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**Youth Disaffection: An Interplay of
Social Environment, Motivation, and Self-Construals**

Fidelma Hanrahan

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Sussex

December 2013

Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been, and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Fidelma Hanrahan

13 December 2013

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UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Fidelma Hanrahan

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**Youth Disaffection: An Interplay of
Social Environment, Motivation, and Self-Construals**

Summary

Youth disaffection is associated with huge personal and social costs, with future trajectories typically marked by school exclusion, poverty, unemployment, youth offending, and substance abuse. Core theoretical frameworks including perspectives concerning self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement motivation provide explanations for the role of social-environment factors, self-concepts and cognitions in human motivation. However, there has been little work to integrate these theories into a nuanced account of the socio-motivational processes underpinning school disaffection, and our understanding of how interventions may work to re-direct the negative trajectories remains weak. This thesis includes four papers reporting on a programme of theoretical and empirical research conducted in order to address this gap in knowledge.

The first, a theoretical paper, presents an integrated model of the development of school disaffection in which multiple self-construals play a key role in bridging the gap between need fulfilment and cognitive and behavioural indicators of school disaffection. The second paper reports on a thematic analysis of extensive semi-structured individual interviews with school-excluded young people and practitioners working with them. In

accordance with our theoretical model, the accounts of the young people's emotional and behavioural profiles in achievement contexts were connected to need-thwarting social experiences, with maladaptive constructions of multiple selves appearing to mediate the relationship between these factors.

The third paper presents an analysis of quantitative survey data with school-excluded and mainstream secondary school pupils that investigated the direct and mediated pathways between key processes identified by our model. Results showed that pathways between key variables were moderated by the experience of exclusion such that distinct pathways emerged for excluded and non-excluded pupils. The final paper reports on an in-depth, longitudinal, idiographic study exploring the impact of theatre involvement on marginalised young people. Results from an interpretative phenomenological analysis of interview transcripts suggested that the nurturing, creative environment of the theatre project provided optimal conditions for promoting resilience and self-development in youth at risk.

Together, the findings from this programme of research highlight the crucial role played by social experiences in the development of school disaffection via the impact on self-construals, motivation and achievement goals, as well as the role they can play in supporting young people to create more positive life trajectories. This body of work has implications for further research and also carries practical implications for interventions and school-based practices seeking to both support school-disaffected children, and increase engagement in those at risk of school disaffection.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Existing theoretical frameworks for understanding motivation – including perspectives concerning self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000a), self-discrepancies (Higgins, 1987; Markus & Nurius, 1986), attributions (Weiner, 1985) and achievement motivation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) – provide fruitful explanations for the role of social-environment factors, self-concepts and cognitions in human motivation. However, whilst this work provides invaluable insights into the likely processes underpinning disaffection at school, the links between socio-motivational processes have not yet been fully examined in relation to youth disaffection. Furthermore, calls for “a more integrated and holistic approach to disaffected and disadvantaged young people” in order to create effective interventions which address the multiplicity of needs underlying youth disengagement (Steer, 2000, p. 13) mean that more work in this area is required. This thesis aims to advance our understanding of youth disaffection at school by addressing this gap in existing knowledge. Specifically, the thesis centres on an examination of the interplay of social environmental experiences, self-construals, and motivations thought to underpin emotional and behavioural outcomes in disaffected youth, through a dual approach of idiographic enquiry and empirical testing.

This introduction provides an overview of the existing theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence within which our work on the socio-motivational processes underpinning youth disaffection is grounded. Our aims in this introduction are: first, to describe the characteristics, and antecedents, of youth disaffection at school as evidenced in the relevant literature; second, to outline existing theoretical explanations of, and evidence for, socio-motivational processes thought to underpin emotional and behavioural outcomes in youth; third, to detail existing interventions or experiences that appear to positively influence how trajectories develop for young people, as well as

explanations for how these ‘work’; and finally, to outline the research questions, aims, and methodological approach of the current programme of work, including an overview of the empirical studies.

School Disaffection: Characteristics and Antecedents

Disengagement from school has been referred to as a spectrum, with those toward the extreme end characterised by infrequent attendance and a negative attitude toward – as well as making little or no effort at – school (Steedman & Stoney, 2004). With many young people failing within mainstream education – 5,170 young people were permanently excluded from schools in England in 2011/12 and there were 304,370 fixed period exclusions during the same academic year – there are increasing concerns about the personal and societal impact of youth disaffection, and increasing awareness of its link to social exclusion (DfE, 2013; SEU, 2000). Indeed, research indicates that young people who are persistently absent or excluded from school disproportionately experience social and psychological barriers to achievement experiences such that they are less likely to be in education, employment or training at age 18 (DfE, 2011; DfE, 2012), while their future trajectories are associated with negative outcomes including experiencing homelessness, substance misuse, mental health problems, and incarceration in their adult lives (Coles, Godfrey, Keung, Parroott, & Bradshaw, 2010; DfE, 2012; SEU, 2000; Steer, 2000; Summerfield, 2011).

Whilst disaffected youth are recognised as a heterogeneous group, characteristics commonly ascribed to school-excluded youth include a) disruptive behaviour (DETR, 1999; Steer, 2000); b) repeated failures at school, low self-esteem and low confidence (Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000; Maguin & Loeber, 1996; McEvoy & Welker, 2000; Steer, 2000); and c) social backgrounds characterised by low SES, family turmoil, negative peer group influence and community norms, and

institutional or foster care (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Daniels et al., 2003; Estévez & Emler, 2010; Rumberger, 1995). We will now explore these characteristics and antecedents of youth disaffection in more detail.

First, the backgrounds of disaffected young people who have been either excluded from school or who have dropped out are typically characterised by serious disadvantage, familial problems including drug abuse, violence and physical or sexual abuse, and/or institutional care (Daniels et al., 2003; Lessard et al., 2008; Rumberger, 1995; Steer, 2000). Behavioural and emotional difficulties are common, and are frequently linked to a history of abuse and neglect (Desbiens & Gagne, 2007; Steer, 2000). Family turmoil appears to make a large contribution to difficulties encountered at school with many young people at risk reporting little emotional support from caregivers; in turn, being preoccupied with difficult or volatile home-life situations means many are subsequently unable to focus on their school-work (Fortin, Marcotte, Potvin, Royer, & Joly, 2006; Lessard et al., 2008). Whilst the association between difficult family contexts and drop-out rates has long been recognised, the issue of the pervasiveness of family instability throughout the lives of drop-outs has been more recently highlighted (Lessard et al., 2008; Steer, 2000). Indeed, Jimerson and colleagues (2000) suggest that given the strong association between the early home environment and quality of caregiving on later school performance and behaviour problems, dropping out may be more appropriately viewed as “a dynamic developmental process that begins before children enter elementary school” than as an event (Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000, p. 525; Jimerson, Ferguson, Whipple, Anderson, & Dalton, 2002).

Second, youth disaffection at school may be understood to manifest as disruptive classroom behaviour and non-attendance of school. Pupils have described the

experience of disaffection as involving feelings of boredom, anger, and fear (Kinder, Wakefield, & Wilkin, 1996). A perceived lack of respect for pupils by teachers; feeling not listened to by teachers; a lack of relevance of curriculum content; family issues; bullying; and a lack of control within classrooms are additional factors perceived by pupils to cause disaffection (Kinder et al., 1996; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Pomeroy, 1999).

The impact of relationships with peers on disaffection has been highlighted in the literature, with disaffection perceived by pupils to be caused in part by the desire to fit in and be respected by peers (Kinder et al., 1996; Lessard et al., 2008; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Pomeroy, 1999). Indeed, in their qualitative study exploring the experiences of school drop-outs, Lessard and colleagues (2008) found that rejection by peers or teachers was a commonly cited cause of aggressive school behaviour, as well as a felt need to avoid being seen as a victim. Furthermore, peer rejection was associated with new relationships to deviant peers that provided a sense of belonging, which had as yet evaded them. A large literature on the selection and influence of deviant peers confirms that peers play a significant role in the initiation and exacerbation of disruptive and anti-social behaviour in young people in the education system, as well as in the thwarting of academic motivation (Cullingford & Morrison, 1997; Ellis & Zarbatany, 2007; Gifford-Smith, Dodge, Dishion, & McCord, 2005; Kindermann, 1993; Vitaro, Brendgen, & Tremblay, 2000). Furthermore, research indicates that friendships with antisocial peers – and potentially even affiliation with gangs – increases the likelihood of dropping out of, or being excluded from, school even after controlling for academic difficulties or failure (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Fortin et al., 2006; Hales, Lewis, & Silverstone, 2006; Thornberry, Huizinga, & Loeber, 2004; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, Smith, & Tobin, 2003).

The importance of pupil-teacher relationships for motivational outcomes has also been highlighted repeatedly within the literature (Fortin, Marcotte, Diallo, Potvin & Royer, 2013; Kinder, Harland, Wilkin, & Wakefield, 1995; Kinder et al., 1996). For example, in the aforementioned study by Lessard and colleagues (2008) supportive relationships where pupils feel listened to, valued, and encouraged appeared to be a crucial factor in keeping students engaged. In contrast, relationships where pupils feel teachers do not value them are associated with disaffection and dropping out (Lessard et al., 2008). Large-scale longitudinal research by Fortin and colleagues has also shown that negative pupil-teacher relationships are associated with poor academic achievement which in turn directly predicts school drop-out, again stressing the importance of the quality of pupil-teacher relationships for school retention (Fortin et al., 2013).

Third, the self-concepts of school-excluded and disaffected youth are characterised by low self-esteem and low confidence (Jimerson et al., 2002). This is echoed by qualitative work showing that teachers also consistently perceive disaffection to be caused by individual factors such as lack of self-esteem and lack of social skills (Kinder et al., 1995), as well as work showing that school-excluded students tend to have weak positive self-images and more negative perceptions of their futures compared to non-school-excluded students (Mainwaring & Hallam, 2010). Pupils in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) – alternative education settings that provide education opportunities for those who have been excluded from school, among others – have also been found to have low academic self-efficacy, meaning that they do not typically conceive of themselves as having the agency or choice which would enable them to effect change in their own lives (Solomon & Rogers, 2001). Indeed, students often blame teachers or uncontrollable aspects of themselves for their present situation (MacLeod, 2006; Solomon & Rogers, 2001).

Psychological Frameworks for Understanding Engagement and Disaffection at School

Considering the considerable personal and social costs of youth disaffection at school, research which can shed light on the development of maladaptive motivational states in young people will have important implications for the creation of effective interventions and for informing the decisions of policymakers. An understanding of the psychological dimensions underpinning these factors associated with disaffected students come from core psychological theories of motivation.

Attributions for successes and failures. Given the negative emotions that school work characteristically arouses in disaffected pupils, scrutiny of the psychological processes underpinning negative emotions in pupils (such as anger, shame, and hopelessness) provides important insights into the processes involved in the arousal of these emotions. The motivational framework of attribution theory (Weiner, 1985; Weiner, 1986) provides a possible explanation for emotions and motivational orientations in school contexts by emphasising the importance of the individual's construction or perception of an event.

Specifically, attribution theory (Weiner, 1985; Weiner, 1986) proposes that diverse emotions are generated by successes and failures depending on the causes attributed to these events. Perceived causes of successes or failures are posited to share particular causal dimensions including locus, stability, and controllability. The dimension of locus has two levels, internal or external, which describe whether the cause is ascribed to internal or external factors. The dimension of stability also has two levels that describe whether the cause is perceived to be constant or whether it is perceived to vary over time. Finally, the dimension of controllability describes the extent to which a cause is perceived to be subject to change by the individual (for a

review of attribution theory, see Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1986). Within the context of school achievement, different attributions ascribed to successes and failures have implications for motivation. For example, a pupil who ascribes a failure at school to a fundamental lack of ability may perceive this cause to be internal, stable over time, and beyond their control. This in turn is likely to lead to a lack of motivation and effort. However, for a pupil who ascribes a failure to lack of effort, hope is fostered because even though this is an internal cause, it is not stable and is within personal control (Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1986).

Causal dimensions, as outlined above, are linked in turn to particular psychological outcomes including expectancy about future outcomes, and self-appraisals and emotions (Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1986). First, the locus dimension is associated with an individual's self-esteem. For example, when internal factors such as ability or effort are ascribed to a success or failure, self-esteem will be correspondingly raised or lowered. Second, the stability dimension is closely linked to affects that influence expectancies for future outcomes such as feelings of hopelessness, apathy, and resignation following stable causal attributions for failures. Finally, the controllability dimension is linked to social emotions such as guilt, shame, pity and anger which have motivational consequences. For example, shame is likely to be experienced when uncontrollable causes are attributed to a failure leading, in turn, to the withdrawal or cessation of effort. Controllable causes on the other hand, such as lack of effort, are linked with feelings of guilt, which incentivise new motivation in order to assuage this guilt (Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1986).

Research carried out to test attribution theory in achievement contexts has shown that changes in causal beliefs alter performance (Dweck, 1975; Perry, Hechter, Menec, & Weinberg, 1993). For example, the first 'attribution re-training' study

conducted in 1975 by Dweck successfully retrained poor performing students to attribute a failure to low effort. This and similar studies found that pupils' persistence at a task increased despite failure once attributions had been re-trained from low ability to low effort.

Achievement goals. The lack of motivation associated with disaffected youth, as well as the low levels of self-esteem observed in this population, may also be partially explained by goal framing. Achievement goal theory proposes that different goal frameworks lead to different affective reactions to tasks, such that an individual who has 'performance' or 'ego' goals – i.e., who focuses on the 'objective' performance indicators that can be compared across individuals – interprets their failure to achieve these goals as indicative of low ability (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). In this way failure becomes a threat to self-esteem, and is associated with feelings of anxiety, depression and shame, or may lead to defensive reactions such as those seen in disaffected pupils, for example the devaluing of tasks, boredom and the expression of disdain (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). On the other hand, for individuals with 'learning' or 'mastery' goals – i.e., who focus more on the process of learning and personal progress in mastering a task – failure indicates the need for more effort and a different strategy for mastery. In this sense failure to achieve goals is viewed as an opportunity for greater learning and leads to heightened positive affect and determination (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

Achievement motivation also proposes that effort will have different significance to individuals according to whether performance goals or learning goals are used, such that those with performance goals will use an inference rule that says that effort signifies a lack of ability, whereas those with learning goals view effort as a strategy which enables them to exercise their ability and reach mastery (Diener &

Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). For those with learning goals, then, pride in performance is related to the degree of effort they perceive themselves to have exerted regardless of whether that effort resulted in failure or success (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

The distinction between performance and mastery goal orientations relates to a distinction in reasoning about the self. According to achievement goal theory, entity self-concept describes the type of self-concept in which traits which make up the self are perceived to be fixed qualities which are possible to measure and appraise (Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995; Dweck, Hong, & Chiu, 1993; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Here the raising and maintenance of self-esteem relies on performance outcomes that verify the individual's competence and worth (Covington, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). In contrast, incremental self-concept is understood to be a conception of the self where traits are considered to be malleable, changing over time in accordance with the individuals' experiences and efforts in particular domains. In this case it is the very process of learning – gaining mastery of tasks – that is both highly regarded and demanding, which leads to increased self-esteem (Dweck et al., 1995; Dweck et al., 1993; Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

In support of this are a series of studies carried out by Diener and Dweck (1978, 1980) concerning children's responses to failure on a task. Some children were identified as showing helplessness-oriented patterns in achievement situations, which corresponds to having performance goals or an entity self-concept. They differed markedly in their responses from others who were identified as showing mastery-oriented patterns, which corresponds to having learning goals or an incremental self-concept.

Specifically, despite performing as well as mastery-oriented children prior to failure, helpless-oriented children underestimated the number of problems they had solved correctly. Furthermore, once confronted with the feedback that their solutions to tasks were “wrong” helpless-oriented children attributed their poor performance to personal inadequacies such as lack of intelligence or ability, had a lower expectancy of future success, expressed significant negative affect such as boredom and anxiety, and many engaged in verbalisations irrelevant to the task or which bolstered their self-image. Together these responses suggest that helpless-oriented children view the effort required by challenging problems, and failure, as indicative of low intelligence or ability which is experienced as a threat to their self-esteem and engendered negative affect such as anxiety and depressive characteristics (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Thompson, 1994). Ultimately, the combination of low perceived ability and a performance orientation predicts behavioural and emotional withdrawal – what researchers have called a performance-avoidance orientation (in contrast with the performance-approach orientation of those who also emphasise performance goals but believe that they can secure successful performance outcomes and thus appear ‘better’ than others).

In contrast, a fixed view of high or low ability does not factor into the level of engagement by mastery-oriented children when confronted with failure. In these studies, such children verbally self-instructed, were solution-oriented, monitored their effort and concentration, were optimistic about their chances of future success, and continued to express positive affect despite the feedback that their solutions were “wrong” (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). This suggests that for mastery-oriented children challenging problems do not threaten their self-esteem but rather are experienced as an opportunity for learning and mastery by flagging the need

for greater effort and new solutions. In this way challenging situations produce positive affect and determination in these children who still believe they are capable of mastery or at least of learning, with greater effort bringing pride and pleasure (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980; Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

In order to understand why children differ in their goal orientation and affective responses to achievement situations, Dweck and colleagues have explored the antecedents of helpless and mastery-oriented patterns. In their studies with young children (Cain & Dweck, 1995; Heyman, Dweck, & Cain, 1992) Dweck and colleagues have shown that beliefs about the self are central to what goals are pursued and what attributions are made to achievement outcomes (Burhans & Dweck, 1995). Specifically, these studies found that children for whom general self-worth is contingent upon displaying particular behaviour, perceiving themselves to possess particular qualities, or simply upon judgements from others, were more likely to have a helpless-orientation pattern of responses and self-valuation goals which are related to performance goals (Heymen et al., 1992; Kamins & Dweck, 1997, cited in Kamins & Dweck, 1999).

Furthermore, Kamins and Dweck (1999) found that both positive and negative person-directed feedback – which involves praise or criticism of a child’s abilities, goodness or worthiness after their performance on a task – can foster a sense of contingent self-worth by indicating to children that they should assess their global worth on their performance. Thus children with contingent self-worth typically seek positive judgements of competence, whilst avoiding negative ones, due to a belief that failure indicates “badness” or unworthiness (Kamins & Dweck, 1999). In a pattern of behaviour which reflects that of typically disaffected pupils, children with contingent self-worth in the studies by Dweck and colleagues were found often to resort to

performance avoidance strategies to protect their sense of self-worth (Burhans & Dweck, 1995; Heyman et al., 1992).

Parallels between the learning and performance goals of achievement motivation theory and much broader concepts of ‘intrinsic’ and ‘extrinsic’ motivations (see account of self-determination theory below) have also been drawn by Dweck and colleagues, who have said that learning goals are a “hallmark of intrinsic motivation” and can be thought of as “part of what is meant by intrinsic motivation in a broader sense”, whilst performance goals “undermine intrinsic motivation and their pursuit is considered to be an index of extrinsic motivation” (Heyman & Dweck, 1992, pp. 242-3).

Self-worth and academic self-concepts. The self-construals implicated in work on achievement goals, and their link with behavioural and motivational outcomes have also been empirically investigated in their own right. Work by Covington and colleagues (1984; 1992; Covington & Beery, 1976) has outlined how self-worth may work to undermine or strengthen achievement motivation, thereby providing a useful way of understanding how this aspect of self-construal may lead to behavioural disengagement at school. The self-worth theory of achievement motivation asserts that in order to protect their self-worth individuals will withdraw their effort to avoid failure (Covington, 1984; Covington & Beery, 1976; Thompson, 1994). Withdrawal of effort means that subsequent failures cannot be ascribed to lack of ability which has consequences for feelings of self-worth (Covington, 1984). This has been shown by experimental work by Covington and Omelich (1985; see Covington, 1992) with undergraduate students which revealed that those who experienced repeated failures also experienced an increase in feelings of shame and hopelessness as beliefs in their inability were consolidated. Such negative self-evaluations are associated with lowered success expectancies and negative achievement outcomes (Covington & Omelich, 1979,

1981) bringing Covington and Omelich (1985; Covington, 1992) to identify these students as ‘failure accepters’ whose academic behaviour is typified by resignation and unresponsiveness in comparison to those who still seek to avoid failure.

In addition to withdrawal of effort, self-handicapping strategies are employed by those who have experienced repeated failures in an effort to protect self-worth in achievement contexts (Covington, 1984; Covington & Beery, 1976; Thompson, 1994). Self-handicapping strategies include low risk-taking behaviours such as engaging in easy activities, last-minute revision, and procrastination. Deliberately selecting very difficult tasks is another strategy which allows for causal attributions that focus on the difficulty of the task, rather than low ability, following failure. Other strategies include opting out and disruptive behaviour (Thompson, 1994). As might be expected, longitudinal research (Zuckerman, Kieffer, & Knee, 1998) shows that self-handicapping is associated with worse performance compared to those who do not self-handicap. Furthermore, this research provides some evidence for the assertion that self-handicapping leads to a vicious cycle whereby handicapping leads to worse performance which in turn elicits more self-handicapping in order to further protect self-esteem (Zuckerman et al., 1998).

This work on self-worth and handicapping may help explain the behaviours and academic outcomes associated with disaffected pupils. Indeed, there are indicators that disaffected pupils differ from their peers in terms of their self-worth with findings from research with high-school pupils showing that those described as ‘delinquent’, or as having behaviour disorders, have lower self-worth compared to their ‘non-delinquent’ or normally achieving engaged peers (Harter, Whitesell, & Junkin, 1998; Weist, Paskewitz, Jackson, & Jones, 1998).

The role of academic self-concepts in explaining differing degrees of motivation at school has also been the subject of empirical enquiry. Academic self-concept refers to “individuals’ knowledge and perceptions about themselves in achievement situations” (Bong, & Skaalvik, 2003, p. 6) and has been shown to predict achievement outcomes at school, after controlling for academic interest and prior grades: those who perceive themselves to have greater ability, confidence, and efficacy in the academic context will have better achievement outcomes than those with less positive academic self-concepts (Ireson, Hallam, & Plewis, 2001; Marsh, Byrne, & Yeung, 1999; Marsh, Trautwein, Lüdtke, Köller, & Baumert, 2005). These findings have implications for educators as they highlight the importance of supporting positive academic self-concepts, particularly for those students with low academic self-beliefs.

Valuable work by Hallam and Ireson (2009) that has investigated the impact of ability grouping by schools on academic self-concepts also highlights the important ways in which schools can influence self-beliefs and academic outcomes. This study found that students in schools that engaged in high levels of ability grouping of students had less positive academic self-concepts, controlling for prior self-concept and academic achievement. Furthermore, academic motivation was found to be impacted by academic self-concepts such that subject-specific self-concepts predicted students’ intentions to continue learning. This work emphasises a key role for self-construals in the development of differing motivational orientations at school, and clarifies the potential impact of creating social structures at school that foster unfavourable social comparisons.

Self-discrepancies. The differing consequences for motivation associated with perceptions of the self are also explored by self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987, 1989). Self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987, 1989) posits three domains of the self

that underpin negative emotions. The first, the actual self, constitutes an individual's representation of the attributes they (or another person) believe(s) they possess (Carver, Lawrence, & Scheier, 1999; Higgins, 1987). The second and third represent self-guides against which the actual self is compared in a process of self-evaluation. The ought self is a person's representation of the attributes they (or another person) believe(s) they should, or ought to, possess. In this way ought self-guides are characterised by a sense of duty, responsibility, or obligation. Ought selves are not intrinsically desired selves but selves to approach in order to avoid the disapproval of others (Carver et al., 1999; Higgins, 1987). Finally, the ideal self is a person's representation of the attributes that they (or another person) would ideally like themselves to possess. Ideal selves are characterised by attributes that the individual desires such as particular aspirations, hopes and dreams. In this way ideal selves are connected to intrinsic desires (Carver et al., 1999; Higgins, 1987). Self-discrepancy theory claims that individuals seek congruency between their actual self and their self-guides, and that when there are discrepancies negative emotions are produced (Carver et al., 1999; Higgins, 1987).

Self-discrepancy theory explores the different emotions and motivational dispositions that are associated with the existence of different types of disparities between these representations of diverse selves. Early tests of the self-discrepancy framework showed that, in accordance with predictions, greater self-discrepancies are associated with greater emotional distress, while different types of discrepancies between actual self and self-guides predict different negative emotions (Higgins, Klein, & Strauman, 1985). Later studies supported these initial findings showing that disparities between 'actual' and 'ideal' self-representations are associated with emotions of dejection such as disappointment, dissatisfaction, and sadness, whereas disparities between 'actual' and 'ought' self-representations are associated with emotions of

agitation such as fear, threat, and restlessness (Higgins, 1989; Scott & O'Hara, 1993; Strauman, 1989; Strauman & Higgins, 1987). Furthermore, where these self-discrepancies come together with an external locus of control the outcome is negative affect, lowered self-esteem and decreased motivation (Higgins, 1987).

Following early developments of self-discrepancy theory Higgins and colleagues have begun to explore promotion or prevention focuses – alternatively ‘approach’ and ‘avoidance’ motives – associated with particular self-guides (Carver et al., 1999; Higgins & Tykocinski, 1992). This aspect of the model asserts that those with actual-ideal discrepancies will be focused on hopes and desires and will therefore have a promotion or approach focus, orienting themselves toward positive outcomes by maximising their presence and minimising their absence. In contrast, those with actual-ought discrepancies who are focused on duties and responsibility will have a prevention or avoidance focus, and will orient toward negative outcomes such that they maximise their absence and minimise their presence (Carver et al., 1999; Higgins & Tykocinski, 1992). This proposition has been borne out in research with a study by Higgins and Tykocinski (1992) showing that people with actual-ought discrepancies primarily focus on avoiding negative outcomes, whereas those with actual-ideal self-discrepancies focus, in contrast, on positive outcomes. However, there remains an important question about cases where actual-ideal self-discrepancies are perceived to be unresolvable (e.g., due to an entity self-concept); in such cases, an avoidant response would seem to be highly likely.

Possible selves. That perceived discrepancies between different concepts of the self have motivational and behavioural consequences has also been posited by Markus and Nurius (1986), and later by Oyserman (2008), in their conception of ‘possible selves’. Possible selves are an individual’s imagined future selves – what they envisage

they will become, what they would like to become, and what they fear they could become – and as such represent an individual's goals, aspirations, and fears (Markus & Nurius, 1986; for a review, see Oyserman & James, 2011). Possible selves are selves to be approached or avoided and thus serve as motives and incentives for behaviour (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman, 2008).

It is proposed that possible selves generate affect in two ways. Firstly, each possible self, whether positive or negative, is understood to be linked to the associated positive or negative affect. Secondly, when discrepancies between self-concepts are perceived, such as a discrepancy between an individual's current self and their positive future self, positive or negative self-feelings are generated to the degree that an individual perceives that it is possible or likely for them to achieve that particular future self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Furthermore, it is understood that when positive future possible selves come with plausible strategies and are congruent with identities significant to an individual they can provide motivation (Oyserman, 2008).

Finally, balance between feared and positive expected possible selves in the same domain is posited to be crucial for possible selves to achieve maximal motivational effectiveness (Oyserman & Markus, 1990). For example, a feared possible self will be most effectual in motivating an individual when it is balanced by a conception of what could be done to avoid the feared outcome and instead achieve a positive expected self. In this way, it is asserted that those with balance between their feared and positive expected possible selves will be better able to achieve desired outcomes through self-motivated behaviour because of the motivational resources that are available to them (Oyserman & Markus, 1990)

Work by Oyserman and Markus (1990) comparing the possible selves generated by non-delinquent and delinquent youth showed that more delinquent youths, such as

school-excluded youths who had engaged with criminal activities, had more negative expected selves as well as less balance between their expected and feared selves compared to less-delinquent and non-delinquent youths. Oyserman and Saltz (1993) replicated these findings in their study with 230 inner-city high school and incarcerated youths such that delinquent youths were found to have less balanced expected and feared possible selves compared to non-delinquent youths.

Similar results were also found in work by Mainwaring and Hallam (2010) that explored the motivation and aspirations of pupils in a PRU, and compared them to those of pupils attending a mainstream school. The study found that compared to non-school-excluded pupils, pupils attending PRUs generated more impossible future selves and had more negative perceptions of their futures. Additionally, PRU pupils were less able to generate a positive possible self, and when they did, were less able to say how they would attain their positive possible self; nor had they considered the possible difficulties they might encounter in their attempts to achieve their goal. These findings suggest that many disaffected young people in education do not believe in the possibility of positive options and futures for themselves, and that this likely contributes to the lack of motivation and delinquency which characterises these young people (Mainwaring & Hallam, 2010; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman & Saltz, 1993).

Self-determination and need fulfilment. Self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1991; Ryan, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2000a) provides a theoretical framework for understanding the link between non-optimal environmental factors that characterise the backgrounds of disaffected youths in the education system, and the type of motivational orientation exhibited at school. SDT proposes the existence of three basic psychological needs – competence, relatedness and autonomy – that are essential for an individual to experience ideal growth, social development and personal well-being. Within STD,

competence captures the experience of engaging in optimal challenges, feeling confident and effectual in tackling challenges, and receiving encouraging feedback; relatedness describes a feeling of connectedness, belonging, and being cared about; and autonomy refers to having agency or acting from the authentic self (Ryan, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2004). It is proposed that when these basic psychological needs are thwarted due to unfavourable environmental factors, the development of optimal self-motivation, social functioning, and personal well-being are affected and undermined (Grouzet, Vallerand, Thill, & Provencher, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

These patterns are linked with the broad distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. When behaviour is intrinsically motivated an activity is undertaken because of a genuine interest in the activity and for the inherent enjoyment of taking part in it. However, when behaviour is extrinsically motivated an activity is undertaken for the exclusive purpose of achieving some separate outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997). According to SDT different types of motivation – intrinsic and extrinsic – are facilitated or thwarted by social-contextual events, such as feedback and rewards, to the extent that they satisfy the basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Finally, individuals who are amotivated are lacking motivation, which means that their behaviour is not purposeful as the activity in question is not valued or is felt to be outside an individual's capabilities (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vallerand et al., 1997).

Different types of motivation are in turn proposed to have different consequences for performance and self-esteem. To this extent, research shows that intrinsic or self-determined motivation, when compared to extrinsic or externally regulated motivation for an action, results in greater interest, excitement, and confidence, which in turn result in enhanced performance, persistence, and heightened

self-esteem (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). Furthermore, different types of motivation appear to be associated with the differential satisfaction of basic psychological needs. Studies show that when motivated by factors external to the self, for example, when rewards are conditional on task performance or when an individual is issued with threats or deadlines, the diminished autonomy which results is found to reliably undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1999).

Crucially, research within SDT suggests that the home and school context may play a key role in facilitating or undermining self-determined motivation and subsequent behaviour, via the extent to which relationships with adults meet the children's needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness. Experiments examining performance on learning tasks when autonomy-supportiveness of the environment has been manipulated showed that autonomy supportive environments tend to lead to better learning than controlling environments (Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, & Soenens, 2005). In addition, work by Ryan, Stiller and Lynch (1994) revealed that relatedness to parents and teachers was predictive of school motivation and positive attitudes to school as well as being associated with greater autonomy and engagement.

Prospective work by Vallerand and colleagues (1997) has also illuminated the crucial role of home and school environments for pupils' motivational orientation at school and ultimately in predicting drop-out. This study, which examined the psychological processes underlying high school students' decisions to drop-out of school, found support for the SDT framework for understanding the link between social-contextual factors and subsequent motivation and behaviour. Findings revealed that students who subsequently dropped out of school had lower levels of intrinsic motivation regarding school activities as well as more self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation, but higher levels of amotivation, compared to students who

remained in school. Furthermore, students who ultimately dropped out of school, compared to those who remained in school, perceived both their teachers and parents to be less autonomy-supportive and – in turn – perceived themselves to be less autonomous and competent (Vallerand et al., 1997).

SDT also provides an explanation for how individuals develop the motivation to carry out actions that are not intrinsically interesting to them. This is achieved through a process of internalisation and integration of regulations, such that greater autonomy and optimal social functioning is understood to be experienced when regulations are internalised and assimilated into the self (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). According to SDT, this process of internalisation and integration is central to socialisation during childhood and vital for the regulation of behaviour throughout adulthood (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Relatedness, perceived competence and autonomy are understood to facilitate internalisation through the process of modelling, and the experience of volition (Ryan et al., 1994; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005). The absence of internalisation of regulations may go some way to explaining problems in social functioning and behaviour difficulties observed in school-excluded children and drop-outs (see Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995).

SDT offers a perspective on motivations and aspirations that extends beyond the school/achievement context. For example, some authors have noted that one characteristic of disaffected youth is the high value typically placed on material consumption (Williamson & Cullingford, 2003). The development of aspirations for materialistic gain observed in disaffected youth can be understood in terms of need-thwarting experiences, according to SDT. Specifically, if basic psychological needs are not met in early development, behaviour is likely to be extrinsically motivated, and as such not in tune with the ‘true’ or autonomous self (Ryan et al., 1995). Failed

internalisation and inadequate attachments mean that extrinsic, narcissistically oriented, ‘false self’ values, such as materialism, are turned to in an attempt to gain some sense of power and worth (Kasser & Ryan, 1993; Ryan et al., 1995). In other words, when basic needs are thwarted, greater emphasis is typically put on exteriorised qualities due to the lack of a developed inner autonomous self (Ryan et al., 1995).

Support for this explanation comes from a study by Kasser, Ryan, Zax, and Sameroff (1995) which showed that teenagers with mothers who were less supportive and who grew up in socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances, valued financial success relatively high when compared to other values. SDT theory suggests that these teenagers are focused on gaining a sense of self-worth through materialistic success, as intrinsic needs have not been validated in early development. This finding also supports SDT’s proposal that relatedness has an impact on type of aspiration and school motivation (Ryan et al., 1995). Disengagement from the academic context may also be compounded by the pursuit of need substitutes through affiliation with similarly disengaged or ‘deviant’ peers (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). This search for compensatory needs represents a defensive response to the thwarting of need fulfillment; however substitute needs are just that and do not in fact fulfill basic needs and foster self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

Summary. A range of theoretical frameworks speak to the complex psychological processes likely to shape the motivational orientations of disaffected youths. Going beyond simplistic social learning accounts that focus on reinforcement contingencies and modelling, they clarify how variations in social environmental experiences, basic need satisfaction, self-construals, goal orientations, and causal attributions may all play a role here. A major task, however, remains: how do these theories come together to provide an integrated account of the socio-motivational

profile of disaffected youths? And to what extent does empirical evidence support such a model? Before turning to the main body of work in this thesis, we situate our discourse within the context of different approaches that have been taken to working with disaffected youths.

Approaches that Shape the Developmental Trajectories of Disaffected Youths

School-based initiatives designed to reduce school exclusion. With the number of pupils being excluded from school peaking in the mid '90s (DfE, 2012; Hallam & Castle, 2001), the development and implementation of initiatives designed to reduce the number of young people being excluded from school became a key government policy. For example, in order to find new and effective ways to target exclusion rates and behavioural disruption – the main cause of school exclusions – Multi-Disciplinary Behaviour Support Teams (MDBSTs) and In-School Centres (ISCs) were trialled in schools in the late 90s (Hallam & Castle, 2001). MDBSTs involved teams of specialists supporting schools and pupils on issues relating to challenging behaviours; ISCs describe support centres on school campuses which pupils at risk of exclusion attend for short periods.

In their evaluation of these projects, Hallam and Castle (2001) found that both types of projects – MDBSTs and ISCs – could be effective in reducing exclusions from school, although not all implementations were effective and there was wide variation in success rates. Successful ISCs and MDBSTs had in common the commitment of school management and staff, as well as of parents and pupils; the ability to identify difficulties, keep track of progress, and work flexibly with teachers, pupils and parents; and strong communication skills which enabled an understanding of issues to develop amongst those they worked with. More recently ISCs have been replaced by Learning Support Units (LSUs) providing much needed on-site support to vulnerable or

disaffected pupils, or those at risk of exclusion (Hallam & Rogers, 2005). Similarly, Behaviour and Education Support Teams (BESTs) have replaced MDBSTs and have continued to have a positive impact on children, parents, and schools. According to a report by Halsey and colleagues (2005) this has been achieved by increasing attainment, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing, strengthening links between home and school, increasing parenting skills, and increasing the knowledge and skills of teachers in how to deal with emotional and behavioural difficulties (Halsey, Gulliver, Johnson, Martin, & Kinder, 2005). In this report, communication between key parties was again shown to be crucial for effective outcomes (Halsey et al., 2005).

Interventions using alternative curriculums have also had success in re-engaging disaffected youths. Hallam and colleagues have evaluated one such scheme, Skill Force, which aims to improve attendance and behaviour in disaffected pupils by improving students' attitudes to education, as well as to raise aspirations and encourage employment by enabling youths to attain a range of vocational qualifications (Hallam, Rogers, & Rhamie, 2010). The programme provides a variety of alternative curricula activities for disaffected pupils that are designed to raise self-esteem and increase problem-solving skills. Activities emphasise the practical and encourage pupils to take responsibility as well as providing them with the opportunity to make choices (Hallam et al., 2010). Evaluation of the programme, which involved a dual approach of quantitative and qualitative methods, found increases in motivation in accordance with changes in attitudes to education and school, as well as increases in self-esteem and well-being. The programme also had a positive impact on a wide range of social skills such as listening and communication skills, the ability to work in a team, and respect for others. These changes were found ultimately to lead to perceived increases in school attendance and better behaviour, as well as reductions in exclusion, emphasising the

need for educators to engage with young people at risk in a supportive way by addressing their needs using relevant and flexible approaches (Hallam et al., 2010)

Other interventions aimed at improving school attendance and behaviour – both for young people at risk of exclusion as well as for those who have already been excluded – include: learning mentors, the deployment of which has been shown to benefit home-school liaisons in addition to benefits for pupils (Hallam, Castle, & Rogers, 2005; Hallam & Rogers, 2008); parenting programmes, which can improve behaviour in children and young offenders, and reduce conflict at home (for an extensive evaluation on programmes with the parents of young offenders see Ghate & Ramella, 2002, and with the parents of pupils, see Hallam, Rogers, & Shaw, 2004); and behaviour programmes, for which positive effects on aggressive and disruptive behaviour have been found (see Wilson & Lipsey, 2007 for a meta-analysis). Additionally, interventions targeting self-concepts and cognitions include those designed to alter self-concepts (Oyserman, Brickman, & Rhodes, 2007; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002) and achievement-related cognitions (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007).

Alternative ways of engaging youth at risk. In addition to an increased interest in interventions targeting school exclusion rates and poor behaviour at school, a growing awareness of the potential of alternative projects or experiences for re-directing the negative trajectories of pupils at risk has developed, particularly over the past decade. This has in part been spurred by the UK government's Green Paper for Youth (*Youth Matters*), published in July 2005, which set out an agenda for integrated services for young people with an emphasis on empowering more young people to engage in positive, constructive activities including sporting activities, youth groups, cultural activities, and activities that encourage "creativity, innovation and enterprise" and

“enriching experiences”, involving a range of resources and providers including voluntary groups (DfES, 2005, p. 32). As a result of this new agenda for young people, a number of policy initiatives encouraging alternative ways of engaging and supporting young people at risk of social exclusion were implemented (DfES, 2005; Steer, 2000).

These policy initiatives, coupled with a developing understanding of key factors that support the development of resilience in young people at risk – including strong relationships with carers, teachers, or other adults, as well as engagement in out-of-school activities (Kinder & Wilkin, 1998; Gilligan, 2000; SEU, 2000) – has meant that projects targeting youth at risk have become the subject of increasing interest and evaluation over recent years (Arts Council England, 2005; Jermyn, 2001). These interventions include those that employ activities such as sport (for a review, see Sandford, Armour, & Warmington, 2006; Sandford, Duncombe, & Armour, 2008), a broad range of creative arts – including dance, craft, music, painting, film, circus skills, and photography (Arts Council England, 2005; Hirst, & Robertshaw, 2003; Wilkin, Gulliver, & Kinder, 2005) – and drama and theatre (Arts Council England, 2005; Arts Council England, 2006).

Sports-based programmes. Sporting activities are recognised widely as an effective mode of working with disaffected youths to facilitate personal and social development (DfES, 2005; Sandford, Armour, & Warmington, 2006; Sandford, Duncombe, & Armour, 2008). Physical activities are understood to be engaging for many disaffected young people as they are perceived as practical, as opposed to academic, and relevant (Sandford et al., 2006; Steer, 2000). In fact, it has been suggested that the value of sporting activities may be in its power to work as an initial “magnet” or motivating factor for disaffected young people, rather than in any inherent benefit conferred by sport itself (Sandford et al., 2006; Steer, 2000, p. 17). Indeed, Steer

has suggested that the extent to which benefits are accorded by sports projects for disaffected youths, lies in the degree to which they are adept at “educating by stealth” (Steer, 2000, p. 17).

In fact, research conducted to investigate ‘what works?’ in sports interventions with disaffected youths has identified multiple factors that are crucial for successful outcomes; these include positive relationships with adults which provide disaffected youths with positive role models that may otherwise be absent in their lives, a sense of a supportive social environment, and a sense of personal agency and empowerment (for a review, see Sandford et al., 2006; Sandford et al., 2008). ‘Successful outcomes’ from sports programmes include improved behaviour and attendance at school, improved engagement at school, more positive relationships with teachers, greater confidence, self-esteem, and resiliency, as well as increased communication skills and leadership skills (Sandford et al., 2006; Sandford et al., 2008).

General arts-based programmes. It has been suggested that interventions that employ the creative arts may have added benefits beyond outcomes associated with a broad range of alternative provision, including a new understanding of, and skills in, the particular art form engaged in, creativity and self-expression, and transferable skills, which together mean that “the arts have the power to transform lives and communities” (Arts Council England, 2005, p. 2; see also Harland et al., 2000; Kinder & Harland, 2004; Wilkin et al., 2005). Acknowledgement of the benefits accorded by arts projects is seen in the establishing of The Creative Partnerships programme in 2002 as an Arts Council England initiative supported by government departments including the Department of Culture Media and Sport and the then Department for Education and Skills (Galton, 2010; Sharp et al., 2006); since 2008 this initiative has developed into an independent organisation: Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE). The initiative funds

creative practitioners to work together with teachers and pupils to develop skills, nurture creativity in pupils, raise aspirations and achievement, engage pupils with learning, increase involvement with the arts, and enhance creative practices by teachers (Kendall, Morrison, Sharp, & Yeshanew, 2008; Sharp et al., 2006).

Arts initiatives specifically targeting youth at risk have also been increasingly employed as their ability to reach disaffected youths is ever more recognised (Wilkin et al., 2005). Important advances in our understanding of the impact of such work comes from a number of studies which have evaluated arts-based projects with disaffected young people in the last decade; these include arts activities such as dance, craft, music, painting, film, circus skills, t-shirt design, drumming and photography (Hirst & Robertshaw, 2003; Wilkin et al., 2005). For example, research carried out to examine the impact of arts projects in PRUs and LSUs using qualitative and quantitative measures document a wide range of benefits for pupils including: an increase in knowledge and skills in the particular art form; greater listening and communication skills; increased group-work skills; greater confidence and self-esteem; positive changes in behaviour; and a sense of achievement and enjoyment from activities (Wilkin et al., 2005). Encouragingly, similar benefits are reported by Hirst and Robertshaw (2003), who evaluated an arts-based project with PRU pupils designed to increase self-esteem and re-engage pupils. Furthermore, the distinctive contribution of the arts has also been highlighted by projects. Interviewees – pupils, teachers, and artists – in the study by Wilkin and colleagues (2005) perceived the arts to be uniquely beneficial to disaffected young people because of its practical nature; the opportunity for achievement experiences that it provides; its cultural relevance; the space it provides for self-expression; and its inherent support for the holistic development of the child.

Music programmes. Notwithstanding the value of general arts-based programmes for disaffected youth, the distinctive value of music – which is widely recognised as a powerful force in learning and development – in re-engaging youth at risk is a mode worthy of separate consideration. Research shows that the benefits of engagement in music for children and young people include impacts on cognitive development including language development, literacy, numeracy, concentration, and intelligence; personal and social development including social skills, team work, self-discipline, self-confidence, and emotional sensitivity; as well as creativity (for a review, see Hallam, 2010). Interestingly, Hallam (2010) notes that the positive impact of musical engagement on personal and social development is dependent upon experiences being enjoyable and fulfilling, thus pointing to the importance of social environments and the quality of relationships. The importance of relationships – both between pupils and their parents, and between pupils and their music teachers – for socio-motivational processes when learning a musical instrument has been found more recently by Creech and Hallam (2011).

Despite these important and encouraging findings, to date there is a dearth of research examining the impact of music-based projects on the personal and social development of disaffected pupils. However, preliminary insights may be seen in the results of a qualitative study which explored disaffected pupils' engagement with music at secondary school and the strategies that were effective in engaging them (Rusinek, 2008). An exploration of the accounts of pupils and their music teacher showed that underpinning the young people's highly motivated and engaged attitude to school music were feelings of agency, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and a sense of responsibility and team work as students felt invested in the goal of putting on a concert. Importantly, the

teacher's own pedagogical style, in particular his belief in the pupils' ability to succeed, was considered crucial to the fostering of this engagement (Rusinek, 2008).

Drama and theatre. Finally, drama and theatre constitute a particularly interesting context for working with marginalised young people given that theoretical frameworks of drama and theatre have long advocated its therapeutic effects (Blatner, 1997; Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995; Holmes, Karp, & Watson, 1994). Indeed, historically, a number of drama and theatre approaches have asserted their ability to facilitate growth and change in marginalised groups, from the work of Theatre of the Oppressed with disempowered groups (Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995) to Psychodrama with offenders (Harkins, Pritchard, Haskayne, Watson, & Beech, 2011; Holmes et al., 1994). Taken together, this suggests that employing drama and theatre techniques in interventions with youth at risk may be a particularly fruitful approach.

Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995) has been employed widely in its many manifestations, to empower oppressed groups including homeless women (Woodson, 2012), Aboriginal victims of domestic violence (Diamond, 1994), and more recently those suffering with individual 'oppressions' such as loneliness, fear of emptiness, and alienation (Boal, 1995; Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994). Boal has described Theatre of the Oppressed as

a system of physical exercises, aesthetic games, image techniques and special improvisations whose goal is to safeguard, develop and reshape this human vocation, by turning the practice of theatre into an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions. (Boal, 1995, pp. 14-15)

And whilst Theatre of the Oppressed does not profess to be a form of therapy, it does see itself as having therapeutic effects (Boal, 1995; Diamond, 1994) via the self-observation that it entails:

Theatre [...] allows man to observe himself in action [...]. The self-knowledge thus acquired allows him to be the subject (the one who observes) of another subject (the one who acts). It allows him to imagine variations of his action, to study alternatives. (Boal, 1995, p. 13).

According to Boal (1995), being able to simultaneously step outside oneself and observe as spectator whilst also remaining the actor – creates a space for self-reflection and self-awareness, and ultimately self-transformation.

In contrast, Jacob Moreno's Psychodrama, which was first developed in the 1950s, is considered a method of psychotherapy that elicits a growth in self-awareness and transformation through "dramatization, role playing, and dramatic self-presentation" (Kellermann, 1992, p. 20). However, there are many features of psychodrama and Theatre of the Oppressed that overlap (Feldhendler, 1994), and like Boal's approach psychodrama is improvisational and has been employed widely to promote change in individuals and groups (Holmes et al., 1994). For example, it has been used in combination with CBT to work with offenders (Harkins et al., 2011), conferring benefits including increases in self-efficacy, motivation and confidence.

Psychodrama is rooted in role theory, which proposes that people play out different roles depending on the social context; the more roles an individual has at their disposal the more they are able to fulfil their needs, while a limited role repertoire results in difficulties functioning in society (Harkins et al., 2011). Thus, central to psychodrama is the use of role-play to explore existing roles and experiment with alternative roles that might be more successful. Here drama allows for perspective-taking with the actor-client playing different roles in familiar scenarios – including one's own and others' – thereby encouraging alternative perspectives. Furthermore, drama is used to explore feelings, thoughts and behaviours, not only from one perspective, but from multiple perspectives (Kellermann, 1992). Psychodrama proposes

that with the growth of a deep self-awareness comes catharsis, while the integration into the self of new actions, unrestricted by old roles is experienced as a liberation (Feldhendler, 1994).

Finally, the distinctive space that drama and theatre provide is illuminated through a consideration of Turner's theory of 'liminal' and 'liminoid' spaces (see Hughes & Wilson, 2004; Schechner, 2013). Turner described the transitional spaces found in ritual as liminal spaces – spaces where transformation occurs, where new realities, roles and identities can be forged. Just like liminal spaces, liminoid spaces are spaces of transformation, but they are spaces found in voluntary activities such as arts-based programmes, rather than in traditional rituals (Schechner, 2013). In this way, drama and theatre activities may be described as liminoid activities as they provide spaces in which self-transformation can occur through self-expression, the development of new perspectives, and the exploration of new roles and identities (Hughes & Wilson, 2004).

Preliminary evidence supporting the proposition that drama and theatre may confer unique benefits on those who engage with it comes from a large scale study exploring the impact of youth theatre on the personal and social development of young people by Hughes and Wilson (2004). Encouragingly, results showed positive benefits for young people with the youth theatre providing a space in which self-expression and self-authenticity was felt to be possible, in addition to an exploration and experimentation with new ways of being through playing new roles, an outcome which is likely to be unique to drama and theatre. Hughes and Wilson (2004) conclude with a recommendation that future work using youth theatre with marginalised young people be carried out in order to learn more about how drama and theatre may work in such interventions.

Additional support for the unique benefits that drama and theatre activities can accord marginalised young people comes from an Arts Council England (2006) report on a drama-based project carried out with a small cohort of at-risk youths over a two-week period. The results of evaluation of this project indicated that the experience had been an enriching one and that there had been substantial personal development for the young people over the course of the two weeks including changes in attitudes to adults so that they were more positive by the end of the project; group bonding; a sense of enjoyment and achievement – as well as pride in achievement; increased confidence in communication skills; positive relationships with adults; and the development of new coping strategies (Arts Council England, 2006).

A small number of studies have also evaluated projects with young offenders and at-risk youth that have employed drama and theatre activities such as role play and characterisation based on personal experiences. The findings from these studies are encouraging in terms of the personal and social development of participants, with evidence of benefits including the development of more pro-social behaviours, positive identity changes, self-belief, self-efficacy, motivation, confidence in social skills, and increased agency (Bradley, Deighton, & Selby, 2004; for a review see Daykin, Orme, Evans, & Salmon, 2008; Harkins et al., 2011; James & McNeil, 2009; McArdle et al., 2002; Turner, 2007). Theoretical frameworks such as Bandura's (1977a, 1997) social learning theory and ideas of learning development (Vygotsky, 1978) have been employed to provide psychological explanations for the impact of drama and theatre on participants (Bradley, Deighton, & Selby, 2004; Harkins et al., 2011; James & McNeil, 2009; Turner, 2007). However, there is a pressing need to integrate this area of work with what we know about the socio-motivational factors that play a role in the

development of engagement and disengagement at school, particularly in the case of youth disaffection.

1.2 Research Questions and Aims

This thesis reports on a programme of work that sought to integrate core theoretical frameworks of socio-motivational processes into a holistic model of the development of youth disaffection. Existing theoretical frameworks for understanding motivation – including perspectives concerning self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement motivation – provide some insight into the likely processes underpinning disaffection; however, the need for “a more integrated and holistic approach to disaffected and disadvantaged young people” in order to create effective interventions which address the multiplicity of needs underlying youth disengagement has been highlighted (Steer, 2000, p. 13).

The new theoretical and empirical research reported here tackles this pressing need for work that examines the processes and pathways underpinning the development of disaffection. Furthermore, this work also examines whether a holistic model of disaffection can be extended to explain the impact of theatre-based activities with disaffected youth. Our overall aim was therefore *to identify and examine the complex and differentiated interplay of social environmental experiences, self-construals, and motivations thought to underpin emotional and behavioural outcomes in disaffected youth.*

1. Our first aim was to advance our understanding of theoretical frameworks that could explain the socio-motivational processes at play in the development of youth disaffection at school, by synthesising theoretical explanations from the

extant literature as well as by paying close attention to the lived experiences of disaffected young people.

2. Secondly, we aimed to examine what direct and indirect pathways exist between variables identified as key factors for understanding school disaffection. Additionally, we aimed to examine the role of school-exclusion in moderating these pathways.
3. Our final aim was to evaluate social experiences as a key factor in pathways into, and pathways out of, disaffection by listening to the voices of marginalised young people.

1.3 Methodological Approach

The empirical research in this programme of work employed a mixed methods approach in order to address our research questions. Adopting both quantitative and qualitative methods was considered both appropriate and important given the vulnerable population of interest in this work. Marginalised young people constitute, by definition, a section of society whose voices are little heard; as such, it was considered vital that the voices of participants in our work be heard rather than relying on nomothetic accounts only. Furthermore, a mixed methods approach allowed us to test links between constructs identified by our model of the development of disaffection and generalise beyond our sample, whilst also ensuring that the model accurately reflected the lived experiences of disaffected youth.

Going beyond the extant literature on motivational development, to include new idiographic accounts from marginalised young people was considered crucial to informing our theoretical understanding of the socio-motivational processes underpinning engagement or disengagement. We therefore chose to speak to young

people who had been excluded from school because of behavioural difficulties about their understanding of why they had been excluded, how they felt about school, their relationships to teachers, how they felt about themselves, and their aspirations for the future. We also chose to speak to staff working with the young people to gain their perspective on the social environmental experiences of many of the young people they worked with, as well as their understanding of how these experiences may impact the young people's aspirations, feelings about themselves, and attitudes to education.

Individual semi-structured interviews were used with participants. This enabled key factors in motivational development identified from the existing literature to be covered, as well as allowing for space for participants to express their views on topics that arose which were relevant to, but not covered by, questions in the interview schedule (Burman, 1995). By keeping the voices of those most affected by disaffection central to this work in this way, we were both able to ensure the plausibility of our model and to advance our understanding of the psychological processes underpinning disaffection beyond existing theoretical explanations of factors involved in motivation.

In later work, qualitative longitudinal (QL) methods were used to capture the experiences of young people over the duration of their involvement in a long-term drama and theatre project. Whilst this methodology has to date been little used within the field of psychology, this novel approach was considered appropriate as it allowed us to capture the change and continuity in participants' experiences over time, thereby going beyond the limited 'snapshot' a cross-sectional study would allow for (Neale & Flowerdew, 2003, p. 190). In this way we were able not only to identify the impact of their involvement, but also to gain a clearer picture of how this impact developed over time as well as the changing perspectives and retrospective insights of the young people.

Two different methods of analysis were used in relation to the qualitative data generated in this programme of work. In the first instance, theory-driven thematic analysis was used to analyse interview transcripts in our study which sought to evaluate and further expand our model of school disaffection. This approach was considered appropriate because of its flexibility in allowing for both the evaluation of our existing model, as well as its expansion should new psychological processes not yet included in models of disaffection emerge (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Later, for our study in which the impact of a drama and theatre project on four marginalised young people was explored, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was considered most appropriate because of its dedication to idiographic enquiry (Smith, 2004; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2007). In this study it was important to gain insight into how the four young people made sense of their experiences in the drama and theatre project in order to help us develop an understanding of the impact of this experience in terms of the psychological processes at play, whilst always remaining grounded in the young people's experiences. Individual semi-structured interviews were again used to generate data for this study which meant that participants' accounts were not restricted by topics covered by questions in the interview schedule, thus allowing participants the freedom to focus on what their experience of drama and theatre meant for them (Burman, 1995).

In order to test our model of the development of youth disaffection at school, it was also necessary to employ quantitative methods. We used survey style self-report questionnaires with a sample of 11- to 17-year-old pupils, which tapped into key variables identified by our model of school disaffection in order to investigate links between social environmental experiences, self-construals, cognitions and behavioural orientations. Using quantitative methods allowed us to carry out statistical testing of our

model, thereby advancing our understanding of direct and indirect pathways from social environmental experiences to different motivational and behavioural orientations, while also determining the role of the experience of school exclusion in moderating these pathways.

Given the vulnerable population our sample of young people represented, we took several measures to ensure that ethical issues raised by our studies were addressed. First, ethical approval for each study was given by the University of Sussex's Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committee (C-REC) prior to recruitment and data collection. Second, informed consent was sought from each participant at each interview or testing time point so that the nature of the study and what was being asked of them was made clear both verbally and in written form. Third, participants in our study using survey questionnaires were made aware that they could withdraw their data at any time up to a given date, while interviewees were informed that they were free to end interviews at any time; all participants were informed that they could decide not to answer particular questions if they preferred not to. Fourth, the informed consent of parents or guardians was sought for participants under the age of 16 prior to data collection, in addition to their own informed consent.

Fifth, we were aware that some of the topics covered by survey questionnaires, or that could arise in the context of interviews, were likely to be of a sensitive nature, as they covered topics including negative life events, family experiences, and experiences of school exclusion. As such, it was decided that support structures – such as designated staff members that a child could speak to – should be put in place by schools for any young people who needed support. Participants were made aware of these supports both verbally and via an information sheet. Finally, while survey questionnaires were answered anonymously, with codes employed to anonymise school names and

additional codes used for each participant, the nature of interviews meant that anonymity and confidentiality could only be ensured through secure management of data, and by anonymising references to people and places within transcripts. Both of these procedures were carried out for recordings and transcripts where applicable in the present programme of work, in order to ensure that experiences shared by participants remained confidential and anonymous.

1.4 Overview of Empirical Studies

This thesis includes four papers that address our aims. Our first paper was designed to draw together existing theoretical frameworks for understanding motivation to create a more nuanced account of developmental pathways to youth disaffection at school through a consideration of multiple self-construals as a potential mediator between social environmental experiences and behavioural and emotional outcomes. In our second paper we aimed to further develop our model, and examine its plausibility, by listening to the lived experiences of disaffected youth. In our third paper we sought to test our model of the development of disaffection by investigating the direct and mediated pathways between key processes identified by our model, while also examining whether pathways would be moderated by experiences of school exclusion. Our final paper aimed to identify the impact of involvement in a theatre-based project on marginalised youth and to examine whether the core factors identified by our theoretical model of disaffection could illuminate the psychological processes underlying this impact. The basic rationale, methodology, and hypotheses for each paper are presented below.

Paper 1: Who Am I? Incorporating Multiple Self-Construals into a Model of School Disaffection in Youths

This theoretical paper draws together existing theoretical frameworks for understanding socio-motivational processes – including perspectives outlined above concerning self-determination, self-discrepancies, and motivations – into one integrated model of the development of school disaffection. In particular, our goal was to illustrate how multiple self-construals – particularly self-discrepancies and possible selves – may form a powerful bridge between social environmental experiences and motivational, behavioural, and emotional outcomes associated with disaffected pupils. This theoretical work built on existing ‘self-system’ models of motivational development in which the self is implicated in mediating the effects of social environmental contexts on levels of engagement at school, but which nonetheless have not yet considered a role for a more elaborate and multi-faceted analysis of self. Our aim was to develop a more nuanced account of developmental pathways to disaffection in order to apply this approach in our research with school-excluded young people. Our proposed model also aimed to show how a consideration of reciprocal links between key constructs, which may amplify and reinforce adaptive or maladaptive self-construals, motivations, or indeed environments, may lead to vicious cycles of disaffection and the negative trajectories associated with school exclusion.

Paper 2: ‘I Think Education is Bullst’: Socio-Motivational Pathways to Disaffection in School-Excluded Young People**

Our next goal was to test the plausibility of our integrated model, and to extend it if necessary, by examining whether the lived experiences of school-excluded young people could be explained through a consideration of pathways set out in our model. In order to explore the young people’s lived experiences, qualitative methods were

employed with a sample of 10 young people who had been permanently excluded from school and were either currently attending or previously had attended a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), as well as 6 members of staff working with them. The study involved extensive semi-structured individual interviews in which both the young people and staff were asked questions about the young people's school experiences, their experiences of exclusion, their feelings about education, how they saw themselves, their relationships with teachers, family and peers, and how they saw their futures. The paper reports on a thematic analysis of the resulting interview transcripts. In accordance with our proposed model of the development of school disaffection, we expected that accounts of the young people's behavioural, emotional, and motivational profile of school disengagement would be associated with accounts of need-thwarting family and school experiences in which the basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness are not met. We also sought to evaluate the proposition that the relationship between accounts of behaviour, emotions and motivation in the academic context on the one hand, and need-thwarting social experiences on the other, would be mediated by maladaptive constructions of multiple selves.

Paper 3: Understanding Pathways to School Disaffection: Associations between Environmental Experiences, Self-Construals, Cognitions, and Behavioural Orientations

In order to understand the links between variables in our theoretical model of the development of school disaffection, our next step was to test our model with a sample of school-excluded, and non-school-excluded, pupils using quantitative methods. Our initial aim in this study was to examine whether secondary school pupils who have been excluded from school differ in terms of key processes identified in our model compared to pupils who have not experienced exclusion, and to investigate the direct and

mediated pathways among key constructs identified by our model. Our subsequent aim was to examine whether pathways between variables would be moderated by experiences of school exclusion such that distinct patterns in pathways exist for school-excluded pupils compared to pupils who have not experienced exclusion. We drew on data collected from pupils in secondary school (N = 209) – approximately half of whom had experienced school-exclusion – using survey style questionnaires that tapped into key variables identified by our model of school disaffection.

This study tested three broad hypotheses that underpinned our analysis. First, we expected to find differences between school-excluded and non-school-excluded pupils in our sample on key variables in our study including experiences of social environments, self-construals, cognitions, motivations and aspirations, and on behavioural and emotional responses to interpersonal situations. Second, we hypothesised that social environmental experiences would predict self-construals, which would in turn predict patterns of cognition and motivation, and finally that those cognitions and motivations would in turn predict pupils' reports on behavioural and emotional outcomes (measured in the context of specific hypothetical scenarios). We also expected that variables in our model associated with self-construals and cognitions and motivations would significantly mediate pathways from social-environmental experiences to behaviours and emotions. Finally, we hypothesised that the experience of exclusion would moderate pathways such that distinct patterns in pathways would exist for school excluded and non-school-excluded young people.

Paper 4: “It Makes Me Feel Alive”: The Socio-Motivational Impact of Drama and Theatre on Marginalised Young People

In our final paper we sought to examine whether key psychological factors in our model of disaffection could help us understand pathways out of disaffection. This study aimed to identify the impact of involvement in a drama and theatre project on marginalised youth by listening to their voiced experiences, and to examine whether key processes identified by our theoretical model of disaffection could illuminate the impact of their experience. A longitudinal, idiographic approach was employed in order to fully capture the rich and complex lived experiences of four young people involved in a drama and theatre project which catered for youths at risk. The study employed a qualitative longitudinal (QL) design in order to capture change and continuity of experience for the duration of the participants’ involvement in the drama and theatre project. The study involved individual semi-structured interviews at three separate time points over 22 months in which participants were asked about their experiences of the theatre project. The paper reports on an interpretative phenomenological analysis of the resulting interview transcripts as well as a discussion of the psychological processes that can explain the impact identified.

**Chapter 2: Paper 1 – Who Am I? Incorporating Multiple
Self-Construals into a Model of School Disaffection in Youths**

2.1 Abstract

Existing 'self-system' models of motivational development implicate the self as playing a key role in mediating the effects of social environmental contexts on youths' motivational, behavioural, and emotional profiles at school. A more nuanced account of these developmental pathways can help us move forward in applying this approach to school disaffection in young people, in terms of both theory and practice. We propose that a consideration of multiple self-construals – particularly self-discrepancies and possible selves – helps to form a powerful bridge between ideas about need fulfilment within self-determination theory and numerous psychological and behavioural indicators of school disaffection. The conceptual integration of these perspectives, alongside existing knowledge about psychopathology and sociocultural influences, sets an agenda for future research and policy development concerning youths at risk of dropping out from the mainstream education system.

2.2 Introduction

Disaffected young people who have dropped out of – or been excluded from – mainstream education have been described as ‘disturbed’, ‘depressed’ and ‘difficult’ youths. In addition to social and emotional problems, they are portrayed across multiple societies as having a sense of failure, lacking a clear perception of identity, and being indifferent to or having been failed by education and employment (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, 1999; National Education Association, 2008; Prevatt & Kelly, 2003; Rumberger, 1995). Whilst recognised as a heterogeneous group, the profile of disaffected youth can be broadly characterised in terms of: a) disruptive behaviour (DETR, 1999; Steer, 2000); b) repeated academic failure, low self-esteem and low confidence (Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000; Maguin & Loeber, 1996; McEvoy & Welker, 2000; Steer, 2000); and c) social backgrounds which are typically associated with low SES, family turmoil, negative peer group influence and community norms, and institutional or foster care (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Cattarello, 2000; Daniels et al., 2003; Estévez & Emler, 2010; Rumberger, 1995; Vitaro, Brendgen, & Tremblay, 2000).

One way of conceptualising the psychological development of disaffection in youths is to focus on developmental trajectories leading to internalising and externalising psychopathologies, which are known to be prevalent among youths who have been excluded from mainstream education (Breslau, Lane, Sampson, & Kessler, 2008; Breslau, Miller, Chung, & Schweitzer, 2011; Kessler, Foster, Saunders, & Stang, 1995). However, understanding the profile of disaffected pupils requires a distinctive and nuanced assessment of socio-motivational processes related to the educational context – an assessment that goes beyond the emergence and maintenance of psychopathology.

There has been a significant and welcome move in recent years to elucidate the interplay between environmental experiences, cognitive representations, and motivational orientations in pupils' behavioural and emotional functioning. The self-system model of motivational development (SSMMD; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008; Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2009) incorporates a number of core theoretical frameworks. For example, achievement goal theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) provide motivational and cognitive frameworks for understanding disaffected youths' responses to failure and performance avoidance, while need satisfaction as outlined by self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000a) draws attention to the role played by environmental contexts in the development of disaffection.

However, a more nuanced account of developmental pathways involving the multiple self-construals held by disaffected young people can help us make significant advances in both theory and practice. Self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) and possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) offer an understanding of the tensions among the self-construals held by disaffected young people, and their affective consequences, helping to form a powerful bridge between ideas about need fulfilment within self-determination theory and evidence regarding the psychological adjustment and motivation of disaffected youths. Below, we demonstrate how a systematic consideration of relationships among this expanded array of constructs (depicted for easy reference in Figure 2.1) can be used to refine and strengthen our understanding of school disaffection in youths.

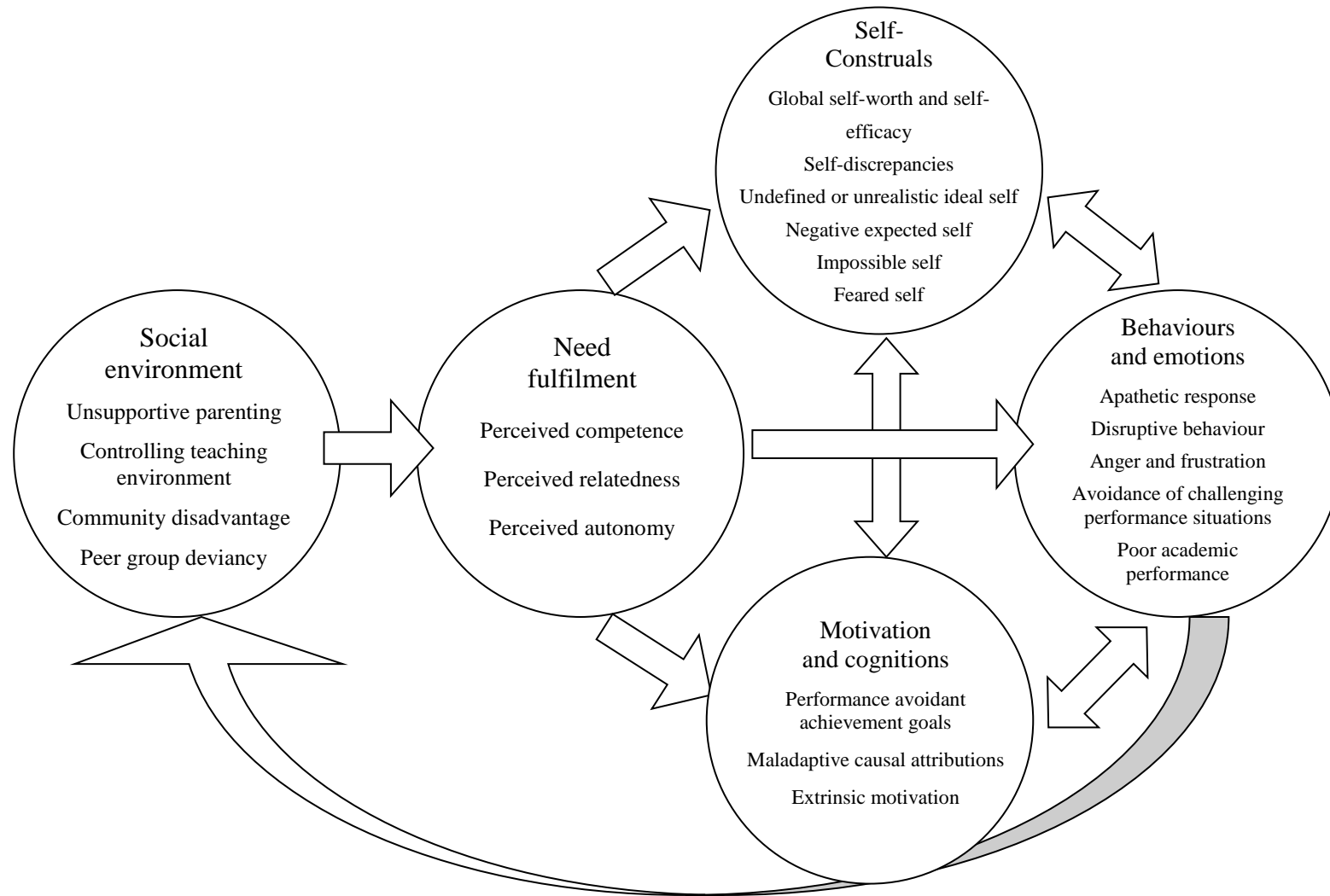


Fig. 2.1. Representation of the proposed expanded model of the development of engagement vs. disaffection.

2.3 Motivation and self-efficacy

Behaviours and emotions typically observed in disaffected youths at school, such as disruptive behaviour, frustration, negative responses to failure and avoidance of challenging performance situations (Reid, 2008; Soloman & Rogers, 2001) reflect what have been referred to as ‘maladaptive motivational states’ (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2008, p. 767). Indeed, cognitive and motivational frameworks of goal framing (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot, 1999; Elliot & Church, 1997; Grant & Dweck, 2003) and attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) provide prominent explanations for these behaviours and emotions and their associations with repeated failures.

Goal framing, as put forward by Dweck and colleagues (1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988), posits a goal model which includes two classes of goals, learning goals and performance goals, which differently affect motivation and achievement via the types of cognitive strategies and self-regulation different goals elicit. It is suggested that individuals who pursue performance goals are concerned with securing positive judgements, or avoiding negative judgements, of their performance and abilities, whilst those who pursue learning goals wish to improve in their abilities on a task, or to figure out or master a new challenge (Dweck, 1986; Grant & Dweck, 2003). Longstanding research shows that those who are oriented to performance outcomes, rather than to the mastery of tasks for intrinsic reasons, experience failure as a threat to self-esteem, and suffer feelings of anxiety, depression and shame. These in turn may lead to defensive reactions such as those commonly observed in disaffected pupils including the devaluing of tasks, boredom, self-handicapping behaviours, and the expression of disdain (Ames, 1992; Boon, 2007; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984; Soloman & Rogers, 2001; Thompson, 2004).

In addition, negative emotions typically experienced by disaffected teenagers in relation to school work (Kinder, Kendell, Halsey, & Atkinson, 1999; Kinder, Wakefield & Wilkin, 1996; Solomon & Rogers, 2001) can, at least in part, be traced back to the attributions given by pupils for the achievement experiences they have at school (see Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1985). Attribution theory (Graham, 1991; Weiner, 1985) also proposes that diverse emotions are generated by successes and failures depending on the causes, such as ability or effort, attributed to these achievement outcomes. As with goal framing, these attributions and affective reactions are understood to raise or lower an individual's self-esteem and perceptions of self-efficacy thereby influencing their subsequent motivation and behaviour in achievement situations. Research consistently shows that when attributions for failures centre on uncontrollable aspects of the self – as is typically the case for school-excluded pupils (MacLeod, 2006) – feelings of hopelessness are engendered, self-esteem and self-agency are lowered, and motivational responses will be poor, resulting in amotivation or performance avoidance (Solomon & Rogers, 2001; Weiner, 1985). This relationship between attributions and goal framing and behavioural and emotional outcomes is depicted in Figure 2.1. The relationship is depicted as reciprocal as the negative behaviours and emotions, as well as the ensuing negative academic outcomes, may amplify the maladaptive causal attributions and performance goal orientations (Graham, 1991; Turner, Thorpe, & Meyer, 1998; Weiner, 1985).

A key message from existing research is that self-perceptions are central to these individual differences in motivation at school. Longstanding theoretical and empirical work by Bandura (1977b) has linked self-efficacy judgements with internal attributions for past achievements and failures, while more recent research has also linked low self-efficacy to lower mastery achievement goals (Boon, 2007; Solomon & Rogers, 2001).

Similarly, the helpless, performance-avoidant orientation of disaffected youths may be linked to an ‘entity’ self-concept, in which traits which make up the self are perceived to be fixed qualities, rather than an incremental self-concepts where traits are considered to be malleable (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). This fixed approach to self in turn is linked to a sense of contingency in self-worth, in that the raising and maintenance of self-esteem rely on outcomes which verify the individual’s competence and worth (Covington, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988); unfortunately, in the case of disaffected youths, such outcomes are perceived to be uncontrollable and unlikely to support a positive self-concept. Ultimately, these processes can result in the poor achievement outcomes that amplify school disaffection and can trigger drop-out or exclusion. Green et al. (2012) have recently found that academic self-concepts and motivation predicted attitudes toward school in high school students, which in turn positively predicted scores on engagement measures and negatively predicted absenteeism, both of which predicted test performance.

2.4 Multiple self-construals and amotivation

Although the above analysis demonstrates how disaffection can be understood in terms of an interplay of self, goal orientation, and attribution patterns, we can build on these foundations by considering a more elaborate and multi-faceted analysis of self. In particular, a fixed view of self carries implications for pupils’ ability to bridge discrepancies between ‘actual’ and ‘ideal’ self-concepts, and also to form realistic aspirations regarding ‘possible selves’ which are an individual’s imagined future selves – what they envisage they will become, what they would like to become, and what they fear they could become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Thus, disaffected youths’ self-representations can be better understood through consideration of *multiple self-construals*.

Hallam's account of musical motivation and behaviour at school has already included a role for self-concepts – including possible selves, self-esteem and self-efficacy – within a model of motivation with links to cognitions and environmental factors (Hallam, 2002; Hallam & Rogers, 2008), thus highlighting the importance of incorporating tensions in self-construals in conceptions of the development of school motivation. Encouragingly, emerging findings also support the importance of multiple self-construals in pathways to disaffection or engagement.

Oyserman and Markus (1990) found that more delinquent youths, such as school-excluded youths who had engaged with criminal activities to various degrees, had more negative 'expected selves' as well as less balance between their expected selves and 'feared selves' (selves to be avoided), compared to less-delinquent and non-delinquent youths. Similar results were found in a study by Mainwaring and Hallam (2010) which explored the motivation and aspirations of pupils in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU; an education facility in the UK designed to cater for school-excluded pupils), and compared them to those of pupils attending a mainstream school. Pupils attending PRUs generated more *impossible* future selves and had more negative perceptions of their futures. Additionally, they were less able to generate a positive possible self, and when they did, were less able to say how they would attain their positive possible self; nor had they considered the possible difficulties they might encounter in their attempts to achieve their goal. These findings suggest that many disaffected young people in education do not believe in the possibility of positive options and futures for themselves, and that this likely contributes to the lack of school engagement and delinquency which characterises these young people (Mainwaring & Hallam, 2010; Oyserman & Markus, 1990).

Researchers investigating the topic of ‘possible selves’ (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman, 2008; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman & Saltz, 1993) have posited that there are motivational, affective and behavioural consequences to experiencing discrepancies between different concepts of the self (as depicted in Figure 2.1). Indeed, self-discrepancy theory holds that different types of disparities between representations of diverse selves are critical determinants of different emotions and motivational dispositions (Higgins, 1987). For example, disparities between ‘actual’ and ‘ideal’ self-representations are shown to be associated with emotions of dejection such as disappointment, dissatisfaction, and sadness, while disparities between ‘actual’ and ‘ought’ self-representations are associated with emotions of agitation such as fear, threat, and restlessness (Higgins, 1987; Scott & O’Hara, 1993; Strauman & Higgins, 1987). Where these are accompanied by an external locus of control – as we know already is the case for many disaffected youths – these kinds of discrepancies lead to negative affect, lowered self-esteem and decreased motivation (Higgins, 1987).

2.5 Need-thwarting environments and multiple self-construals

What then are the processes or experiences that lay the foundation for maladaptive self-construals in disaffected young people? According to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000a), the nourishment and support of three basic psychological needs – competence, relatedness and autonomy – are essential for an individual to experience ideal growth, social development and personal well-being. Conversely, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, features of the social environment can thwart young people’s basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and thereby inhibit the development of optimal self-motivation, social functioning, and personal well-being at school and in other environments (Grouzet, Vallerand, Thill, & Provencher, 2004; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997).

Indeed, findings from research show repeatedly that the childhood environments of disaffected youths – who have been either excluded from school or who have dropped out – are frequently characterised by serious disadvantage, which may include familial problems related to drug abuse, violence, physical or sexual abuse, negative peer group influence and community norms, and/or institutional care (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Cattarello, 2000; Ellis & Zarbatany, 2007; Estévez & Emler, 2010; Kindermann, 1993; Vitaro et al., 2000). Similarly, a perceived lack of respect for pupils by teachers, feeling undervalued by – and a lack of relatedness to – teachers, as well as a lack of perceived control within classrooms, are perceived by pupils to cause disaffection, and are highly associated with disengagement, low performance, and dropping out (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Kinder et al., 1996; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Pomeroy, 1999; Skinner, Wellborn & Connell, 1990; Vallerand et al., 1997).

We know already that young people's self-perceptions mediate the impact of perceived parent and teacher support on pupils' engagement and academic achievement (Boon, 2007; Connell, Halpem-Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usinger, 1995; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Guay & Vallerand, 1997; Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008). However, we now need to consider how the multiple self-construals of disaffected youths – their conceptions of possible selves and their self-discrepancies – fit into these pathways. As seen in Figure 2.1, we propose that specific self-construals may mediate the links between young people's self-perceptions of need fulfilment and specific motivational, behavioural and emotional outcomes. For example, it is theoretically plausible that the effects of negative and controlling environments on mastery achievement goals (see Ciani, Sheldon, Hilpert, & Easter, 2011) may be mediated by particular patterns of multiple self-construals, such as an inability to identify realistic 'hoped for' selves or lower confidence in the possibility of establishing such selves. Similarly, when

relatedness needs are thwarted, such as by neglectful parenting (see Boon, 2007), youths are likely to form maladaptive self-construals such as more negative expected selves and a greater actual/ideal self-discrepancy, which in turn can be expected to lead to maladaptive motivational orientations and negative affective responses at school.

2.6 Bi-directional associations and broader outcomes

Comprehensive longitudinal work is now needed in order to evaluate in a more systematic way the developmental trajectories connecting detrimental early social experiences, multiple self-construals, motivation and attribution patterns, and the behavioural and emotional profiles of disaffected youths. Such work will help to capture the reciprocity of the links between the different constructs, as shown by the bidirectional relations in Figure 2.1. As noted earlier, the behaviours and interactions that result from the motivational and self-related processes involved will themselves shape the young person's social environment and thereby feed back into further elaboration of those personal and socio-motivational orientations. Indeed, other lines of work on children's social adjustment have already shown that social experiences both influence, and are influenced by, cognitive and motivational processes (see Crick & Dodge, 1994). For example, in the case of youths who are disaffected within the school system, a holistic model which integrates perspectives on pathways to engagement and disengagement helps to clarify how the self-handicapping and avoidant behaviour of disaffected young people (Reid, 2008; Soloman & Rogers, 2001) not only could be generated by, but also could go on to amplify and reinforce, goals and attributions associated with a poor sense of competence and a negative fixed view of self.

Again, there is some preliminary evidence in support of these kinds of reciprocal relationships between constructs. For example, findings from research by Skinner and colleagues (Skinner, Furrer, et al., 2008) indicate that engagement and disaffection are

amplified over time through the reciprocal effects of behaviour and emotion. Additionally, research on classroom engagement has pointed to bidirectional links with parental support (Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994), and in a similar way, Skinner and Belmont (1993) have elegantly demonstrated that “teachers deal with children who have lower behavioural engagement in a way that will exacerbate their initial passivity and withdrawal from learning activities” (p. 578). However, in order to shed light on how young people in education become trapped in a maladaptive interplay of social experiences, self-construals, cognitions, and motivations – essentially, a vicious cycle of disaffection – further longitudinal work is needed to examine the developmental cascades in operation. Masten et al. (2005) have shown that such cascade analysis is a viable technique for linking academic achievement and psychopathology constructs, but this clearly needs to be broadened to accommodate the range of constructs known to be involved in school disaffection.

In fact, there is clear need to bring together the proposed trajectories in social motivation with existing models of developmental cascades in psychopathologies, which are known to have a high prevalence in school-excluded pupils (Breslau et al., 2008; Breslau et al., 2011; Kessler et al., 1995). For example, Dodge and Pettit’s (2003) biopsychosocial model of conduct disorder presents a wide-ranging and multifaceted account of how biological predispositions, sociocultural factors (including neighbourhood, family, school, and peer effects), and information-processing patterns interact with each other to bring about chronic conduct problems. Yet, the roles played by the socio-motivational processes presented in this paper – self-determination, self-construals, attributions and goals in achievement contexts – still remain largely unexplored. Thus, further empirical work is needed to expand our understanding of the causal pathways that link the biological, social, and cognitive factors involved in

psychopathology on the one hand, with the socio-motivational processes involved in school disaffection on the other.

2.7 Implications

We believe that work with an integrated model of disaffection is likely to inform the development of person-centred, holistic interventions which re-engage disaffected young people over the long term by addressing the multiplicity of needs underlying their disengagement from school, as recommended by Steer (2000). Current interventions – both for young people at risk of becoming disaffected as well as for those who have already dropped out or been excluded – frequently intervene at only one level of the profile of disaffected youth, whether by trying to affect self-concepts (Oyserman, Brickman, & Rhodes, 2007; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002), achievement-related cognitions (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007), aspirations (Hallam, Rogers, & Rhamie, 2010), behaviours (Wilson & Lipsey, 2007), or parenting practices (Ghate & Ramella, 2002; Hallam, Rogers, & Shaw, 2004). Such work will, of course, continue to provide an essential foundation for policy and practice. However, according to a holistic model of motivation, the most effective future school interventions for high risk pupils will be those which target both the basic social-experiential factors that pose challenges to optimal development – the environmental conditions which thwart the basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness – *and* the self-construals which mediate the effects of these needs on subsequent motivational, behavioural, and emotional outcomes.

In sum, the conceptual integration of multiple self-construals and other theoretical frameworks implicated in the development of disaffection into one holistic model poses challenges at several levels: a) it encourages us to work across, rather than within, dominant theoretical paradigms; b) it invites further empirical research to

investigate the proposed linkages between multiple self-construals – self-discrepancies and possible selves – and other psychosocial constructs that play out in the developmental trajectories of disaffected youths; and c) it provides an impetus to the development of multi-faceted interventions that address the connections between the different factors involved in the aetiology of school disaffection, rather than targeting single ‘causes’ in isolation. Progress in these challenging tasks will offer greater power of explanation and prediction to our understanding of this crucial aspect of youth development.

Chapter 3: Paper 2 – “I Think Education is Bullst”: Socio-Motivational Pathways to Disaffection in School-Excluded Young People**

3.1 Abstract

Various theoretical frameworks have been used to explain the development of school disaffection in young people who have been excluded from mainstream education, but the extent to which an integration of these frameworks fits with the lived experience of such youths is not yet clear. A qualitative study was designed to evaluate, and further develop, a theoretical model of school disaffection in young people which draws together perspectives concerning self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement motivation. Extensive semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten young people who were either currently attending or previously had attended a Pupil Referral Unit (4 male, 6 female; aged 14-20 years), and six members of staff (4 male, 2 female) working with them. Results of thematic analysis provide support for a model of disaffection which includes mediated and reciprocal pathways between: a) fulfilment of basic needs in the social experiences of these young people; b) perceptions of, and discrepancies between, multiple selves; and c) motivational, emotional, and behavioural profiles in achievement contexts. Directions for further research and intervention are discussed.

3.2 Introduction

Disengagement from education has been referred to as a spectrum, with those toward the high end characterised by infrequent attendance and a negative attitude toward – as well as making little or no effort at – school (Steedman & Stoney, 2004). At the extreme, the personal and societal impact is considerable; research shows that young people who are persistently absent or excluded from school are less likely to be in education, employment or training at age 18 (DfE, 2011; DfE, 2012). The futures of those excluded from school are frequently unstable with many not only experiencing unemployment, but also early incarceration; a survey study recently carried out by HM Inspectorate of Prisons found that of the 1,052 young people in young offenders institutions who took part, 86% of young men and 82% of young women said they had been excluded from school (Summerfield, 2011). Considering that in 2011-2012 a total of 5,170 young people were permanently excluded from school, and that 304,370 received at least one fixed period exclusion (DfE, 2013), research which can shed light on the development of maladaptive motivational states in young people's attitudes towards education will have important implications for the creation of effective interventions and for informing the decisions of policymakers. Attempts in recent years to draw together previously disparate theories of motivation to create a holistic framework for understanding the development of maladaptive motivational states in young people in the education system have resulted in plausible models which may have important implications for informing policy and interventions. However, to date little is known about how well such integrated models reflect the lived experiences of young people who have been excluded from the education system.

Approaches to school disaffection

The term ‘disaffection’ is commonly interchanged with ‘disengagement’ in the literature; however, whilst prominent researchers in the field have described disaffection as the opposite of engagement, they also emphasise that it entails “more than the absence of engagement”; that is, behaviours and emotions are manifest which signify the presence of maladaptive motivational states (Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008, p. 767). At the extremes of disengagement then lie disaffected youth, characterised as having a sense of failure, lacking in a sense of identity, being ‘disturbed’, ‘depressed’ and ‘difficult’ and having social and emotional problems including involvement in crime and antisocial behaviour (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions [DETR], 1999). Disaffected young people are understood to present distinct behaviours, attitudes, and emotions which are associated with non-optimal future trajectories as well as disadvantaged backgrounds. Within the school environment indicators of disaffection include behavioural patterns – such as passivity, withdrawal from participation, poor attendance and disruptive behaviour – and emotional profiles – such as boredom, anxiety and frustration – that reflect maladaptive motivational orientations (Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008; Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2008). The backgrounds of disaffected youths are typically characterised by family turmoil, and even serious disadvantage including experiences of abuse and neglect, chaotic or volatile family experiences, and institutional care (Daniels et al., 2003; Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000; Rumberger, 1995; Steer, 2000), while their future trajectories include repeated failures at school, school-exclusion, unemployment and involvement in crime (Coles et al., 2002; Maguin & Loeber, 1996; Pritchard & Cox, 1998; SEU, 1999).

Clearly, understanding the pathway from maladaptive environments to the behaviours and emotions that characterise disaffection in young people is essential if more effective policy and interventions are to be created. Inroads have been made, with recent theoretical work resulting in some plausible models of motivational development. Various theoretical frameworks have been used to understand and explain the interplay between environmental experiences, cognitive representations, and motivational orientations in pupils' behavioural and emotional functioning by drawing together existing work on motivation into an integrated model of the development of disaffection. For example, the self-system model of motivational development (SSMMD) (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008; Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2009) highlights the role of environmental contexts in the development of differential motivational orientations and self-perceptions, while motivational and cognitive frameworks for understanding the characteristic avoidant and disruptive behaviours presented by disaffected pupils are also incorporated into the model.

Encouragingly, there is already some tentative support for the elements of this model of motivation. This support comes from both qualitative research and large-scale survey studies in the educational and psychological literatures. For example, Gonzalez-Pienda et al. (2002) show that when environments – in this case, parental involvement behaviours – support the basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy, as outlined by self-determination theory (see Ryan & Deci, 2000a), adolescents' academic achievement is significantly positively affected via within-person variables such as academic self-concept and causal attributions. The outlook is much bleaker however when needs are not met, as indicated by prospective studies which have shown that pupils who ultimately drop out of school, compared to those who

remain in school, perceive both their teachers and parents to be less autonomy-supportive and – in turn – perceive themselves to be less autonomous and competent (Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997). Similar findings have also been reported by Hardre and Reeve (2003), with perceived autonomy support from teachers predicting pupils' self-determined motivation and perceived competence, which in turn predict intentions to drop-out of, or persist at, school. This clear link between unsupportive environments, subsequent need thwarting, and non-optimal outcomes is repeated in the findings from qualitative research which show that when pupils experience unsupportive environments including pervasive family turmoil, a perceived lack of respect for pupils by teachers, feeling undervalued by – and a lack of relatedness to – teachers, as well as high levels of deprivation and unemployment in the community, then disaffection, repeated failure, and dropping-out are replete (Desbiens & Gagne, 2007; Kinder, Harland, Wilkin, & Wakefield, 1995; Kinder, Wakefield, & Wilkin, 1996; Lessard et al., 2008; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Pomeroy, 1999).

Evidence regarding the behavioural sequelae of achievement goals and attributions is also well established. Motivational frameworks such as achievement goal theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) have addressed such issues with research showing that for those with 'performance goal orientations', self-esteem is threatened when met with failure, leading to feelings of anxiety, depression, and shame, which may in turn lead to behavioural responses such as self-handicapping behaviour and disruptive behaviour (Ames, 1992; Covington, 1992; Diener & Dweck, 1978; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984, 1987; Shim & Ryan, 2005; Sutherland & Singh, 2004). In addition, research shows that when attributions for failure centre on uncontrollable aspects of the self, feelings of hopelessness are engendered, self-esteem and self-agency are lowered, and motivational

responses will be poor, resulting in amotivation or performance avoidance (see Graham, 1991; Peterson & Seligman, 1984; Weiner, 1985).

Furthermore, the SSMMD (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008) has implicated the self as central to pathways from environmental experiences to engagement or disaffection. A particularly interesting, and as yet little explored, avenue opened up by this perspective is an examination of the role played by young people's multiple self-construals in the development of disaffection. For example, possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) provide frameworks for understanding the self-construals held by disaffected young people, and their affective consequences. Some findings linking multiple self-construals to disaffection have emerged from research by Oyserman and Markus (1990) showing that delinquent youths (e.g., school-excluded youths who had engaged with criminal activities) had more negative 'expected selves' compared to less-delinquent and non-delinquent youths. Qualitative research by Mainwaring and Hallam (2010) which explored the motivation and aspirations of school-excluded and non-school-excluded pupils has found similar results with school-excluded pupils generating more 'impossible future selves' and having more negative perceptions of their futures compared to non-school-excluded pupils. Within self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) discrepancies between 'actual', 'ideal', and 'ought' self-representations are shown to be associated with negative emotions of dejection or agitation, which when accompanied by an external locus of control lead to negative affect, lowered self-esteem and decreased motivation (Higgins, 1987; Scott & O'Hara, 1993; Strauman & Higgins, 1987).

Notwithstanding the preliminary support for various constituent elements of the SSMMD, further evaluation and exploration are required in order to assess how well the

integrated model, as a whole, fits the lived experiences of young people in the education system. There is a particular gap in our knowledge of how well this kind of model maps onto the key issues raised by youths who have lived through the process of being excluded from mainstream education, as well as those raised by the school staff who are tasked with supporting their educational development. It is vital that theoretical frameworks designed to explain the development of disaffection are tested in ways that capture the lived experiences of youth populations approaching the extreme end of the spectrum of disengagement. Furthermore, there are likely to be additional processes, as yet unidentified within existing models of the development of school disaffection, which may further strengthen the bridge between social environments and disaffection.

The present study

The present study sought therefore to evaluate, and further develop, a theoretical model of school disaffection in young people which draws together major conceptual frameworks regarding self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement motivation (see Figure 3.1). We used individual interviews with school-excluded young people and staff to explore accounts of the young people's school experiences, their attitude to education, how they saw themselves, their relationships with family and peers, and how they saw their futures. In accordance with our hypothesised model, we expect that accounts of the young people's behavioural and emotional profile of disengagement will be connected to accounts of family and school experiences which describe chaotic, unsupportive environments which fail to provide the young people with the basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness. Crucially, we evaluate the proposition that the relationship between the accounts of behaviour, emotions and motivation in the academic context on the one hand, and their need-thwarting social

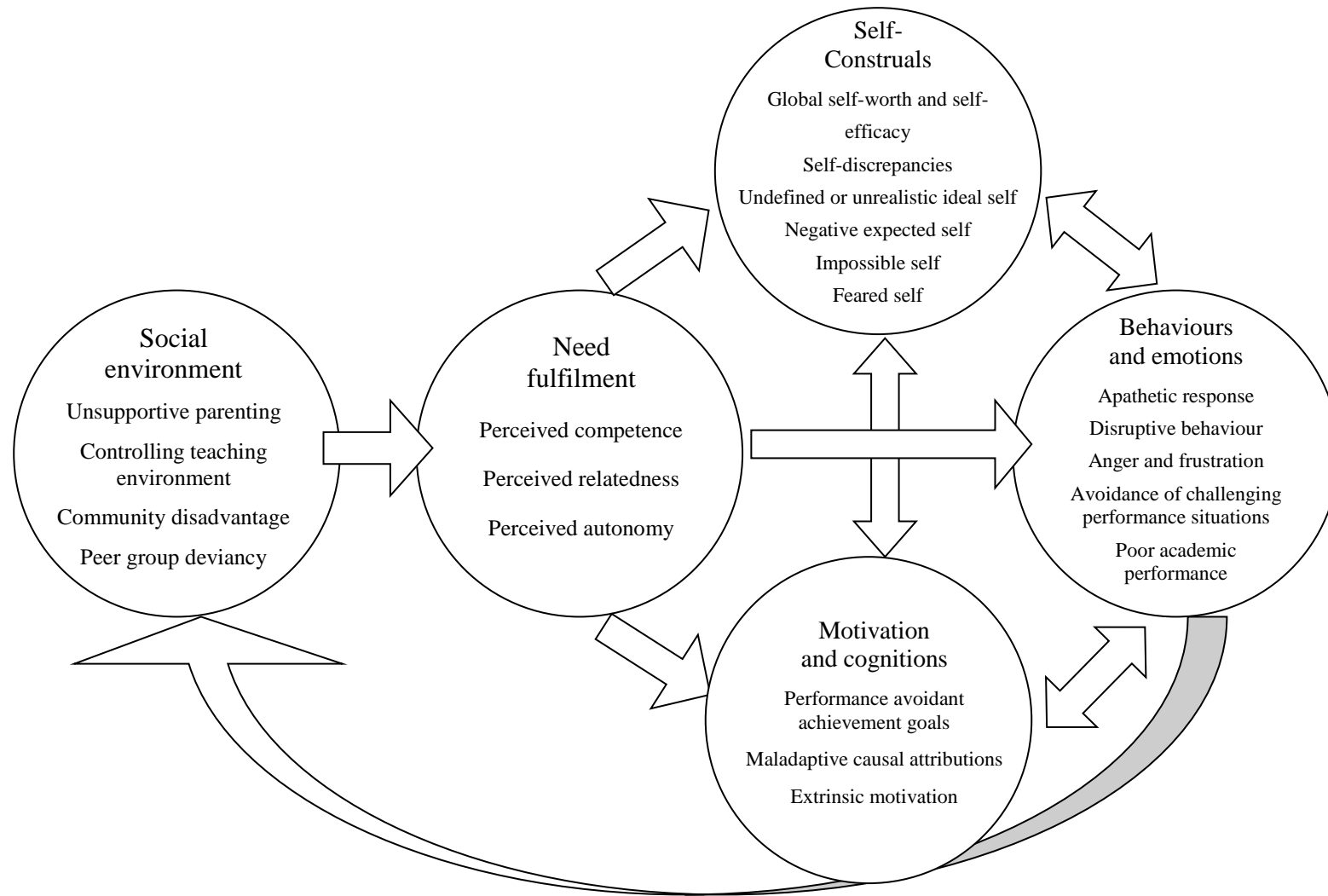


Fig. 3.1. Representation of pathways to school disaffection in hypothesised model.

experiences on the other, will be mediated by maladaptive constructions of multiple selves. Theory driven thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. This approach was adopted because of its flexibility allowing for the evaluation of our existing model of the development of disaffection, as well as its expansion through the detection of new psychological processes hitherto not included in models of disaffection (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.3 Method

Participants

A total of ten young people and six adult staff at a South London Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) – an education centre which caters for school-excluded pupils – were invited to participate in in-depth individual interviews about how the young people felt about education, how they saw their futures, their understanding of why they were excluded, their relationships to teachers and family, and how they saw themselves. All participants were recruited via the PRU. Written consent was given by all participants. In addition, parental consent was given for all participants under 16 years of age. The sample included nine young people, five female and four male, from the PRU. Of these, five were current PRU pupils, one had just completed the final year of statutory education at a PRU at the time of interview and was unemployed, and three were ex-PRU pupils with two unemployed and one attending college. In addition, one other young person (female and currently unemployed), who had not attended a PRU but was considered ‘at risk’ having received multiple exclusions whilst attending a mainstream school, was interviewed. The young people were aged between 14 and 21 years ($M = 16.60$, $SD = 2.22$). Participants were British with a mixed ethnic profile: four of the

young people were mixed race, four were black, one was white, and one was South-Asian. Four staff members at a PRU, two female and two males (all white), and two external practitioners (one white, one black) currently working with PRU pupils on theatre workshops, both male, were also interviewed. One PRU staff member had been working in the centre for 14 years; two others had been there 11 years, while the fourth had been working in the PRU for six years. All PRU staff also had experience of mainstream school teaching. The two external practitioners had several years' experience of working with at-risk youths.

Interview schedule

An interview schedule was developed on the basis of our conceptual framework in order to explore the experiences and opinions of school-excluded young people and staff who work closely with them. Questions covered the following topics: the young people's experiences of being in school and in a PRU; the experience of being excluded from mainstream school and why they were excluded; their relationships with teachers, peers and others; their attitudes to education and aspirations; and their self-concepts (see Table 3.1). Adaptations were made to the interview schedule to allow for young people who were no longer attending a school or PRU such that these young people were asked about their past experiences. Questions were adapted in a similar way to accommodate the participant who had not experienced permanent exclusion. Likewise, the interview schedule for the external practitioners was modified as indicated in Table 3.1. The interviews were semi-structured in their design, with the interviewer providing space for participants to express their views on topics that arose which were relevant to, but not covered by, questions in the interview schedule (Burman, 1995).

Table 3.1

Interview schedule for young people and practitioners organised by topic

Topic	Young People	Practitioners
School/PRU experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long have you been at this PRU? • What is it like being in the PRU? • What does being in a PRU mean for you? • Is being in a PRU different from being at school? If so, how? • What do you think you get out of coming to the PRU? • What are the other kids at the PRU like? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it like to work in a PRU?* • What are the rewards of working with these young people? • What are the negative aspects? • What are the young people like when they first come to the PRU?* • How does the PRU differ to school?* • Do you see changes in pupils who have been in the PRU for a while?*
Pupil-teacher relationships at school and the PRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were/are the teachers at school/PRU like? • Did you feel like you could talk to them and they would listen? • Do you feel your teachers understood you and cared about you as a person? • Do you feel your teachers at school/PRU encourage(d) you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the relationship between practitioners and pupils like? • Do you think they feel like they can talk to practitioners and that they would be listened to? • Do you think they feel that staff understand them and care about them? • Do you think they feel encouraged by staff? • Do you think the relationship between practitioners and pupils is different in PRUs and schools?
Experiences of, and reasons for, exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why were you moved to a PRU? • Had you been excluded before? • What is your understanding of why you were excluded? • Do you think it was fair that you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about how the kids end up in the PRU? • What do you see as the root cause or causes? • What is going for these young people at a deeper level?

	were excluded?	
Peer relationships and relationships with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What qualities do you look for in a friend? • Is it important that your friends come from the same area as you? • What do you think of gang involvement? Why would someone join a gang? • Who would you say is the closest person to you? • Who do you look up to and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are gangs a big issue for these young people? • Why do you think these young people join gangs? • What kind of role models do these young people have? • Who do they tend to look up to? Why?
Attitudes to education and aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any school subjects you like and why? • How do you feel about school work? • What do you want to do when you leave school? What will it take to get there? • How do you see your future? • Do you believe you can change your situation to get where you want to be? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens to the young people after they leave the PRU? • What do their futures look like? • Do some succeed in creating a stable life for themselves? • For those that do succeed in making a stable life for themselves, what makes the difference do you think?
Self-perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of a person are you? • How do you think others see you? • How would you like to be seen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the young people see themselves do you think? • How do you imagine they think others see them? • How do you think they would like to be seen?

Procedure

Each participant was interviewed by the first author (a white female researcher). Interviews were held either in the counselling room of the PRU, in a private room of the building where the theatre workshops took place, or in a café. Interview length varied depending on participants' responses, with the shortest lasting 18 min and the longest 74 min (Staff: $M = 47.41$, $SD = 14.49$; Young people: $M = 38.25$, $SD = 16.47$). Interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Interviewees were fully informed of the purpose and nature of the interview, both verbally and via an information sheet, prior to the interview, and gave written consent for the audio recording of the interview. Parental consent was given prior to interviews for those participants under the age of 16 years. In addition, interviewees were made aware that they could terminate their participation at any time, for any reason, and that they could choose not to answer particular questions. No payment was given for taking part.

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed by the interviewer (first named author) and analysed using theory driven thematic analysis according to established methods (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analysis involved initial scrutiny and coding of the interview data in relation to the broad *a priori* domains which related to our theoretical framework and which formed the basis for the study's interview questions. These *a priori* domains were 'social environments', 'self-concepts', 'motivations and cognitions', and 'behaviour and emotions'. This was followed by a theory driven process of coding and recoding the data to arrive at a final set of themes and subthemes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). We were also cognisant that analysis might produce themes beyond our model expectations, thereby expanding the model.

3.4 Results

Figure 3.2 provides a visual representation of the themes and subthemes arising from the thematic analysis of the interview data. Below, we present a narrative account of the key findings from the thematic analysis, illustrated with extracts from the interviews. Themes relating to the young people's orientation to school are presented first, followed by themes relating to aspirations and self-construals. Finally, themes associated with the young people's experiences of their social environment are presented. Interviewees are identified with code numbers, preceded by 'Staff' or 'YP' (young person). Codes for the young people range from 1-10 and codes for staff range from 1-6. The gender of participants, as well as age in the case of the young people, is also reported. Statements or questions made by the interviewer are identified with 'Int'.

Orientation to school: Behavioural disengagement and negative emotion

The young people's orientation to mainstream school and college was commonly one of apathy and resignation which manifested as disinterested, withdrawn, and disengaged behavioural and emotional responses.

YP-1: [...] I went to college to do A-Levels; I think I lasted about two weeks. [...] I was just like, aw this is just like school, why bother, so I didn't bother with it. (Female, 20)

Int: How did you feel when you were excluded permanently?

YP-7: Well ... I couldn't be bothered to be honest. (Male, 16)

A further manifestation of this disengagement from school was the antisocial behaviour and resistance to authority frequently mentioned by young people. These behaviours typically included absence, distraction, criminal behaviour from the streets entering school life, fighting, confrontations with teachers, and drug use.

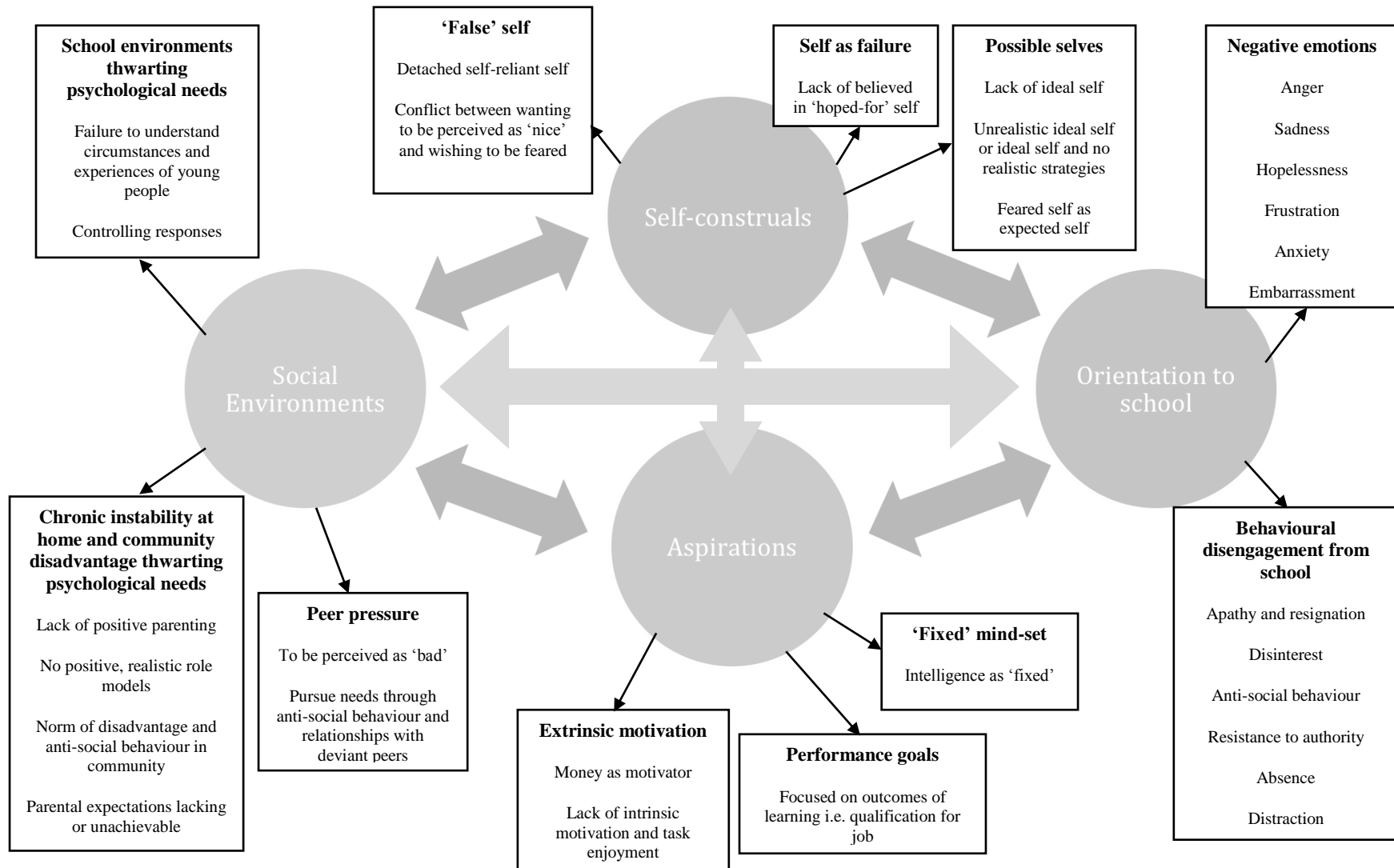


Figure. 3.2. Representation of pathways to school disaffection in hypothesised model.

YP-9: I was fighting a lot with other kids, and I was bunking, like, quite a lot, and I wasn't really, never really hardly went in. [...] They [temporary exclusions] were all for all different things like walking out of school, or arguing with someone, or getting rude to someone [...]. (Female, 15)

YP-3: So I was just going off the rails, just smoking drugs and sh*t like that... and obviously got kicked out of school for it, so y'know, went into school and decided 'F**k it, I'm getting high today' and got caught. (Female, 16)

Int: So can you tell me a little bit about what happened to get you excluded [...]?

YP-2: [Laughs]. Yeah, I robbed some girls basically [...] yeah. I robbed like their iPods, their iPhones, their Blackberrys, their money, their Oyster cards, everything they had on them basically. Then I got arrested for it [...]. And I robbed a teacher on that same day as well. (Female, 15)

Emotions including anger, sadness, and hopelessness were clearly evident, and appeared to underpin the antisocial and/or disengaged behaviour described above.

YP-8: The people here [at the PRU], they're wild. [...] They're wild, they're angry, some of them are angry, some of them... they don't care, some of them don't care about work, nothing. (Male, 16)

YP-3: I was upset, angry, couldn't deal with my feelings, couldn't deal with what was going on around me. If I can't control what's going on around me I'm very, very emotional. (Female, 16)

Staff-1: I think in all honesty most of them [pupils] when they get here [to the PRU] are pretty depressed and pretty down. (Male)

The negative emotional experiences of the young people were frequently connected with learning difficulties and the experience of repeated scholastic failures. Frustration was therefore a common subtheme appearing in the words of both the young people and the staff working with them. Members of staff specifically associated this experience of frustration with the young people's profile of helpless and/or challenging behaviours.

YP-6: When it's really hard I don't understand it and I get frustrated. (Male, 16)

Staff-4: A lot of the pupils we receive have got learning difficulties, and they've had learning difficulties ever since they've been in primary school. So very often when they're at school they're incredibly frustrated because they can't do the work properly and obviously one way of disguising that is to be disruptive [...] a lot of them have been excluded, mainly because of bad behaviour as a result of frustration not being able to access the curriculum. (Male)

Intriguingly, staff also identified anxiety and embarrassment as playing a key role in the prevalent attitude of apathy and withdrawal, summed up by the phrase ‘I’m not bothered’, which ultimately curtails opportunities for achieving life goals and aspirations.

Staff-4: They’ve all lacked that motivation to go on and fulfil their potential. So they might be offered [football] trials at certain well known clubs, but because it’s over the other side of London they can’t be bothered to get there or [...] they’d be too embarrassed to say ‘look, I don’t know how to get there, can you show me how to do it’. ... They would see that as a major journey, and they would be very worried about doing it. (Male)

Aspirations: Extrinsic motivation, performance goals, and a ‘fixed’ mind-set

When asked about further education, the young people focused heavily on extrinsic goals, and particularly money. Money was frequently cited as a reason for staying in further education, and money was also considered a key determining factor when choosing routes into adult life, often ahead of the actual nature of the qualification or job being considered.

YP-6: I think [education] is bulls**t. [...]

Int: And what keeps you doing it then?

YP-6: The money really, till you get a job. (Male, 16)

YP-2: But I was thinking about apprenticeships, yeah. See how apprenticeships you earn the qualification while you’re doing the job and you’re earning money, so... [...] So I was thinking like that might be like what I’m more into [rather than college], cause if I’m earning some money... (Female, 15)

Many of the young people recognised education as essential in order to get somewhere in life. However, resentment and disdain for the educational process were commonly experienced as a barrier to employment and success. Thus, the overwhelming message from the young people we interviewed was that, where they did experience a sense of motivation at school, this was focused on the end product of learning, rather than any direct benefits from mastering the process of learning itself. This orientation to

performance rather than to learning itself seems to be associated with low levels of persistence in the face of difficulty.

Staff-4: [...] if they can't find the answer within literally 2 seconds, they give up. So anything that requires a little bit of thought and a little bit of patience seems to defeat the majority of them. And it literally is, y'know, 2 seconds – so if they can't find the answer, that's it, 'oh, I'm not doing this, it's long, it's too hard'.
(Male)

YP-1: I've tried to go to college, I've tried to... I just don't think that's really for me. I don't think it would've ever worked out... because there's nothing that I'd say I'm so interested in that I'd go and study for years and stick to it [...] it'd just piss me off, I wouldn't be able to do that... if I'm going to do something now I'd want to know, well that's going to get me a job right at the end of it.
(Female, 20)

Accompanying this orientation to performance was a clear belief by some interviewees that intelligence was a fixed asset and that performance outcomes would ultimately be shaped by their given level of intelligence, rather than effort. In referring to unrealistic expectations for academic success within the family, one young person expressed this belief explicitly:

YP-1: I'm not as smart as you think, [...] there's a certain limit there... that's as smart as I can get. (Female, 20)

Self-construal: Self as failure and conflicts between multiple selves

The fixed mind-set described above applied more broadly to the young people's sense of self. They regularly expressed a sense that being permanently excluded means not only that they had failed, but also that this cannot be altered, thus removing all possibilities for a positive future. Under these circumstances, the future is not taken seriously, and education was therefore perceived as meaningless by the young people. Fear of this 'failed self' and a lack of any 'hoped-for self' appear to provide a foundation for the low motivation and negative behaviour described above.

YP-5: I got kicked out of [mainstream school]; [...] that's when I first got into a Pupil Referral Unit. [...] I was basically sh*tting it then, basically, because I thought like, 'Is this my life over now? I'm not going to be able to get back into mainstream school, get my education and my grades'. (Male, 21)

YP-4: I thought [getting sent to the PRU] meant that I didn't... I wasn't going to get nothing, go nowhere in life, like... it was always going to be on my record and I wasn't going to be able to achieve anything, stuff like that... never going to get into school again, that's what I thought anyway. (Female, 17)

Staff-5: When they come in? Well, 'it's the end of my life', particularly year 10 and year 11, 'it's the end of my life, I'm not going to get anything' ... very angry, angry at being here, angry at the schools, angry at anyone. (Female)

Many of the young people showed a strong awareness of different possible selves, which could provide incentives for change. Feared selves, or selves to be avoided, were often modelled on parents or others close to them who they have seen experience disadvantage and instability. At the same time, other social models clearly influenced some young people's notions about 'ideal' selves to be approached.

YP-8: I don't want to be a failure, cause, if I get nowhere in life I'll just probably be on the streets and gangs, end up prison or somewhere. [...] I want to try to get off the streets properly. (Male, 16)

YP-10: I don't want to be a drug dealer; I want to go work. (Female, 14)

YP-2: I wanna have good grades because I see like my sisters, I see my brothers, I see my uncles, I see my aunties, I see my mum, like, and my cousins, all struggling because they don't have nothing, d'you know what I mean? And it's not nice at all [...] it's just not nice them having no money to do what they feel like or do what they want to, I mean like it's not nice at all and I don't ever want to be in that boat. (Female, 15)

Unfortunately, many of the young people either could not identify an 'ideal' self or identified 'ideal' selves that were unrealistic and unachievable, and did not appear to have any realistic strategies for achieving this. Additionally, strategies for avoiding feared selves were often lacking, giving rise to the situation where several of the young people interviewed expressed a belief that they expected to become their feared self.

YP-6: I see myself in the future as, like, not getting a job and stuff. Something really bad. (Male, 16)

Int: What kind of aspirations do the kids in the PRU have?

Staff-1: They have either incredibly unrealistic ones like want to be an international football player [...] or not a vague idea of what they're going to do in life. Or, they have very depressed... they'll end up doing exactly what their parents were doing. [...] I think the idea about what they want to be in the future it's... it's not a reality and a lot of them will just go 'Oh, I don't know'; especially the boys will just go 'Oh, I don't know'. (Male)

Int: And back then [when you dropped out of college at 16] where do you think you saw yourself going?

YP-1: I don't know, I don't really have a... I don't know. Even now I don't really have a set thing of what I want to do, so I don't know. (Female, 20)

A common subtheme that became salient during the interviews was the presentation of a 'false' or 'inauthentic' self to others. This was used to protect or hide the 'true' self which is vulnerable or perceived to be unacceptable to others. This hiding of the authentic self was also conceived of as vital for adapting to a hostile, unaccepting environment which put pressure on young people, particularly those in gangs, to present a tough image. A detached self-reliant self, impervious to those around them was frequently cited.

Staff-4: there's a lot of bravado, but basically I don't think they have a high opinion of themselves. (Male)

YP-3: I've always got a brick wall around me. It doesn't matter where I am, who I'm with. Unless it's someone that I feel comfortable enough to almost peek over it, then I'll... you'll never see me ... you'll never see the true – who I really am, who I always want to be but don't feel that I'm able to. (Female, 16)

YP-4: [Being in a PRU] just makes you be more street-wise cause you see a lot of things that go on in there so you know how to act, how to behave, cause you've been there, you've seen things and you can't really see nothing much more worse than being in a PRU where it's full of all people that's come in from the same bad background... [...] most of the time, it's a lot of people with problems. (Female, 17)

Staff-2: They all tend to come with swagger and attitude because this is defence mechanism. (Male)

In particular, there was clear evidence of a conflict between wanting to be perceived by others as 'nice', whilst simultaneously wishing to come across as individuals to be

feared. The young people's awareness that others perceive them as rude or aggressive was thus a source of both accomplishment and dismay.

YP-9: [My behaviour] tells them [other people] that basically I'm not going to take their sh*t really, to be honest with you. Even though it's not good – it can make situations bad – but it also can sort out some sort of situations [...]. It's up to me how I should let them see me. [...] I want them to see me as a nice person but I also want them to see me as, like, I'm a person don't, just don't get on the wrong side of me. So it's two ways basically. (Female, 15)

YP-10: Well, I've been told that I can be a nice person but I'm difficult and I'm aggressive. [...] People say sometimes I'm being rude but I'm not being rude it's just the tone of my voice and I don't mean to be rude. [...] I'm a nice person. If you're nice to me then I'll be nice to you. If you're rude to me then I'll be rude to you. [...] I don't care what other people what people think of me. [...] I don't really care but I'd like people... Even if sometimes I can be aggressive I'd like people to see that I actually am a nice understanding person. (Female, 14)

Social environments: Support for basic needs

A common subtheme in the interviews with the young people was a sense that the school environment frequently failed to provide them with experiences that could fulfil psychological needs of competence and relatedness. They often identified failures on the part of the school in understanding and reaching out to young people who came from difficult socioeconomic circumstances or were experiencing difficulties at home or with learning. The lack of understanding and effort to connect on the part of school staff was seen as almost inevitably resulting in antisocial behaviour from young people. Additionally, controlling responses from teachers were seen as undermining autonomy and intrinsic motivation, and therefore were perceived to make problems worse.

YP-4: [The school staff] didn't care. [...] They knew that the school was bad; they knew that the people there was bad, so they just didn't really care [...]. (Female, 14)

YP-2: [School teacher] doesn't really understand why we behave in the way that we do. [...] She doesn't know, she doesn't understand. [...] So if [teacher] was to say to me 'Do this piece of work', I'd be like, 'F**k you, like, go to a f**king private school, f**k you alright', that's what I'd say to her. I've even said that to her, I'd say 'F**k you, I ain't doing your work'. (Female, 15)

YP-10: If they [teachers at mainstream school] always shouted at me or give me detentions, that made me worse. (Female, 14)

The difficulties in mainstream school were superseded by chronic instability at home or in the neighbourhood, which was seen by the young people as more real and pertinent to their everyday lives.

YP-3: [Pupils who have been excluded] probably don't even care that they've been kicked out of school. They're more worried about what's going on at home. (Female, 16)

Staff-3: And then other times they just, they don't care ... what's more important to them is what's happening on the street, what's happening at home... (Female)

A lack of positive parenting and a dearth of positive, realistic role models, together with entrenched disadvantage and anti-social behaviour in the community, appeared to pose difficulties for fulfilling young people's needs for positive relationships. Staff described how it becomes necessary for young people to adapt to this environment in order to survive.

Staff-2: In the more difficult households it's just a part of life. [...] There's nothing else. So if mum and dad are fighting physically that's what you know. It's ok, mum and dad are having a fight again. And I think for some of the kids it becomes so normal but they know that this isn't the way it should be [...] They become their own parent very young in life because they think: well you're not doing it, [...] I'll do my own thing. (Male)

Parents' expectations also play a part in the fulfilment of young people's competence and autonomy needs, with either too many expectations from parents which are felt to be unachievable, or a complete lack of any expectation at all. In both cases, these appeared to underscore feelings of failure, lack of autonomy and incompetence which in turn leads to amotivation at school.

Staff-1: like this Asian kid [...] he can't live up to [his parents'] expectations, has rebelled to such a point that they've disowned him and he's in care, you know, and it's not doing him any good cause there's now no boundaries. Whereas

before there were loads and loads of boundaries that he could only fail to meet, there are now none at all, and he's just totally lost, he's just totally at sea. (Male)

YP-1: as soon as I went to school [my mother] was on my case, on my case, on my case [...] it was only for the first two years of school and then after that she just left me alone and then that's when I really just didn't do anything, cause she wasn't trying to make me do anything, so I suppose it's like... her not saying anything at all didn't help but then her saying too much didn't help either. (Female, 20)

Peer pressure to be perceived as appropriately 'bad' – in order to be seen as a successful member of a gang – together with the norm of violence and drugs in the community, mean that young people frequently pursued their basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness through anti-social activities and relationships with deviant peers.

YP-3: I mean I was involved with a gang when I was like 13 [...] I was just running around with like people, just doing bad things but... y'know, you don't have to be in a gang to, beat someone up or, y'know, rob someone.

Int: Why do you think you were doing that?

YP-3: Had problems at home [...] it's a way of dealing with things really, a coping mechanism. (Female, 16)

Involvement in deviant peer groups and antisocial behaviours rarely provided opportunities for gaining true fulfilment of basic needs. Staff in fact perceived a *lack* of autonomy – emphasising a feeling of inevitability – when it came to gang involvement and criminal activity, both because of the serious consequences of trying to leave a gang once affiliated, and because other options outside of criminality are not felt to be a real option.

Staff-2: It's just a lack of choice, [...] it's peer group pressure... Are you gonna study when everyone's gonna think you're an a**hole for doing so? Or are you going to live for the moment and be cool at that moment? [...] For the weaker amongst the group there's even less choice because the only way to become stronger is to do something that gives you credibility and whether that be stab somebody or really damage somebody, these things matter and... It's just a survival tactic, because there's no other way to be within their groups. (Male)

Room for hope: Positive responses to the PRU environment

Although the initial experience of being excluded from mainstream school was identified as disheartening by the young people, they often referred to their experience in the PRU as a highly positive experience. Here, the lack of need fulfilment experienced in other contexts was seen to be counteracted through a supportive school environment. With the changed focus on building relationships between staff and pupils, coupled with staff members' better understanding of the often unstable situations experienced by these pupils at home, psychological needs of relatedness and autonomy could be met. Many of the young people reported experiencing this kind of turnaround from negative experiences at mainstream school to positive ones at the PRU.

Int: What changed when you came [to the PRU]?

YP-5: I'd say the approach on [...] the teacher-pupil relationships and the way that they taught the classes. (Male, 21)

YP-4: I felt people [in the PRU] listened to you more. Some teachers don't really care, but other teachers did really care and obviously they're more understanding because they know people that's coming there is got... problems, or troubles – something going on, so... yeah, and it gave you a lot of freedom there [...] They will try and help you but they won't try too hard cause they know that some days you come in you're not really... in that state of mind to do work so... [At the PRU], if something was wrong they'll try and find out or they'll tell you to calm down or they'll make you go and speak to someone and... stuff like that. So it was really, really good. (Female, 17)

YP-2: [...] Like I've never said to [teacher at PRU], 'F**k you' in his face because he understands me, he understands why I'm in this situation, understands what I'm feeling [...] we have a common ground, he understands, we have a foundation, then it can go from there. That's why I respect [teacher]. (Female, 15)

Competence needs were seen to be met through the setting of realistic goals, academic or otherwise, which are given due recognition when achieved. Here, staff confidence in the young people – what they are capable of and the genuine belief that they can have positive futures – appeared to be crucial for the fulfilment of this need.

Staff-5: You find other pathways for them to learn – they may not be academically brilliant but they’ve achieved personal goals that you set up that are tangible, and you can orchestrate that with staff. And that they just... they’re not a waste of space. (Female)

YP-3: But in a PRU it’s different cause they know this is your last chance. And they really do care about you. They really want you to do something with yourself. They want you to be a better person. They want you to come out of the other side and say ‘yes, I did get kicked out of school, but look at me now’... (Female, 16)

YP-5: I kinda believed in myself before anyway, but then as I came here like, I think it was really the relationship with the teachers and the faith they had in me, I think that’s what helped me to believe in myself as well. (Male, 21)

Thus, for at least some of the young people, achieving a stable life was experienced as a realistic hoped-for self, an almost tangible goal towards which they were already on the path. These young people expressed a sense of autonomy in terms of actively making the choice to break away from past behaviours and negative situations.

YP-2: I did not want to be with those friends and doing whatever they was doing, [...] cause I saw it getting me nowhere [...] I saw it getting me to the bottom [...] it didn’t look clear, didn’t look happy [...]. So I just thought: ‘forget about it’. [...] So that’s why I broke out of it, [...] cause I was sincere about it and I did not want that to happen, I didn’t want that to happen anymore, cause I just saw it f**king up my life, f**king up the whole situation between me and my family [...]. I like to do something and achieve something [...] I like to look at something and say ‘oh my gosh, look at what I’ve done,’ [...]. It feels good. (Female, 15)

3.5 Discussion

Individual interviews with young people who had been excluded from school, and the staff working with them, provided us with rich accounts of their perspectives and experiences. These in turn allow for an exploration of the extent to which our integrated theoretical model of school disaffection in young people – which draws

together major conceptual frameworks regarding self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement motivation – fits with the lived experiences of school-excluded youths. Moreover, they allow us to extend and enrich the model by identifying details of the likely psychological pathways from unsupportive environments to school disaffection.

Applying an integrated motivational framework to school-excluded youths

Our evidence suggests that the SSMMD framework of engagement and disengagement (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008; Skinner et al., 2009) – which highlights the importance of environments which satisfy basic psychological needs for engagement at school, via their impact on self-processes – closely maps onto the lived experiences of those who might be considered to be at the extreme end of the disengagement spectrum. For example, within the over-arching theme of ‘orientation to school’, sub-themes including ‘behavioural disengagement from school’ and ‘negative emotions’ reflect an apathetic orientation to school manifesting in behaviours such as disinterest, repeated absences, resistance to authority, and distracting and anti-social behaviour, as well as negative emotions such as hopelessness, anger and frustration (as depicted in Figure 3.2). These themes fit well with Skinner and colleagues’ description of the behaviours and emotions that characterise school disengagement (Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008; Skinner et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the overarching theme of ‘aspirations’ describes the young people’s academic motivation and goals at school, such as being extrinsically oriented in their motivation, having performance goals and holding the view that intelligence is not malleable (see Figure 3.2). These themes fit well with theoretical frameworks such as achievement goal theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), implicated in the SSMMD, which help us understand and explain the types of motivation and cognitions which may lead to maladaptive behaviours and negative

emotions in pupils. The additional evidence of a motivational focus on extrinsic goals such as money mirrors findings by Kasser and colleagues which show associations between high ratings of the importance of financial success and behaviour problems in young adults (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). Furthermore, Kasser and colleagues have also found that older adolescents who value financial success highly tend to have mothers who are less supportive of their intrinsic needs (Kasser, Ryan, Zax, & Sameroff, 1995). Our qualitative data therefore help to provide much-needed evidence for the role of motivational orientations as mediating the pathway between unsupportive environments and behavioural and emotional difficulties at school, as in the SSMMD model (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008). Moreover, our finding that PRU pupils frequently hold performance goals and tend to view themselves as having a ‘fixed’ ability, also extends existing research with mainstream pupils showing associations between beliefs about intelligence and achievement goals. For example, by identifying the type of academic goals and beliefs about ability held by PRU pupils, our analysis extends longitudinal research by Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck (2007) which found that junior high school pupils who had an incremental theory of intelligence – where intelligence is viewed as malleable – tended to hold learning goals and believe that effort is necessary for achievement, in comparison to those who held fixed entity theories of intelligence.

Finally, our analysis of the overarching theme, ‘social environments’, maps onto the theoretical framework provided by SDT to help understand how maladaptive social environments – such as the controlling school environments, unsupportive parenting, and peer pressure repeatedly described by pupils and staff in this study – may impact subsequent motivation, academic outcomes, and well-being (see Figure 3.2). Here, school environments and parenting which thwart need fulfilment appear to lead many

youngsters to attempt to compensate by trying to pursue needs through anti-social behaviour and relationships with deviant peers. In this way feelings of self-agency, importance and self-worth are temporarily gained; however, this rarely leads to a true fulfilment of basic needs (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995). Our interviews with young people in PRUs confirm that need-thwarting environments are commonly experienced by school-excluded youths at home, school, and in the wider community, mirroring findings such as those by Vallerand, Fortier, and Guay (1997) and Hardre and Reeve (2003) whose studies have highlighted the crucial role played by parental and teacher support for self-perceptions of autonomy and competence, and ultimately perseverance with the challenges of school. Conversely, the importance of positive environments that satisfy the psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness for instilling a sense of hope, self-belief, and motivation, was highlighted by many of the young people in their description of the PRU environment. These pupils frequently cited the PRU as a place where they were believed in, encouraged and valued, and where some had experienced a positive turnaround in terms of their behaviour and aspirations. Thus, our study underlines the applicability of self-determination theory to make sense of the role played by environmental support (both its presence and its absence) in the development of school-excluded youths.

Self-construals as mediators of pathways to disaffection

Thus far the SSMMD framework has only been studied in terms of engagement in a typically-developing population of pupils in mainstream school, and to predict drop-out (Fall & Roberts, 2012; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008; Skinner, Kindermann et al., 2008). Beyond demonstrating the value of our integrated conceptual framework for understanding the psychosocial functioning of disaffected youths, our study also provides much-needed empirical detail regarding the specific

psychological processes that are likely to bridge the gap between need-thwarting social experiences on the one hand and school disaffection on the other. Our analysis of the lived experiences of school-excluded youths confirms a consideration of maladaptive constructions of multiple selves is of particular importance here. The interviews point to three specific self-construals which may usefully bridge this gap: a categorical view of the self as a failure, an inability to identify realistic future selves or realistic strategies for achieving desired selves, and a sense of the self as inauthentic.

These self-construals build on the role of self-processes in the development of engagement/disengagement, as conceptualised by the SSMMD, by adding further detail through the establishment of a role for maladaptive constructions of multiple selves in pathways to disaffection. Firstly, the subtheme ‘self as a failure’, identified by our analysis of interviews with school-excluded youths and staff working with them, can be seen as bridging the gap between unsupportive environments – captured by the experience of being excluded from school – and behavioural disengagement such as apathy and resignation at school, a sense of hopelessness, and disinterest. This self-construal resonates with past research by Midgley and Urdan (1995) which found that self-worth predicted self-handicapping behaviour in secondary school pupils. Similarly, work by Covington and Omelich (1981, 1984, 1985; Covington & Beery, 1976; Thompson, 1994) investigating associations between perceptions of academic self-worth and achievement behaviour might also be a useful way of understanding how this self-construal may bridge the gap between unsupportive environmental experiences and behavioural disengagement at school in school-excluded youths. In particular, experimental research with undergraduate students revealed that those who experienced repeated failures also experienced an increase in feelings of shame and hopelessness as beliefs in their inability were consolidated. Covington and Omelich (1985; Covington,

1992) identify these students as ‘failure accepters’ whose academic behaviour is typified by resignation and unresponsiveness in comparison to those who still seek to avoid failure. This description resonates with the feelings of hopelessness and lack of belief in positive future selves as well as the behavioural disengagement and resignation identified in the analysis of interviews with school-excluded youths in the current study.

Secondly, many of the school-excluded young people we interviewed had difficulties in citing realistic ‘positive future selves’, or difficulties in identifying realistic strategies for achieving desired selves, whilst believing in negative ‘expected selves’. As noted earlier, the theory of possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) also provide an understanding of how the kinds of self-construals held by disaffected youth can lead to particular affective and motivational consequences. For example, research by Oyserman and Markus (1990) which examined the possible selves of delinquent and school-excluded youths involved with crime found that an imbalance in possible selves in the same domain predicted delinquency, while more recent research by Oyserman and colleagues (Oyserman, Bybee & Terry, 2006) with secondary school pupils has shown that possessing realistic strategies for attaining possible selves is crucial for self-regulation and academic outcomes. Moreover, research by Oyserman, Brickman, and Rhodes (2007) has shown that interventions aimed at strengthening secondary school pupils’ positive possible selves can ameliorate the effects of low parent involvement on academic outcomes, highlighting how possible future selves, such as those identified in the current study with school-excluded youths, appear to moderate the relationship between unsupportive social environments and academic outcomes.

Finally, our analysis also identified a new psychological process, captured by the subtheme ‘inauthentic’ or ‘false self’, which we had not previously identified within our

a priori model of motivation. However, it is revealing that a number of theorists, including those within SDT, have proposed that the authentic self is linked to intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; La Guardia, 2009). This subtheme describes the young people's presentation of a detached, self-reliant self, invulnerable to others, which is seen as essential in order to be accepted and to protect a vulnerable 'true' self. Theories which help to shed light on this psychological process, including those by Winnicott (1960/1965) and Harter (Harter, Marold, Whitesell, & Cobbs, 1996; Harter, 1998, 2006), provide insight into the role a 'false' self may play in the development of school disaffection in young people. According to Harter a 'false' self, which does not reflect the "authentic experience" of a person, may be created when parenting fails to provide a child with the need fulfilment necessary to develop a sense of the self as worthy (Harter, 1998, 2006, p. 536). Examples of such parenting include unsupportive, controlling or abusive parenting, and/or parenting which is characterised by inconsistent or conditional approval (Harter, 2006). Research by Harter and colleagues shows links between perceived parent and peer support and false self-behaviour via the devaluing of the 'true' self in school pupils (Harter et al., 1996). According to Harter (2006) and Winnicott (1960/1965), the 'false' self is particularly prominent in those for whom a lack of validation of the self has resulted in a devaluation of, and alienation from, the 'true' or 'core' self. Research by Cassidy (1988) which shows that insecurely attached children tend to have an idealised self-view, whilst denying negative aspects of the self, supports the idea of the 'false' self as a defence. Indeed, presenting a 'false' self is proposed to function as an adaptive defence mechanism, protecting the child whose self is not validated by primary carers from the pain of feeling 'unacceptable' (Cassidy, 1988; Winnicott, 1960/1965). This is supported by research by Schimel and colleagues (Schimel, Arndt, Banko, & Cook, 2004; Schimel, Arndt, Pyszczynski, & Greenberg,

2001) which shows that when the ‘true’ or ‘intrinsic’ self is validated, in contrast to the validation of a self based on achievements, defensive reactions are reduced, for example in making social comparisons, and distancing one’s self from an ‘undesirable’ other, as well as less self-handicapping and conformity.

The addition of ‘false-self’ into a model of the development of school disaffection represents an advance in our understanding of disaffection by providing a fuller picture of how multiple self-construals may mediate pathways between unsupportive social environments and maladaptive behaviours. A systematic examination of the role played by the ‘false self’ in these pathways is now required so a fuller understanding of links with other processes implicated in a model of disaffection may be reached. In this way our model of the development of school disaffection, supported by the testimonies of the young people and staff working with them in this study, suggests that when an individual’s social environment is one in which the basic needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy are thwarted, a lack of belief in one’s own lovability, competence and choice arises. This depleted sense of self leads in turn to a lack of belief in positive future selves as well as a need to be self-reliant in order to fill the vacuum of support and defend a vulnerable self. Extrinsic and performance oriented goals are generated in attempt to bolster the self, whilst outward signs of defensiveness seen in anti-social behaviour, bravado, defiance, disinterest and other behaviours attempt to protect the vulnerable self and counter feelings of frustration, anger, sadness and hopelessness. It is also likely that reciprocal relationships exist between these constructs and that behaviours arising from self-construals and maladaptive cognitions exhibited by young people will influence their social environments and in this way establish a feedback loop. In support of this are findings from Skinner and colleagues (Skinner, Furrer, et al., 2008) which show that the

reciprocal effects of behaviour and emotion lead to an amplification of engagement and disaffection over time.

The added value of this model, which brings together the psychological processes involved in the development of school disaffection, lies in the holistic understanding of factors underlying school disengagement that it affords and the implication for more effective interventions that it suggests. By gaining a holistic understanding of how school disaffection may develop, more person-centred interventions may be created which link the different factors involved in the aetiology of disaffection rather than targeting one factor in isolation. In this way the multiplicity of needs underlying individuals' disengagement from school can be addressed as recommended by Steer (2000). Furthermore, this model suggests that interventions which take account of the tensions in multiple self-construals, in addition to basic need fulfilment and goal orientations, may be more effective than those in which only one psychological process is targeted or in which self-construals are not considered.

The results of our analysis thus have important implications for designing effective interventions for young people at risk of disaffection. Crucially, they indicate that school and PRU environments that support young people's needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, can help to address a lack of need fulfilment commonly experienced in other contexts, and even, in the case of some school-excluded young people in the present study, lead to a turnaround from overwhelmingly negative trajectories to significantly more positive ones. Furthermore, the support we found for an integrated model of the development of school disaffection has benefits in terms of interventions, as it suggests that interventions that holistically address the different psychological processes included in the model may be more effective than interventions that address processes in isolation. Existing interventions that seek to re-engage young

people at risk of school disaffection, or already disengaged from school, commonly address only one factor implicated in the development of disaffection, whether by trying to affect self-concepts (Oyserman, Brickman, & Rhodes, 2007; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002), achievement-related cognitions (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007), aspirations (Hallam, Rogers, & Rhamie, 2010), behaviours (Wilson & Lipsey, 2007), or parenting practices (Ghate & Ramella, 2002; Hallam, Rogers, & Shaw, 2004). Whilst these interventions offer much needed support to young people who are disengaged from school, the current model indicates that more effective interventions will be those that target the multiplicity of needs underpinning the development of disaffection.

Limitations and future directions

Clearly the current findings are based on the experiences of one group of school-excluded young people and their practitioners, and as such may not reflect the experiences of all school-excluded young people. Additional research is now required to systematically examine the links between the different psychological processes implicated in the model using complementary questionnaire measures and larger samples of school-excluded and mainstream pupils. The heterogeneity within such a sample would allow for an examination of how different degrees of need satisfaction – such as variations in levels of school or home support of basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, as well as the extent and nature of experiences of peer pressure – relate to behavioural and emotional outcomes. Such work would also allow pathways from environmental experiences to the orientations to school implicated in the proposed model of the development of school disaffection (including multiple self-construals, and motivations and cognitions) to be tested.

Furthermore, the possibility that there might be developmental constraints on the model must also be examined in future research in order to determine whether the model is particularly salient at a certain point or whether it continues to be useful beyond particular developmental periods. For example, it is likely that the impact of need thwarting environments on some of the more complex self-construals and cognitions identified in the model may not become evident until adolescence when self-reflective cognitive functions are more fully developed (see Blakemore, 2008 for review; Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006; Forehand & Wierson, 1993). Similarly, future research needs to address the extent to which our model holds consistently across gender given that there is some evidence to suggest a gender effect in behavioural, if not emotional, disaffection (Skinner et al., 2008). Moreover, it is likely that there are additional psychological processes involved in the development of school disaffection that were not captured by the present model and that were beyond the scope of the present study to explore. For example, it is known that internalising and externalising psychopathologies are prevalent among youths who have been excluded from mainstream education (Breslau, Lane, Sampson, & Kessler, 2008; Breslau, Miller, Chung, & Schweitzer, 2011; Kessler, Foster, Saunders, & Stang, 1995), and various impulse control, language impairments and learning difficulties are also likely to be relevant (Bowman-Perrot et al., 2011; Breslau, Miller, Chung, & Schweitzer, 2011; Clegg, Stackhouse, Finch, Murphy, & Nicholls, 2009; Hill, 2002; Ripley & Yuill, 2005). Future research is needed to test whether the developmental trajectories related to school disaffection operate in different ways for individuals who exhibit these patterns of atypical development. Finally, although the present research has identified the PRU context as potentially having a positive role for satisfying basic needs, the possibility of environmental or personal protective factors such as positive experiences

or relationships outside of the school context should also be explored (see Gilligan, 1999, 2000; Reis, Colbert, & Hébert, 2004). Particular attention can fruitfully be paid to the relevance of intergroup processes (e.g., groups formed on the basis of ethnic identity, groups that are immersed in gang culture) not only as antecedents and maintaining factors in school disaffection (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Boduszek & Hyland, 2011; Mak, Heaven, & Rummery, 2003), but also as potential contexts for positive intervention (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Conclusions

The present study was designed to evaluate, and further develop, a proposed theoretical model of school disaffection in young people that draws together major conceptual frameworks regarding self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement motivation. In accordance with our hypothesised model, our analysis found that the accounts of the young people's behavioural and emotional profile of school disengagement were connected to accounts of home and school experiences that describe unsupportive environments that fail to fulfil the young people's basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness. Furthermore, analysis found support for the hypothesised model's proposition that maladaptive constructions of multiple selves mediate the relationship between behaviour, emotions and motivation in the academic context on the one hand, and need-thwarting social experiences on the other. In this way, the experiences of school-excluded pupils and staff working with them who participated in this study provide empirical support for the hypothesised model of disaffection. Furthermore, the findings extend previous conceptions of pathways to academic disengagement by highlighting the importance of specific conceptions of multiple self-construals, including self-discrepancies, possible selves, and the 'inauthentic' self, thereby providing a richer picture of the mediated pathway

between environmental experiences and motivational, behavioural and emotional outcomes. Further work is now required to test the links between the psychological processes implicated in the proposed model of the development of school disaffection. Such work will lay the foundation for the development of interventions which address factors that contribute to school disaffection holistically rather than treating them individually as isolated 'causes'.

Chapter 4: Paper 3 – Understanding Pathways to School

Disaffection: Associations between Social Experiences, Self- Construals, Cognitions, and Behavioural Orientations

4.1 Abstract

Existing theoretical frameworks identify a range of constructs involved in young people's socio-motivational engagement at school. However, the systematic associations among these remain poorly understood, particularly in the case of those with high levels of school disaffection. Results from a cross-sectional study with 209 secondary school pupils, half of whom had been excluded from mainstream school, confirmed numerous differences between school-excluded and non-school-excluded pupils. Structural equation modelling revealed indirect links between perceived parental support and reports on behavioural and emotional responses to potential conflict situations, via self-worth, helpless attribution patterns, and extrinsic aspirations. Distinct pathways emerged for excluded and non-excluded pupils. The findings highlight the interplay of perceived family relationships with cognitive and motivational processes at school.

4.2 Introduction

With 5,170 permanent exclusions from schools in England in 2011/12 and 304,370 fixed period exclusions during the same academic year school disaffection is still very much a pertinent topic of policy formation and academic debate (DfE, 2013). The ‘challenging’ behaviours and emotional profiles displayed by school-excluded youths on the one hand are associated with disadvantaged backgrounds including poverty, chaotic family experience, abuse or neglect, and institutional care (Daniels et al., 2003; Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000; Rumberger, 1995; Steer, 2000). At the same time, they are associated with overwhelmingly negative future trajectories including repeated failures at school, dropping out of, or being excluded from school, not being in education, employment or training (NEET) at age 18, involvement in crime, drug use, violence, and being incarcerated (Coles et al., 2002; DETR, 1999; DfE, 2012; Maguin & Loeber, 1996; Pritchard & Cox, 1998; SEU, 1999). Given such considerable costs both at a personal and societal level, research that can shed light on the interplay of psychological processes in the development of school disaffection is crucial if effective interventions to prevent these trajectories from taking hold are to be developed.

The nature of ‘school disaffection’

Definitions of ‘school disaffection’ and ‘disengagement’ are difficult because rather than being a single, categorical trait or attribute, individuals may be at different points on a spectrum from engagement to extreme disengagement or disaffection (Duffy & Elwood, 2013). However, the terms ‘disaffection’ and ‘disengagement’ tap into some kind of common experience or process that we think is usefully captured by the following working definition of ‘disengagement’ (Baird et al., 2011, p.140):

‘disengaged’ includes those excluded permanently from school, those who have left school at leaving age, those still in school who cause disruption, experience a sense failure or feel that the curriculum is pointless as well as those who despite succeeding in school lack interest in deep learning. Thus, disengagement would refer to lack of involvement in academic, social or extracurricular activity or poor conduct in these contexts.

In the present study, we focus on the extreme end of the engagement/disengagement spectrum, with specific attention to those students whose disengagement has led to their exclusion from mainstream school.

Socio-motivational factors in school disaffection

We have previously presented a model of the development of disaffection proposing that the well-documented link between maladaptive environments and the various behavioural and emotional indicators of disaffection (such as apathy, disruptive behaviour, and anger) is mediated by socio-motivational constructs of self-construals, cognitions and motivations (see Figure 4.1, from Hanrahan, Banerjee, & Brown, 2013¹). Below, we outline the key constructs in the model, detailing how those who experience school exclusion are likely to differ from those who have stayed in mainstream school, before identifying the key direct and indirect pathways that we believe connect these constructs.

Need-thwarting social environments. Self-determination theory (see Ryan & Deci, 2000a) provides a useful framework for understanding how environments can lead to differential motivational and behavioural outcomes, as it proposes that environments – such as home or school – can be more or less supportive of the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness and that satisfaction of these needs is required for optimal self-motivation and well-being at

¹ Hanrahan, Banerjee, & Brown (2013) refers to Paper 1 reported in this thesis.

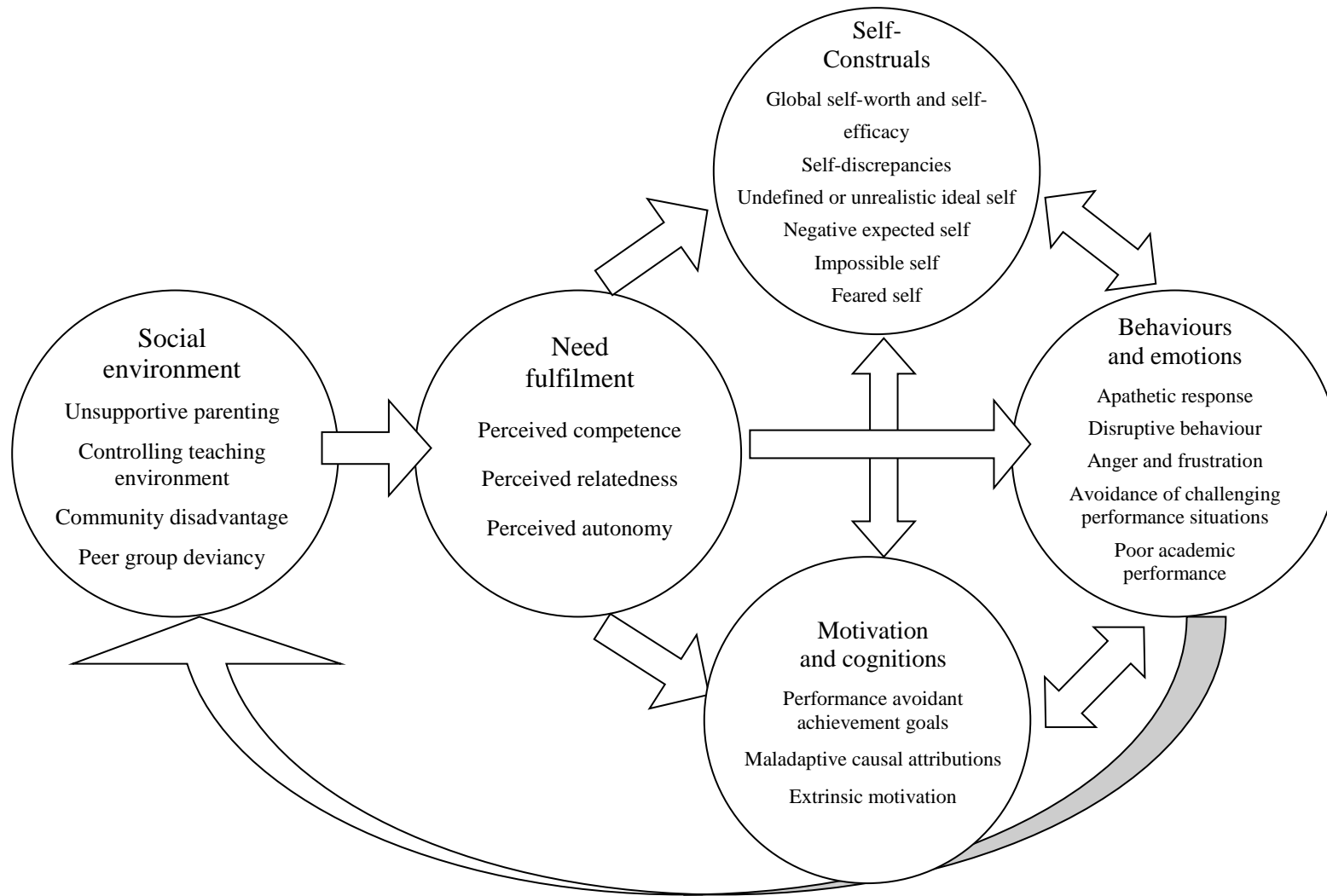


Fig. 4.1. Representation of pathways to school disaffection in hypothesised model.

school (Grouzet, Vallerand, Thill, & Provencher, 2004; La Guardia, 2009; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997). Indeed, as already noted, there is well-documented evidence that disaffected youths disproportionately experience environments characterised by chaotic familial experiences (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Cattarello, 2000; Ellis & Zarbatany, 2007; Estévez & Emler, 2010; Vitaro et al., 2000) as well as negative experiences of school including feeling undervalued by and a lack of relatedness to teachers (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Kinder et al., 1996; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Pomeroy, 1999; Skinner, Wellborn & Connell, 1990; Vallerand et al., 1997).

That differences exist between non-excluded and excluded young people in terms of their environmental experiences is further supported by findings from prospective studies showing that dropping out of school can be predicted by lower levels of teacher and parental support (Fall & Roberts, 2012; Hardre & Reeve, 2003; Rumberger, 1995; Vallerand et al., 1997). Furthermore, research shows that those who remain in school and those who drop out or are excluded from school differ in terms of their school-related behaviour such that high school absenteeism and displaying problem behaviours at school predict dropping out (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009; Rumberger, 1995). Indeed, research also shows that in the majority of cases pupils are excluded for externalising behaviours including persistent disruptive behaviour and physical assault, as well as threatening behaviour directed at another pupil or teacher (DfE, 2012). Indeed, over half of pupils excluded from school are described as having behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (DfE, 2012).

Low self-worth and inauthentic self. We believe that self-construals – such as feelings of low global self-worth and having higher levels of ‘false’ or ‘inauthentic’ self – play a role in mediating pathways to disaffection through the internalisation of perceptions of support from significant others in young people’s social environment

(Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1998). Research by Covington and colleagues (1984, 1992; Covington & Beery, 1976) has outlined how self-worth may work to undermine or strengthen achievement motivation. There are also indications that disaffected pupils differ from their peers in this respect, with studies showing that self-worth negatively predicts self-handicapping – a form of disengagement – in middle-school students (Midgley & Urdan, 1995). Similarly, findings from research with high-school pupils show that those described as ‘delinquent’, or as having behaviour disorders, have lower global self-worth compared to their ‘non-delinquent’ or normally achieving engaged peers (Harter, Whitesell, & Junkin, 1998; Weist, Paskewitz, Jackson, & Jones, 1998).

Furthermore, having a strong ‘false’ or ‘inauthentic’ self has also been linked to motivational orientations by theorists within the self-determination framework (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; La Guardia, 2009) via failure of the integration of goals and values into “a coherent, organized self-structure in line with needs”, and resulting in an alienation from “core motivations” (La Guardia, 2009, p. 97). Other notable theorists, such as Winnicott (Winnicott, 1960/1965) and Harter (Harter, Marold, Whitesell, & Cobbs, 1996; Harter, 1998, 2006), provide insights into how the ‘false’ self may play a key role in the development of school disaffection through the need to protect a ‘true’ self, experienced as ‘unacceptable’, through defensive behaviours. A preliminary indication that the false self may be an important, though as yet neglected, process in considerations of the development of disaffection, comes from a qualitative study that explored the experiences of school-excluded pupils. In this study, interviews with PRU pupils and staff working with them found that participants frequently referred to young people having to behave in a tough way which protected a more authentic, yet

vulnerable self, in order to adapt to a hostile, unaccepting social environment (Hanrahan & Banerjee, 2013a²).

Maladaptive cognitions and motivations. Secondly, maladaptive cognitions and motivations – including low academic self-efficacy, maladaptive achievement goals, extrinsic aspirations, and helpless attributions for academic successes or failures – are also proposed to mediate the link between non-optimal social-environments and maladaptive behaviours. The theories of goal framing (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot, 1999; Elliot & Church, 1997; Grant & Dweck, 2003) and attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) provide well-established frameworks for understanding the role of cognitions and motivations in the development of the behaviours and emotions associated with disaffection. For example, longstanding research reveals the differential effects of holding performance goals, compared to mastery goals, for a task, with the former associated with extrinsic motivation and maladaptive responses – commonly observed in school-excluded pupils – such as self-handicapping behaviour and the devaluing of tasks when met with repeated failure (Ames, 1992; Boon, 2007; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984; Solomon & Rogers, 2001; Thompson, 2004).

Perceptions of self-efficacy are also understood to play a role in the development of different motivational orientations with well-established theoretical and empirical work by Bandura (1977b) showing links between self-efficacy and attributions for successes and failures, while more recently links between low self-efficacy and lower mastery achievement goals have been found (Boon, 2007; Solomon & Rogers, 2001). Finally, work by Kasser and colleagues (2002; Kasser & Ryan, 1993) within the SDT framework provides an explanation for the role of extrinsic goals or

² Hanrahan & Banerjee (2013a) refers to Paper 2 reported in this thesis.

aspirations within models of motivational development via the searching for some kind of need-fulfilment in a context where the environment has failed to satisfy the most fundamental needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Emerging evidence again suggests that in relation to these processes differences between disaffected pupils and their peers exist such that school-excluded young people have lower academic self-efficacy, as well as lower learning goals and higher performance goals when compared to other samples (Solomon & Rogers, 2001), while research by Kasser and colleagues (2002) shows that students who score high for extrinsic aspirations do not achieve as well in school compared to those with intrinsic motivations.

Links between socio-motivational constructs

Several decades of research on aggressive behaviour in children has shown the need to probe the problematic behavioural profile by considering the underlying patterns of motivation, cognition, and social experience. For example, Crick and Dodge's (1994) approach to social information-processing has detailed the associations between aggressive behaviour in young people and a distinctive sequence of biased attributions (e.g, interpreting ambiguous acts as hostile), social goals (e.g., focusing on instrumental outcomes rather than relationship-building), response evaluations and outcome expectations (e.g., believing that aggressive behaviour will solve problems).

Taking in an even broader array of core socio-motivational constructs, we propose that pathways to youth disaffection at school include direct and indirect pathways between levels of need-fulfilment in social environments, different patterns of self-construal, motivational aspirations and orientations, attributional patterns, and behavioural and emotional responses to social scenarios.

Need-thwarting environments and self-construals. The importance of considering a role for the self in considerations of the development of motivation has been highlighted by Pintrich (2003), who has also pointed out its neglect in the literature to date. Our model proposes that particular self-construals identified as playing a part in the development of disaffection – such as feelings of low self-worth and having higher levels of ‘false’ or ‘inauthentic’ self – are underpinned by social environments that thwart the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. There is already a long established body of work linking self-worth in children and adolescents with parental support (Buri, 1989; Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, & Mueller, 1988; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989) and teacher autonomy support (Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, & Ryan, 1981). This work has been extended by more recent research showing that need fulfilment and felt authenticity is associated with higher levels of self-esteem in undergraduate students, while positive relationships with others predicts feelings of self-worth (Heppner et al., 2008). In addition, work by Harter and colleagues reveal how the devaluing of the authentic self in school pupils mediates the link between perceived parent and peer support and false self-behaviour (Harter et al., 1996).

Self-construals and amotivation. What then is the fallout of having low self-worth and low felt authenticity for the cognitions, motivational orientations, and behaviours of young people in an educational setting? We propose that self-construals mediate the pathway from need-thwarting environments to maladaptive cognitions and motivational orientations and behaviours at school. This is reflected in findings from Midgley and Urdan (1995), which demonstrated that levels of self-worth predicted self-handicapping behaviour in secondary school pupils, as well as in research from Schimel and colleagues (Schimel, Arndt, Banko, & Cook, 2004; Schimel, Arndt, Pyszczynski, & Greenberg, 2001) showing in contrast that when the ‘true’ or ‘intrinsic’ self is validated,

defensive behaviours such self-handicapping are reduced. Further evidence comes from research showing associations between using helpless attributions when faced with failure and reduced self-esteem, leading ultimately to amotivation and performance avoidance (Soloman & Rogers, 2001; Weiner, 1985).

Basic need satisfaction and motivational patterns. As well as mediated links via self-construals, our proposed model of school disaffection also proposes direct links between need-thwarting environments and maladaptive cognitions and motivational orientations. These links are well supported in the literature with work by Deci and colleagues (1981) showing links between teacher autonomy support and intrinsic motivation, while more recent work by Martin (2007) shows that need supporting environmental factors – here in the shape of good teacher-pupil and parent-pupil relationships – are associated with having a ‘mastery goal orientation’ at school. Similarly, Bronstein, Ginsburg and Herrera (2005) have found that parenting styles differentially predict pupils’ motivational orientations to school such that parenting that is characterised by greater parental control and lack of guidance predicts extrinsic motivation, while parenting which exhibits greater autonomy supporting behaviour predicts intrinsic motivation. Finally, there is evidence to support a link in adolescents between highly valuing extrinsic aspirations – specifically financial success – and less need-supporting parents (Kasser, Ryan, Zax, & Sameroff, 1995; Williams, Cox, Hedberg, & Deci, 2000).

Maladaptive cognitions, amotivation, and negative behaviours and emotions. In recent years, a substantial body of evidence supporting the link between maladaptive motivations and cognitions and negative behaviours and emotions at school has accumulated. Gonzalez-Pienda and colleagues (2002) found that when home environments are supportive of the basic psychological needs outlined by SDT, pupils’

academic achievement increase via positive changes in academic self-concepts and causal attributions. In contrast, and perhaps more crucial to our proposed model of disaffection, research shows that thwarting these needs predicts complete disengagement from school via decreases in self-determined motivation. For example, research shows that when teachers and parents are perceived as less autonomy-supportive, pupils perceive themselves to be less autonomous, less competent and as having less self-determined motivation, which in turn is predictive of dropping out, or intentions to drop out, of school (Vallerand et al., 1997; Hardre & Reeve, 2003).

There are also well-established links between academic goal orientations at school and behaviour, with research showing that holding ‘performance goal orientations’ is associated with exhibiting self-handicapping at school and with helpless responses to failure (Ames, 1992; Covington, 1992; Diener & Dweck, 1978; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984, 1987; Shim & Ryan, 2005). Finally, research by Kasser and Ryan (1993) provides evidence for a link between holding extrinsic aspirations and behaviour problems in young adults. More recent research with teenagers has also found support for links between holding materialistic value orientations, maladaptive goal orientations and behaviours. Ku, Dittmar and Banerjee (2012) showed associations between higher levels of materialism, lower intrinsic mastery goals, and higher extrinsic performance goals in teenagers, while longitudinal data confirmed that materialistic value orientations explained later decreases in mastery goals and increases in performance goals. This research also supports a link between materialistic orientations and a helpless and avoidant response to challenging tasks (Ku et al., 2012).

Distinctive socio-motivational processes in school-excluded youths

In more recent years there has been an encouraging response to calls in the literature for models that integrate the wide variety of theoretical frameworks created to illuminate young people's engagement with education (Pintrich, 2003). For example, Fall and Roberts (2012), and Green et al. (2012) have found support for the SSMMMD model. However, whilst these studies are encouraging, these kinds of models of engagement and disaffection have so far only been tested with typically-developing populations of pupils in mainstream school, or to predict drop-out. Young people at the extreme end of the engagement/disaffection spectrum – who have already been excluded from mainstream school – have rarely been included in systematic testing of links between constructs identified as playing key roles in motivation.

In our previous, qualitative study of these processes in school-excluded pupils, our analysis of in-depth semi-structured interviews revealed that processes identified by the proposed model were mirrored in the lived experiences expressed by participants, with themes tapping into experiences of unsupportive social environments, discrepancies between self-construals, extrinsic motivation and performance goals, and behavioural disengagement and negative emotions at school. However, despite this preliminary support for our proposed model of the development of school disaffection, questions regarding the generalisability of our model to populations still remain unknown. First, systematic testing of the direct and indirect pathways described above needs to be completed with a larger sample, evaluating differences between those who have versus have not experienced school exclusion. Moreover, it seems plausible that the experience of exclusion from mainstream school itself could moderate the nature and strength of the pathways. For example, the home and/or school environment may differentially predict pathways to engagement/disaffection due to the well-documented

and stark differences between excluded and non-excluded pupils in terms of their socio-environmental experiences (Fall & Roberts, 2012; Hardre & Reeve, 2003; Rumberger, 1995; Vallerand et al., 1997).

The present study

Building on the previous research described above, we analysed responses of school-excluded (attending five PRUs) and non-school-excluded (attending a mainstream secondary school) pupils to survey-style questionnaires in order to test three broad hypotheses. First, we expected preliminary analysis to show differences between the two groups on key variables relating to their experience of social environments, self-construals, cognitions, motivation and aspirations, and finally their judgements about behavioural and emotional responses to interpersonal situations³. Turning to our main hypothesis, we expected to find that social environmental experiences would predict self-construals, which in turn would predict patterns of motivational orientation and attribution, and also that those patterns would in turn predict behavioural and emotional outcomes. Thus, we hypothesised that aspects of self-construal, cognition and motivation would significantly mediate pathways from social-environmental experiences to behaviours and emotions. Finally, although the existing evidence base is not sufficient for making very precise predictions, we anticipated that the experience of exclusion could moderate these pathways such that distinct patterns in pathways exist for school excluded and non-school-excluded young people.

³ Although we cannot assume that the non-school-excluded pupils are a matched 'control group' for the pupils from the five PRUs, identifying differences between the two groups would provide an indicative socio-motivational profile of school-excluded pupils, relative to a sample of pupils from mainstream school.

4.3 Method

Participants

Participants were drawn from five PRUs across Britain – including urban and rural locations in the South East, South West, North West, and Wales – and one secondary school situated in an urban location in the South East. The sample consisted of a total of 209 secondary school pupils (113 male, 89 female, 7 unknown), of whom 102 (62 male, 33 female, 7 unknown; $M = 14.97$, $SD = 1.37$, range = 5.75) were attending an alternative education centre, or PRU, as a result of receiving a school exclusion; the remaining 107 pupils (51 male, 56 female; $M = 13.72$, $SD = 1.48$, range = 5.02) were attending a mainstream secondary school. The secondary school is in a predominantly White British, low socio-economic area – 28% of pupils receive free school meals – and has a higher proportion than average of students with special educational needs. The ethnicity of PRU and mainstream pupils was similar with 74% of PRU pupils, and 82% of mainstream pupils, identifying as White British. All educational settings were initially recruited via emails and telephone calls. Head teachers provided consent for the research to be conducted in their schools. All participants gave informed consent, and in addition all parents or guardians of children under the age of 16 received information about the study and gave informed consent. The data was collected across schools over a period of 9 months, although all data collection in a given school took place within one school term.

Materials

Demographics. The first page of the survey asked pupils to indicate their gender, year at school, date of birth, ethnicity, whether they had received any temporary or permanent exclusions from school, and who they currently lived with.

Life events. To assess the number of stressful life events experienced by pupils a life events scale, adapted from those by Attar, Guerra, and Tolan, (1994), Swearingen and Cohen (1985), and Ystgaard (1997) which focus on stressful events experienced by adolescents, was completed by participants (see Appendix 4.1 for all the measures included in this study). This measure includes 22 statements relating to potentially stressful life experiences that adolescents may have encountered, for example, *'My parents divorced or separated'* (internal consistency $\alpha = .79$). Items on this measure are answered on a five-point Likert scale to include the following responses: *'never happened'* (0), *'very difficult'* (1), *'quite difficult'* (2), *'not difficult'* (3), and *'good'* (4). Pupils received a score representing the number of life events experienced as *'very difficult'* or *'quite difficult'*. This score was calculated by adding the number of responses coded 1 and 2⁴.

Perception of parental support. Pupils completed an adapted version of the College-Student Scale version of the Perception of Parents scale (POPS; Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991) to assess the extent to which they experience their parents, or the adults they currently live with, as autonomy supportive and emotionally involved, and as providing warmth ($\alpha = .81$). Items on the original scale were adapted so that questions relate to the children's parents or carers, rather than administering questionnaires relating to mothers or fathers separately. The scale was also reduced to an eight item scale with items tapping into autonomy support (*'My parents, or the adults I live with, listen to my opinion or perspective when I've got a problem'*), involvement (*'My parents, or the adults I live with, put time and energy into helping me'*), and warmth (*'My parents, or the adults I live with, accept me and like me as I*

⁴ Alternative scoring methods for this scale yielded similar results, with scores highly correlated for different scoring methods. Therefore only one score – the number of life events experienced as difficult – is reported. This method was chosen as it was felt to capture life events perceived by participants to be difficult.

am'), previously identified by Grolnick and colleagues (1991). Responses were given using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from '*never true*' (1) to '*always true*' (7).

Negatively-phrased items were reverse-coded and pupils received a mean score for the overall scale with higher scores indicating greater perceived parental support.

Perception of support from teachers. The short version of the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; Williams & Deci, 1996) was used to assess the degree to which pupils perceive their teachers to be autonomy supportive ($\alpha = .91$). For this questionnaire, pupils in PRUs were instructed to respond to the statements in relation to perceptions of their mainstream school teachers (i.e., the teachers they had prior to attending the PRU). This measure includes six statements which tap into the perceived autonomy support of teachers, such as '*My teachers give me choices and options*'. Responses are given using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from '*never true*' (1) to '*always true*' (7) with participants receiving a mean score for the overall scale with higher scores indicating greater perceived teacher support.

False self. To assess the extent to which pupils hold generalised false self-perceptions, an adapted version of the Perception of False Self Scale (POFS; Weir & Jose, 2010) was completed by participants ($\alpha = .80$). The original 16 item one factor version was shortened to include six items. Statements tap into the perceived existence of a false versus true self as well as false-self behaviour, such as '*I don't let people see the real me*' and '*I tend to say one thing even when I think another*'. Items on this measure are answered on a four-point Likert scale ranging from '*not true at all*' (1) to '*very true*' (4). Pupils received a mean score for the scale with higher scores indicating higher levels of generalised false self-perceptions.

Self worth. Participants completed an adapted version of the Global Self-Worth subscale of Harter's (1988) Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) to assess

their general sense of self-worth ($\alpha = .79$). Item format was adapted for all items in line with revisions made by Wichstrøm (1995) who found greater reliability and factorial validity for the complete scale when the original format, which has come under some criticism (see Wichstrøm, 1995), was simplified to reflect the format used more ordinarily in self-description scales. Respondents use a four-point Likert scale to indicate the extent to which they felt five statements were true for them, for example, 'I am often disappointed with myself' and 'I like the kind of person I am'. Responses on this scale range from '*not true at all*' (1) to '*very true*' (4). The two negatively-phrased items (e.g., I am often disappointed with myself) were reverse coded and pupils received a mean score for the scale with higher scores indicating higher levels of global self-worth.

Attributions for academic successes or failures. An adapted version of the Sydney Attribution Scale (SAS), Version 4, ("SAS," n.d.; Marsh, Cairns, Relich, Barnes, & Debus, 1984) was completed by pupils to assess their attribution style for successes and failures at school. Of the 24 items included in this scale, eight were adapted and used in the current study. The items were adapted so they were no longer subject-specific; instead the stem of each item taps into general academic successes and failures at school, for example, '*Suppose you get a question right in class. It is because...*' Half of the statements are positively phrased, to reflect academic successes, and the other half negatively phrased to reflect academic failures. The items were also adapted so that the stem of each statement has three explanations which reflect the three types of attributions for a success or failure: an external, effort, and ability attribution respectively. For example, for the statement above respondents are asked to indicate how likely each of three explanations are: '*you are very good at the subject*' represents an ability attribution, '*the question was easy*' represents an external attribution; and '*you*

had tried really hard to understand the topic’ represents an effort attribution.

Respondents use a four-point Likert scale to indicate the likelihood of each of the three explanations for each statement, with responses ranging from ‘*not likely*’ (1) to ‘*very likely*’ (4). In the present study, we focused on three key attribution scores that theoretically imply a helpless orientation: external attribution for an academic success (subscale $\alpha = .62$); external attribution for an academic failure (subscale $\alpha = .52$); ability attribution for academic failure (subscale $\alpha = .78$). Higher scores indicate higher levels of adherence to a particular attribution for a success or failure. For our analysis, a single latent variable, ‘Helpless Attributions’, was created with the three attribution subscales (Ability Attribution for Failure; External Attribution for Success; External Attribution for Success) as indicators. This decision was based on their common theoretical association and the significant correlation between responses for the three attributions (all $r_s > .37$, $p_s < .001$).

Aspirations. To assess the extent to which extrinsic aspirations are important to pupils, an adapted version of the Aspiration Index (AI) (Grouzet, Kasser, et al., 2005) was completed by participants. We used 23 of the original 35 items with statements tapping into the extrinsic aspirations (13 items) of wealth, fame, and image, for example ‘*In the future it is important that you will have lots of money*’ ($\alpha = .92$), and the intrinsic aspirations (10 items) of meaningful relationships and community contributions, for example ‘*In the future it is important you will help people in need*’ ($\alpha = .83$). Only one response – the importance of a particular aspiration – is rated in this adapted version, with responses answered on a four-point Likert scale ranging from ‘*not at all important*’ (1) to ‘*very important*’ (4). Each pupil received a score for extrinsic aspirations calculated as a relative score by dividing the mean extrinsic score by the total mean score. Higher scores represent greater relative importance of extrinsic aspirations.

Achievement goals. Two subscales from the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS; Midgley et al., 2000) were used to measure mastery orientation and academic efficacy respectively. Participants responded to three items from the ‘Mastery Goal Orientation (Revised)’ subscale which taps into pupils’ perceptions of their competence to do their class work, for example, *‘I try to learn as much as I can in class’* ($\alpha = .85$). Participants also responded to three items from the ‘Academic Efficacy’ subscale which taps into pupils’ perceptions of their competence to do their class work, for example, *‘Even if the work is hard, I can learn it’* ($\alpha = .79$). Respondents use a seven-point Likert scale to indicate the extent to which they agree that statements are true for them. Responses on the scale range from *‘never true’* (1) to *‘always true’* (7). Pupils received a mean score for each subscale with higher scores indicating higher levels of mastery goals and academic efficacy respectively.

Emotional and behavioural responses. In order to assess pupils’ reports on emotional and behavioural responses to social situations, four interpersonal vignettes, describing scenarios that could potentially trigger conflict, were developed for the present study⁵. The vignettes include scenarios describing situations with authority figures and with peers. For each vignette pupils were asked to indicate the extent to which they would experience feeling *‘angry’* using a four-point Likert scale ranging from *‘not at all’* (1) to *‘very much’* (4). Pupils received a mean score across vignettes this subscale, provided at least two vignettes were responded to, with higher scores indicating higher levels of anger ($\alpha = .68$). Participants were then asked to imagine, in each vignette, that they respond to the scenario in a particular way then described (e.g. *‘Imagine that you shout at the teacher and tell him that he can’t tell you what to do’*) and to consider *‘what would happen then?’*. Pupils respond by rating four possible

⁵ Additional types of vignettes and questions relating to other aspects of social interaction not considered in the present study were also administered to participants.

outcomes: *'I would feel better'* ($\alpha = .81$), *'people would like me more'* ($\alpha = .82$), *'other people would respect me more'* ($\alpha = .79$), *'that would solve my problem'* ($\alpha = .77$).

Respondents use a four-point Likert scale, as above, and pupils received a score for each response type rated across each vignette. This resulted in four scores for each participant with higher scores indicating greater credence in the likelihood of a particular outcome. For our analysis, a single latent variable, 'Positive about Aggressive Behaviour', was created with the four scores as indicators, as they all correlated very strongly with each other (all $r_s > .64$, all $p_s < .001$).

Procedure

Researchers, and school staff in the case of some PRUs, administered surveys to each class of children, with the assistance of class teachers and designated learning support assistants also present. Prior to beginning the surveys, pupils were reminded that there were no right or wrong answers but that their honest responses were sought. Pupils were also assured that they could skip over any questions they did not want to answer, or stop altogether without giving a reason. Pupils were also made aware that the researchers and school staff members present were available to provide assistance if required. Following completion of the surveys, there was an opportunity for pupils to ask any questions they might have.

4.4 Results

Differences between PRU and mainstream pupils.

Table 4.1 shows the results of ANOVAs comparing PRU and mainstream pupils after controlling for age on all variables included in the present study. The mean scores

Table 4.1

Comparisons Between PRU and Mainstream Pupils on Mediating and Outcome Variables

Measure	No. of Items	<i>M</i> and <i>SD</i>	
		Mainstream	PRU
No. of Negative Life Events (Range 0-22)	22	4.06 (3.04)	5.93 (4.00)***
Perception of Parental Support (Range 1-7)	8	5.35 (1.01)	4.73 (1.22)***
Perception of Teacher Support (Range 1-7)	6	4.80 (1.18)	3.15 (1.50)***
False-Self (Range 1-4)	6	1.93 (0.65)	2.00 (0.69)
Self-Worth (Range 1-4)	5	2.98 (0.68)	2.85 (0.72)
Attributions for academic successes and failures (Range 1-4 for all)			
Ability Attribution for Academic Failure	8	1.62 (0.57)	2.09 (0.80)***
External Attribution for Academic Success	8	2.07 (0.60)	2.34 (0.65)**
External Attribution for Academic Failure	8	2.21 (0.59)	2.40 (0.70) ⁺
Extrinsic Aspirations (Range 1-4 for all)	23	0.79 (0.13)	0.87 (0.16)**
Achievement Goals			
Mastery Goal Orientation (Range 1-7)	3	5.90 (0.91)	5.10 (1.44)***
Academic Efficacy (Range 1-7)	3	5.18 (1.15)	4.63 (1.36)**
Emotional and Behavioural Responses			
Interpersonal Vignettes			
Angry (Range 1-4)	4	2.19 (0.76)	2.63 (0.82)***
Feel better after aggressive response	4	1.59 (0.71)	2.09 (0.85)***
Feel more liked after aggressive response	4	1.37 (0.57)	1.62 (0.73)**
Feel more respected after aggressive response	4	1.43 (0.57)	1.76 (0.75)**
Aggressive response solves problem	4	1.33 (0.56)	1.66 (0.82)**

ANCOVA comparing PRU vs. mainstream groups, controlling for age

⁺ $p < .10$ * $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$ (2-tailed)

show that PRU pupils differed significantly from their mainstream peers in terms of their environmental experiences with those in the PRU experiencing a greater number of difficult life events, and perceiving their parents and teachers to be less supportive. On measures of self-perceptions, however, PRU and mainstream pupils did not differ; there was no difference found between groups on the False Self or Self-Worth measures.

PRU pupils' attributions for academic successes and failures differed significantly from their mainstream peers, on all three of the helpless attribution patterns: in terms of academic successes PRU pupils made more external attributions compared to their mainstream peers, while for academic failures those in PRUs made more ability, and more external, attributions. As expected, PRU and mainstream pupils also differed in terms of their aspirations and achievement goals with PRU pupils identifying extrinsic goals as more important relative to intrinsic goals, whilst also scoring lower on measures of Mastery Goal Orientation, and Academic Efficacy, compared to mainstream pupils. Finally, the PRU pupils reported feeling angrier in response to the hypothetical vignettes, and judged aggressive behavioural responses more positively in every way.

Correlations between variables. Table 4.2 shows Pearson's correlations between all variables included in the present study. Broadly, the correlations are consistent with our hypotheses about relationships among the different socio-motivational constructs. Table 4.3 shows Pearson's correlations between variables grouped by school type. These results showed a slightly different pattern of results with correlations between parental support and other variables stronger for the PRU group, and correlations between teacher support and other variables stronger for the mainstream group.

Table 4.2

Correlations between Variables

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
1. No. of negative life events															
2. Parental support	-.33***														
3. Teacher support	-.26***	.34***													
4. False-self	.14*	-.36***	-.08												
5. Self-worth	-.28***	.50***	.05	.20***											
6. Ability attributions failures	.19**	-.34***	-.28***	.23**	-.33***										
7. External attributions successes	.01	-.29***	-.16*	.23**	-.27***	.57***									
8. External attributions failures	.00	-.18*	-.14	.20**	-.07	.47***	.37***								
9. Extrinsic aspirations	.18*	-.28***	-.15*	.04	-.05	.31***	.29***	.35***							
10. Mastery goals	-.21**	.31***	.29***	-.08	.20**	-.21**	-.17*	-.18*	-.42***						
11. Academic efficacy	-.21**	.22**	.33**	-.12	.20**	-.32***	-.26***	-.18*	-.25**	.56***					
12. Vignette feel angry	.19**	-.26***	-.20**	.17*	-.19*	.25**	.22**	.32***	.27***	-.12	-.14				
13. Aggressive feel better	.04	-.29***	-.21**	.10	-.12	.32***	.31***	.45***	.52***	-.12	-.14	.35***			
14. Aggressive feel more liked	.06	-.25***	-.09	.14	-.13	.26***	.21**	.39***	.45***	-.22**	-.15*	.30***	.67***		
15. Aggressive feel more respected	.04	-.24**	-.15*	.12	-.09	.23**	.21**	.42***	.45***	-.23**	-.18*	.26***	.67***	.90***	
16. Aggressive solve problem	.02	-.25***	-.15*	.12	-.08	.25**	.28***	.33***	.49***	-.31***	-.16*	.26***	.73***	.64***	.65***

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$

Table 4.3

Correlations between Variables by School Type

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.
1. No. of negative life events	1	-.19*	-.12	-.09	-.21*	.10	-.13	.00	.12	-.06	-.20*	.12	-.06	-.03	-.08	-.22*
2. Parental support	-.34**	1	.26**	-.38***	.46***	-.20*	-.17	-.06	-.05	.18	.22*	-.10	-.08	-.20*	-.16	-.09
3. Teacher support	-.14	.25*	1	-.01	.22*	-.13	-.18	-.18	-.07	.33**	.45***	-.04	.00	.05	.02	.11
4. False-self	.315**	-.35**	-.10	1	-.51***	.25**	.33**	.21*	.06	.01	-.09	.26**	.30**	.38***	.29**	.36***
5. Self-worth	-.31**	.52***	.14	-.50***	1	-.39***	-.26**	-.22*	-.07	.29**	.41***	-.15	-.22*	-.29**	-.25*	-.26**
6. Ability attributions failures	.10	-.35**	-.14	.21	-.25*	1	.51***	.49***	.27**	-.14	-.34***	.27**	.30**	.24*	.17	.23*
7. External attributions successes	.00	-.32**	.03	.11	-.24*	.57***	1	.52***	.19	-.20*	-.29**	.22*	.28*	.10	.06	.26**
8. External attributions failures	-.08	-.23*	.02	.18	.11	.42***	.19	1	.27**	-.09	-.23*	.37***	.46***	.43***	.37***	.30**
9. Extrinsic aspirations	.10	-.37**	.02	.00	.03	.22	.29**	.38***	1	-.23*	-.13	.28**	.39***	.32**	.29**	.37***
10. Mastery goals	-.16	.30**	.04	-.12	.10	-.10	-.02	-.19	-.46***	1	.42***	-.02	-.12	.00	.02	-.12
11. Academic efficacy	-.14	.13	.12	-.23	-.04	-.21	-.15	-.09	-.26*	.61***	1	-.28**	-.06	-.03	.00	.02
12. Vignette feel angry	.13	-.30**	-.11	.05	-.19	.12	.13	.22*	.17	-.05	.10	1	.35***	.33**	.26**	.25*
13. Aggressive feel better	-.04	-.36**	-.11	-.11	.02	.20	.24*	.41***	.55***	-.37***	-.23*	.24*	1	.66***	.61***	.73***
14. Aggressive feel more liked	.01	-.24**	-.03	-.09	.04	.19	.23*	.33**	.51***	-.09	.00	.21	.64***	1	.88***	.64***
15. Aggressive feel more respected	-.02	-.22*	-.06	-.04	.09	.15	.24*	.44***	.52***	-.19	-.05	.16	.67***	.91***	1	.66***
16. Aggressive solve problem	.04	-.31**	-.15	-.09	.10	.15	.22*	.33**	.53***	-.34**	-.18	.20	.72***	.60***	.61***	1

Note: Correlations for PRU sample shown below the diagonal; correlations for Mainstream sample shown above.

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$

Direct and indirect pathways among socio-motivational constructs

We used a structural equation model using IBM SPSS AMOS version 20 (Arbuckle, 2006) to test our hypothesis that social environmental experiences would predict self-construals as well as cognitions relating to academic attributions and goals, which in turn would predict behavioural and emotional responses to interpersonal scenarios. Missing data were treated using the data imputation function on AMOS which uses maximum likelihood estimates. This procedure – in which missing values for individual cases are predicted based on data from complete and partial cases using a linear regression – was considered to be the most appropriate for our analysis given that this method has been shown to be more efficient and less biased than other methods for treating missing data including listwise, pairwise deletion, and similar response pattern imputation (Enders & Bandalos, 2001).

To test our hypothesis we began with our theoretical model (Figure 4.1) in which variables associated with social environmental experiences (parental support, teacher support, life events) were allowed to predict variables relating to self-construals (false-self, self-worth), motivation and cognitions (extrinsic aspirations, helpless attributions, academic self-efficacy, mastery goals), and behaviours and emotions (reports of feeling angry and viewing aggressive behaviours positively). Furthermore, paths were set out from self-construals to motivation and cognitions, and to behaviours and emotions. Likewise, motivation and cognitions were allowed to predict behaviours and emotions.

We then trimmed the model by deleting all non-significant pathways, while allowing the error terms for mastery goals and self-efficacy to covary, as well as the error terms for false-self and self-worth. Figure 4.2 depicts our trimmed model, which showed a relatively good fit according to Kline's (2005) criteria, $\chi^2(94) = 172.97, p < .001$,

Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = .94, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .06. It is noteworthy that negative life events were not significantly connected to any other variable in the analysis, once perceived parental and teacher support had been included in the model.

Next, in order to investigate whether pathways for our PRU and mainstream samples differed significantly from each other, a multi-group structural equation modelling approach was used. The resulting model with unconstrained parameters fit the data well according to fit criteria (Kline, 2005), $\chi^2(188) = 307.29, p < .001$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06. However, when all paths were constrained to be equal the fit was significantly poorer, $\Delta\chi^2(13) = 33.12, p < .005$. We therefore lifted the equality constraints for pathways where the standardised regression weights were significant for one group but not the other. This resulting model represents an improvement compared to the model when all paths were constrained to be equal, $\Delta\chi^2(5) = 24.56, p < .005$, and a comparison with the default model showed no significant deterioration of fit $\Delta\chi^2(8) = 8.76, p > .05$. Furthermore, this model also fit the data well according to fit criteria, $\chi^2(196) = 316.04, p < .001$, CFI = .906, RMSEA = .054. In Figure 4.2, the arrows in bold typeface show differences between PRU and mainstream school pupils.

Mediated pathways. Given the results of our multi-group analysis, we estimated indirect pathways – using the bootstrap procedure to generate 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals – separately for mainstream and for PRU pupils. Note that direct pathways (even when non-significant) were always included in this mediation analysis, in order to calculate accurate estimates of the indirect effects.

For mainstream pupils, there was a significant indirect pathway from perceived parental support to lower helpless attribution via greater levels of self-worth (standardised indirect effect = -.141, 95% CI [-.291, -.049], $p = .003$). There was also a

significant mediated pathway from perceived parental support to academic self-efficacy for both mainstream and PRU samples. In the case of PRU pupils this was mediated by helpless attributions (standardised indirect effect = .104, 95% CI [.009, .255], $p = .027$), whilst for mainstream pupils both self-worth and helpless attributions served as mediators (standardised indirect effect = .052, 95% CI [.008, .157], $p = .008$).

Furthermore, for mainstream pupils only, self-worth and helpless attributions mediated the links between perceived parental support and extrinsic aspirations (standardised indirect effect = -.047, 95% CI [-.131, -.012], $p = .005$), and feeling angry in interpersonal situations (standardised indirect effect = -.056, 95% CI [-.144, -.019], $p = .003$).

In addition, for mainstream school pupils, inverse pathways linking perceived parental support to viewing aggressive behaviour positively were significantly mediated by self-worth, helpless attributions, and feelings of anger (standardised indirect effect = -.014, 95% CI [-.044, -.003], $p = .006$) and also by self-worth, helpless attributions, and extrinsic aspirations (standardised indirect effect = -.013, 95% CI [-.042, -.002], $p = .004$). Similarly, for PRU pupils, there was a significant inverse pathway from perceived parental support to viewing aggressive behaviour positively via helpless attributions and extrinsic aspirations (standardised indirect effect = -.113, 95% CI [-.233, -.019], $p = .017$). It should be noted that all mediated pathways from teacher support to other variables in the model were found to be non-significant for both mainstream and PRU samples (all $ps > .07$).

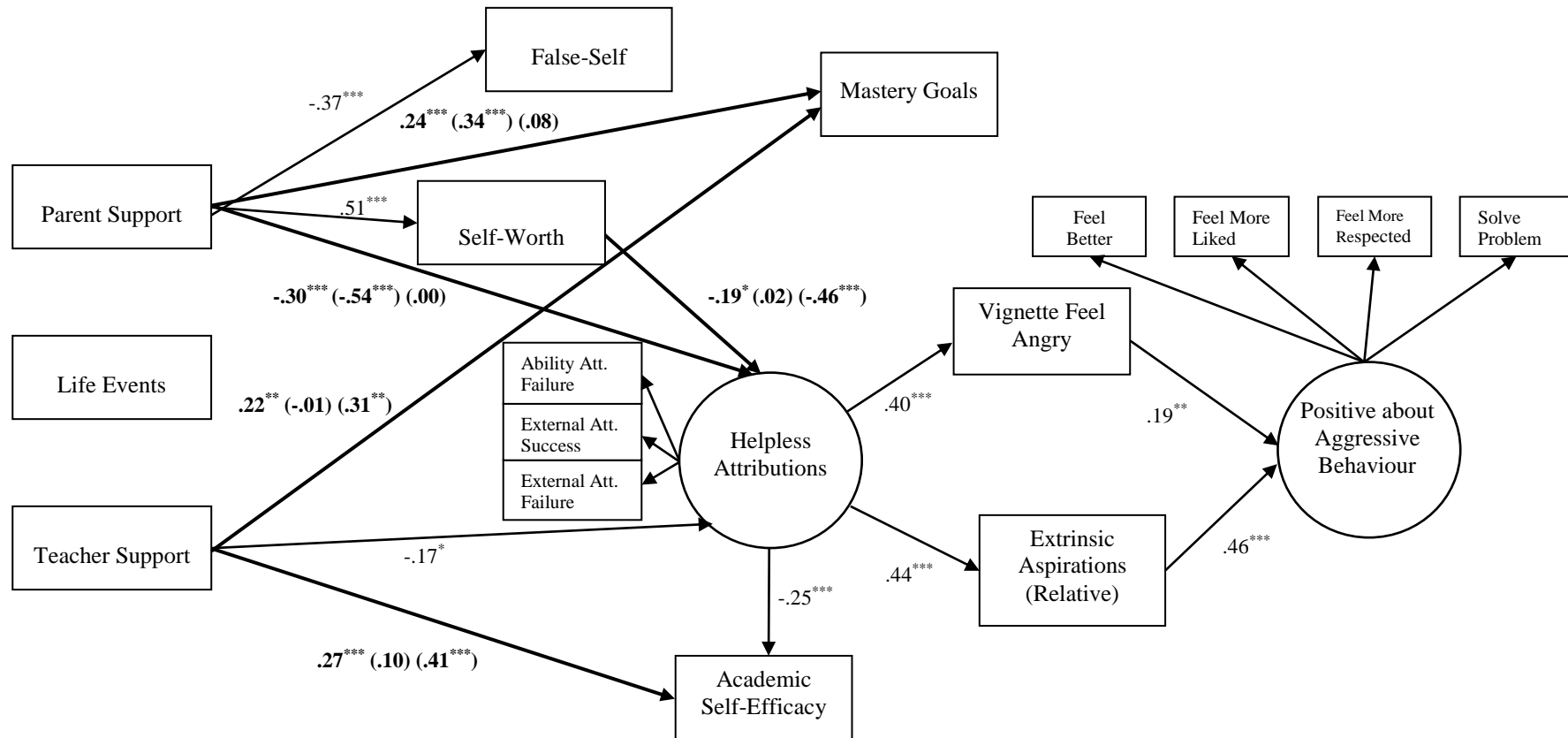


Figure 4.2. Structural equation model showing standardised coefficients from the overall trimmed model. Coefficients from the multi-group analysis are shown in parentheses for bold arrows, with the PRU coefficient first and the Mainstream coefficient second. Error terms are not displayed in order to improve clarity; these were allowed to covary for mastery goals and self-efficacy, and for false-self and self-worth.

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$

4.5 Discussion

Our results provide the first quantitative support for our integrated theoretical model of school disaffection (Hanrahan et al., 2013). As expected, preliminary analysis confirmed differences between school-excluded and non-school-excluded pupils on social environmental experiences, cognitions, motivations and aspirations, and judgements about behavioural and emotional responses, although it was noteworthy that no significant differences were found on self-worth or false self. Moreover, we found indirect pathways broadly consistent with our theoretical model, linking social environmental experiences with reports on behavioural and emotional responses to potential conflict situations, via self-worth, helpless attribution patterns, and extrinsic aspirations. However, details of these pathways were different for the mainstream and PRU groups.

The importance of perceived environmental support

Our results serve to highlight the crucial role played by supportive environments for adaptive behavioural and emotional outcomes in young people at school. First, our results confirm expectations that excluded and non-excluded pupils would differ in terms of their social-environmental experiences. Specifically, those who had been excluded from school had experienced a significantly greater number of negative life events, and perceived both their parents and teachers to be less supportive compared to pupils in mainstream schools. These findings reflect the findings from previous prospective studies which have found that less teacher and parental support is predictive of dropping out of school (Fall & Roberts, 2012; Hardre & Reeve, 2003; Rumberger, 1995; Vallerand et al., 1997).

In fact, the number of difficult life events experienced by participants was not a significant predictor of other variables in the final model, after controlling for parental and teacher support. This finding is perhaps surprising given the well-documented evidence that social deprivation and stressful life events are associated with school exclusions, delinquency and aggressive behaviour (Daniels et al., 2003; Lessard et al., 2008; Rumberger, 1995; Steer, 2000). However, it is also a crucial finding as it suggests that it is the response and nurture of the adult figures in children's lives that ultimately predict a whole host of outcomes relating to self-appraisals, motivational orientations, and behavioural and emotional outcomes at school, rather than the accumulated stress of negative life experiences. This fits with previous research showing that it is the impact of supportive environments on individuals' basic need satisfaction – levels of perceived self-competence, autonomy, and sense of relatedness, which are internalised from supportive environments – that is predictive of positive outcomes at school (Skinner, Furrer et al., 2008).

Our results also highlight the particular salience of perceived parental support for PRU pupils. This variable was correlated with more variables relating to cognitions and motivations – including helpless attributions, extrinsic aspirations, mastery goals, and behavioural and emotional outcomes – for PRU pupils compared to mainstream pupils. In contrast, whereas the PRU sample did not exhibit any correlations between these variables and perceived teacher support, for mainstream pupils greater support from teachers predicted having more mastery goals and higher levels of academic self-efficacy. Indeed, research shows that whilst strong teacher-pupil relationships can act as a positive force in the lives of disaffected pupils (Lyche, 2010), the importance of parental interest and involvement in children's education in reducing low achievement,

and increasing engagement, at school has been found to be critical (Harris & Goodall, 2007; Tunnard, Flood, & Barnes, 2008).

In fact, it was clear that perceived support from parents, rather than from teachers, was involved in the mediated pathways to young people's reports on behavioural and emotional responses to potential conflict situations. Positive views on aggressive responses, for example, were predicted by low perceived parental support, via factors such as helpless attributions and extrinsic aspirations. Analogous to our results, Vallerand et al.'s (1997) findings from their prospective analysis of school drop-out showed that parents exerted a much stronger influence on motivation compared to teachers and school administrators. These results have important implications for school policy and practice if extreme school disaffection is to be prevented. Evidently, interventions cannot ignore family relations, and perhaps more specifically should involve parents positively in school-related issues in order to address the links with motivational processes; indeed, research has shown that work of this kind at an early age can set a key foundation both for building positive parent-child relationships, and for school outcomes (Webster-Stratton, 2001; Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2001).

Socio-motivational explanations for responses to interpersonal situations

Our results shed light on the interplay of socio-motivational processes underpinning the kinds of behavioural and emotional outcomes that are typically seen in school excluded pupils. First, in comparison with the mainstream sample, the school-excluded pupils responded to interpersonal vignettes with more anger and more positive attitudes to aggressive responses – for example, claiming that enacting aggressive responses would mean that they would feel better, be more respected and liked, and also

that an aggressive response would solve their problems. These findings link with previous work that has focused on information-processing biases in children (see Crick & Dodge, 1994, for review) showing that aggressive children view aggressive behaviour more positively than non-aggressive children (Dodge, 1993). The role of emotions such as anger, alongside attributional biases, in shaping children's response evaluations has also been highlighted in the existing literature (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Hill, 2002), and the link between anger and positive attitudes to aggressive responses was also found in the present study.

Of particular interest was our finding that both helpless attributions about school events and much more general extrinsic aspirations mediated the links between perceived parental support and young people's reports on responses to potential conflict interactions. These results support assertions by SDT that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations are differentially produced to the extent that social contexts satisfy the basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). For example, relatedness to parents and teachers has been shown to be predictive of motivational orientations and positive attitudes to school (Ryan, Stiller & Lynch, 1994). Moreover, a prospective study by Vallerand and colleagues (1997) found that students who subsequently dropped out of school had lower levels of intrinsic motivation, and higher levels of extrinsic motivation and amotivation. Finally, SDT proposes that individuals who are amotivated in a particular domain do not engage in purposeful behaviour in that domain as the activity is not valued or is felt to be outside an individual's capabilities (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vallerand, et al., 1997). This may explain our finding relating to the mediational role of helpless attributions in links between need-thwarting environmental experiences and maladaptive behavioural and emotional responses. The finding that these school-specific patterns go hand in hand

with more general extrinsic aspirations (e.g., social image, money, fame) underlines the importance of looking beyond the school context in order to understand motivational factors involved in school disaffection; indeed, Ku, Dittmar, and Banerjee (2012) have recently shown that a materialistic value orientation predicts declining school performance in adolescents.

Intriguingly, our results show that the constructs of false self, mastery, and academic self-efficacy were not significant independent predictors of interpersonal responses. It may be that these variables are better at predicting more direct measures of behavioural and emotional engagement at school (e.g., items relating to class participation; see Green et al., 2012), rather than the specific interpersonal vignettes used here. Furthermore, the limited scope of our measurement of both goal orientation and self-construals may have contributed to the null findings here. In the case of the former, other studies have utilised much more comprehensive and nuanced measures of goal orientations (Elliot & Murayama, 2008; Law, Elliot, & Murayama, 2012). In the case of the latter, we may need more detailed assessments of multiple self-construals. It is noteworthy that in the present study, no differences were found between the school-excluded and non-school-excluded groups on either false self or self-worth, and self-worth was also not found to be a significant predictor of helpless attributions in the school-excluded group. Yet previous research has already shown that maladaptive self-identities, including differences in hoped-for and feared future selves, are more prevalent in disaffected and delinquent youths, compared to their peers (Mainwaring & Hallam, 2010; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman & Saltz, 1993). It seems likely that rather than relying on overall measures of self-worth and false self, we need a more nuanced approach tapping into specific adolescent self-presentation and inauthentic

selves (Carroll, Houghton, Hattie, & Durkin, 1999), as well as measures of ideal/actual self-discrepancies and possible selves.

Limitations and directions for further work

The present results advance our understanding of pathways from perceived parental support to behavioural and emotional outcomes at school by shedding light on the complex pattern of socio-motivational processes which mediate these links, and by highlighting the pathways that exist for school-excluded and non-school-excluded, pupils. However, the cross-sectional design of our study means that our results are based on correlational data, and as such no conclusions can be made about causality. In order to begin to address this limitation, longitudinal work with measures of the key constructs at different time points is now needed so that a reliable explanatory account of developmental trajectories can be formulated (see Green et al., 2012, and Hughes, Luo, Kwok, & Loyd, 2008, for an example of longitudinal work on student engagement).

A further limitation of the present study is that our measures relied on adolescent self-report only, which brings with it the possibility of shared method variance, informant bias, and socially desirable responding by participants. Future research would benefit from the inclusion of alternative measures to increase validity. For example, measures of observed behavioural responses could be gained through teacher reports (Skinner & Belmont, 1993), or through an examination of school records for measures of behaviour and attendance (Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004). More generally, the measures used were limited in nature due to the large number of constructs examined in the study. For example, our measure of teacher support only included a subscale measuring autonomy support, and did not examine the role of teacher relatedness and

competence support in pathways. Furthermore, as noted above, our investigation of the role played by self-construals did not include measures of possible selves and self-discrepancies, which we know are implicated in disaffection (Mainwaring & Hallam, 2010; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman & Saltz, 1993).

Furthermore, our outcome measures were limited to judgements about aggressive and angry responses to hypothetical interpersonal scenarios at school. The behaviour of disaffected pupils is associated with problem behaviours at school (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009; Rumberger, 1995) and the majority of school exclusions are a school's final response to externalising behaviours (including persistent disruptive behaviour and physical assault, as well as threatening behaviour directed at another pupil or teacher; DfE, 2012). However, school exclusions are not *always* the result of aggressive behaviour and such behaviour is not the only indicator of extreme school disaffection. Indeed, being the victim of aggressive behaviour is also associated with experiencing exclusion (Hamilton & Thomas, 2006), and internalising psychopathologies are also prevalent among youths who have been excluded from, or drop-out of, mainstream education (Breslau, Lane, Sampson, & Kessler, 2008; Breslau, Miller, Chung, & Schweitzer, 2011; Kessler, Foster, Saunders, & Stang, 1995). Thus, to ensure that other types of disaffection are also accounted for in pathway models of motivational development, future research would benefit from the inclusion of additional measures of outcomes associated with disaffection such as helpless behaviours (Peterson, Maier, & Seligman, 1993), and measures of engagement and disengagement – for example the the Motivation and Engagement Scale – High School (MES-HS; Martin, 2007, 2009) or a measure of behavioural and emotional engagement and disaffection at school (Skinner et al., 1990, 1998; Wellborn, 1991). These have

been successfully used to test other models of motivational orientations such as the SSMMD (Green et al., 2012).

Finally, there is a need for more precision to identify distinctive background factors that distinguish the PRU group from their mainstream peers; for example whether differences in demographic/neighbourhood characteristics, specific characteristics of the former mainstream schools, academic ability level, and/or the school exclusion experience itself, interact with the socio-motivational differences seen in the present study. Certainly, it is likely that many of these factors contribute in some way; for example, we know that school-excluded pupils are disproportionately from low SES backgrounds (DfE, 2013). Whilst it was beyond the scope of the present study to match a control group on all of these dimensions, future research could look at the contributing role of specific factors by concentrating on one dimension at a time, for example by comparing low-achieving students who have been excluded to students with matched achievement levels but who have not been excluded. Furthermore, to examine how background factors such as low SES interact with the motivational processes examined in this study, a vital next step is to study the combination of these factors – for example, low SES with levels of parental support – in work on disaffection. It will also be crucial to incorporate these additional factors into models of motivational development, in a similar way to how Dodge and Pettit's (2003) biopsychosocial model of conduct problems has taken these kinds of interactions into account.

Conclusion

In summary, our findings highlight the key connections between perceived parental support and young people's adaptive judgements about behavioural and emotional responses to interpersonal situations. Furthermore, the findings advance our

understanding of the interplay of socio-motivational processes underpinning the behavioural and emotional outcomes typically seen in school excluded pupils, with helpless attributions and extrinsic aspirations appearing to have specific mediating roles for both PRU and mainstream pupils. Our results set an agenda for future research to build on the links established in the present study, for example by examining the role of additional self-construals – possible selves and self-discrepancies – in pathways to behavioural outcomes at school. Furthermore, longitudinal work is now needed to establish the likely causal connections between the variables measured here, and to evaluate interactions with additional background factors that are likely to give rise to differences between school-excluded and mainstream pupils. Our results have implications for policies and practices that seek to increase school engagement, suggesting that a focus on family relations, and a careful consideration of both school-specific and more general motivational processes, will be crucial for improving young people's behaviour and motivational orientations at school.

Appendix 4.1: Battery of Questionnaires

Life Events Scale (adapted from Attar, Guerra, & Tolan, 1994; Swearingen & Cohen, 1985; and Ystgaard, 1997).

Indicate if each of the following events has happened to you.

- If it never happened to you, circle 0 (**never happened**).
- If it did happen to you, indicate how difficult the situation was for you by circling 1 (**very difficult**), 2 (**quite difficult**), 3 (**not difficult**), or 4 (**good**).

	Never Happened	Very Difficult	Quite Difficult	Not Difficult	Good
EXAMPLE QUESTION: I scored a goal in a football game.	0	1	2	3	4
1. I was suspended or excluded from school	0	1	2	3	4
2. I experienced the death of someone close	0	1	2	3	4
3. I was seriously ill or injured	0	1	2	3	4
4. Someone close to me was seriously ill or injured	0	1	2	3	4
5. I had to move out of my house because my relationship with my parents was difficult	0	1	2	3	4
6. I got drunk	0	1	2	3	4
7. I took drugs	0	1	2	3	4
8. I worried about my sexuality	0	1	2	3	4
9. I was pregnant or had an abortion	0	1	2	3	4
10. A new person came to live in my family home (e.g., a grandparent, stepbrother, or parent's boyfriend/girlfriend)	0	1	2	3	4
11. I was unable to go hang out with friends in my neighbourhood, because violence or crime made it too dangerous	0	1	2	3	4
12. My parent lost his/her job	0	1	2	3	4
13. My parent had mental health problems (e.g., depression, addiction)	0	1	2	3	4

14. I ran away from home	0	1	2	3	4
15. Someone close to me was in serious trouble (e.g., was arrested, had a problem with drugs)	0	1	2	3	4
16. I was assaulted, robbed, or a victim of another violent crime	0	1	2	3	4
17. A family member or close friend was a victim of violence	0	1	2	3	4
18. I was abused or saw someone else abused	0	1	2	3	4
19. I had a difficult relationship with my parent(s)	0	1	2	3	4
20. My family had serious financial difficulties	0	1	2	3	4
21. My parents argued a lot	0	1	2	3	4
22. My parents divorced or separated	0	1	2	3	4

Perception of Parents scale (adapted version) (POPS; Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991).

These statements are all about **your parents or the other adults that you live with**.

Decide how true each of the following statements is for you, and circle one answer for each.

<i>My parents or the adults I live with...</i>	Never true		Sometimes true			Always true	
EXAMPLE QUESTION: Are taller than me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Seem to understand how I feel about things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Try to tell me how to run my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Accept me and like me as I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Ignore my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Listen to my opinion or perspective when I've got a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Insist that I do things their way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Put time and energy into helping me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Seem to be disappointed in me a lot.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Learning Climate Questionnaire (short version) (LCQ; Williams & Deci, 1996).

These statements are all about **your teachers at school**⁶.

Decide how true each of the following statements is for you, and circle one answer for each.

<i>At mainstream school...</i>	Never true			Sometimes true		Always true	
EXAMPLE QUESTION: My teachers are always on time for class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. My teachers give me choices and options.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I feel understood by my teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My teachers are confident in my ability to do well at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My teachers encourage me to ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My teachers listen to how I would like to do things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My teachers try to understand my point of view before suggesting new ways to do things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

⁶ PRU pupils were asked to answer this questionnaire in relation to the teachers they had at mainstream school (prior to exclusion).

**Perception of False Self Scale (adapted version) (POFS; Weir & Jose, 2010) and
Global Self-Worth subscale (adapted version following revisions by Wichstrøm, 1995)
of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA; Harter, 1988).**

These statements are all about **how you would describe yourself**.

Decide how true each of the following statements is for you, and circle one answer for each.

	Not true at all	A Little true	Quite true	Very true
1. I act one way, but wish I could behave in a different way.	1	2	3	4
2. I don't let people see the real me.	1	2	3	4
3. I hide the real me by trying to look like others.	1	2	3	4
4. What I say on the outside is different to what I think on the inside.	1	2	3	4
5. I tend to say one thing even when I think another.	1	2	3	4
6. If people knew what I was really like on the inside they would not like me.	1	2	3	4
7. I like the kind of person I am.	1	2	3	4
8. I am often disappointed with myself.	1	2	3	4
9. I am happy with myself most of the time.	1	2	3	4
10. I hate the way that I am leading my life.	1	2	3	4
11. I am very happy being the way I am.	1	2	3	4

Sydney Attribution Scale (SAS), Version4 (adapted) (“SAS,” n.d.; Marsh, Cairns, Relich, Barnes, & Debus, 1984).

Now, imagine that each of the following situations happened to you. Then look at the three explanations for why each situation happened, and decide how likely they are. Circle one answer for each explanation.

		Not likely	A bit likely	Quite likely	Very likely
1. Suppose you get a question right in class. It is because...	you are very good at the subject	1	2	3	4
	the question was easy	1	2	3	4
	you had really tried to understand the topic	1	2	3	4
2. Suppose your teacher tells you that your work is good. This is because...	you really work hard at this subject	1	2	3	4
	you always do well at this subject	1	2	3	4
	he/she is only being nice	1	2	3	4
3. Suppose your teacher asked you a question in front of the class and you get it wrong. This is because...	you were asked a really hard question	1	2	3	4
	you always have difficulty in class	1	2	3	4
	you just weren't concentrating	1	2	3	4
4. Suppose your teacher says you are doing badly in a school subject. This is because...	you are lazy at that subject	1	2	3	4
	the teacher doesn't like you	1	2	3	4
	you always do badly at school	1	2	3	4
5. Suppose the teacher gave out a prize for work in a school subject and you got it. This is because...	you deserved it because of your hard work	1	2	3	4
	you were lucky	1	2	3	4
	you are good at that subject	1	2	3	4
6. Suppose you really did well on a test at school. It is because...	you were lucky	1	2	3	4
	you tried very hard	1	2	3	4
	you always do well in tests	1	2	3	4
7. Suppose you find it hard to understand a school subject. It is because...	you need to try harder at it	1	2	3	4
	you are no good at schoolwork	1	2	3	4
	the subject is boring	1	2	3	4
8. Suppose you did badly in a test. This is because...	you always do badly in tests	1	2	3	4
	you spend too little time studying	1	2	3	4
	the test was hard for everyone	1	2	3	4

Aspiration Index (adapted version) (AI; Grouzet, Kasser, et al., 2005)

For each of these things, decide how important it is that it happens to you in the future, and circle one answer.

<i>In the future it is important that...</i>	Not at all important	A Little important	Quite important	Very important
1. You will be famous.	1	2	3	4
2. People will comment often about how attractive you look.	1	2	3	4
3. You will have a lot of expensive possessions.	1	2	3	4
4. Many people will know your name.	1	2	3	4
5. You will give time or money to charity.	1	2	3	4
6. You will have good friends that you can rely on.	1	2	3	4
7. You will keep up with fashions in hair and clothing	1	2	3	4
8. You will have a job that pays well.	1	2	3	4
9. You will share your life with someone that you love.	1	2	3	4
10. Many people will admire you and look up to you.	1	2	3	4
11. You will have people who care about you and are supportive.	1	2	3	4
12. You will do work that helps other people.	1	2	3	4
13. You will achieve the "look" you've been after.	1	2	3	4
14. You will have a job that makes others look up to you.	1	2	3	4
15. You will work to make the world a better place.	1	2	3	4
16. You will stay looking young.	1	2	3	4
17. Your name will appear a lot on TV and in the newspapers.	1	2	3	4
18. You will have friends that you can have fun with.	1	2	3	4
19. You will help others to improve their lives.	1	2	3	4
20. You will have lots of money.	1	2	3	4
21. You will do something that makes you very well-known.	1	2	3	4
22. You will help people in need.	1	2	3	4
23. You will have some good friends who you can really trust.	1	2	3	4

Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS; Midgley et al., 2000)

These statements are all about **how you feel about your schoolwork**. Decide how true each of the following statements is for you, and circle one answer for each.

	Never true			Sometimes true			Always true
EXAMPLE QUESTION: I like strawberry ice cream.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. It's important to me that I learn a lot of new things this year.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I try to learn as much as I can in class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I want to learn a lot of new skills this year.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I can do almost all the work in class if I don't give up.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Even if the work is hard, I can learn it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I can do even the hardest work in this class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Vignettes: Emotional and Behavioural Responses⁷

1. Now, please imagine that it's your first day at a new school where you don't know anybody. During class you don't know the answer to a question your new teacher asks you. Some pupils in the class start laughing.

		Not at all	A little bit	Quite a lot	Very much
How would you feel?	Bothered	1	2	3	4
	Sad	1	2	3	4
	Disappointed	1	2	3	4
	Angry	1	2	3	4
What would you do next?					
Imagine that you decided to fight the kids who you think were laughing at you. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4
Imagine that you decided to ignore the laughing. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4

⁷ Only the emotional response of 'Angry' and the negative behavioural responses were included in our analyses for the present study.

2. Now, imagine that your teacher has the results of a test you took. He tells you that you did very poorly and asks you to re-sit the test the next day.

		Not at all	A little bit	Quite a lot	Very much
How would you feel?	Bothered	1	2	3	4
	Sad	1	2	3	4
	Disappointed	1	2	3	4
	Angry	1	2	3	4
What would you do next?					
Imagine that you told the teacher you don't care about their stupid test. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4
Imagine that you agreed to take it again and said you would really study for it. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4

3. Next, imagine that you are late for the same class for a third day running. Your teacher tells you your time keeping is not good enough and that you need to be on time the next day.

		Not at all	A little bit	Quite a lot	Very much
How would you feel?	Bothered	1	2	3	4
	Sad	1	2	3	4
	Disappointed	1	2	3	4
	Angry	1	2	3	4
What would you do next?					
Imagine that you said you were sorry and would try to be on time the next day. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4
Imagine that you shout at the teacher and tell him that he can't tell you what to do. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4

4. Finally, please imagine that you are walking along the corridor in school singing a song you like that's in the charts. Some kids from your class walk past and one tells you to "shut-up" because of your "rubbish" voice and because "no one likes that song anymore anyway". The others laugh.

		Not at all	A little bit	Quite a lot	Very much
How would you feel?	Bothered	1	2	3	4
	Sad	1	2	3	4
	Disappointed	1	2	3	4
	Angry	1	2	3	4
What would you do next?					
Imagine that you started a fight with the person who made the comment. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4
Imagine that you decided to ignore your classmate's comment. What would happen then?	a. I would feel better	1	2	3	4
	b. Other people would like me more	1	2	3	4
	c. Other people would respect me more	1	2	3	4
	d. That would solve my problem	1	2	3	4

Chapter 5: Paper 4 – “It Makes Me Feel Alive”: The Socio-Motivational Impact of Drama and Theatre on Marginalised Young People

5.1 Abstract

An in-depth, longitudinal, idiographic study examined the impact of theatre and drama involvement on marginalised young people. Semi-structured interviews, at three separate time points over two years, were conducted with four young people involved in a theatre project. Interpretative phenomenological analysis suggested that applied theatre creates space and support for the authentic self, and provides optimal conditions for promoting positive growth and resilience through voluntary engagement in a positive activity. In particular, the young people's accounts pointed to the pivotal role of interpersonal relationships and a nurturing environment in re-engaging young people. Some participants' accounts also suggested that drama provides a uniquely engaging and therapeutic way to reflect on, express and explore experiences. The results are discussed in relation to core psychological processes underpinning self-development and key directions for further research.

5.2 Introduction

Young people who are ‘socially excluded’ or ‘marginalised’ include those growing up with multiple deprivations such as economically disadvantaged circumstances, those who have been permanently excluded from school, those who are ‘not in education, employment, or training’ (NEET), and those lacking in social supports (Burchardt, Le Grand, & Piachaud 1999; SEU, 2000; Thompson, Russell, & Simmons, 2013). Their future trajectories are associated with negative outcomes that frequently include academic underachievement, homelessness, substance misuse, mental health problems, and incarceration in their adult lives (Coles et al., 2010; DfE, 2012; SEU, 2000; Steer, 2000).

Despite the significant costs of social exclusion to individuals and to society more generally (Coles et al., 2010), our understanding of how specific interventions may successfully re-direct these negative pathways is lacking. Drama and theatre practices have for many decades been employed to promote social and individual change (Blatner, 1997; Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995; Holmes, Karp & Watson, 1994). Furthermore, recent evidence suggests that drama and theatre activities may confer unique benefits that emphasise personal development (Harkins, Pritchard, Haskayne, Watson, & Beech, 2011; Hughes & Wilson, 2004; James & McNeil, 2009). However, our understanding of the psychological mechanisms that underpin individual changes and growth purported to result from drama and theatre involvement is weak.

Promoting change through drama and theatre

Since the UK government’s Green Paper for Youth (*Youth Matters*) was published in 2005, policy initiatives encouraging alternative ways of engaging and supporting those at risk of social exclusion have been developed (DfES, 2005; Steer,

2000) resulting in an increasing interest in, and evaluation of, interventions targeting youth at risk (Arts Council England, 2005; Jermyn, 2001). Such interventions include those employing sport (for review see Sandford, Armour, & Warmington, 2006; Sandford, Duncombe, & Armour, 2008), creative arts such as dance, craft, music, painting, and photography (Arts Council England, 2005; Hirst, & Robertshaw, 2003; Wilkin, Gulliver, & Kinder, 2005), and drama and theatre (Arts Council England, 2006).

Close scrutiny of theoretical frameworks regarding drama and theatre suggest interventions using such approaches may confer additional benefits above and beyond those common across arts-based projects (Blatner, 1997; Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995; Holmes et al., 1994). There is already some evidence supporting this proposition. For example a large-scale study by Hughes and Wilson (2004) explored the impact of involvement in youth theatre on young people's personal and social development and found that youth theatre offered young people a space in which freedom of expression was possible, where young people felt they could 'be themselves', and – arguably uniquely to drama and theatre – where the playing of the roles of others provides an opportunity to learn and experiment with other ways of being.

There are as many theoretical frameworks associated with drama and theatre, as there are approaches, each providing explanations for the growth and change witnessed in a wide range of projects – from the use of Theatre of the Oppressed with disempowered groups (Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995) through to Psychodrama with groups including offenders (Harkins et al., 2011; Holmes et al., 1994). Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 2002; Boal, 1995) has been employed widely to empower, excite activism in, and give voice to disempowered or socially excluded groups

(Diamond, 1994; Woodson, 2012), as well as those with individual, internal ‘oppressions’ such as fear of emptiness and alienation (Boal, 1995; Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994). Theatre of the Oppressed sees itself as having therapeutic effects (Boal, 1995; Diamond, 1994) with drama being “the place where deep psychological processes are expressed” (Feldhendler, 1994, p. 87). Central to these therapeutic effects is the self-observation that this approach allows:

Theatre [...] allows man to observe himself in action [...]. The self-knowledge thus acquired allows him to be the subject (the one who observes) of another subject (the one who acts). It allows him to imagine variations of his action, to study alternatives. (Boal, 1995, p. 13).

Boal (1995) proposed that this dichotomous existence – being able to simultaneously step outside oneself as spectator *and* act as actor – creates a separation, or space, in which knowledge of the self grows, as well as a potential for imagining what could be. Ultimately, it provides a space where transformation can occur.

Similarly, Jacob Moreno’s Psychodrama, developed in the 1950s, uses “dramatization, role playing, and dramatic self-presentation” to bring about self-knowledge and change (Kellermann, 1992, p. 20). Central to psychodrama is the use of role-play to explore feeling, thoughts and behaviours, as well as perspective-taking by viewing one’s own, and others’, behaviour from alternative perspectives and by playing the role of others (Harkins et al., 2011; Kellermann, 1992). It is thought that catharsis is reached when deep self-knowledge is experienced, and liberation reached through the integration into the self of new actions, free of old roles (Feldhendler, 1994), producing “spontaneous moments of change which occur – moments that produce a kind of mysterious healing” (Kellermann, 1992, p. 12).

Turner’s theoretical framework of liminal and liminoid spaces has also been used to try to understand the unique qualities that drama and theatre spaces provide (see

Hughes & Wilson, 2004; Schechner, 2013). Liminal spaces are spaces of transition and transformation found in ritual, where new realities, roles and identities can be formed, while liminoid spaces have the same characteristics as liminal spaces but are found outside of ritual in voluntary activities such as arts-based programmes (Schechner, 2013). Hughes and Wilson (2004) have highlighted how drama and theatre activities may be usefully described as liminoid activities as they provide a space that exists “outside of normal routines” in which unfettered self-expression is encouraged, where new perspectives may grow, and well as new roles and identities explored and experimented with (Hughes & Wilson, 2004, p. 69).

Psychological dynamics of drama and theatre activities

Inroads into exploring psychological mechanisms underpinning the impact of drama and theatre come from a small number of studies which have explored the impact of drama and theatre activities on young offenders and at-risk youths (Bradley, Deighton, & Selby, 2004; for a review see Daykin, Orme, Evans, & Salmon, 2008; Harkins et al., 2011; James & McNeil, 2009; McArdle et al., 2002; Turner, 2007). These investigations have drawn on theoretical frameworks such as a consideration of Bandura’s (1977a; 1997) social learning theory, and ideas of learning development (Vygotsky, 1978) as explanations for diverse positive outcomes, including more pro-social behaviours, positive identity changes, increases in self-belief, self-efficacy, motivation, confidence in social skills, and personal agency (Bradley et al., 2004; Daykin et al., 2008; Harkins et al., 2011; James & McNeil, 2009; Turner, 2007). However, notwithstanding the importance of this work, these analyses cannot adequately explain the specific socio-motivational mechanisms by which drama and

theatre projects may work to re-engage disaffected and socially marginalised young people.

A model of the development of disaffection/engagement that draws together core theoretical frameworks concerning self-determination, self-discrepancy, and achievement may also provide a useful framework for understanding the impact of drama and theatre experiences on subjective experiences (see Figure 5.1; Hanrahan, Banerjee, & Brown, 2013; Hanrahan & Banerjee, 2013a; 2013b⁸). This framework may be useful given that many of the key psychological processes highlighted by the model have parallels in the theory and evidence that support a role for drama and theatre activities in promoting change and growth in social and motivational outcomes.

Firstly, the model emphasises the crucial role of social environments in supporting or thwarting the basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy as outlined by self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000a), which in turn leads to differential motivational outcomes. Warm relationships and support for autonomy – as opposed to relationships that are controlling – are likely to be crucial for pursuing the development of the authentic self because of their support for intrinsic growth processes and autonomous behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 1990). In addition, qualities of the environment, such as warmth and acceptance, are thought to be assimilated and internalised such that environments that are supportive and accepting of the individual, lead to self-acceptance and the authentic expression of the self (Deci & Ryan, 1990). This is paralleled by theory and evidence regarding the importance of the role of practitioners and having a ‘supportive context’ – including feeling accepted – if interventions with young people are to be successful (Hughes & Wilson, 2004; Kinder & Wilkin, 1998; Wilkin et al., 2005). Additionally, the unique features of the social-

⁸ Hanrahan & Banerjee (2013b) refers to Paper 3 reported in this thesis.

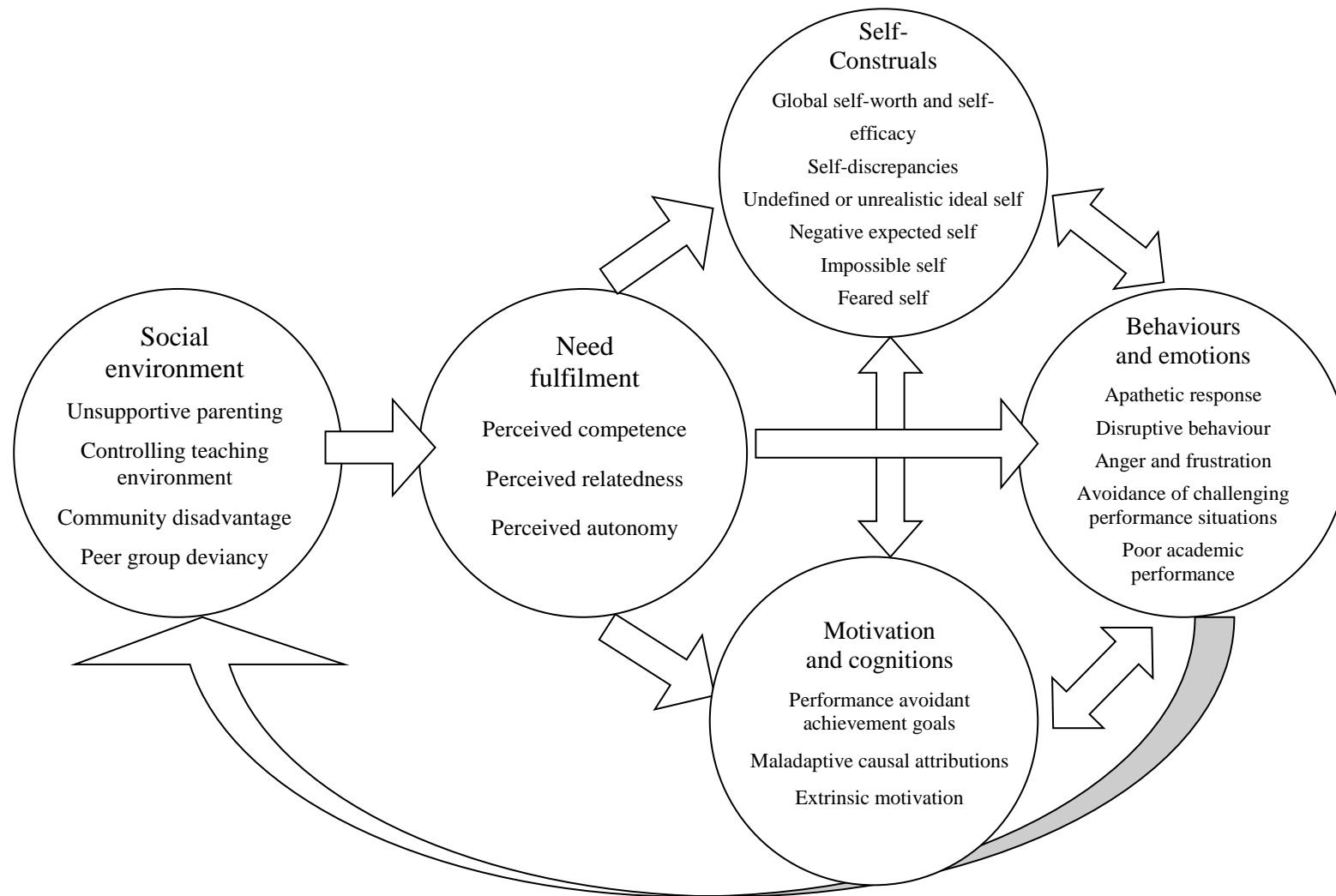


Fig. 5.1. Representation of the proposed expanded model of the development of engagement vs. disaffection.

environmental space created by drama and theatre means that it is one in which experimentation of self-expression and role play can take place because of the accepting space it represents:

Thus, within the limits of the scene and the moment, the free exercise of all asocial tendencies, unacceptable desires, forbidden behaviours and unhealthy feelings is allowed. On stage, all is permissible, nothing is forbidden. (Boal, 1995)

Secondly, drama and theatre provides a space where self-expression and exploration is not only permissible, but also encouraged, in order to allow for change and transformation. For example, one of the oft-cited benefits of drama and theatre is that it provides the self with the space and freedom to be authentic, thus allowing for self-knowledge to deepen (Boal, 1995; Hughes & Wilson, 2004), as well as the opportunity to experiment with different imagined roles for the self so that new ways of being are learned and internalised (Harkins et al., 2011; Hughes & Wilson, 2004; James & McNeil, 2009; Kellermann, 1992; Turner, 2007). In addition, increases in self-esteem and self-efficacy for those who participate have been found in participants involved in drama and theatre projects (Harkins et al., 2011). These points converge neatly with models of disaffection/engagement that highlight the important role of self-construals, including not only general self-worth, but also more specific representations of possible future selves and reflections on discrepancies between one's 'actual' self and one's 'ideal' self (see Hanrahan et al., 2013; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008; Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2009).

Furthermore, the emphasis placed on enjoyment (ACE, 2006), inquisitiveness and play (Schechner, 2013) – considered to be at the heart of drama and theatre – map onto the way in which our theoretical model stresses the significance of opportunities to experience intrinsic motivation (doing something for the enjoyment of the task itself),

an orientation to curiosity and mastering the task (rather than competitive performance outcomes), and an attributional style whereby one feels in control over events (rather than feeling helpless). These connections set an agenda for analysing the impact of drama and theatre work on the socio-motivational trajectories of young people.

The Present Study

We aimed to explore the participants' experiences of long-term involvement in drama and theatre work from an idiographic, phenomenological perspective, and to examine whether the young people's narratives supported the psychological mechanisms identified by our model of disaffection/engagement. In this way, the study was designed to help us address the question of 'how and why' drama and theatre activities 'work' (Hughes & Wilson, 2004).

We employed a qualitative longitudinal (QL) design in order to capture change and continuity of experience for the duration of the participants' involvement in the drama and theatre project. QL methodology offers a rich way of understanding the lived experiences of participants, going beyond the limited 'snapshot' a cross-sectional study could provide (Neale & Flowerdew, 2003, p. 190). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was deemed the most appropriate approach as it is concerned with exploring and understanding the lived experience of each participant and is dedicated to idiographic enquiry, with the researcher's interpretative work considered key to understanding individual participants' accounts (Smith, 2004; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2007).

5.3 Method

Participants

Participants in the current study were four young people who were involved in a drama and theatre project. Prior to recruitment and data collection, ethical approval for the current study was given by the University of Sussex's Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committee (C-REC). The young people were approached at theatre workshops by the lead researcher (first named author), informed about the study and invited to participate in in-depth individual interviews about their experience of the theatre project. Interviews occurred at three time points over a two and a half year period. Written consent was given by all participants at each interview. In addition, parental consent was given for the one participant who was under 16 years of age at the first time point.

Table 5.1 shows the age and occupation of the four participants across the three time points. At the first interview, the sample included four young people, three female and one male aged between 15 and 21 years ($M = 18.25$, $SD = 2.75$). Participants were British with a mixed ethnic profile: two of the young people were mixed race, while the other two were black. One participant (female, 15 years of age) was a current year 10 PRU pupil; two were ex-PRU pupils, with one (female, 17 years of age) currently attending first year of college having completed her GCSEs at a mainstream school, while the other (male, 21 years of age) had attended some college but was currently unemployed and no longer attending college; and finally, one young person (female, 20 years of age) had not experienced permanent exclusion from school but had received multiple exclusions whilst attending a mainstream school, was currently unemployed at

the first interview, was a mother of one child, and had not attended any college. The names of the participants have been changed to protect their confidentiality.

Table 5.1

Participant age and occupation, outside of theatre project, at each interview time point

Participant name (anonymised)	T1		T2 (7–10 months post T1)		T3 (11–12 months post T2)	
	Age	Occupation	Age	Occupation	Age	Occupation
Chloe	15	PRU pupil (year 9)	15	PRU pupil (year 10)	16	College student
Jasmine	20	Unemployed (single mother)	21	Unemployed (single mother)	22	Employed (single mother)
Alisha	17	College student	18	College student	19	College student
Jordan	21	Unemployed	21	Unemployed	22	Employed

Theatre process

The drama and theatre project that participants took part in was run by a charitable theatre company. The project involved creating a theatre production based on the life experiences of marginalised young people who had experienced school exclusion, with parts acted by the young people. The early stages of the project involved weekly or bi-weekly drama workshops over a six-month period, which focused on improvisation using a wide range of scenarios and roles, as well as improvisations based on life stories and experiences. Following this initial stage, a process of devising scenes and parts for the production began, and acting skills were learned and honed. This work culminated in a semi-improvised production based on the experiences of each of the young people, which ran for three nights at a theatre venue in October 2011. Following a period of time in which the project met only sporadically for improvised workshops,

the drama and theatre production began a new phase of intense rehearsing of a newly scripted version of the production over a 12 week period before a three-week run of the production at a different theatre venue in September 2012.

The theatre project was run independently from the researchers' input, with the director and producer of the theatre company organising all matters relating to the theatre project including the recruitment of young people for the theatre project, workshop content and schedules, and duration of the project. The two theatre practitioners – the artistic director and the producer – each had several years' experience of working with youth at risk. Specifically, the producer of the company was an experienced PRU drama teacher and had worked with three out of the four young people in that capacity prior to the current theatre project. However, as none of the young participants were current students of the producer, nor were participants attending the PRU at which the producer was a practitioner, there was no crossover for the duration of the theatre project. The director had several years of experience of working with youth at risk through work with multiple theatre projects.

Interview schedule

An interview schedule was developed which aimed to explore the young people's experiences of the theatre project. Questions covered the following topics: why and how the young people had come to be involved; their motivation for attending the workshops; their experience of the workshops/performances; their relationships with the theatre practitioners and other young people; and the character they played in the production (see Table 5.2). Adaptations were made to the interview schedule at each time point to allow for contextual changes such as adding questions about upcoming or recent performances. Furthermore, the interviews were semi-structured in their design,

Table 5.2

Interview schedule for young people organised by topic and interview time point

Topic	Interview Time 1	Interviews Time 2 and 3
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you tell me about how you came to be involved in the theatre project? <i>Prompts:</i> Why did you decide to be involved? What were you expecting it to be like? Is it any different? In what ways? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you tell me about what you've been doing since we last spoke? <i>Prompts:</i> Has anything changed in your life outside of the theatre project? In what ways? How do you feel about those changes?
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you tell me about what motivates you to come to the workshops? <i>Prompts:</i> What keeps you coming back? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you tell me about what motivates you to come to the workshops? <i>Prompts:</i> What keeps you coming back?
Workshop/ Performance Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you describe what the workshops are like? <i>Prompts:</i> What do you do? How does it feel? Is there anything you like? Is there anything you dislike? Have you changed since being involved? <i>Prompts:</i> In what ways? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [T2 only]: Can you describe what the workshops have been like? <i>Prompts:</i> What do you do? How does it feel? Is there anything you like? Is there anything you dislike? [T3 only]: Can you describe what the rehearsals for the production were like? <i>Prompts:</i> What was involved? How did it feel? Was there anything you enjoyed? Was there anything you didn't enjoy? Can you tell me about the performance? <i>Prompts:</i> How did it feel to be on stage? What were the best parts? Was there anything you didn't like? [T2 only] What were the rehearsals leading up to it like? Have you changed since being involved in the theatre project? <i>Prompts:</i> In what ways? What has being involved meant for

		you?
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe your relationship with the theatre practitioners? <i>Prompts:</i> How do you find working with them? • Can you describe your relationship with the other young people involved with the theatre company? <i>Prompts:</i> Do you feel you can relate to them? In what ways? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe your relationship with the theatre practitioners? <i>Prompts:</i> How do you find working with them? • Can you describe your relationship with the other young people involved with the theatre company? <i>Prompts:</i> Do you feel you can relate to them? In what ways?
Character played		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about the character you play in the production? <i>Prompts:</i> Is your character any different to how you are now? In what ways? Can you describe how it feels to play yourself?

in order to provide participants with the space and opportunity to express their views on topics that arose which were relevant to, but not covered by, questions in the interview schedule (Burman, 1995; Smith, 2004).

Procedure

Each participant was interviewed by the first author (a white female researcher) at three time points. Interviews at the first time point took place between February and April 2011 when the young people were just beginning to attend theatre workshops; the second wave of interviews took place in November and December of 2011, following the young people's first (semi-improvised) performance of the co-created theatre production; finally, the third wave of interviews was carried out a year later in November and December of 2012, following a three-week run of the production. Interviews were held either in a private room of the building where the theatre workshops took place, or in a café. The length of interviews varied depending on participants' responses, with the shortest lasting 38 min and the longest 74 min (T1 $M = 50.25$, $SD = 16.17$; T2 $M = 66.75$, $SD = 5.85$; T3 $M = 47.75$, $SD = 0.96$). Interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Interviewees were fully informed of the purpose and nature of the interview, both verbally and via an information sheet, prior to each interview. Participants gave written consent for the interviews to be audio recorded and parental consent was additionally sought and given prior to the first interview with one participant who was under the age of 16 years. Interviewees were also made aware that they could terminate their participation at any time, for any reason, and that they could choose not to answer particular questions. The young people were also assured that the content of their interviews would not be shared with other members of the theatre company, unless they shared something that indicated a risk to themselves or

others, and that their anonymity would be protected. No payment was given for taking part.

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed by the interviewer (first named author) verbatim, and identifying information anonymised. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), as outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009), was used to analyse the resulting data for each participant. To ensure that the principles of IPA were followed – such that the voice of the individual and their attempts to make sense of their experiences remain the focus of our analysis (Smith et al., 2009) – each case was analysed separately and without reference to other interviews; in addition, analysis of a single case across the three time points was completed before moving on to the next case. The process of analysis itself involved a number of stages which were adapted from Smith et al. (2009) and Smith and Osborn (2007) for longitudinal analysis. Firstly, following a process of reading and re-reading participant transcripts to ensure familiarity with each interview as a whole, the understandings, concerns and claims of participants at each time point were closely scrutinised and notes, including the analyst's responses and interpretations, were added to scripts; secondly, patterns within interviews were identified to form emergent themes which were then recorded; thirdly, patterns across themes were identified to create superordinate themes. A table of superordinate themes and themes was then created – including extracts, page numbers for supporting information, and notes – for each time point, for a single case. After this process was carried out for each of the four cases, patterns were identified across multiple cases, at first by compressing time points, and later by tracking common, and distinct, themes and changes across

individuals and time points. A master table of themes for the group, with time compressed, was then created (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3

Super-ordinate themes and themes from the analysis across time-points

	Super-ordinate themes		
	Something for Myself	A Nurturing Space	Changing the Story
Themes	Self-expression and self-exploration	Growth of trust	My life's so different
	Intrinsic enjoyment	Supportive boundaries	Desire to move on
	A positive activity to fill time	It feels like we're all a family	
	Opportunity		
	Room to unexpectedly achieve		

5.4 Results

This section will present the super-ordinate themes and the themes nested within them using extracts from the accounts and the analyst's interpretations. The interviewer is indicated in quoted extracts by: 'Int'. In quoted extracts, the following indicates editorial elision by the author: [...]. At the end of each quoted extract the participant quoted and the interview time point is indicated in parentheses with the participant's name followed by T1, T2, or T3 according to the interview time point.

Something for Myself

This superordinate theme captures participants' recurrent accounts of how the theatre production was an experience of space-giving for the self – space to express and explore the authentic self, to do something intrinsically motivating, to enrich their lives with a sense of hope and opportunity, and to fill their time with a positive, constructive activity.

Something for myself: Self-expression and self-exploration. We will start by exploring accounts that illustrate how for some participants the experience of acting itself provides a 'space' where self-expression, and exploration, of an authentic self is experienced. For both Chloe and Jordan drama provides space for the safe and cathartic expression of emotion, particularly negative emotion:

When you've got something to say, yeah, or you've got like this anger inside you, or you've got this happiness inside you, [...] you just wanna, like, let it out in some way. But you don't wanna [...] go out and kill someone and start stabbing someone and let it out that way, cause obviously that's gonna put you in jail for life [...] but whereas with theatre, it's like you're letting all that emotion out in somebody else [...] So then, when you finish, you feel like 'Oh, my gosh, that went so good', and you feel happy in yourself and like, anyway for me that's how it is. (Chloe, T3)

I think that it helps you get so much off your chest. Like, if [...] I'm just feeling down or depressed, or even if I've got something bottled up, and I do an exercise or I do a scene that helps me express that emotion, it's just like, 'Phew!' [...] it just gets it out there [...] (Jordan, T3)

The negative emotions 'bottled up', as in a pressure cooker, are given a release through drama and in this way channelled away from more negative actions and consequences:

"go out and kill someone and start stabbing someone". The relief experienced –

"Phew!" – through "letting all that emotion out" is palpable. Jordan's experience of acting brings him to an even deeper connection with himself as it, perhaps ironically, provides a space where he can be truly himself and express and 'explore' this self without restriction.

This is how I unwind. This is how I express myself. [...] Definitely something magical happens [...] I'll do something [...] that I wouldn't usually do in my everyday life, or I wouldn't feel comfortable doing around other people, but because I'm in that environment [...] it kind of like, relaxes me and makes me just comfortable in my surroundings. [...] say I just wanted to pick my nose, or something like that, usually in life you'd just be thinking like, who's watching you. [...] In the workshop, I'd just do it willy nilly [...] Just let my hair down really. [...] It's just like, you're allowed to be ... think and act out of the box. [...] There's no real limitations really. You just explore, and I love it. (Jordan, T2)

This extract is very striking in its use of analogy and metaphor to describe a sense of freedom and unrestricted exploration. Acting gives Jordan a space within which it is permissible, even expected, to explore who he really is and express this 'real' or authentic self with all its unsavoriness and without feeling exposed. The example of picking his nose is revealing. By choosing an example of something that is not considered socially acceptable and should remain hidden and not exposed Jordan emphasises how in drama the hidden self may be revealed without fear of judgement or feeling exposed. In acting there is permission to experience freedom and step outside the "box". The authenticity Jordan experiences through acting is ultimately captured in a statement he makes in his final interview:

When I'm on stage [...] it makes me feel alive. [...] My inner self, the real me, comes out. (Jordan, T3)

Here, in no uncertain terms, Jordan describes how his authentic self is allowed to breathe and live when he is on stage – suggesting an escape out from behind the usual constraints and masks of everyday life.

Something for myself: Intrinsic enjoyment. The intrinsic enjoyment of acting, performing and/or the theatre process is described by all four participants, though each account of this experience has its own unique flavour. Drama for Jordan and Chloe means having fun – it is energetic, and thrilling, something that they love doing – and is

a central part of their enjoyment of the workshops and performances. Accounts of their enjoyment of drama recur in both of their second and third interviews, and for Jordan in his first also.

It's [acting is] fun, it's energetic [...] so I really enjoy that. (Jordan, T1)

It felt like we were just moving, it wasn't like recapping or going over (Jordan, T2)

I just have so much fun [acting], I enjoy every moment. I love it. (Jordan, T3)

I just want it to like, go on and do more, like. I wanna do it [the production] every single day. [...] It [performing] was absolutely, I loved it because it's like that whole thrill (Chloe, T3)

Both Chloe and Jordan are intrinsically motivated to be involved in the theatre project and to act. The fun and energy Jordan experiences through acting in the workshops is tangible from his account. Indeed, by describing the workshops as a place where he felt things were “moving” rather than “recapping or going over”, Jordan gets to the very heart of what is meant by motivation; acting in the workshops gets him moving – they are full of energy and momentum. For Chloe there is a sense that drama has become like a drug, producing a thrill and a seemingly insatiable desire for the experience to continue and never end. Chloe makes this comparison herself at her third interview, which may reflect how completely she has become absorbed by drama having recently been accepted into a drama college:

It [theatre] like, keeps you buzzing [...] I have never like tried no like drug [...] but like obviously, like, people say [...] it makes you feel buzzy, and then it wants you to like take it more ... [...] That's what theatre does to me. [...] So it's like: 'Oh! I wanna do that again.' (Chloe, T3)

For Jasmine too the workshops and performances were enjoyable experiences as described at interviews two, “Oh my god, this [performing] is so good. I really, really liked it” and three “The rehearsals were really good, I enjoyed myself.” However, in interview three Jasmine also adds a dimension to this enjoyment by reflecting that it is

also the space and time for herself that her involvement entailed that was an important part of her overall enjoyment:

And obviously to do something for myself rather than just being a bloody housewife; that was nice. (Jasmine, T3)

There is a sense of indulgence in this description – a sense of her involvement being like a treat, a space just for her without the stresses and strains of motherhood, a time just for her to be herself without the added identity of housewife.

Alisha's enjoyment of acting is expressed perhaps less effusively, but is nonetheless present in interviews one and two where her enjoyment of the improvisation workshops and of performing is described in terms of imagination, escape, and stimulation.

Workshops is really good. We do a lot of improvisation, cause I like improvisation [...] you can kind of think of with your head and go into your own imagination. (Alisha, T1)

I think it [acting] takes your mind off things [...] cause you're focusing on something else. Like, even if you have issues, once you start performing that kinda goes out the window. It, like, stimulates your mind. (Alisha, T2)

It is only in the final interview that Alisha uses the word enjoyment and reveals a pleasure in acting, though interestingly this pleasure is expressed in terms of a private performance, rather than a public one.

I just really enjoy it [acting], like – even when I'm at home by myself, I just talk to myself and be characters and stuff. (Alisha, T3)

It is also in interview three that Alisha expresses a desire to pursue acting because it is “where my heart is at, because obviously I really want to act.”

Yet, in addition to the positive enjoyment of acting and performing, a number of the young people also gave accounts of particular challenges they experienced during

their involvement in the theatre project. For three out of four of the young people the nerves they experienced before and during the first performance represented a hurdle, though the degree to which this was felt and then overcome differed for each participant. Chloe describes feeling very nervous before performing, but this anxiety turned into enjoyment once she was on stage:

I was nervous. My heart was beating every single second. [...] I was really, really nervous, but it was ... once I was on I enjoyed it. (Chloe, T2)

Jasmine describes feeling so nervous that she wanted to quit the play and not perform. Only her loyalty to the other cast members and their reliance on her prevented her from walking out.

Oh my God, it was horrible. I was so nervous, y'know, honestly. [...] The first night I was dreading it. [...] I just didn't want to walk out. [...] I wouldn't do that to them lot. [...] If I didn't have other people relying on me, I think I probably would have. [...] And by the end [...] after the last performance, I was happy that I didn't not do it. (Jasmine, T2)

In the case of Alisha's account, her nerves were wrapped up with feeling exposed and self-conscious when she is on stage. So scared of attention and self-conscious did she feel when on stage that she did not want to perform and described hating performing on her own.

I was scared, I didn't wanna go up and do it cause, [...] being in front of people is kinda like... y'know you feel like you're self-conscious [...]
I hate it [...] cause everyone's looking at me. [...]
I prefer when we're in our debate scenes and it's all of us talking and it's not all on me. (Alisha, T3)

This feeling of exposure is expressed in interviews after both performances. What underpins these feelings of self-consciousness and being exposed, is a fear of being judged either as a person or on her performance:

It [being on stage] was really nerve-racking [...] because it's like everyone [the audience] being silent and listening to you [...] And they could be thinking: 'Oh, you're rubbish', and you won't even know. [...]

You might feel that they're judging you a bit when you were telling your story, like: 'Oh, poor her' (Alisha, T2)

In her third interview, Alisha puts these fears down to a lack of confidence: "I do enjoy acting, I'm just, I'm not as confident." This lack of confidence is perhaps reflected in the value she places on audience feedback, and the surprise she feels when it is forthcoming, as we will explore in more depth later.

I think we don't believe in ourselves as much as we should [...] people do enjoy it but we're thinking: 'Why do they enjoy it, like, we're not like real actresses.' (Alisha, T3)

Something for myself: A positive activity to fill time. This theme brings together accounts from the young people that describe their involvement in the theatre workshops and performances as, at a very basic level, a positive activity that filled their time. The value placed on this activity because of its positivity is not to be taken lightly here as the accounts make clear that the theatre project represents possibly their only way to escape from the emptiness, or temptations, of stretches of unscheduled time. For Jasmine and Jordan the value of this activity in their lives is expressed in the strong sense of loss when the regular workshops cease after the first run of the production.

It [the workshops and the performance] was good fun [...] When it was finished I was like: 'What do I do now? I don't have anything to do with my day!' (Jasmine, T2)

All the drive in me just went for some reason, and I was the last person to send my script in [post performance]. [...] Just feeling like, if I send the script, [...] what's gonna then happen? [...] Cause now I've handed it in, it's like, I just feel empty innit'. (Jordan, T2)

Both of these accounts suggest that the loss of the theatre projects is experienced as a loss of purpose and meaning in life. Furthermore, accounts from Chloe and Alisha draw attention to the fact that for them involvement in theatre not only has been a positive activity to do, but has also been a welcome way to avoid becoming drawn into other less positive activities which have occupied them in the past. Instead the

involvement in theatre has generated positivity in their lives by engendering new motivation and feelings of being constructive.

It was stopping a lot of us from probably go and do something that was not worthwhile that wasn't going to get us nowhere in life, and it motivated us, kept us, made us do something, so it really does help. (Alisha, T2)

It's [involvement in the theatre project has] been really fun. [...] it feels like [...] you have a motive [...] like you have something to do and it's positive and it's constructive. [...] so it's, yeah, it feels good, it feels good. [...] I feel like I've done something constructive. (Chloe, T2)

[I] started to focus on things that I actually love to do, and then it [drama] just channelled all that energy that I was putting in on being that hard rude girl [...] into now doing what I actually wanna do, and it's constructive [...] (Chloe, T3)

Chloe's repetition of the word "constructive" is interesting here as it may highlight something of the value inherent in drama, or perhaps the creative arts more generally, in that it may provide a space for constructive activity that is not 'work' in the dry sense, but rather "feels good", as Chloe puts it. The words productive, valuable, creative (in the sense of producing something competently) and useful are brought to mind by the term 'constructive'. These words are in sharp contrast to the sense of failure and uselessness often expressed by school-excluded pupils. Reading these excerpts from Chloe, this discovery of being constructive, useful, valued and productive is part of the enjoyment of the 'work' in the creative sense.

Something for myself: Room to unexpectedly achieve. Some participants also described the theatre project as a space that provided an opportunity to achieve. Accounts by Jordan and Chloe make clear that their hopes, dreams and desires were given room to flourish and grow in the space provided by the theatre project.

It's made me realise that, um, you know, it's not over yet. [...] Yeah, it's another chance. [...] It just allows me to have a breather and say, yeah, you know, life has its ups and downs basically. (Jordan, T3)

When I was [...] doing the drama stuff, it was just, I felt really positive, I wasn't thinking small, I was thinking outside the box. I was thinking 'ok, if I do this and

I keep on going on with this, then there are so many opportunities I can have.’
(Chloe, T2)

This experience was for them a new chance to achieve and grow, and a space which doesn’t judge them on their past failures and exclusions. For both there is an acknowledgement of the opportunity being provided through the theatre project and an eagerness to grab that opportunity and run with it.

If this is genuinely serious and this is something that we can make something out of, we need to be putting in hard work, just every second of every day. (Jordan, T2)

For me to have that opportunity to be in that position already is like wicked, like, I just proper feel privileged [...]. That I've had the people around me that's been able to give me that and me just grabbing that chance to do that. (Chloe, T3)

Indeed, the sense of achievement – and the surprise that accompanies the experience of achievement – that the young people experienced following the performances of their production can be felt strongly in all of the participants’ accounts of what performing was like. The sense of pride and achievement in themselves at having pulled off a performance to a paying audience is palpable, together with a sense of shock and awe at the audacity of their own achievement.

The second night after I did it I was like: 'Oh my God! I didn't forget a thing, I can't believe it!' [Laughs]. [...] I've never finished anything in my whole life [Laughs]. [...] I think that was like one thing that I've actually stuck at and actually finished. [...] Literally, never finished a thing. So it was nice to do something, and ride it out till the end (Jasmine, T2)

The best part [...] is after when you think 'Wow! We just did that. We delivered like a mind-blowing thing to these people, and, like, them actually paying their money to come and watch it.' [...] It's just something that goes over my head. I don't... sometimes I don't believe it. (Chloe, T3)

Alisha’s sense of achievement and satisfaction was derived in particular from the positive response of the audience following performances. She describes the thrill and satisfaction that she gets from hearing the unexpected applause and positive

comments from the audience. Alisha's uses the audience response as proof that she "did a good job".

When we finish and people clap, I enjoy that so much [...] I get excited and I start jumping up and down because it's like ... *that* makes you know you did a good job. They're letting you know you was good. [...]
Definitely, that audience applause [kept Alisha motivated] [...] (Alisha, T3)

There is a sense here that Alisha's feelings about the worth of her own performance relies heavily on what the audience thinks. That her satisfaction and motivation comes from the audience's enjoyment – which serves as a reward for her hard work – rather than from an internal source may point to a difference in the kinds of performance related goals Alisha holds compared to those held by the others and may also reflect a lack of confidence in performing highlighted by Alisha, as well as her fear of being judged by others, which we shall explore later.

A Nurturing Space

This superordinate theme captures the strong sense of trust, support, encouragement and belonging brought out within the accounts of relationships built between staff and young people during the theatre project, as well as foundations of clear structures and boundaries upon which positive relationships could develop and personal growth occur.

A nurturing space: Growth of trust. Accounts from participants illustrate that for most of the young people trust was a vital aspect of the relationship between them and the director, both in the sense of having trust in the director and being trusted by the director. During the second interview most of the participants acknowledged their initial scepticism about the project and their fear about whether the next mooted performance

would happen – Would it really manifest? Could the director be relied on? Should they get their hopes up? This extract from Alisha captures this scepticism:

At first it was hard to think, believe that this [the performance] was gonna be the outcome of it [...]
So I was thinking: ‘Oh, this is never going to happen. [...] Oh, they're giving us false hopes, getting our hopes up.’ (Alisha, T2)

Being prepared to be let down, if not expecting to be, was common in these accounts.

The persistence of this anxiety might suggest that being let down is not a new experience for these young people.

By the second interview all of the young people had been working with the theatre company for at least seven months – time enough for strong relationships to be established. Therefore, alongside this acknowledgement of a fear or expectation of being let down is a growing trust in, and respect for, the director based on their experience of him being consistent, fair, and true to his word. Alisha illustrates this in the following statement of her belief in the director’s reliability.

I feel like he’s [the director is] someone I can definitely rely on. When he tells me this is gonna happen and this is what I'm trying to achieve, I believe him. (Alisha, T2)

Not only was trust in the theatre practitioners an important feature of the developing relationship between the practitioners and young people, but the young people’s sense of being trusted and believed in also featured strongly in accounts of these relationships. Alisha’s account of how the director stood by the young people – when unforeseen circumstances meant that the first performance was likely to be cancelled just days before they were due to begin – illustrates this feeling well.

He didn't give up on us. [...] I'm not gonna lie, if I was a director or something, I'd probably give up on us cause we're people from backgrounds, never done acting before. [...] So he took a risk with us, and he believed in us. [...] It feels good to, for someone to actually put their trust in us... someone that come from the PRU. (Alisha, T2)

Her account is notably accompanied by a sense of surprise that someone bothered to believe in them. Alisha highlights how not being trusted or believed in is perhaps part and parcel of the fallout from experiencing school exclusion, so for the director to see something other than failure and worthlessness in the young people and to “put their trust” in the young people “feels good”.

Being believed in means that the practitioners saw something in them – a potential or talent – beyond their past experiences of violence, crime and school failure. The value of something good and positive being seen inside them feels powerful. This is illustrated powerfully in the following extracts from Chloe and Alisha:

I think all of them is just like proper: ‘I see something good in you.’ (Chloe, T1)
 He [the director] must have saw something in us that... a little sparkle,
 something that: ‘Oh, these people have potential.’ (Alisha, T2)

There is a sense that even though they had themselves perhaps lost sight of this “sparkle”, the very fact that someone else sees it in them, and believes in them, makes it easier for them to internalise this and believe in it also. This internalisation is seen in an account from Chloe:

From young that's [study theatre at college] what I wanted to kind of do, but I've never really had the confidence to be like 'Yeah, I can go in there, and do it, and I can get it.' But, like, obviously with the help from [the director and producer] of saying, 'Yeah, you, you're really good, like, you're, you're really good, you should go for it'... So I did. (Chloe, T3)

Here, the practitioners’ praise for, and belief in, Chloe’s ability, together with their encouragement, gives her the confidence and belief in herself to pursue a lifelong dream which she had stopped believing in.

A nurturing space: Supportive boundaries. This theme captures the various ways in which the approach used to run the theatre project laid the foundations upon which it was possible for positive relationships to develop and personal growth to occur.

Most of the participants described this approach as one that was characterised by an authoritative, no-nonsense, style where the commitment of the theatre practitioners was made clear from the start. This approach is repeatedly described as helpful by the young people in their accounts because of the fact that it meant that expectations were made clear. This extract from Alisha captures this sense of authority and clear structures well:

He [the director] was like: This is what we need to do, this is what I want to achieve. [...] He was always on time. He always showed up. He never missed a session. And y'know, if we had a director that only came sometimes, or didn't turn up on time, you'd be like: 'Well, he's not taking it seriously, so we're not going to take it seriously'. He took it very seriously. (Alisha, T2)

[The director] knew exactly what he wanted to do and where it was going, and that was better for all of us lot, because obviously we're all quite unstructured so to have the play that we're doing that wasn't structured would have just been a nightmare I think. (Jasmine, T2)

It is interesting that this structured time and space was a welcome one for the young people particularly considering the creativity and freedom inherent in drama. Perhaps creativity within a known and established structure gave the young people the scope to explore and enjoy drama whilst still being 'held' within the safe boundaries of known expectations.

Coupled with this strictness and authority are descriptions of a friendly and playful theatre environment. This crops up in all the accounts, but is illustrated well in Alisha's statement at interview two that: "[The director] was friendly, and you can talk to him, but he just didn't take no crap." The same sense of a playful, though structured environment is also seen in this extract from Jasmine:

[The director] is wicked, he's so funny. He's strict but he's funny, and I really got on with him. And the same with [the producer]. I think [the producer] is hilarious, he really makes me laugh. (Jasmine, T2)

This sense of being 'held' by the theatre environment through knowledge and experience of its structure, boundaries and expectations, is also felt in the young

people's descriptions of the theatre project as a positive and comfortable environment where their confidence and exploration could flourish:

In the workshops I just felt comfortable, obviously because of the people I was working with and I just felt confident because [the director] is a good director [...] he's supportive as well so, yeah, I just felt confident. (Chloe, T2)

A nurturing space: It feels like we're all a family. The importance and depth of the relationships between the young people and theatre staff becomes evident during their second interviews, with three of the young people referring to the theatre practitioners as being akin to family members:

It's [the relationship has] been really good. [...] Obviously my dad's not around, yeah, I'm not going to say, yeah, [the director is] my dad or nothing, [...] but he's really like a person, like, there's only, like, a good two people, [...] my brothers [...] they're like male figures in my life, yeah, but they're like, more brother figures innit' [...] (Chloe, T2)

They're [the director and producer] like uncles or something! [...] My older brother lives in [different location in UK]. My uncles, like, they do their own thing. My dad lives in [different European country]. [...] So I think it was nice to have, like, such a male presence, like, in terms, like older, [...] cause I ain't, I ain't had that for years, literally for ages. So it was nice. (Jasmine, T2)

[The director has] been like a dad. [...] Not to say that my dad hasn't been, but in terms of like when I'm here, he's been like a father figure to me. [...] And [the producer] [...] he's always been there for me, from day one, so ... I've got enough love for them two. (Jordan, T2)

The young people are quick to emphasise that the producer and director are in no way replacements for the male figures in their lives, however absent, but that they have been welcome older male figures in their lives. The comparison to “father figures”, “uncles”, and “family members” are qualified by the young people in their descriptions of what that relationship entails.

For Jordan this relationship takes on the quality of a mentoring relationship, particularly with the director who he describes as someone he can turn to for support on issues he faces outside of the theatre:

I just felt like I could be myself and just tell him anything, anything, anything that happened or was going on in my head and we could just speak about stuff. (Jordan, T2)

It's, like, real advice, it's not like this is my job, I'm a counsellor, this is what I'm paid to do, so... I'm gonna do it. It's like, I'm someone that is just, you know, an acquaintance almost to you, but at the same time I still care and I still understand what it's like to be young... (Jordan, T2)

Jordan emphasises here how the relationship feels different to a purely professional one where it is the counsellor's job to provide support. Instead, being 'held in mind' by someone who does not *have* to care, but who *does* value him, and 'see[s]' him, feels different.

The word 'team' appears in a number of accounts of the experience of involvement in the theatre project, accompanied very often with a sense of belonging and being valued. This is particularly well illustrated in an extract from Jordan at his second interview:

It feels like a whole team thing innit', [...] It feels good man. It's good to be part of something. [...] [Being involved in the theatre project] It means I'm not a nobody. (Jordan, 2)

Associated with belonging are feeling of being worthwhile and valued. At the third interview Jordan describes a similar sentiment, if stronger, with his comparison to belong to a "family":

The best part of it was just ... it's almost ... [...] it feels like we're all a family. (Jordan, T3)

The importance of being a part of something is also portrayed by Chloe, who also relates this feeling to a sense of achievement in perhaps a similar way to Jordan's description of no longer feeling like "a nobody".

It just feels like I was part of something and I achieved something. [...] I felt like I was one of the main people, and [...] I felt I had achieved something and I was a part of something. (Chloe, T2)

The use of the word 'team' also conjures feelings of equality and a sense of shared experience in Chloe's third interview. This extract captures well the sense of equality which characterised the accounts of relationships with the director and producer for some of the participants at the third interview:

Everything is always spoken amongst us, it feels like we're a team more than like they're the producer and the director and we're just the actors and we just come in and whatever, like, like we're separate [...] This is more like together. (Chloe, T3)

Here the practitioners are not only adult figures in positions of authority, but also equals in a team where mutual respect is evident. This same description of the producer and director not only being authority figures but also equals is also seen in Jordan's description during his third interview:

Even though [X] is the producer, [Y] is the director, and I have that respect for them as well, but then also on the side I just look at them like friends. (Jordan, T3)

Just like in any relationship, however, there were times when trust between members of the group was tested. In particular, relationships were put to the test when some of the participants felt frustrated by the commitment demanded by the theatre project and by what they felt to be the theatre practitioners' lack of understanding for the other commitments they had outside of the theatre project. For Alisha these commitments included college, whereas for Jasmine it was being a mother and looking after her home.

He [the director] acts like I don't have nothing else to do in my life. [...] There was sometimes when ... I would get frustrated because it was taking up a lot of my time. (Alisha, T2)

It's like they [the director and producer] forget that I've got a life outside [...] I think they didn't really take that into account last time. [...] While they're doing their play, that's their life and that's what they're focusing on, and the same with everybody else, that's all their focus was [...] but it's different innit' when you're ... when you've got a house that you've got to maintain, when you've got a child that you've got to look after. (Jasmine, T3)

The phrase “their play” here suggests a feeling of lacking ownership over the play. Indeed, the sense of a shared project is not felt from these descriptions; instead a feeling of resentment at being expected to put everything else on hold for the play is clear. Interestingly, Alisha only voiced these frustrations at her second interview, whereas Jasmine only described feeling taken for granted in this way at her third interview. Jasmine’s voicing of frustrations at her third interview is perhaps not surprising as they come from a wider context of a breakdown of trust between Jasmine and the other young people and practitioners that developed when Jasmine had to miss a performance during the second run of the production (immediately prior to the third wave of interviews) and her reasons for not being able to attend were not believed. However, despite this breakdown in trust and damage to relationships Jasmine still showed her investment in these relationships by expressing her respect and fondness for the theatre practitioners at this final interview – ‘They’re both like uncles [...] I really do like them both and I’ve got massive respect for them’ – as well as a desire to repair the damage, re-establish communication, and leave open the possibility of working together in the future:

I just think I wanted to talk to him [the producer] [...] to say, like, I'm sorry [...] I didn't want to leave a bad [feeling] between us because realistically in the future [...] I would do something with them again. (Jasmine, T3)

Changing the Story

This third super-ordinate theme describes a common feature in accounts by participants involving their reflections on their past, present, and future selves. Two

themes, ‘My life’s so different’ and ‘Desire to move on’ capture the participants’ accounts of their desire and decision to move forward past their previous selves.

Changing the story: My life’s so different. A number of participants felt already at their first interview that the seeds had been sown for a change in the trajectory of their life, when they first began their involvement with the theatre project:

I came here [to the PRU], and then [the producer] was showing me about the [theatre project], and I was like ‘wow, yeah, I want to get involved ...’. And all the girls [at the PRU], they was like ‘no man, that’s long man, I can’t be bothered to do that’ and I was just thinking: ‘Well you can stay there and carry on doing whatever you’re doing [...] but see me, I want to do something with myself, I wanna be something [...] I need to stop all of this, this is not getting me nowhere’ [...] they’re just not doing nothing with their lives basically, but I’m trying to do something. (Chloe, T1)

However, their involvement in the theatre project, and in particular playing themselves – or a past version of themselves – seemed to provide the participants with a unique opportunity for a consolidation of, and a space to reflect on, this perceived change.

By the time of the second interview, the participants each found that playing a character in the production that was closely based on their own life experiences had highlighted for them the differences between their past and current selves:

My life's so different, it's completely, completely, completely different to how it was. [...] it feels really, really distant [...] it feels like that's a whole lifetime away [...] everything's so different (Jasmine, T2)

It just feels like it was like: ‘Did that even happen?’ Because the transition from then and now is just completely different. [...] it's like everything's changed, like everything's just gone positive (Chloe, T2)

I think people that [...] don’t know me very long, won’t know how far I’ve come and how much I’ve changed. [...] But if you ever saw me before I was like completely two different people [...]. I think I’ve come a long way cause I’m more mature now, I’m more grown up, and I wouldn’t ever go back that way. (Alisha, T2)

Jasmine describes her past as being “a whole lifetime away”, Chloe questions whether the past even occurred, so remote is the experience, emphasising the feeling of distance

from their pasts, while Alisha's description of having been "two different people" evocatively reveals just how much she feels she has changed.

These perceived differences included changes in behaviour and attitude towards others, as well as the type of person they see themselves as – their very identity. At her third interview Chloe reflects on how she used to feel about herself and others and the impact this had on her relationships, compared to how she feels now since she turned things around:

I just used to feel like I [...] should be that hard rude girl [...]. Before it's like everything was, like, against me [...] I didn't want anybody around me, I just wanted to do my own thing, didn't care about nobody; whereas now, it's more like [...] I let people in more, I guess. (Chloe, T3)

Chloe describes how the tough exterior – effectively a false self – she used to present to others in order to protect a more vulnerable self, was no longer needed now that she did not feel that everything, and everyone, is against her. Alisha also identifies a change in her behaviour and identity; from being someone who couldn't control her anger, she sees that she has become a more sensible, patient and less angry person.

Now I'm just a more sensible person. And that's why I don't get angry a lot. Because I think if I was to get angry it would be like I'm going backwards. [...] I realise now I'm more patient with people. (Alisha, T2)

Jordan also expressed a mild separation from his character at his second interview, but this sense of distancing from a past self was more emphatically expressed in Jordan's third interview when he describes having difficulty playing his past self because it was so far behind him:

I was just dodgy [his past self/character]. [...] I've come so far from that now. [...] I found it hard to draw back and be that person again. (Jordan, T3)

Jordan recognises recent change in his outlook and priorities. Getting a job seemed to be a major boost in helping him to stay off the streets and avoid any criminal behaviour:

Int: So, how are you different to that character now?

Jordan: Um, well for starters, I've got a job [laughs]. That's the main thing that was like bringing me down. Because I didn't have a job, I was always getting into mixes with the wrong people. Selling, selling weed, and just, generally being a bum, and not doing anything with my life. [...] And now that I'm working and I'm earning my keep and having to pay my bills and stuff, and going out and enjoying myself with money that I've earned legitimately, and I just feel good with life [...]. That's made me feel worthwhile, like... I've got something to wake up for. (Jordan, T3)

For Jordan, getting a job and earning money legitimately makes him feel worthwhile and enables him to make a decision to change his behaviour:

All my friends basically that don't work and sell drugs [...] I don't hang around with them anymore. [...] I used to just sit on the streets and just smoke weed and talk shit [...] I made a decision to stop doing that [...] I thought to myself, like, this isn't for me. What am I achieving? How is this benefitting me? (Jordan, T3)

Like Jordan, other participants also felt that by the time of the third interview playing the past version of themselves had become more effortful and challenging – and so acting a part, rather than realism, was increasingly required:

I found it difficult this time round I think to get into character because... this was actually acting whereas before when we were in [location of first performance the previous year] it wasn't cause it was still like raw to me [...] this time it didn't even feel like [...] I was talking about myself (Jasmine, T3)

Changing the story: Desire to move on. The desire to move on from, and avoid returning to, a perceived negative past self is voiced by most of the participants at the third interview. For Alisha there is also a sense here that acting out her past in the play is an unwelcome reminder of a past she would rather forget.

It's hard for me to be that person, it's really hard for me to act that person [...] because you know it's yourself and that's not how you want to be anymore, and it kind of reminds you of how you don't want to be. (Alisha, T3)

For Chloe and Jasmine, this desire to move away from their past is something they have put into action by trying not to think about their past experiences. As their accounts make clear however, this has caused some internal conflict given that their participation in the production requires them to play out some past experiences.

I'm not trying to look back, I'm trying to look forward, so anything that was bad that happened in my past, I just try to block it out and not remember it, but obviously for this particular thing that we're doing, I have to go back there every single night when we was performing. (Chloe, T3)

The way I see it is if something like that's happened obviously you talk about it when you need to talk about it but there's a moment where you just have to like let go and not think about it anymore [...] I don't want to end up some flippin', I don't know, like, spiteful old lady that's always feeling like some victim [...] I'd rather just move on from it. (Jasmine, T3)

These accounts are interesting as they suggest that perhaps as time passes and the young people grow through cathartic expression and self-exploration – looking towards a more positive future – the content of the production can make it challenging for them to move forward completely into the new selves that they have developed. Clearly, as the young people embarked on – and successfully completed – a substantial three-week run of performances after two years of involvement with the project, the balance had to shift from engaging in ‘raw’ and therapeutic drama activities to pursuing a challenging, professional theatre production.

5.5 Discussion

The present study explored participants’ experiences of long-term involvement in drama and theatre work from an idiographic, phenomenological perspective. Analysis revealed that this project provided a unique setting for the participants to engage in a self-chosen activity that provided a safe, nurturing space within which healthy

relationships could be formed, and self-knowledge deepened. Also, the opportunity to experience intrinsically motivated work, both in terms of developing the theatre production and successfully performing it on repeated occasions, resulted in new achievement experiences. Furthermore, the experience of playing characters based on versions of their past selves in a theatre production gave the participants an opportunity to reflect on ways in which they had changed as well as the reasons for their past behaviour and situations, and engendered a desire to move away from past identities perceived as undesirable.

Self-development through drama and theatre

Participants' accounts in this study support the theory that drama and theatre projects offer young people what Turner referred to as a liminoid space (Hughes & Wilson, 2004; Schechner, 2013), a space outside of other school or home environments where the self is nurtured such that new insight and self-awareness can grow and new roles, identities, and ways of behaving can be actively explored. Additionally, the drama and theatre activities in this study clearly provided opportunities to experience intrinsic motivation and task mastery, all of which are often absent in the experiences of youth at risk who more often encounter failure, rejection, and apathy (Gilligan, 2000; Larson, 2000; Smokowski, Reynolds, & Bezruczko, 1999; Steer, 2000).

Deci and Ryan have described self-development as "the by-product of activity that emanates from the phenomenal core of one's experience and satisfies one's basic psychological needs" (Deci & Ryan, 1990, p. 246). At the heart of optimal self-development is an internalisation of a social environment that is supportive of "integrative development" such that a re-connection with intrinsic values and motivation is encouraged, and the authentic or integrated, agentic self can emerge and engage with the environment in an active way (Deci & Ryan, 1990, p. 239). Accounts

from participants in this study include descriptions of feeling valued and of belonging, while a sense of internalised worth may be seen in descriptions of new-found self-belief and competence which has grown from the positive feedback from theatre practitioners and audience members. The acceptance, and valuing, of the authentic self may be particularly important for young people who less frequently experience social environments in which the authentic self is accepted and valued.

Indeed, as work with the theatre project progressed, participants described feeling increasingly distant from a past self, which they felt no longer represents them. Similarly, it is clear from some of the participants' accounts that ideal future selves, which in the past seemed impossible to achieve, are increasingly perceived as more realistic and worth pursuing. These accounts suggest that felt discrepancies between diverse selves – such as between actual and ideal selves (Higgins, 1987) – may have reduced over the duration of the project such that the young people are moving towards a more integrated self and the attainment of hoped-for future selves (see Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman, 2008).

Links between self-construals and motivational orientations are also highlighted by SDT, which proposes that interest and intrinsic enjoyment are essential for self-development (Deci & Ryan, 1990). Enjoyment, inquisitiveness and play (Arts Council England, 2006; Schechner, 2013) are considered to be at the heart of drama and theatre activities, making these an optimal arena for self-development to take place. The experiences of participants in the present study echo these sentiments, with accounts describing enjoyment of the process of acting, as well as wider enjoyment of being engaged in a constructive activity, and of belonging to a positive group. Furthermore, the “optimally challenging activities” that the drama and theatre activities provide make possible intrinsic enjoyment and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 1990, p. 242) as well as

opportunities for mastery experiences, personal achievements, and feelings of competence within a non-competitive arena.

Social relationships as a foundation for self-development

Self-development is made possible by the existence of a need-supporting environment: “a child actively elaborates the ‘self’ by using nutriment from the social context” (Deci & Ryan, 1990, p. 276). Preliminary research has shown that disaffected young people experience more need-thwarting social environments compared to other young people – including a greater number of life events, and perceiving their parents and teachers to be less supportive. This background highlights the value of providing marginalised young people with activities within a need-supporting environment so that positive self-development and the re-direction of negative trajectories is made possible (Hanrahan & Banerjee, 2013b).

The impact of relationships with others, as well as the wider social context, on self-construals, behaviour and development is also emphasised by self-determination theorists:

The quality of the others’ presence [...] as well as the quality of the broader social context within which we interact with others, can have an important effect not only on our behaviour but also on our feelings about ourselves and our overall development. (Deci & Ryan, 1990, p. 245)

Indeed, positive relationships with adults are thought to be central to successful interventions with marginalised young people (Wilkin et al., 2005), and certainly appeared to be crucial for establishing a space in the present study in which the young people felt secure and comfortable and where feelings of confidence, self-belief, trust, belonging, mutual respect and equality could grow. Moreover the clear structures and

expectations that characterised the approach of the theatre staff created a solid foundation upon which those positive relationships could develop, and personal growth could occur. Together, these features echo the three dimensions – involvement, autonomy, and structure – described within SDT frameworks as dimensions by which social context is assessed (Deci & Ryan, 1990). The consequence of having these features present in the theatre project appeared to be a strong sense of resilience in relationships; even when difficulties arose, there was a fundamental sense of commitment to restoring positive interpersonal connections.

It is not only the qualities of the relationships with the theatre practitioners that are need-supporting, but also the sense of a ‘team’, as well as relationships with the audience, and ultimately with themselves. Besides the references to feeling part of a ‘family’ or ‘team’, the theatre audiences’ positive responses to, and interest in, the participants’ performances – the culmination of many months of hard work – provided immediate acknowledgement, value, and respect for the achievements of the young people. The feedback that was at first received with shock and disbelief, was slowly internalised with a growing self-belief and confidence (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991; Harland et al., 2000; Smokowski et al., 1999; Vallerand & Reid, 1988). This internalisation of nutriment from the social environment means that ultimately a change in the young peoples’ relationship with themselves is felt (Deci & Ryan, 1990). There is a sense from the accounts that space and voice have been given to an authentic self, which finds release rather than being hidden away. The old masks of the past – the tough self-presentations and false selves (Harter, 2006), and the quashing of intrinsic interest and engagement – have been shed and replaced with new motivation, self-belief, self-worth (Burhans & Dweck, 1995; Kamins & Dweck, 1999), and confidence

in the capacity to reach for new possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman & Markus, 1990).

Limitations and future directions

Despite the unique understanding of participants' experiences that this study afforded, we must recognise that these experiences cannot be assumed to generalise to all marginalised young people, nor indeed to all drama and theatre activities for at-risk youths. A larger study with samples of young people from a number of different drama and theatre projects would allow for an examination of how different experiences of drama and theatre projects – such as variations in approaches, as well as in qualities of the relationships between adults and young people – relate to self-construal and motivational outcomes. Furthermore, the heterogeneity of such samples of young people would allow for an examination of how other factors external to the drama and theatre project – such as demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity), baseline levels of motivation/goals/self-construals, present life circumstances, as well as past school or home experiences – relate to outcomes.

It is important to stress that the theatre project described in the present study was framed not as an intervention, but rather as a unique, sensitive, and powerful way of developing a theatre production. Whilst this approach is appropriate for qualitative designs concerned with idiographic inquiry, there is also a need for future work to explore systematically the extent to which drama and theatre activities can be used deliberately as therapeutic interventions to re-engage marginalised young people. Testing drama and theatre projects as an intervention will require an experimental design in order to compare those involved in the intervention against control samples on outcome variables.

Specifically, as noted above, a wide range of factors beyond the theatre project could have influenced the psychosocial trajectories described in this report. Particularly given that the participants had themselves chosen to get involved in the theatre project, it is likely that they were distinctive in terms of having at least some initial interest in drama and theatre, as well as a variety of additional personal, social and experiential factors that will have led to differing experiences of, and engagement with, the drama and theatre project. Future studies focused on experimental tests of drama and theatre interventions for young people should avoid selection bias by ensuring that samples of participants are randomised, and that groups are matched on a range of relevant personal and social factors. Quantitative measurements will also allow for a systematic understanding of statistical changes over time in outcomes such as self-construals, motivations and cognitions, and behaviours and emotions (Daykin et al., 2008; see McArdle et al., 2002, for a randomised controlled trial of the efficacy of group drama therapy for at-risk children).

Finally, whilst the present study provides a rich account how drama and theatre projects may promote self-development and potentially help to re-direct the negative trajectories associated with marginalised youth, our understanding of whether specific activities within the range of drama and theatre activities – in particular those based on autobiographical reflections – provide unique contributions beyond those that are conferred by projects employing a broad range of arts-based activities (Arts Council England, 2005; Hirst & Robertshaw, 2003; Wilkin et al., 2005) remains limited. A fruitful avenue of future research could include a quantitative examination of the impact of specific drama and theatre activities – for example role-play improvisations, and improvisations based on lived experiences – on outcomes such as self-concept, emotional well-being, and social behaviour, in order to determine the unique benefits of

these approaches over and above the effects of other projects which do not include drama and theatre elements. Moreover, our understanding of what happens when creative arts projects for at-risk young people end is little understood. Participants in the present study described feelings of emptiness and loss when activities within the project came to an end, and therefore questions about long-term resilience in participants need to be explored, as well as follow-up work to examine how long lasting the changes captured are (McArdle et al., 2002).

Conclusion

Our in-depth, longitudinal, idiographic investigation has illustrated how drama and theatre activities may provide a unique opportunity for marginalised young people to engage in a process of self-development by providing a social environment which is nurturing for the self. Consistent with our integrated model of engagement/disaffection (Hanrahan et al., 2013), our results speak to the interplay of positive relationships, self-construals, and the experience of intrinsic enjoyment, mastery, and achievement. Further work is now required to test more systematically the use of drama and theatre work as an explicit intervention approach for addressing the psychosocial needs of marginalised youths. Such research will be crucial for harnessing the power of the theatre project reported here in order to promote self-development and positive trajectories within the larger population of marginalised youths.

Chapter 6: General Discussion

6.1 Overview of General Discussion

The thesis presented four papers that examine how the behavioural and emotional profile of disaffected youths may be underpinned by a complex interplay of social environmental experiences, self-construals, and motivations. This final section will provide a summary of the overall findings, and a discussion of theoretical and practical implications of this body of work. Limitations of the current programme of research, as well as directions for future work, will also be considered.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The Development of a Theoretical Model of Youth Disaffection at School

Our first aim was to advance our understanding of theoretical frameworks which could explain the socio-motivational processes at play in the development of youth disaffection at school. We did this by synthesising theoretical explanations from the extant literature as well as by paying close attention to the lived experiences of disaffected youths. First, the theoretical work presented in Paper 1 drew together relevant frameworks already identified within the literature into a holistic model of the development of youth disaffection at school. Specifically, motivational and cognitive frameworks for understanding disaffected youths' responses to failure and performance avoidance including achievement goal theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) were found to be closely connected with each other, as well as with accounts of basic need fulfilment as outlined by self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000a), which provides a framework for understanding the role played by environmental contexts in the development of disaffection.

Uniquely, the model proposed that in addition to direct links between key processes identified in the model, multiple self-construals mediate the effects of need-thwarting environments on subsequent motivational, behavioural, and emotional outcomes, thus refining and strengthening our understanding of school disaffection. Frameworks built into this conceptualisation of disaffection include those which provide explanations for the tensions in self-construals held by disaffected young people, and their affective consequences, including self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) and possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Furthermore, reciprocal links between different constructs in our model were considered to be likely based on work on children's social adjustment which show that social experiences both influence, and are influenced by, cognitive and motivational processes (see Crick & Dodge, 1994). It was also considered that these feedback loops help to explain how some pupils get trapped in vicious cycles of disaffection that lead to further marginalisation, and eventually to entrenched social exclusion.

This model of youth disaffection at school was supported by the in-depth accounts from our qualitative study with school-excluded young people and staff working with them, which was reported in Paper 2. In this study, results from a theory-driven thematic analysis of transcripts were consistent with proposed links between factors identified in our model. Specifically, young people's behavioural and emotional profile of school disengagement were linked with accounts of home and school experiences that described unsupportive environments that failed to provide the young people with the basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness. Furthermore, our analysis supported the proposition that maladaptive constructions of multiple selves mediate the relationship between need-thwarting social experience on the one hand, and behaviour, emotions and motivation in the academic context on the

other. In this way, the lived experiences of the young people and staff who took part in this study provided empirical support of our socio-motivational model of youth disaffection at school. Furthermore, as well as illuminating the likely psychological pathways from unsupportive environments to school disaffection, our findings allowed us to extend and enrich the model because an additional process – the conception of an inauthentic self – emerged from accounts resulting in a richer picture of how multiple self-construals may mediate pathways between unsupportive social environments and maladaptive behaviours.

Testing Direct and Indirect Pathways in Our Model of Youth Disaffection at School

Our second aim was to test our model of school disaffection by investigating what direct and indirect pathways exist among the core constructs identified by our model, including those related to social environmental experiences, self-construals, cognitions, and reports on behavioural and emotional outcomes, as well as examining the role of school exclusion in moderating these pathways. First, Paper 3 showed that PRU pupils differed significantly from their mainstream peers in terms of their environmental experiences with those in the PRU experiencing a greater number of significant life events, and perceiving both their parents and mainstream school teachers to be less supportive. PRU pupils' attributions for academic successes and failures also differed from their mainstream peers, in that they made more external attributions for academic successes and more ability and external attributions for academic failures. As expected, PRU and mainstream pupils also differed in terms of their aspirations and achievement goals with PRU pupils identifying extrinsic goals as more important relative to intrinsic goals, whilst also scoring lower on measures of mastery goals, and academic efficacy, compared to mainstream pupils. On measures of self-perceptions,

however, PRU and mainstream pupils did not differ, with no difference found between groups on the false self or self-worth measures. Finally, the use of hypothetical vignettes to measure behavioural and emotional responses showed that PRU pupils responded with more negative emotions and with more positive perceptions of aggressive behaviour than their peers in mainstream school.

Second, Paper 3 provided quantitative support for our model, with support for the expected links between key processes such that social environmental experiences (specifically when operationalised as perceived parent and teacher support) predicted self-construals as well as cognitions relating to academic attributions and goals, which in turn predicted young people's reports on behavioural and emotional responses to interpersonal scenarios. Third, results of our analysis showed support for hypothesised mediated pathways from social-environmental experiences to behavioural and emotional responses to hypothetical vignettes, via self-worth, cognitions and motivations including helpless attributions and extrinsic aspirations.

Finally, pathways between these variables were found to be moderated by the experience of exclusion such that distinct pathways emerged for excluded and non-excluded pupils. Specifically, our analysis showed that for excluded pupils perceived parental support of psychological needs was a much stronger predictor of cognitions and motivations compared to measures of perceived teacher support, with parental support positively predicting mastery goals and negatively predicting helpless attributions. However, for mainstream pupils perceived supportiveness of teachers and levels of self-worth predicted cognitions and motivation, with teacher support positively predicting mastery goals and self-efficacy, while self-worth negatively predicted helpless attributions. Furthermore, in Paper 2, some interviewees – both PRU pupils and staff members – commented explicitly that what was going on at home troubled the

young people much more than any school-related factors and had the greatest impact on their behavioural and emotional presentations at school. These findings highlight the particular importance of perceived parental support for young people who experience behavioural, emotional and motivational difficulties at school.

The Role of Social Experiences in Building Pathways Out of Disaffection

Our final aim was to evaluate social experiences as a key factor in pathways into, and pathways out of, disaffection by listening to the voices of marginalised young people. First, results from the theory-driven thematic analysis of interviews with school-excluded young people in Paper 2 showed that while experiences of mainstream school had been overwhelmingly negative for the young people – their accounts indicated that schools had failed to provide contexts in which the basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness could be met – most of the young people in contrast described their experiences of the PRU as highly positive. Here the psychological needs of relatedness and autonomy were seen to be met through a new emphasis on building strong pupil-teacher relationships as well as more appropriate staff responses to pupils' often challenging behaviour, based on a deeper understanding of external pressures faced by many pupils. Furthermore, competence needs were seen to be met through the internalisation of staff confidence and belief in the young people's potential and ability. Here, the lack of need fulfilment experienced in other contexts was seen to be counteracted through a supportive school environment such that the future trajectories for at least some of the young people appeared to move towards positive future selves that were being actively pursued with a new sense of personal agency.

The centrality of perceived support from parents or guardians and teachers was again highlighted by findings in Paper 3 whereby social environmental experiences were found to predict self-construals such that greater perceived support for

psychological needs from parents negatively predicted having a false-self and positively predicted feelings of self-worth. There were also direct links between social environmental experiences and cognitions and motivations, with greater perceptions of parental support predicting having more mastery goals and fewer helpless attributions, while perceiving teachers to be more supportive of psychological needs also predicted having more mastery goals, fewer helpless attributions and a greater sense of academic self-efficacy. Similarly, in Paper 2, the importance of social environmental experiences was again highlighted by interviewees, many of whom expressed that concerns about stressful home-life situations, and the impact of turbulent relationships with parents, had detrimental impacts on the extent to which they could, or wished to, engage with school.

Lastly, the results of our interpretative phenomenological analysis of the accounts of four marginalised young people who took part in a long term drama and theatre project, as described in Paper 4, illustrated how by providing a social environment which is nurturing for the self, drama and theatre projects can support a unique opportunity for self-development in marginalised young people. Specifically, an examination of psychological processes likely to underpin the young people's experiences pointed to the crucial role of relationships and social contexts in providing environments which supported the needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy as outlined by self-determination theory. Through integration of nutrients from the social environment the development of the self was made possible, reflected in changes in perceived self-discrepancies and possible selves, the expression of an authentic self, and self-efficacy. Finally, the social context of the drama and theatre project provided a space within which intrinsic motivation, as well as mastery and achievement experiences, could be enjoyed and further nurture the self along new trajectories of development.

6.3 Theoretical and Practical Implications

This programme of work has a number of important implications for theoretical conceptualisations of the associations between maladaptive social environmental experiences and poor motivational and behavioural outcomes at school, which in turn feed into implications for practice in working with disaffected youths. Below we outline the key implications arising from this work and explain how they advance our understanding of pathways into, and pathways out of, youth disaffection.

The Complex Interplay of Psychological Factors Underpinning Youth Disaffection

This programme of work represents a significant advance in our understanding of the interplay of psychological factors underpinning youth disaffection. Notwithstanding the significant contributions of existing models of engagement (Hallam, 2002; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008; Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2009), our model, as outlined in Papers 1 and 2, is the first psychological model of disaffection and disengagement at school to date which has included: a) the psychological frameworks of need-thwarting social environments as outlined by self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1991; Ryan, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2000a); *and* b) a consideration of the mediating role of multiple self-construals – in particular low self-worth, possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman, 2008) and self-discrepancies (Higgins, 1987, 1989); *and* c) cognitive and motivational processes such as attribution patterns, goal orientations, and aspirations. In this way, our model builds on, and integrates previous models such as: a) the self-system model of motivational development (SSMMD; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner et al., 2008; Skinner, et al., 2009) – which has included considerations of social environments, and self-perceptions of need fulfilment, as well as well-established frameworks for understanding cognitions

and motivations including goal theory; and b) Hallam's model of motivation which incorporates a role for self-concepts – including possible selves, self-esteem and self-efficacy – within a model of motivation with links to cognitions and environmental factors (Hallam, 2002; Hallam & Rogers, 2008).

Our results build on specific links that have already been identified in the existing literature. For example, Connell, Spencer, and Aber's (1994) path analysis of data from 10- to 16-year-old African American pupils showed that perceptions of parental involvement predicted measures of perceived competence and relatedness, which in turn predicted engagement at school, while engagement predicted academic performance and attendance. Further support for links asserted by the SSMMD has been shown in work by Skinner et al. (2008), in which both teacher support and student's self-system processes of perceived control, autonomy and relatedness were found to be predictors of engagement at school, with self-system processes mediating the link between teacher support and engagement. Similarly, longitudinal work by Green et al. (2012) found that academic motivation and self-concept predicted attitudes toward school in high school students, which in turn predicted engagement at school, and ultimately test performance.

The results of Papers 2, 3 and 4 advance this understanding of links between social environmental experiences that support or thwart psychological needs, and behaviours and emotions associated with engagement or disaffection, by providing evidence that this well-established link can be explained by psychological factors. First, a qualitative exploration of the lived experiences of school-excluded young people in Paper 2 revealed that processes identified by the proposed model were mirrored in the lived experiences expressed by participants. Furthermore, a process not yet considered by models of school disaffection was revealed in this analysis – the inauthentic or

‘false’ self – suggesting that models of disaffection might be strengthened with the incorporation of this self-construal. Second, results from Paper 3 provide the first quantitative support for a model of disaffection which tested, and found support for expected direct links and mediated pathways from need-fulfilment (perceived parent and teacher support), to adolescents’ judgements about behavioural and emotional responses to interpersonal scenarios at school, via self-worth, and cognitions and motivations including helpless attributions for successes and failures at school, and extrinsic aspirations. Third, results reported in Paper 4 from our qualitative longitudinal analysis of accounts from at-risk young people who took part in a drama and theatre project revealed strong links between environmental experiences and a complex process of self-development. Increased feelings of self-efficacy, mastery, competence, authentic self-expression, and self-belief were shown to be underpinned by the nurturing context of the project in which supportive relationships, positive feedback, and freedom of expression were experienced.

Importantly, the present programme of work tested this interplay of socio-motivational factors with young people at an extreme end of the disaffection spectrum, namely those who have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools. This was considered crucial to adequate testing of links between processes identified by models of motivation, because the majority of the previous literature on this topic has employed typically-developing populations of pupils in mainstream school. By including school-excluded young people, the present programme of work advances the reach of our theoretical understanding by showing not only that the excluded and non-excluded subgroups differ on key socio-motivational constructs in expected ways, but also that the theorised pathways connecting the various constructs are applicable to

young people who have been marginalised through their exclusion from mainstream education.

Moreover, we advance existing models of engagement and disaffection by showing that the experience of exclusion from mainstream school moderates the effect of links between variables such that pathways differ for school-excluded and non-school-excluded pupils in a systematic way. The results of Paper 3 show that for school-excluded pupils perceived parental support of psychological needs is a much stronger predictor of cognitions and motivations compared to measures of perceived teacher support, whereas for mainstream pupils, perceived supportiveness of teachers and levels of self-worth predicted cognitions and motivation. Thus, by including pupils at both ends of the engagement/disengagement spectrum in our analysis of pathways to engagement and disaffection in Paper 3, we avoid the errors inherent in trying to produce a model that is applicable to all, and increase the generalisability of our findings to populations of mainstream and school-excluded pupils.

Taken together, our work testing the interplay of socio-motivational processes underpinning youth disaffection has implications for practice. First, our findings from Papers 2, 3 and 4 suggest that schools not only must provide nurturing environments that support the needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, but also must address the psychological factors that mediate the relationship between environmental experiences and engagement at school. This could, for example, involve helping young people to identify – and then build realistic strategies to achieve – positive, hoped-for, or ideal selves. Furthermore, our findings (Paper 3) suggest that interventions targeting cognitions and motivations relating to specific academic attributional patterns (for a review of attribution training studies with adolescents with learning difficulties see

Robertson, 2000) as well as more general aspirations might also be effective for increasing engagement.

Some existing interventions do already target some factors identified by our findings as important for engagement or disaffection, particularly interventions or practices that focus on raising levels of self-worth in pupils. For example, existing early interventions with at-risk pupils such as Pyramid Clubs have been found to successfully increase the socio-emotional skills of primary school children (Ohl, Fox, & Mitchell, 2013), and alternative curricula such as Skill Force (Hallam & Rogers, 2008; Hallam, Rogers, & Rhamie, 2010) may be usefully employed by schools to increase feelings of self-worth. These can be embedded within much larger-scale universal school-based programmes for promoting ‘social and emotional learning’ at primary and secondary schools (see Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011 for a meta-analysis; Hallam & Rogers, 2008).

In addition, preliminary research by Oyserman, Terry, and Bybee (2002) suggest that interventions specifically targeting possible selves can change these self-construals and in turn increase engagement at school, as well as increasing feelings of belonging and reducing disruptive behaviour. However, the efficacy of such interventions with already highly disaffected young people is not always strong (Hallam & Rogers, 2008), therefore interventions specifically designed for school-excluded secondary pupils, or those not engaging in any kind of alternative provision, could also be turned to in the case of hard-to-reach pupils (Duckworth, 2005; Hallam & Rogers, 2008). For example, Notatschool.net provides online alternative provision to young people for whom other approaches to learning have not worked, and has been found to increase self-worth, social skills and ambition, as well as having successes in re-engaging young people (Duckworth, 2005).

Our findings (Paper 3) also suggest that perceived support from teachers is relevant to young people's socio-motivational engagement in mainstream school. Although the causal direction of the links in Paper 3 cannot be inferred, it may be that a focus on increasing the quality of pupil-teacher relationships could have a preventive function in terms of reducing the likelihood of negative behavioural and emotional pupil responses to potential conflict situations. One way of improving such relationships may be to increase teacher awareness and skills, and support them to build supportive relationships with students, using programmes such as Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE for Teachers). Encouraging preliminary work assessing the impact of CARE on teachers found significant improvements in teacher well-being, efficacy and stress when compared to controls, as well as teacher endorsement for the efficacy of the programme in improving performance; teachers in the CARE intervention group agreeing that they felt better able to establish and maintain supportive relationships with pupils (Jennings, Frank, Snowberg, Coccia, & Greenberg, 2013).

Finally, this work has implications for the home environment, as it suggests that increasing parental support is important, particularly for those pupils who are at risk of becoming increasingly disaffected from school. Findings from Papers 2 and 3 suggest that for disaffected pupils, having this nurturing context is vital if positive school factors – such as relationships with teachers – are to impact on the cognitions and motivations underpinning engagement. Programmes that can improve parent-child relationships, and increase positive parent-school interactions, may be effective in ensuring supports are in place for these young people (Hallam, Rogers, & Shaw, 2004). For example, successful parenting programmes such as the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities programme report increased parental skills including the use of positive discipline and

communication strategies, and increased feelings of competence, with benefits for children also reported (Wilding & Barton, 2007).

Individual Responses to the Environment

This programme of work also serves to draw attention to the unique responses of individuals to their environment and to experiences including interventions and strategies to help ‘re-engage’ young people. Listening to the voices of individual participants in Papers 2 and 4 highlighted the unique responses each young person had – whether to the mainstream school, the PRU, or the drama and theatre programme – and also provided insights into the distinct set of circumstances and experiences that set the background for these responses. The school-excluded pupils interviewed in Paper 2 each provided unique accounts of their school experiences, relationships to teachers, the context of their home-life experiences, what being excluded was like for them, their understanding of why they were excluded, their aspirations and feelings about themselves. Similarly, the four young people interviewed in Paper 4 brought distinctive experiences with them to the drama and theatre project, which meant that each of them responded differently to this new experience resulting in unique relationships and very personal journeys within the context of this project.

The uniqueness of individual responses to the environment necessitates a focus on individual needs and an awareness of the distinct experiences underpinning these needs. In practice, this means that it behoves educators, and adults working with young people, where possible to assess and address the unique needs of young people they come into contact with, and to use individualised approaches, rather than employing ‘one-size-fits-all’ strategies or interventions. As has been highlighted in other studies with disaffected pupils (Zamorski & Haydn, 2002) when the agenda of a young person and school or adult collide greater disengagement and detachment is likely. Thus, child-

centred approaches whereby understanding a young person's perspective, acknowledging the everyday reality of their worlds, and listening to their needs, remains central, will be crucial for establishing valued relationships and ultimately for effective practice (Prior & Mason, 2010; Ruch, 2005; Trevithick, 2003).

The findings from Paper 3 in this programme of work showing that disaffected young people disproportionately experience more need-thwarting social environments compared to other young people – including a greater number of life events, and perceiving their parents and teachers to be less supportive – highlight the importance of providing nurturing environments in work with youth at risk in particular. Indeed, being listened to and understood by teachers and practitioners were factors highlighted as crucial for engagement by the young people participating in qualitative interviews in Papers 2 and 4 in this programme of work. The need to be seen not as just another pupil with problems, but rather as a unique individual with a distinct set of 'lived experiences', who desires to be valued for who they are, is voiced strongly by many of the young people.

The renewed focus on relationship-based practice within the social work literature seen over the past 15 years, echoes our findings (Papers 2, 3 and 4) in which the importance of strong relationships for the creation of nurturing, need-fulfilling environments in which self-development may take place, is emphasised. Here effective communication, warmth, genuineness, and empathy are emphasised as key to effective practitioner approaches. At the same time, responding to the complexities the young people present with by seeing and understanding "the child as an individual within her own context" and "attempt[ing] to gain access to the child's perspective" is viewed as central to effective engagement (Brandon, Schofield, & Trinder, 1998, p. 72).

Active Engagement in Self-Development

The need-fulfilling environments described in interviews with young people educated in PRUs (Paper 2), and those who took part in the drama and theatre project (Paper 4), were often associated with positive relationships, feelings of self-belief, competence, being valued and a sense of a positive future. In these studies, the positive environments of the PRU and the drama and theatre project appeared to lay the foundation and provide nourishment for some young people to engage in a process of self-development leading in turn to positive self-perceptions and self-construals. However, our findings imply that this process is not a passive one, nor one that will occur through the provision of a nourishing environment alone. Instead, the young people themselves embarked on their own self-agentic journey of self-development enabled by the provision of a nourishing social context.

That the process of self-development is one that is engaged in by the young person has important implications for practice, as it emphasises the notion that interventions are not ‘done to’ young people, but rather they are participatory, that is, engaged in by young people with the support of others. This again emphasises the importance of relationships with practitioners in interventions or centres of educational provision in order to promote optimal conditions for self-development to occur. Thus, as outlined by self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000a), interventions in which supportive relationships with others – such that a young person feels that they matter to and are accepted by practitioners – will meet their need for relatedness. If a young person feels that within the context of an intervention, or at school, they are listened to and have the freedom to make choices and pursue their interests their need for autonomy will be satisfied. Finally, if young people feel they are able to meet the

challenges they face, they will feel competent (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Stiglbauer, Gnambs, Gamsjäger, & Batinic, 2013).

Support for the effects of positive, need-fulfilling social environmental experiences on self-agentic self-development come from evidence relating to Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, which asserts that the experience of having positive emotions broaden a person's thought-action repertoire thereby supporting and promoting approach behaviour, creativity, and engagement in opportunities presented. Furthermore, the resources built through the physical, psychological, intellectual, and social engagement that results from broadened thought-action repertoires, in turn lead to increased well-being and further positive emotions, creating an upward spiral toward well-being so that over time the effect is a "widen[ing] [of] people's outlooks in ways that, little by little, reshape who they are" (Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008, p. 1045; see Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005, for a review of supporting evidence; Stiglbauer et al., 2013).

We believe the personal resources that result from broadened thought-action repertoires are akin to what has here (Paper 4) been described as self-development. This is attested to by research showing that positive emotions can lead to increases in self-acceptance, positive relations with others, feelings of competence about one's life, an awareness of realistic pathways for achieving goals, a sense of having purpose in life, and resilience, which in turn lead ultimately to increased satisfaction with life and fewer symptoms of depression (Fredrickson et al., 2008). Encouragingly, this model has more recently been extended to the school context with findings from longitudinal work with adolescents showing that positive school experiences and happiness are reciprocally related and lead to an upward spiral of well-being over time (Stiglbauer et al., 2013). This last study is particularly important as it suggests that need-fulfilling, supportive

environments lay the foundations for positive emotions which in turn lead to broadened thought-action repertoires, or self-development, and that this in turn increases over time via amplifying loops or virtuous cycles. The interpretive phenomenological analysis of accounts from the young people in Paper 4 revealed that precisely this kind of spiral of positive emotions, sense of agency and capability, and positive aspirations for the future came to characterise the young people, as they progressed along a remarkably challenging but ultimately empowering journey through drama and theatre.

6.4 Limitations and Future Directions

Overall, our findings provide innovative support for links between core psychological frameworks for understanding motivation, particularly among young people who have been excluded from school. However, there are a number of limitations to our programme of research in relation to the methodologies and measures employed, as well as the interpretations of relationships between variables in our model.

First, our conceptual model, despite encompassing many constructs, is certainly not exhaustive, and further psychological factors that contribute to the development of disaffection exist and may further mediate or moderate the effects discussed above. For example, it is well-established that internalising and externalising psychopathologies, including ADHD and conduct disorder, are prevalent among youths who have been excluded from, or drop-out of, mainstream education (Breslau, Lane, Sampson, & Kessler, 2008; Breslau, Miller, Chung, & Schweitzer, 2011; Kessler, Foster, Saunders, & Stang, 1995). Various impulse control, language impairments and learning difficulties are also likely to be relevant (Bowman-Perrot et al., 2011; Breslau et al., 2011; Clegg, Stackhouse, Finch, Murphy, & Nicholls, 2009; Hill, 2002; Ripley &

Yuill, 2005). Therefore an important consideration for future research investigating pathways to disaffection at school should include an examination of whether the developmental trajectories related to school disaffection operate in different ways for individuals who exhibit these patterns of atypical or psychopathological development.

Furthermore, although the model of disaffection tested in the present programme of research included a role for the social environmental factors of home, school, peers, and the community in providing or thwarting basic needs, the inclusion of health-promoting environmental factors, or personal protective factors that might increase the resilience of youngsters and lead to positive outcomes in terms of behavioural and emotional engagement, has yet to be explored. These might include positive experiences and relationships outside of the school context (see Gilligan, 1999, 2000; Reis, Colbert, & Hébert, 2004). The current programme of work included a first step in this direction through its exploration of the impact of a drama and theatre project on the self-development of disaffected youths. However, a model of the development of disaffection which includes a consideration of positive environmental factors, alongside personal protective factors, should now be empirically tested (for an example of differential susceptibility models of interactions between temperament and environment see Belsky, 1997, and Belsky & Pluess, 2009).

Also, it is possible that there are developmental constraints on the model such that links identified between variables in the model may be particularly salient at a certain developmental period or may cease to be effective before or beyond particular points in development. For example, it is likely that limitations to self-reflective cognitive functions before adolescence will mean that processes such as the more complex self-construals and cognitions identified in the model may be more difficult to identify in younger children (see Blakemore, 2008 for review; Blakemore &

Choudhury, 2006; Forehand & Wierson, 1993). Research is now needed to determine whether developmental constraints exist and similarly, to examine the extent to which our model holds consistently across gender given that there is some evidence to suggest a gender effect in behavioural, if not emotional, disaffection (Skinner et al., 2008).

A further methodological limitation of the present programme of work, which has implications for interpretations of our model, is the cross-sectional nature of much of our data (Papers 2 and 3). Comprehensive longitudinal work is now needed in order to evaluate in a more systematic way the direction of links between early social experiences, multiple self-construals, motivation and attribution patterns, and the behavioural and emotional profiles of disaffected youths, so that a reliable explanatory account of developmental pathways can be created. Longitudinal research will also allow for an examination of the proposed reciprocity of the links between different constructs, such that the behaviours that result from the motivational and self-related processes involved will themselves shape the young person's social environment and thereby feed back into further elaboration of those personal and socio-motivational orientations.

The likelihood of such reciprocal links is suggested by other lines of work on children's social adjustment showing that social experiences both influence, and are influenced by, cognitive and motivational processes (see Crick & Dodge, 1994). Furthermore, tentative evidence in support of these kinds of reciprocal relationships between constructs can be seen in findings from research by Skinner and colleagues (Skinner, Furrer, et al., 2008), which indicates that engagement and disaffection amplify over time due to the reciprocal effects of behaviour and emotion. Additionally, research on classroom engagement has pointed to bidirectional links with parental support (Connell et al., 1994), and teacher support (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Finally, recent

research on longitudinal relationships between need-fulfilling school environments and happiness in adolescents by Stiglbauer and colleagues (2013) has shown found support for reciprocal relationships between these constructs such that over time they lead to an upward spiral of well-being in pupils' lives. This work by Stiglbauer and colleagues (2013) sheds some light on how young people in education become trapped in vicious cycles of disaffection; however further longitudinal work with samples of school-excluded pupils, and including the socio-motivational processes included in the present programme of work, is needed to examine the developmental links between core processes.

Further methodological issues are raised by the limited number of constructs used to operationalize core processes in our model, whether through the limited scope of measures in Paper 3 (e.g., the short scale for perceived teacher support and the use of vignettes to capture behavioural and emotional responses), or the limited range of question topics included in Papers 2 and 4. This may have reduced the complexity, and potentially the accuracy, of the constructs being operationalised and may mean that our findings may not accurately reflect the true potential of our integrated conceptual model. Future research employing additional measures and question topics is needed in order that models of the development of youth disaffection accurately capture the interplay of psychological factors underpinning behavioural and emotional outcomes.

This limitation brings us to a related point about how we operationalised 'disaffection', and whether broader or narrower conceptualisations would be useful for future research. Whilst acknowledging that those described as 'disaffected' or 'disengaged' at school are not a homogenous group (Baird et al., 2011; Duffy & Elwood, 2013; Ross, 2009), the present programme of work has accepted that 'disaffection' and 'disengagement' tap into some kind of common experience or process

(Baird et al., 2011). However, Skinner and colleagues have proposed that there are likely to be systematically different expressions of disaffection that reflect different underlying emotions including: enervated emotion (tired, sad, bored), alienated emotion (frustration, anger), and pressured participation (anxiety) (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2008). In the case of both the quantitative and qualitative work in this thesis, we were able to generate a rich picture of the perspectives and experiences of the young people who participated in our investigations, but we did not have a wider profile of their actual school history, nor of their actual emotional and behavioural responses in different settings. Thus, there remains an important question about the nature and implications of variations within school-excluded samples for the kinds of conceptual processes examined in this study.

Finally, our programme of work set out to develop and test a model of the development of youth disaffection at school. However, a number of the participants in our qualitative evaluations and explorations of our model of motivation (Papers 2 and 4) included previously school-excluded young people who no longer received educational provision because they were over sixteen years of age. Despite this, core processes included in our model were found still to be highly relevant to this group. This raises the question of whether our model can be applied more broadly to young people experiencing marginalisation or who are considered to be socially excluded. It is clear from the literature that young people who experience school exclusion often go on to become socially excluded more broadly once they turn sixteen, and may have long-term NEET status (Burchardt, Le Grand, & Piachaud 1999; SEU, 2000; Thompson, Russell, & Simmons, 2013). Thus, it might be expected that models which can shed light on the socio-motivational processes underpinning youth disaffection at school might also be employed in research with NEETs and marginalised young adults. A fruitful route for

future research would therefore be to test whether our model of youth disaffection at school can be more widely applied to disaffection in youth more generally.

6.5 Conclusions

Overall, the programme of work presented in this thesis supports our model of the development of youth disaffection and advances our understanding through a dual approach of idiographic enquiry and empirical testing. Self-construals, and cognitions and motivations including maladaptive achievement goals, attributions, and aspirations, were shown to mediate associations between need-thwarting home and school environments, and maladaptive behavioural and emotional outcomes in secondary school pupils. However, mediated pathways were found to differ depending on experience of exclusion, with the role of supportive home environments shown to be particularly salient for school-excluded pupils. Additionally, our investigation highlighted the potential for nurturing social environmental experiences to provide a warm and stable basis for young people already excluded from school to engage in a process of self-development. Encouragingly, our findings show that alternative education settings, and extra-curricular work involving drama and theatre, can provide a social context within which intrinsic motivation, and mastery and achievement experiences can be enjoyed, such that a process of self-development occurs via changes in perceived self-discrepancies and possible selves and the discovery and expression of an authentic self.

In this way, our findings support a model of disaffection that has at its core an emphasis on the importance of need-fulfilling environmental experiences in order to achieve positive behavioural and emotional outcomes, bridged by a complex interplay

of socio-motivational factors that underpin self-development. This programme of work provides a strong basis for future work to systematically examine pathways to youth disaffection by building on the links between constructs found in our work, and to further examine the potential for extra-curricular arts-based programmes to empower marginalised young people in building positive trajectories for self-development.

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