAL

In addition to ideas about identity, this study draws on notions of social capital to understand the refugee young people's engagement in different social contexts. In particular, we use Putnam's (2000) notions of bonding and bridging capital to describe the different kinds of social networks that people draw on to build social capital. Bonding capital is described as "sociological super-glue" creating tight, more inward-looking networks. It is "gained from participating in local social networks that are most often homogenous and supportive, and provide a sense of belonging" (Santoro, 2013, p. 962). Family and ethnic community are key sources of bonding capital. In the context of refugee resettlement, bonding capital has been identified as the experience of "receiving emotional support and encouragement in establishing . . . new lives in Australia" (Murray, 2010, p. 38).

Bridging capital is more inclusive, enabling the crossing of social groupings and acting as "a social lubricant . . . for allowing different kinds of people to mix together freely" (Brough et al., 2006, p. 407). It develops from heterogeneous, outward-looking, and more loosely tied social networks that generate "broader identities and reciprocity" (Putnam, 2000, p. 20). There is a strong and positive relationship between bonding and bridging capital. Research suggests that strong bonding capital within a refugee community provides the emotional support, confidence, and self-esteem that contribute to the development of bridging capital (Strang & Ager, 2010). Bridging capital is important to the instrumental support that helps refugees to "better navigate their new environment" (Murray, 2010, p. 39).

Social networks have been identified as assisting refugees to manage the difficulties they face in resettling and adjusting to an unfamiliar environment (McDonald et al., 2008) and social connectedness has been closely linked with feelings of wellbeing for Sudanese refugees (Murray, 2010). Having come from problematic and often traumatizing social and political contexts, most young people of refugee background need social services, networks and resources to assist them to re-form their identities. While experiences of racism and exclusion, as described in the previous section, undoubtedly limit efforts to build social capital in rural and regional contexts, there is evidence that young refugee people and their families can build social capital via community networks and social institutions (see Santoro & Wilkinson, 2016; Wilkinson, Santoro & Major, 2017). This paper further contributes to understandings of refugee experiences in Australia, discussing how three Sudanese refugee young people engaged with three social networks—church, friends, and sport—to re-form identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), build a sense of belonging, and support their quest to succeed in the new environment.

METHODOLOGY

The larger qualitative project that this paper draws on, focused on case studies of eight Sudanese refugee young people in regional Australia—four females and four males—and investigated their out-of-school activities, networks, and practices, and how these contributed to their success across a range of contexts. The young people were aged between 13 and 18 years and lived in regional New South Wales (NSW). This paper draws on data from three of the eight case studies. The participants were identified and selected through a process of negotiation and recommendation by a range of stakeholders working closely with refugee youth, including government and non-government organisations, community groups, and education personnel. The focus was on young people who were identified as successful, where success was defined in broad terms and encompassed family/community engagement and responsibility, positive attitudes to education and learning in general, belief in one's potential to learn in formal and informal contexts, feeling good about oneself, and being identified by others as successful.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews using, as stimulus, photographs taken by the young people on digital cameras. The photographs were of people, places, and things located outside formal education settings, that were important to the young people and that made them feel successful and good about themselves. Each young person was interviewed twice over several months. Interviews were also conducted with parents or caregivers and a community person nominated by the young person; for example, a sports team coach, leader of a community group the young person belonged to, family friend, or volunteer mentor. We also spent time observing the young people in a chosen community activity; for example, sports practices and matches, and cultural activities. Underlying these data collection methods was a critical methodological consideration; that is, to carry out research with young people that was inclusive, humanizing rather than colonizing, and which engendered trust (Paris, 2011).

Data were analysed drawing on Situational Analysis, a grounded theory approach which centres on mapping the "most salient elements" of a situation and its "relations" (Clarke, 2005, p. xxii). It does so through "lay(ing) out the major human, nonhuman, discursive, and other elements in the research situation of inquiry and provok(ing) . . . analysis of relations among them" (p. xxii). As such, the approach is helpful for understanding the interplay between the human and non-human elements in the situation under analysis. It renders visible the most salient elements of a situation, the relationships between them, and the connections to the larger social worlds beyond the specific context which is being investigated (Santoro & Wilkinson, 2015).

Data were read a number of times for each participant and mapped using the focus question: "What are the factors leading to success in Australian communities?" The human elements which emerged as crucial in building a sense of confidence and self-esteem were: family, friends, members of church groups, volunteers from local community groups, and Sudanese community members. The non-human elements which contributed included: the social and welfare support provided by church and youth groups, religious faith, sport, and the regional location itself.

The participants

Samir was 13 years old and the eldest boy living at home with his mother and six younger siblings. His father was still in Sudan seeking entry to Australia on family reunification grounds, and he had an older brother who did not live with the family. Samir's family is Muslim and had been in Australia for two years at the time of the research. They had recently moved

from Sydney, the original point of settlement, to a regional centre with a small but growing population of Sudanese refugee families. Samir had just started at a public high school and this transition was significant in our interviews with him. Samir was very close to his mother and a significant support to her in the care of his younger siblings. He enjoyed school and was outgoing and confident with a passion for sport.

Jamal was 17 years old and had four siblings. His family was Christian and had been in Australia for two years. Jamal's family arrived on a refugee sponsored visa. This meant that the sponsors, which included his uncle and a local Christian congregation, were mainly responsible for his family's initial resettlement instead of a government agency. Jamal attended a public high school. He played a variety of sports in and out of school with friends from diverse cultural backgrounds. Although he attended the same church as his family, Jamal also belonged to three other youth groups—two in different churches, and a leadership group run by a local not-for profit agency.

Anne was 16 years old and had six siblings. Her family was Catholic and she attended a Catholic school. She had been in Australia for six years. Anne first settled in Sydney with her family but later moved with her mother and two other siblings to a regional town. She said being in a regional town allowed her to do things with friends most of the time. She participated in a number of activities, for example, sporting events, a visual arts certificate course, and her church youth group. Through these activities, Anne met young Australians of same faith. Her decision to attend a Catholic school was driven by her growing identification with and connection to her beliefs.

Whereas the regional town where Samir lived was not a designated refugee resettlement centre, the town where Jamal and Anne lived was. This meant that the support and resources for newly-arrived refugee families in the regional town where Samir lived were relatively new at the time of collecting the data, and more limited compared to what was available to Jamal and Anne. The migrant and refugee support officer interviewed in Samir's town, reported that the City Council had just agreed to establish an office to provide necessary services. The regional centre where Jamal and Anne lived had an established multicultural council that had a long history of settling and working with newly arrived refugees. Thus, there was considerably more institutional assistance available to these families. The contrast between the two regional centres in relationship to the support networks, community engagement among the new migrants, and the available social structures were notable in the responses of the three participants discussed in this paper.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

We interweave the concepts of bonding and bridging capital with Gee's identity framework, to examine how church, sport, and friendship networks facilitated and enabled identity re-formation, as well as building the capital so crucial for full social, economic and civic engagement in Australian society.

Church and identity: "It's part of who I am"

Religious institutions have long played an important role in the settlement of migrants and refugees (Allen, 2010) through their ability to rebuild social networks destroyed by the process of dislocation and relocation experienced by refugees. Religious institutions act to facilitate bonding capital by "reaffirming national or ethnic identities and allowing immigrants to practise familiar rituals", and build bridging capital by connecting migrants to the wider community and culture (Allen 2010, p. 1050). According to Allen, religious institutions that

are "affiliated with a majority religious tradition can play both a bonding and a bridging role for refugees" (p. 1050).

Being a member of a church offered an institutional identity for Jamal and Anne and was especially important for Anne, who identified herself explicitly in relation to her Catholic faith, "I'm a Catholic, which is ... part of who I am . . . You know, it's a faith, that's my faith, my religion . . . I do love praying, it's just like asking God for help in things in life . . . and God is always there if you want to talk to Him and stuff". For Anne, church and school aligned as powerful institutions in terms of her faith and this helped to cement a strong identity from institution, discourse, and affinity perspectives. Her active engagement in the practices of her faith in multiple contexts provided a positive sense of belonging.

Through church, Jamal experienced a sense of acceptance and was able to form friendships with other young people from diverse backgrounds. Jamal said the church youth group "are really friendly and we get along with each other and we are good friends and all that . . . we basically call each other sisters and brothers in the youth group . . . [I feel] real happy, I feel welcome". Church provided an affinity group where Jamal was able to construct identity which contributed to success. For example, some church activities also helped with school-work. Jamal described taking part in an activity organized by the church where participants were asked to share an experience with the group, Jamal asserted that he picked up some lasting life skills including his English speaking and collaboration. He explained, "when we went to the winter camp, that was really hard and so they actually helped me a lot with reading . . . They actually helped me a lot with like summarising . . . and so since then . . . I can summarise". Thus, through church and a community of faith, the young people interviewed developed a sense of self-esteem, bonding and bridging capital.

Faith-based organizations have been recognized as shaping and transforming identities for refugees and other groups in need of humanitarian assistance through their generosity with regard to welcoming strangers out of the belief that all human beings "possess dignity that makes them worthy of compassion and respect" (Wilson, 2011). For some refugees, engaging in faith-based activities enables them to manage the complexities of settling in a new and foreign environment, and the vulnerabilities that this creates. In essence, church provides belonging and "an identity [that] is recognised or accepted as such by a wider community of practice" (Valentine, Sporton, & Nielsen, 2009, p. 239).

Active participation in religion and church-related activities have also been found to be important to the educational success of migrant young people (Antrop-González, Vélez, & Garrett, 2015). Church and the activities offered through ethnically diverse youth groups allowed these two refugee young people to access positive social networks and role models such as youth group leaders, ministers, and priests, and friends' parents that enabled them to build bridging capital. Church involvement can be seen as a "protective measure" (Antrop-González et al., 2005, p. 86) encouraging young people to become involved in activities that develop self-esteem while discouraging participation in "oppositional youth culture" such as gang life (p. 86). Community engagement through church and youth group is also a "form of pedagogic work that can shape refugee youth's habitus in ways that predispose them to educational engagement. Thus, it can provide an alternative trajectory to cycles of disadvantage" (Wilkinson et al., 2017, p. 8). Joining well-established and well-resourced churches that were part of the majority culture enabled Anne and Jamal access to social networks and activities that would otherwise have been less available to them.

Sport and identity: "I learned a lot about teamwork"

Sport is often "advocated as a mechanism to promote a social cohesive society" with the potential to build relationships across religious, ethnic and economic lives (Nathan et al., 2010, p. 2). Sport and sporting prowess are highly valued in Australian society and being a skilled sportsperson is an identity position that has significant social capital. Belonging to a sports club and team is a very important way to develop identity and position oneself positively within a powerful discourse community. Membership of formal sporting bodies provide an institutional identity and leads to development of both discourse and affinity identities. The way the three young people talked about their sporting activities revealed the extent to which this supported their identity formation in their regional locations.

For Samir, sport was a key social network in his identity (re)formation. He described sport as his favourite subject at school and being a professional "footy player" was one of his ambitions. Through playing rugby, Samir was able to make Australian friends. When he started high school, he was able to use his connection to children he knew through sport at primary school to build new friendships. When asked what he did at school, Samir's response was: "We've been playing footy a lot that's for sure", and similarly, his out of school activities revolved around sport, "Rugby league and Union and that's pretty much it", with training during the week and games on Saturday. He played footy after school at his place or the park. Samir was proactive in joining a rugby team outside school and gained significant support from the coach in terms of transport to practices and matches.

The social network provided by sport gave Samir a context for constructing a successful social identity with his peers, and his success in sport contributed to his confidence and positive self-esteem. We can understand the role of sport from three identity perspectives for Samir. As a member of a local rugby club, Samir gained an institutional identity and recognition as a rugby player. Samir constructed himself as a good rugby player and this was a discourse identity he formed with his peer group and team mates. The strong bonds between the boys in his rugby team and their passion for the game created an affinity identity. Sport, then, was a very powerful context for Samir's positive identity formation and part of this power came from the ways in which sport crossed boundaries between school and out-of-school contexts as Samir played rugby at school as well as for a community club, and many of his friends at school were also his rugby team mates.

Sport also provided Jamal with opportunities for positive identity formation and social capital. Like Samir, Jamal talked about playing footy at school with his friends, "I feel really happy because we chill and talk funny and all that, we just kick the footy around . . . Every recess and lunch we kick footy and all that". Jamal played soccer and AFL (Australian Football League) outside school and was selected for a multicultural AFL team for the region, which travelled to Sydney to compete. The institutional identity Jamal gained as an AFL club member and member of the multicultural team opened up formalized opportunities for specialized training and skills development. This went beyond simply the physical skills needed to play the sport and encompassed wider skills of team play and sportsmanship. He described it thus: "I learn a lot of teamwork stuff . . . I kind of learn how to speak . . . how to encourage people, be positive . . . talk positive and not negative about the person on your team". He went on to say, "by actually communicating with the people, with the whole team, talking together and that makes, I learn from that, yeah". Jamal's words here suggest that the program he engaged with demonstrated the characteristics identified by Nathan et al. (2010) as contributing to social inclusion, teamwork and cross-cultural understanding. Such programs include capacity building elements such as training, mentoring, leadership, and partnership development in order to achieve maximum impact (Nathan et al., 2010, p. 2; Terry, Naylor, Nguyen, & Rizzo,

2016). Thus, sport is used to facilitate individual health and well-being in holistic ways and can build "bridges to mainstream community organisations" (p. 2). Sport also acted as discourse and affinity identities for Jamal, and these enabled him to actively position himself as successful, thus contributing to strong bonding and bridging capital which he was able to carry into the school context.

Uptin, Wright, and Harwood (2013, p. 132) identify sport as one of the few ways that young refugee people (particularly boys) can access "acceptable racialised identity markers" and thus access a social life at school. Their study of refugee young people entering school in Australia, described experiences of structural and institutionalised racism in schools, and exclusionary practices by teachers and students. For some of the Sudanese refugee boys in the study, playing football (soccer) or basketball at lunchtime enabled them to positively position themselves in relation to a "cool, black basketball player" discourse amongst their peers. This provided "social capital and access to friendships across class and ethnicity" (p. 132). This affinity identity enabled the boys to overcome some of the negative institutional and discourse identities ascribed to them as refugees and second language learners (Naidoo, 2013). Sport enabled the boys in our study to build strong institutional, discourse, and affinity identities in their out-of-school sports teams, and those identities crossed the boundary into the school context contributing to feelings of confidence and success.

Friendship networks: "It makes me feel good and happy"

Developing friendships across ethnic groups, and especially with those perceived to be members of the dominant culture, can be a significant challenge for young refugee people. Their visible and audible difference marks them as "other" and enables Australian students to position them as "unworthy of friendship" (Uptin et al., 2013, p. 130). Jamal, Anne and Samir appeared to have overcome this challenge and reported strong friendship networks that intersected with their sporting and church-based networks and activities. Their friendship networks included extended family, members of the Sudanese community, and peers from a range of ethnicities, including Anglo-Australians.

The Sudanese community was an important source of friendship for Samir and his family. His mother, Aisha, was parenting Samir and his six younger brothers alone, and Samir recognized the importance of family friends who supported his mother. The first photo he showed us was of a Sudanese family friend whom Samir referred to as an Aunty. He said "She looks after us . . . You know she's kind of like my mum". Not only did this friend assist in caring for the children, she also spent time with Samir on his own. This made him feel special, important, and valued contributing to positive self-esteem and a discourse identity as successful and confident. Samir described an active social life with Sudanese family friends in the regional centre where they lived. He also spoke positively about a wider circle of friends from school, telling us "All my class is my friend". Rugby had played an important role in facilitating the transition to high school for Samir as many of his rugby-playing friends attended his high school, and provided a level of continuity for his identity formation and in building social capital.

Aisha also recognized the importance of Samir's friends for his happiness and successful integration into Australian society, "Is very important you see . . . very nice for my son, friend is very important". The regional setting provided a sense of security which enabled Aisha to be more relaxed about Samir's activities with his friends. She felt a greater connection to his social life and friends and had met the parents of many. The sense of safety meant Samir was able to "hang out" with his friends in the town centre, at the library and local parks, something that would have been much less likely in Sydney. The positive levels of bonding capital from

his mother and the Sudanese community gave Samir the confidence to build bridging capital with his Australian peers and his teachers. He was thus able to resist the deficit constructions associated with refugee identity positions and position himself as a successful Sudanese boy.

Jamal's friendship networks were drawn primarily from the youth groups he attended, which intersected with his sporting interests and school. He was introduced to one youth group via a football teammate. He described the significance of the youth group: "They're really friendly and we get along with each other and we are good friends and all that". Jamal's photos were full of images of his friends from the youth groups, many of whom became school friends and assisted in his transition to high school, in the same way as Samir's sports friends did. Jamal also had many friends that came from the English language support classes he attended. Showing new arrivals around the school became an opportunity for developing friendships, "So the teacher introduced me to them . . . I showed them around and we became friends". This kind of activity highlights the important role that teachers can have in facilitating social relationships amongst minority students in school contexts. Jamal's AFL team was most significant for widening his circle of Anglo-Australian friends, and this also connected back to school, as he described: "Oh it's pretty good because when we get back to school we talk about how we went with the footy". Discourse and affinity identities were formed and maintained in the intersections between sport, church, and school friendship networks. Jamal identified the importance of friendship to his feelings of success and the centrality of the youth groups to building friendships. There was evidence, however, that school could have played a greater role in fostering these connections. He said, "In youth group we are all good friends . . . but at school there is not so much friend stuff". He went on to describe incidents of bullying and "negative talk" by some of his peers at school.

Anne also had a wide circle of friends that encompassed members of the Sudanese community and Anglo-Australians. Her wide friendship network was evident in the photos she shared as part of her interview, which began with her smart phone which she identified as very important for keeping in touch with her friends. The photos and Anne's words emphasized that friendship was about having fun and being happy. School and church were important social spaces where she made and maintained friendships. The institutional identity inscribed through her participation in church was reinforced at school and provided a sense of continuity between in- and out-of-school contexts and social networks.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

For all three young people, their out-of-school networks provided a conduit to social networks within school and contributed to the construction of positive social identities within school contexts. Their ability to connect out-of-school and school networks is perhaps one reason they were perceived as being successful educationally as well as socially. It was clear that tight links between institutional, discourse, and affinity identities enabled positive identity re-formation. We suggest that where these links are fostered in the school environment, young people are more likely to experience successful identity re-formation in this space also.

While friendships were obviously central networks for all three, these networks were built in different contexts, with sport being most important for Samir, sport and church being important for Jamal, and church being most important for Anne. This highlights the significance of connecting out-of-school resources with those in schools. This was relatively straightforward in the case of sport and church for these young people but may not be so easy when a young person's out-of-school resources do not link so well with school. Also, it is crucial to realize that networks are socially constructed and value laden and, therefore, the emerging identities are shaped and influenced by the type of networks available to young people. For these three

young people, community-based organizations, such as sports clubs and churches, offered accessible networks.

The ability for former refugee students to successfully transition and engage productively in Australian schooling depends to a large extent on the manner in which their sense of identity is integrated. That is, identity is "underpinned by notions of exclusion and inclusion in so far as it constructs parameters by which some people are included and others left out" (Ndhlovu, 2009, p. 18), as has been established in this paper. Depending how the concept of identity re-formation is embedded in the teaching and learning practices, schools "can either facilitate or hinder effective participation" (p. 18) of minority student groups such as the refugee students. In schools that have been predominantly Anglo-Australian and monocultural, "visibly different" students need to have a sense of belonging (Wilkinson & Langat, 2012). Knowing about students' backgrounds and lives outside school is a central tenet of culturally responsive teaching (Villegas & Lucas, 2002), and a pre-requisite for schools and teachers to be able to create spaces of belonging and inclusion (Edgeworth & Santoro, 2015).

The educational success or otherwise for former refugee students is dependent on social capital and networks the students are able to identify with both within and outside of school. "This is particularly important because once refugee background students are able to settle effectively into their new environment, they are able to find a degree of security and belonging" that is crucial for future achievement and engagement (Naidoo, et al., 2015, p. 131; Mosselson, 2006).

Identities developed through out-of-school connections can enable or constrain the building of social capital in school contexts. It is, therefore, important for schools to develop strong and diverse community connections to facilitate social capital and identity re-formation across contexts. We suggest that schools need to be proactive in knowing about and building on out-of-school resources by creating partnerships with families and community organisations and including students' interests into the curriculum. Creating such connections will enable young people to transfer their out-of-school resources into the school context. A strong network and partnerships with other key education stakeholders outside of school encourages the convergence of institutional, discourse, and affinity identities across multiple contexts which supports social identity development for refugee-background learners.

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