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It is the air that we breathe. Academic socialization as a key component for understanding how parents influence children's schooling

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ABSTRACT

It is well known from the research literature that parents are important when it comes to determining individual school experiences, achievements and careers. However, in what way parental background influences education outcomes is less clear. In this article, the focus is on academic socialization as a specific aspect of parents' influence on children's school achievements. The main aims are to discuss the relationship between academic socialization and school performance and to discuss some implications of this relationship for the educational system's role as a producer and reproducer of social inequalities. Firstly, an understanding of the concept of academic socialization is presented. Secondly, implications of research findings pointing to the importance of academic socialization are critically assessed in terms of social inequalities in education. Thirdly, the educational system's presupposition for academic socialization is discussed in terms of inequity in education and symbolic violence.

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It is well known from the research literature that parents are important when it comes to determining individual school experiences, achievements and careers. In the Norwegian context, parents' formal rights vis-à-vis the educational system have been extended during recent decades, and schools' expectations towards parents' role in their children's education has changed (Bæck, 2015). In line with growing recognition of the importance of involving parents in education, a whole range of studies has focused on different forms of home-school cooperation and parental involvement in school, demonstrating the importance such involvement has in different fields, for example when it comes to students' school motivation (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein, 2005), school attitudes (Dearing, Kreider, & Weiss, 2008), absence (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Sheldon, 2007; Sheldon & Epstein, 2004), dropout (Rumberger, 2011), and subject-specific achievements in mathematics (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005a), science (Van Voorhis, Maier, & Epstein et al., 2013) and literacy (Fletcher, Greenwood, & Parkhill, 2010; Fletcher, Parkhill, Fa'afai, Taleni, & O'Regan, 2009; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005b).

At the same time, the relationship between social background factors and school attainment continues to prevail, and the question of social class differences in education is as relevant now as it has ever been, including in Norway. Recent research findings from the evaluation of the latest educational reform in Norway, the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform,

have shown, for example, that home background is more significant for educational outcomes now than it was 10 or 15 years ago (Bakken, 2012). Thus, the educational system is continuing to reproduce social differences despite its explicit goal of providing equal opportunities to all students.

A growing body of research has pointed out that parents from different socioeconomic strata tend to be variously involved in their children's education (for example, Bæck, 2009, 2010), which may in turn materialize as social class differences in student performance in school. Several meta-studies have put academic socialization forward as a particularly important aspect of parents' contribution to students' educational success (see Hattie, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Van Voorhis et al., 2013). However, while these meta-studies have pointed out the importance of academic socialization for student performance, there has not been a lot of work done on the concept itself. The main aims of this article are therefore to discuss the relationship between academic socialization and school performance, and to discuss some implications of this relationship for the educational system's role as a producer and reproducer of social inequalities.

Firstly, I will start by will presenting an understanding of the concept of academic socialization. Secondly, I will critically assess what the research findings pinpointing the importance of academic socialization entail in terms of social inequalities in education. Thirdly, I will discuss the educational system's

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presuppositions regarding academic socialization in terms of inequity in education and symbolic violence. The last aim is of particular importance since, as I will show in this article, academic socialization has to do with the inner bearings of families as entities where cultural values and beliefs are enacted, and as such needs to be approached in a different way than other forms of parental involvement in school.

Forms of parental involvement in school

The significance of the educational system as a social institution is indisputable. For Norwegian schoolchildren, the adventure starts at six years of age, and almost all preschool children attend kindergarten prior to that. Practically all of them will spend at least 10 years in the system, and most will continue on to upper secondary education. A considerable number will go on to higher education. The type of educational careers that these young ones decide to pursue will have a great impact on their life trajectories. These decisions will make up the foundation of many different aspects of their lives, including social status, economic situation, autonomy when it comes to work conditions, and lifestyle. These decisions may even influence their children's opportunities to succeed within the educational system, and as such for their children's positioning within the social structure. In this way, educational decisions are not just an individual choice, but also constitute a choice for future generations.

Over time, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of involving parents in education, and it has become somewhat of a mantra that parents provide invaluable support for their children in their educational projects. Schools more or less take for granted that they can rely on parents to play an active part in their children's schooling. However, this is not always the case. For many parents, the expectations towards their role as parent, directed at them by schools and teachers, may come as a surprise, since this is not necessarily what they themselves were used to when they were schoolchildren. The schools in which they had their primary educational experiences would have expressed far lower expectations when it came to parental involvement.

A range of activities can be undertaken by parents in order to support their children's schooling, both at home and in school. The classic typology developed by Epstein et al. (2008) includes parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and, finally, collaborating with community. In Hill and Tyson's (2009) meta-analysis, they distinguished between three types of parental involvement in education. The first is *home-based involvement*, which includes strategies

such as communication between parents and children about school, engagement with schoolwork (e.g. homework help), taking children to events and places that foster academic success (i.e. museums, libraries, etc.), and creating a learning environment at home (e.g. making educational materials accessible, such as books, newspapers, educational toys). The second is *school-based involvement*, which includes visits to school for school events (e.g. parent teacher association (PTA) meetings, open houses, etc.), participation in school governance, volunteering at school and communication between parents and school personnel. The third is *academic socialization*, which includes communicating parental expectations for education and its value or utility, linking schoolwork to current events, fostering educational and occupational aspirations, discussing learning strategies with children, and making preparations and plans for the future.

A large part of the research literature on parental involvement in school has been preoccupied with documenting and assessing the development, implementation and/or testing of different forms of parental involvement measures. Researchers have, for example, focused on how parental involvement can have an effect on subject-specific achievements. For literacy, a number of studies have shown that parental involvement has a positive effect, especially for preschool children. Chazan-Cohen et al. (2012) showed, for example, that if parents provide a good home learning environment, this will improve preschool children's vocabulary and letter-word identification skills. Studies conducted by Fletcher et al. (2010), Fletcher et al. (2009) and Sheldon and Epstein (2005b) have demonstrated similar effects of parental involvement on children's literacy skills beyond preschool. When it comes to mathematics and science, a number of studies have shown that family and community partnerships can have a positive effect on achievements. For example, Sheldon and Epstein (2005a) used longitudinal data from elementary and secondary schools to examine the connections between specific family- and community-involvement activities and student achievement in mathematics at the school level. Their analyses indicated that effective implementation of practices that encouraged families to support their children's mathematics learning at home was associated with higher percentages of students who scored at or above proficiency on standardized mathematics achievement tests. Sheldon and Epstein therefore concluded that subject-specific practices of school, family, and community partnerships may help educators to improve students' mathematics skills and achievement.

Such findings on the effects of parental involvement on children's literacy and mathematics skills

have been supported by findings from a meta-study conducted by Van Voorhis et al. (2013) summarizing research conducted over the past 10 years on the effects of family involvement activities at home and at school in literacy, mathematics and socio-emotional skills. However, Van Voorhis et al.'s work, which is based on 52 research studies in literacy and 43 in mathematics, also revealed that even though these studies show that parental involvement in children's schooling has a positive effect on achievements, the documented effects continue to be rather weak. Instead, a number of researchers have put academic or educational socialization forward as an aspect that is more important than other forms of parental involvement (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hattie, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2007; Van Voorhis et al., 2013). In this article, I will show that academic socialization is also a particularly central concept in order to understand socio-economic status (SES) differences in educational outcomes.

In the Scandinavian context, the increased focus on parental involvement in school has rarely been explicitly connected to social inequality aspects in education. More often than not, efforts to involve parents have been approached as efforts to enhance and strengthen the involvement among the parent population in general, and only rarely been directed at specific groups of parents. Even though researchers have pointed out that not only do parents from different social backgrounds act differently when it comes to their involvement in school (Bæck, 2010), they also experience their encounters with school and teachers differently (Bæck, 2009), manipulating the *unequal* influence of the 'parent factor' through parental involvement has not been a main issue in school.

The concept of 'academic socialization'

As mentioned above, the concept of academic socialization has been put forward in some well-known meta-studies as the most important form of parental involvement. However, the concept itself has not been given a lot of attention. This was also pointed out by Suizzo and Soon (2006), who claimed that although studies have shown that parents holding high expectations of children's achievement have had stronger effects on achievement than school-based involvement, little is known about the actual parental practices that promote children's internalization of those expectations. According to, for example, Taylor, Clayton, and Rowley (2004), parents set the stage for their children's academic experiences through their own individual experiences, social and cultural characteristics and behaviours. Academic socialization has to do with acquiring norms, values and knowledge related to education and the

importance of education. As is the case in other forms of socialization, parents or other primary care givers are the most important agents for academic socialization. In addition, like other forms of socialization, academic socialization is related to being introduced to norms and values through relating to an everyday life in which these kinds of norms and values are present through ones' significant others. Academic socialization is what takes place when parents talk to their young ones about the importance of education and about the importance of performing well in school – or at least the need to do their very best. Hill and Tyson (2009) defined academic socialization as a form of parental involvement that includes parents communicating the value of education and their expectations for educational achievement to their young, and in so doing fostering educational and occupational aspirations in their adolescents. Through setting high aspirations for the child, and being clear about and communicating these aspirations to the child, engaging in meaningful conversations with the child and communicating their own interest in the child's education, parents are communicating the importance of education to the child. This may also include discussing learning strategies with children, and making preparations and plans for the future, including linking material discussed in school with students' interests and goals. Academic socialization is also what takes place when a child sees his or her parents read books, watch educational films or TV programmes, or engage in discussions about politics or societal questions. Suizzo and Soon (2006) identified three dimensions of parental academic socialization: emotional support (responsiveness), demanding hard work, and active involvement. They found that the ways in which parents support their children's educational experiences through emotional responsiveness and verbal encouragement is more important than their more concrete behaviours.

Hill and Tyson (2009) linked academic socialization primarily to parental involvement in early adolescence, and claimed that at this point in a school career academic socialization may be more significant than school- or home-based involvement. This was also found by Hattie (2009). Thus, engaging in academic socialization seems to be the most important thing that parents can do to help their children do well in school, especially for older students. Hill and Tyson (2009) stated:

We hypothesize that involvement that scaffolds adolescents' burgeoning decision-making and problem solving skills and elucidates linkages between their schoolwork and future goals may be more strongly linked to achievement in middle school than is home- or school-based involvement. Parental involvement in education that reflects academic socialisation allows

parents to maintain their involvement while also affirming adolescents' autonomy, independence, and advancing cognitive abilities. (p. 742)

However, socializing a child into a mindset in which education is not only important, but self-evident and taken for granted, takes place from a very early age. The parent is a child's first teacher, and highly significant for the primary learning processes of which academic socialization is part. Taylor et al. (2004) claimed that academic socialization is multifaceted, in that it includes a variety of parental beliefs and behaviours that influence children's school-related development. Through the kinds of conversations mentioned above, and through parents' actions, parents are socializing their young ones into a form of academic culture. They familiarize the child with and prepare him or her for academic culture, with its specific values and standards, influencing the child's motivation for what goes on in school, and also his or her understanding of what school is all about. Strambler, Linke, and Ward (2013) emphasized academic identification – that is, how much students are emotionally invested in academic learning – as an important part of educational socialization. Academic identification has to do with how important one believes an academic task is, and how much it is worth pursuing, and the concept places emphasis on the importance of this value to one's sense of self. Through academic socialization, parents ensure consistency between the cultural evaluations that are communicated at home, by the parents, and those that are communicated in school, by the teachers. When parents introduce their child to an academic culture in this way, and when they are engaged and involved in the child's schooling, parental resources are translated into school advantages.

I will now move on to address some challenges connected to the notion of academic socialization.

Academic socialization as a socio-cultural construct

Like other forms of socialization, academic socialization is a process set in sociocultural contexts and is a result of sociocultural processes. According to Taylor et al. (2004), academic socialization is founded in parents' own working models of school, which consist of a combination of recollections of their own school experiences and their attitudes, values and beliefs about school. Taylor et al. wrote: 'How parents feel about school and their own emotional connections to school settings may drive the kinds of academic socialization practices they engage in with their children. Parents with more positive feelings about school may be more likely to be involved than parents whose feelings are disorganized or negative (Taylor

et al., 2004, p. 169). This was confirmed in my own previous research, where I found that while most parents experience the relationship between them and their children's school as fairly unproblematic, others experience relating to school and teachers as troubling (Bæck, 2009, 2010a, 2010b). Furthermore, I found a significant relationship between parents' own well-being in school as schoolchildren and the way they experienced their relationship to school as parents (see Bæck, 2009). Parents who reported a low level of well-being as students tended to experience their current relationship to school as parents as less positive compared to parents who reported a high level of well-being as students. Parents' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs are based largely on their feelings and emotions, which, according to Taylor et al. (2004), are powerful influences on child-rearing practices and may determine adaptive or maladaptive parenting strategies. These feelings and emotional connections towards school and education are, among other things, related to one's experiences in sociocultural settings. The educational system holds specific values, norms and codes and works through its own logic.

It is the air that we breathe

Students' and parents' encounters with the educational system, and their perceptions, attitudes and beliefs are coloured by their experiences as part of social, cultural or ethnic groups that have a close or a more distant relationship to the educational system. When research establishes that it is academic socialization, more than other forms of parental involvement in school, that really makes a difference, this opens up discussions about the more fundamental questions of equity in education, and of how the educational system functions in terms of reproduction of social inequality. The notion of academic socialization differs fundamentally from other forms of parental involvement inasmuch as it ultimately has to do with the way of life that parents from different social classes offer their children. This includes the way family members talk to each other, the way they raise their children, the experiences they provide for their children and the things that they emphasize in their daily lives. Viewing academic socialization through the lens of who parents are, therefore, becomes vital. It is related to the air that parents are able to offer their children to inhale every day – it is the very air that they breathe.

Pierre Bourdieu was preoccupied with education as a social field in which cultural differences were made visible. His theory focused on the economic, social and cultural capital that social actors bring with them when they enter social fields; for example, the capital students bring with them when they enter the educational system, and the way in which different

forms of capital can be transformed, converted and exchanged. For the purpose of discussing academic socialization, the concept of cultural capital is the most relevant of Bourdieu's three forms of capital. To possess cultural capital is described by Bourdieu (1984, p. 3) as mastering an art of cognition or a decoding operation, which implies being able to implement a cognitive acquirement or a certain cultural code, which creates empathy for certain cultural expressions over others. This internalized cultural code is referred to as 'cultural *capital*' because it is unequally distributed and can be exchanged for wealth and power through the educational system.

The educational system awards and presupposes the type of cultural capital possessed by children from middle-class backgrounds, and they will have internalized these skills and this knowledge prior to entering school. Grooming for the educational system through a proper form of academic socialization will increase their likelihood of succeeding within the system, which can eventually give access to higher positions within the social structure. For the educated middle classes, the types of activities that promote academic socialization are part of their way of life, and they are the poster families for academic socialization. Through the primary socialization process, parents from middle-class backgrounds are able to transfer to their children both the foundation for developing abilities that are important for mastering school, and positive attitudes towards schooling. It is in this way that these children will gain an academic head start over children of less-educated parents, and have an academic advantage in school from day one. In order to instil academic socialization in working-class families, their way of life needs to change – at least parts of it, such as their aspirations, values and outlook on education, and ultimately changing culture. These changes are more directly related to the families themselves; to what goes on when families interact and when parents interact with children, and to what kind of values and aspirations they hold. Academic socialization includes forms of interaction that already take place in some families, and less in others. Is this at all problematic?

Academic socialization and symbolic violence

Since the educational system rests on its own logic and its own standards for what counts as more or less valuable, there exists an ideal way to relate to education that makes it easier to succeed within the educational system. This ideal way of relating to education is founded in the presuppositions and the value systems inherent in the educational system. Academic socialization at its core entails instilling these values in children. As pointed out by Lareau (2000), schools' and teachers' expectations towards students are

coloured by the social and cultural experiences of certain intellectual and economic elites, and in this way the standards of schools are far from neutral. Particular standards count, certain types of achievements are awarded and certain social conventions are accepted (Bæck, 2009), and some families are closer to these standards and conventions than others.

Very rarely is the educational system itself questioned. Changing the value base of the educational system so that it can better suit students of diverse backgrounds does not seem to be up for discussion. As stated by Johnson (2015), schools need to build on the values and support of families, rather than try to assimilate parents into a certain culture, but provide them with space to present who they are. To be able to do this, however, schools need to be more aware of the value base and cultural presuppositions that they promote, consciously or unconsciously. Instead, effort is put into compensating for forms of cultural capital that are perceived as an ill fit for knowledge society. Not having the desire to pursue educational goals is unheard of, and lacking the financial ability to pursue higher education does not seem to be an issue.

In Bourdieu's critical sociology, an educational system that assumes certain cultural presuppositions is wrath with symbolic violence. Symbolic violence is defined as the power 'to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 4). According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), the transmission of power and privileges works through the indirect paths of academic consecration. Furthermore, this is a form of symbolic power that, through its subtlety, prevents pedagogic violence from manifesting as the social violence it objectively is. As pointed out by Richardson (2011), symbolic violence works on a largely symbolic level by imposing dominant ways of seeing and acting in the world that become universalized. Therefore, the underlying power dimensions are not questioned. The adamant assumption is that in order to excel in school, working-class children should become more similar to middle-class children. The way schools work and the presuppositions they hold when it comes to what counts as valuable skills and knowledge, and therefore the educational system's contribution to social inequalities, are not questioned.

Thus, the educational system can be seen as reproducing inequalities through enabling certain ways of behaving and certain evaluation principles over others, and thereby creating advantages for certain students over others. Students entering school equipped with the right kind of cultural capital tend to succeed in school. According to Bourdieu, the criteria the educational system employs in this sorting process are the evaluation criteria of the privileged. It

is the characteristics and the skills that they already possess that are valued in school – or, as expressed by Järvinen (2000, p. 356), school will give to the children of the privileged classes the things that they already have, while the others are forced to continuously fight against their social origin and their class-based experiences. The educational system presupposes these characteristics, as well as valuing them through the grading system. In this way, the educational system contributes to reproducing the established order.

When research documents the importance of academic socialization for school attainment, this indicates that these specific cultural advantages play a major role in the inner bearings of the educational system. It shows that the educational system has not been successful in compensating for the 'lack' of academic socialization in certain families, and on the other hand that the educational system has been unwilling or unable to adopt more inclusive approaches to schooling. As emphasized by Bourdieu, cultural capital has an arbitrary quality to it, and it is the socially dominant groups that decide what is to be considered superior. Social dominance is fundamentally about being able to control the categories of perception; that is, to control how the world is perceived and evaluated and decide what is worth striving for and what is not. Since these perceptions will always be in favour of those who dominate, and since part of the dominance is to impose the same value categorizations on everyone, those who are dominated may come to devalue themselves and what they stand for (Bourdieu, 1984). In the classical sociological understanding of socialization, as we find in the works of Mead (1934) and Cooley (1902/1964), a person's identity and sense of self is developed through constant interaction between oneself and the other, between the person and their surroundings. Socialization is a fundamentally social process, and our perceptions of how others view us are therefore a central part of socialization. Socialization means seeing oneself through the eyes of others. In a way, one can say that socialization and identity formation take place as a negotiation between input from the other on one side (that is, input as it is interpreted by oneself) and one's own perceptions and interpretations on the other side. When entering school, these other voices become louder and more central for one's self-assessment. In school, the implicit message, the hidden curricula, is that the values and aspirations of working-class families are less desirable and not as valuable, and that they need to change. Sometimes this demand to change brings with it feelings of inferiority, since what is communicated in school is not only the importance of a certain set of values and aspirations, but just as much the importance of leaving another

set of values, and what is often perceived as a lack of aspirations, behind. Theoretical knowledge is, for example, emphasized over practical skills, which sends a powerful message to families and children who are less academically oriented in their approach to learning and education.

Old problems in new disguises

The problems addressed in this article are far from new within the sociology of education. In fact, one may claim that I am addressing the same issues that sociologists of education have been addressing since the sociology of education was established as a sociological sub discipline. I am even employing some of the most traditional and structurally oriented concepts in order to analyse the problems at hand. However, there are some developmental traits related to the field of education that necessitate a continuing focus on the relationship between families and the educational system, as well as on the educational system as an arena for social reproduction.

As already mentioned, parents' role in education has changed over time. We have seen an increased emphasis on parental involvement in educational policy documents, as well as in school-based practices. There has been an opening up of parents' role within the educational system. There are increased demands and expectations from schools and teachers on parents' contributions, and also from parents on schools and on the work that teachers are set to do. As stated elsewhere (Bæck, 2015), educational authorities' emphasis on the importance of and efforts to facilitate a more prominent position for parents within the educational system can be understood as part of an increased focus on the consumer perspective within the public services in general. This has also been pointed out by other researchers (Ravn, 1996; Sletten, Sandberg, & Nordahl, 2003). Parents are regarded, and view themselves, as consumers who have every right to expect and demand the delivery of goods with the quality that they have been promised (Bæck, 2015). Kofod (2002, p. 202) have understood this as part of the democratization and neoliberalization of society. With the opening up of central, societal institutions towards the general public, the users' right to influence the inner lives of the institutions has been acknowledged.

A general encouragement or invitation to get parents involved in school, directed at all parents as opposed to specific groups of parents, for example based on ethnic background, social class or gender, seem to have accentuated instead of diminished school as an arena dominated by individuals from a specific social background. Findings from my previous studies (Bæck, 2010) have suggested that participation in formalized settings in school is dominated

by a specific category of parents, since more educated parents are more inclined to participate, and that less resourceful groups of parents are heard less often with regard to school issues. Increased parental involvement in school may therefore in reality imply increased parental involvement for educated middle-class parents. As pointed out by Borg and Mayo (2001), lack of participation on the part of subordinate groups may leave the door open for dominant groups to lobby for their own agenda, and equipped with the cultural capital legitimized by the dominant discourse in education, the middle classes are very vocal and deeply involved in the educational system. In addition, Hallgarten (2000) (cited in Hanafin & Lynch, 2002) found that parental involvement is less of a protective barrier than a lever to maximize the potential of the already advantaged. As I have also pointed out elsewhere (Bæck, 2010), it is therefore fair to question whether parental involvement, in its current form, is in fact a good thing, as other researchers have also done (Crozier, 1997, 2000; Hallgarten, 2000; Hanafin & Lynch, 2002; Reay, 1998; Vincent & Martin, 2000). Parental involvement in this way becomes a mechanism for social reproduction, and more of the same will only serve to enhance the differences between students from different social and cultural backgrounds. In addition, parents with more formal education are more inclined to place themselves in positions where they can influence the school system, for example through participation in formal bodies open to parents in school.

All this implies that parents' own working models of school may in fact have increased in significance, and the encounters between parents and schools may have become more decisive for students' success. A strained and distant relationship with school may materialize through the academic socialization of the child, and may have more serious ramifications than previously would be the case.

Schools are also arenas for changing pedagogical models, as can be seen in frequent school reforms in the countries around Europe, and this will also have an effect on the educational system as an arena for social reproduction. Recent research findings from the evaluation of the latest educational reform in Norway, the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform, have confirmed this. These findings have shown that social background seems to be more significant for educational outcomes now than it was 10 or 15 years ago, and this can, among other things, be explained through changes in pedagogical models (Bakken, 2012). Most importantly, changes in learning/teaching methods seem to give certain advantages to some groups of students, while disadvantaging others. More emphasis on student-led activities and more project-based and problem-based work

methods seem to work best for students who have good preconditions for learning and for those students who can manage well on their own. This pedagogical model corresponds best to the parenting styles of middle-class parents, and in this way, the national curriculum in Norway has given children of middle-class parents (even) more advantages in school.

Towards a socially just educational system

The starting point for this article was research demonstrating that academic socialization represents a more important parental contribution to educational success than other forms of parental involvement, such as parents' involvement in specific subjects. The contributions from working-class versus middle-class parents are distinguished from each other not through their direct engagement in school, but rather through socialization differences. When parents provide educational encouragement and express interest in their children's education, they contribute to developing educational motivation, including a sense of the importance and value of education, and thereby providing their children with a head start in school. The fact that parents' ability to motivate and to make sense of educational endeavours are such decisive factors when it comes to educational success indicates that school itself has not succeeded in creating fruitful and positive learning environments for all students.

Parents possess different resources. Some parents are able to provide their children with cultural, economic and social capital, thereby giving them advantages in school. Lacking such resources can work in the opposite direction, as a form of academic handicap. Or, as expressed by Taylor et al. (2004), some parenting behaviours will promote positive school experiences for children and others will hinder children's academic success. For some groups of students and their parents, their expectations and evaluations will coincide with those that exist in school – while for others there is a greater distance between them. Academic socialization has to do with creating compliance between students' home and school experiences. Whether this happens depends on cultural conditions.

A reoccurring question in education relates to achievement differences between children of different social, cultural and ethnic origins. Even though most school administrators, teachers, politicians and researchers seem to agree that such differences are unjust, there are no simple or quick fixes to this problem. There are at least two main intakes that could in theory make a significant difference. The first has to do with seeking to change the way working-class families relate to education. In practice, this

means making them more similar to middle-class families, and a lot of the efforts in school have been geared towards compensating for groups of children's inadequate cultural capital – capital that is an ill fit for the knowledge society. This intake is problematic as it fails to acknowledge diversity as not only a reality, but also a value within the educational field, which brings us over to the second intake. The second intake is somewhat more complex and has to do with problematizing the educational system itself, and how to approach justice in education.

The problem of social differences in educational outcomes ultimately touches upon questions of fairness and equity in education, and upon how we can ensure homogenous educational quality across social spaces. From this viewpoint, societies should strive to enable everyone to participate as full members of an inclusive society, of which education is a crucial part, as highlighted in critical education policy studies that are explicitly based on a justice perspective (Ball, 2005; Taylor, 1997). Schools have a responsibility to educate parents about the crucial role they play in their children's education, and about the importance of their continuing educational encouragement and emotional support. At the same time, schools must approach parents in an inclusive and culturally sensitive manner and thereby seek to turn school into a home field for all parents. This calls for what Cuervo (2016), with reference to Young (1990), outlined as the recognitional and associational dimensions of social justice, which comes in addition to distributive justice. According to Cuervo (2016), recognitional justice in schooling refers to the promotion and celebration of diversity through the inclusion and legitimation of all social groups' culture and identity. According to Cuervo (2016; with reference to Gewirtz, 2006), associational justice is defined by the degree of participation by individuals or groups in decisions that affect the conditions in which they live and act. As stated by Cuervo, it incorporates the notions of participation and voice and of being able to express one's own needs through processes of participative dialogue. Through a focus on associational justice in schooling, the process of education is made as relevant as the products or outcomes. For Cuervo, analyses of discourses and practices of justice should be based on the elimination of oppression and domination through the recognition and participation of all actors in the process of education and schooling, rather than merely on the distribution of benefits and burdens by major social institutions. The symbolic violence inherent in schools' presuppositions of a specific form of academic socialization, as outlined in this article with reference to the significance of academic socialization for academic outcomes, entails a degrading of certain cultural expressions, and the resulting social inequalities in

academic achievements can be considered inherently unjust. Broadening the notion of what is worth striving for will open up avenues for acknowledging a diverse body of students – and parents – thus promoting recognitional, as well as associational, justice in education.

Problematizing the educational system itself in this way entails striving for an educational system that is better adapted to a diverse body of students, and not representing only the values and culture of a specific social segment. This means opening up for discussions of the values present within the educational system, and for critically assessing narrow understandings. The system has indeed failed when it comes to motivating and creating a good learning environments for all students. Even though schools need to do more in terms of compensating for the 'lack of academic socialization in some families, critically assessing their own presuppositions and questioning what it is that makes groups of students apparently poorly motivated for school would be a main task of a socially responsible educational system.

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