

## Neglected, Rejected, and Controversial Statuses: The Relationship to Adolescents' Social Status Goals

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The consistent linkages social status has to adolescent behaviors (e.g., perceived popular to relational aggression, social preference to prosocial behaviors) underscores the significance of social status among adolescents but adolescents' desires to pursue a higher social status, namely social status goals, is not well understood. However, some social statuses are more concerned with social status goals than others: neglected adolescents are not too interested in their current status, while controversial and rejected adolescents actively pursue higher social statuses. In this present study, we investigated the differences in neglected, rejected, and controversial adolescents' endorsements of social status goals, specifically the popularity goal (e.g., the desire for perceived popularity) and the social preference goal (e.g., the desire for social preference). It was hypothesized that neglected adolescents would not endorse social status goals while controversial and rejected adolescents would endorse both goals. Participants included 54 neglected, 52 rejected, and 53 controversial adolescents from 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades who completed a self-report measure assessing their social status goals. Their responses related to the respective social status goals were summed to form a final score representing the endorsement of that particular goal. Our findings indicated that adolescents who identified as either the neglected or the controversial social statuses were differentiated regarding their social status goals. That is, the neglected status was negatively related to both social status goals while the controversial status was positively related to the endorsement of both goals. The rejected status was not related to the pursuit of either social status goals. Results are discussed in terms of the pursuit of social status and the potential ramifications these pursuits may have on adolescent behavior.