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PAPER

# The Effect of Parental Social Status in Academia: Comparative Case of the Public/Private University in Morocco

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**ABSTRACT**

In the educational system, the different parental resources of university students are linked to social inequality through distinct mechanisms; they are reproduced and legitimized. Students' assumed indexed socioeconomic status (SES), based on educational attainment, parental occupation, or family income, is a predictor of academic outcomes. The implementation of interventions that reduce the achievement gap in SES can face significant ideological barriers. The purpose of the study is to compare the effect of students" social backgrounds at the two institutions (public/private) on academic outcomes. Following a purely sociological approach, the comparative study analyzes, through a questionnaire survey, the socio-economic and cultural environment of the students of two Moroccan universities: (1) the Faculty of Sciences Ben M"Sick (FSBM) of Casablanca, a public institution, and (2) a private institution located in the same city but geographically in an advantaged neighborhood. The results obtained attest that the social and cultural heritage of the parents transmitted to the students has effects on social reproduction, as well as the strong significant implication of the social origin in their learning process.

**KEYWORDS**

social status, academia, public education, private education

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Inequality of educational opportunities by parental background is among the most studied and debated topics in the social sciences. Such differentials are generally interpreted as a social closure that perpetuates social inequality. Socially advantaged parents preserve educational opportunities for their offspring by using their superior cultural and material resources, thus compensating for the effect of low

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academic ability. The school system, as the important equalizer [1], is able to counteract differences in social background.

Conflict theorists argue that such differentials are illegitimate because they reflect the mechanisms of how advantaged families preserve opportunities for themselves, given that academic achievement is key to the distribution of life chances in modern societies.

Educational policies emphasize increasing parental involvement in school [2, 3]. Parents' incentives to invest in their children's education have increased [4, 5]. High-income parents can afford economic investments more easily than low-income parents [6].

Researchers have predicted that the intergenerational persistence of income will increase across cohorts [7, 8]. Individual socioeconomic status (SES) has been shown to have a strong relationship with educational outcomes and is typically measured by parental education, parental income, and parental occupation [9, 10, 11].

When academic institutions have large concentrations of low-income disadvantaged students, they are likely to have difficulty attracting and retaining experienced teachers, and they are more likely to have resource-poor learning environments compared with resource-rich environments.

Parental education is often a stronger predictor of parental beliefs and behaviors, while family income is more closely associated with the provision of material resources [12]. A growing number of studies show that parental education is the strongest predictor of children's cognitive and academic outcomes [13, 14], Suggesting an intergenerational transfer of abilities and knowledge through biological and environmental pathways [15].

While the role of parents in schooling is increasingly seen as a mechanism to entrench market principles of choice, responsibility, and individualization in education, the policy continues to "push" parents into governance roles. These roles involve responsibilities and functions that parents believe will benefit their children and improve equity for all children [16].

Mourji et al. (2020) [39], who were interested in education and social mobility in Morocco, considered that social mobility between generations is particularly dependent on mobility in terms of acquired human capital, the objective of which is to know whether and how an individual moves up the social ladder relative to his or her parents. The authors confirmed the central role of cultural inheritance, as well as other demographic and socioeconomic factors, for successful educational mobility.

As part of the presentation of the "NAJAH" program established by the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, Executive Training and Scientific Research in Morocco [40], a "Teacher's Charter" and a "Pupil's Charter" will be developed in consultation with the various stakeholders—namely, teachers, unions, and parent associations—in order to create a repository of shared values for education. This measure will be applied to the school and higher education cycles. Communication and dissemination work will follow the development of these charters to ensure general awareness at all levels.

Parental expectations have grown in complexity and multiplicity: from active and informed selectors to hyperactive producers and financial contributors to their child's education [17, 18, 19, 20]. The majority of advantaged students attend private schools [21, 22, 23]. Over time, a consensus has emerged that SES includes, at a minimum, parental education, family income, and parental occupation (or occupational prestige) since these three indicators reflect different aspects of family background [24].

Theoretical and empirical work has emphasized the impact of family SES on the academic outcomes of university students, examined the mechanisms by which family SES is related to student success, and identified potential pathways behind this relationship, one of which utilizes three forms of capital: economic, cultural, and social [25, 26].

The second form of educational monopolization occurs when advantaged social groups participate in "effectively maintained inequality" [27] by gravitating to "more advantageous, selective, or prestigious segments" within the increasingly horizontally stratified higher education system [28, 29].

In recent decades, resource and prestige hierarchies have increased sharply within the university sector [30], and top-tier groups have fought to place their children in elite private universities rather than less selective public campuses or lower-ranking private institutions [31, 32]. Some scholars have suggested that the class system is constituted to a large extent by the increasing organizational variety of university types [33], with elites and good class culture dominating the top of the horizontally stratified system to create social networks and ensure their legitimacy. In the school context, social capital is positively related to learning outcomes [34, 35, 36, 37, 38].

In the Moroccan context, research by Saih et al. (2016) [41] investigated the effect of socioeconomic factors on the academic performance of learners in a Moroccan region.

Different factors related to learning outcomes were taken into consideration: age, anthropometric measures, and socioeconomic factors as well as the assessment of the determinants of the individual's academic and behavioral performance.

The authors showed that there is a significant dependence between attendance and behavior in educational activities on the one hand and the father's level of education on the other hand ($p < .05$). The socioeconomic factors studied have a negative influence on the student's ability to progress.

The objective of our research is to compare the effect of the social origin of the students of public and private institution on their academic results.

In this regard, the problem raised in this study reviews the following research questions:

- Does social background influence students' aspirations and decisions to pursue higher education to the same extent in public and private settings?
- Does the combination of different parental resources (educational level, social status, professional status) affect the way students learn at university?
- Is equal opportunity perceived in the same way in both worlds (public and private)?

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Study environment

After obtaining all approvals from the administration to contact and communicate with students, we conducted our comparative study between FSBM, an institution considered public that belongs to the Hassan II University of Casablanca (H2UC), and a private institution located in Casablanca.

## 2.2 Sample

The target population was all university students enrolled from the first year to the third year of the undergraduate cycle at both institutions. The study was based on a representative sample of n = 200 students (100 from each institution). We randomly selected individuals from each department to form a sample that contained almost the same proportion of students. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample members (public and private sector) in relation to the different streams, using probability sampling.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the sample of institutions (private/public) in relation to streams

| Branch | Number | |
|---|---|---|
| | Public | Private |
| Mathematics-Computer Science | 20 | 20 |
| Physics | 20 | 20 |
| Chemistry | 20 | 20 |
| Biology | 20 | 20 |
| Geology | 20 | 20 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

## 2.3 Data collection tool

We opted for the questionnaire survey (in electronic format via Google Forms) as a research instrument, using a set of questions to collect quantitative data: MCQs, binary questions and Likert scale questions.

Our questionnaire consists of 38 questions divided into three sections, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the questionnaire

| Sections | Questions | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Personal and sociodemographic characteristics | 10 | Personal and sociodemographic characteristics of the students (sex, age group, residence of the parents, specialty of the baccalaureate and mention, affiliation, school level in high school and higher education, scholarship, etc.). |
| Social status (academic, professional, income, wealth) of parents | 15 | Socioeconomic and cultural characteristics (guardian, activities, professional status, monthly income and educational level of parents, number of siblings, cost of education, etc.) |
| Effect of family social and previous origin on learning | 13 | Perceptions of the effect of social origin (economic and cultural environment of parents, respect for equal opportunities of students, level of learning and social level of students, etc.). |

# 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## 3.1 Results

The questionnaire was administered via Google Forms to students of two Casablanca institutions: a public institution located in a moderately disadvantaged social environment and what is considered a private institution, located in a privileged social environment. The variations of the academic results and the socio-economic profile of the university students (public/private) give us the results shown in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3.** Academic level of public/private university students

| | | Institution | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | | Private | | Total | |
| | | n | (%) | n | (%) | n | (%) |
| **Type of baccalaureate** | **Physic/Chemistry (PC)** | 46[a] | 48.9% | 48[a] | 51.1% | 94 | 100.0% |
| | **Math/Informatics (MI)** | 22[a] | 37.9% | 36[b] | 62.1% | 58 | 100.0% |
| | **Sciences of Life and the Earth (SVT)** | 24[a] | 68.6% | 11[b] | 31.4% | 35 | 100.0% |
| | **Technical** | 4[a] | 50.0% | 4[a] | 50.0% | 8 | 100.0% |
| | **Other** | 4[a] | 80.0% | 1[a] | 20.0% | 5 | 100.0% |
| **Baccalaureate final grade** | **Passable** | 12[a] | 42.9% | 16[a] | 57.1% | 28 | 100.0% |
| | **Good** | 38[a] | 43.7% | 49[a] | 56.3% | 87 | 100.0% |
| | **Ok** | 46[a] | 59.0% | 32[b] | 41.0% | 78 | 100.0% |
| | **Very well** | 4[a] | 57.1% | 3[a] | 42.9% | 7 | 100.0% |
| **University grade** | **Averages** | 60[a] | 60.6% | 39[b] | 39.4% | 99 | 100.0% |
| | **Good** | 39[a] | 42.9% | 52[a] | 57.1% | 91 | 100.0% |
| | **Very well** | 1[a] | 10.0% | 9[b] | 90.0% | 10 | 100.0% |
| **Type of school (primary/ middle school/high school)** | **Public** | 74[a] | 87.1% | 11[b] | 12.9% | 85 | 100.0% |
| | **Private** | 11[a] | 12.8% | 75[b] | 87.2% | 86 | 100.0% |
| | **Both** | 15[a] | 51.7% | 14[a] | 48.3% | 29 | 100.0% |
| **Learning influenced by financial difficulties in the cycle** | **Primary** | 9[a] | 52.9% | 8[a] | 47.1% | 17 | 100.0% |
| | **College** | 13[a] | 68.4% | 6[a] | 31.6% | 19 | 100.0% |
| | **High school** | 21[a] | 44.7% | 26[a] | 55.3% | 47 | 100.0% |
| | **Upper** | 57[a] | 48.7% | 60[a] | 51.3% | 117 | 100.0% |
| **Learning influenced by cultural difficulties in the cycle** | **Primary** | 32[a] | 88.9% | 4[b] | 11.1% | 36 | 100.0% |
| | **College** | 35[a] | 77.8% | 10[b] | 22.2% | 45 | 100.0% |
| | **High school** | 20[a] | 44.4% | 25[a] | 55.6% | 45 | 100.0% |
| | **Upper** | 13[a] | 17.6% | 61[b] | 82.4% | 74 | 100.0% |

*Notes:* The values in the same row and subtable that do not share the same index differ significantly at $p < .05$ in the bilateral column proportion equality test. Cells without a clue are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.[1]
[1] The tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each most internal subtable, using the Bonferroni correction.

**Table 4.** Pearson chi-square test: academic level of public/private university students

| Pearson Chi-Square Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Bachelor's degree | Chi-square | 10.050 |
| | Df | 4 |
| | GIS | .040*[b] |
| Mention of Baccalaureate | Chi-square | 4.618 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .202[b] |
| The grades I get in my graduate studies | Chi-square | 12,712 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .002*[b] |
| I continued my primary/middle school/ high school studies in schools | Chi-square | 94.357 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .000* |
| My learning has been heavily affected by the financial difficulties of the environment to which I belong in the cycle | Chi-square | 3.247 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .355 |
| My learning has been heavily affected by the cultural difficulties of the environment to which I belong in the cycle | Chi-square | 67.357 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | <.001* |

*Notes:* The results are based on the non-empty rows and columns of each of the innermost subtables. GIS means dll, in SPSS.
*The chi-square statistics are significant at the .05 level. [b]More than 20% of the cells in this subtab have an expected cell size of less than 5. The results of the chi-square test may not be valid.

Analysis of the data in the table indicates that the difference between institution and type of baccalaureate is statistically significant (chi-square = 10.050; ddl = 4; $p$ = .040), as well as for university grades (chi-square = 12.712; ddl = 2; $p$ = .002), the type of institution (public/private) attended in primary/college/high school (chi-square = 94.357; ddl = 2; $p$ = .000), as well as for learning influenced by cultural difficulties in the cycle (chi-square = 67.357; ddl = 3; $p$ = .001) (Table 4).

The results obtained show that the baccalaureate grades of the students of the two institutions are very close for both the "Public" and "Private" sectors. On the other hand, we can see that at the university level, the grades obtained by students in the "Private" sector are clearly more advantageous than those of their counterparts in the "Public" sector. The table shows that the majority of students from the "Public" sector have continued their previous education (primary/college/high school) in "Public" schools.

For the influence of financial hardship, with the exception of the high rate shown by "Public" students in college, the results are very close, especially at the higher level, which is the subject of our study. For the effect of cultural difficulties on learning, it is at the graduate level that the rate is very high for "Private" students (Table 3).

**Table 5.** Activity status and professional status of parents of public/private university students

| | | Institution | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | | Private | | Total | |
| | | n | (%) | n | (%) | n | (%) |
| **Guardian** | **Father** | 74[a] | 48.1% | 80[a] | 51.9% | 154 | 100.0% |
| | **Mother** | 16[a] | 47.1% | 18[a] | 52.9% | 34 | 100.0% |
| | **Brother/sister** | 5[a] | 71.4% | 2[a] | 28.6% | 7 | 100.0% |
| | **Another person** | 5[a] | 100.0% | 0[1] | 0.0% | 5 | 100.0% |
| **State of activity of the father/guardian** | **In activity** | 56[a] | 39.2% | 87[b] | 60.8% | 143 | 100.0% |
| | **Unemployed** | 14[a] | 93.3% | 1[b] | 6.7% | 15 | 100.0% |
| | **Retired** | 14[a] | 66.7% | 7[a] | 33.3% | 21 | 100.0% |
| | **Deceased** | 8[a] | 66.7% | 4[a] | 33.3% | 12 | 100.0% |
| | **Other** | 8[a] | 88.9% | 1[b] | 11.1% | 9 | 100.0% |
| **State of activity of the mother** | **Housewife** | 59[a] | 60.2% | 39[b] | 39.8% | 98 | 100.0% |
| | **In activity** | 20[a] | 25.6% | 58[b] | 74.4% | 78 | 100.0% |
| | **Unemployed** | 14[a] | 100.0% | 0[1] | 0.0% | 14 | 100.0% |
| | **Pensioner** | 2[a] | 66.7% | 1[a] | 33.3% | 3 | 100.0% |
| | **Deceased** | 2[a] | 100.0% | 0[1] | 0.0% | 2 | 100.0% |
| | **Other** | 3[a] | 60.0% | 2[a] | 40.0% | 5 | 100.0% |
| **Professional status of the father/guardian** | **Public Sector Framework** | 17[a] | 43.6% | 22[a] | 56.4% | 39 | 100.0% |
| | **Private Sector Framework** | 5[a] | 13.9% | 31[b] | 86.1% | 36 | 100.0% |
| | **Employee** | 21[a] | 72.4% | 8[b] | 27.6% | 29 | 100.0% |
| | **Professional** | 18[a] | 41.9% | 25[a] | 58.1% | 43 | 100.0% |
| | **Other** | 39[a] | 73.6% | 14[b] | 26.4% | 53 | 100.0% |
| **Professional status of the mother** | **Public Sector Framework** | 6[a] | 46.2% | 7[a] | 53.8% | 13 | 100.0% |
| | **Private Sector Framework** | 0[1] | 0.0% | 25[a] | 100.0% | 25 | 100.0% |
| | **Employee** | 10[a] | 38.5% | 16[a] | 61.5% | 26 | 100.0% |
| | **Professional** | 6[a] | 28.6% | 15[b] | 71.4% | 21 | 100.0% |
| | **Other** | 78[a] | 67.8% | 37[b] | 32.2% | 115 | 100.0% |

*Notes:* The values in the same row and subtable that do not share the same index differ significantly at $p < .05$ in the bilateral column proportion equality test. Cells without a clue are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.[2]

[1]This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is zero or one.

[2]The tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each most internal subtable, using the Bonferroni correction.

**Table 6.** Pearson chi-square test: activity status and professional status of parents of public/private university students

| Pearson Chi-Square Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Tutor | Chi-square | 6.637 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .084[a] |
| Currently, father/guardian is | Chi-square | 27.098 |
| | Df | 4 |
| | GIS | <.001[a,*] |
| My mother is | Chi-square | 39.128 |
| | Df | 5 |
| | GIS | <.001[a,*,c] |
| If my father/guardian is active, specify his professional status: | Chi-square | 38.178 |
| | Df | 4 |
| | GIS | <.001* |
| If my mother is active, specify her professional status: | Chi-square | 44.936 |
| | Df | 4 |
| | GIS | <.001* |

*Notes:* The results are based on the non-empty rows and columns of each of the innermost subtables. GIS means dll, in SPSS.
*The chi-square statistics are significant at the .05 level. More than 20% of the cells in this subtable have an expected cell size of less than 5. The results of the chi-square test may not be valid. [c]The minimum expected cell size for this subtable is less than one. The results of the chi-square test may not be valid.

We note that the differences between the father's/tutor's (chi-square = 27.098; ddl = 4; $p$ = .001) mother's (chi-square = 39.128; ddl = 5; $p$ = .001) type of institution and activity statistically, as well as the father's occupational status (chi-square = 38.178; ddl = 4; $p$ = .001) are significant (Table 6).

Students in both sectors are virtually tutored by the father. Father's tutelage is the status fairly separated by students in both the "Public" and "Private" sectors. The case of tutoring by another family member (brother/sister) is perceived only in the "Public" sector.

The "Deceased" and "Retired" statuses of fathers are much more present among students in the "Public" sector. As for the mother's activity status, a very high rate of unemployed mothers is recorded among students in the "Public" sector. The occupation of privileged positions in the private sector favors both fathers and mothers of students in the "Private" sector (Table 5).

**Table 7.** Economic status of parents of public/private university students

| | | Institution | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | | Private | | Total | |
| | | n | (%) | n | (%) | n | (%) |
| **The monthly income of the father/guardian** | **No income** | 28[a] | 68.3% | 13[b] | 31.7% | 41 | 100.0% |
| | **< 5,000 DH** | 35[a] | 97.2% | 1[b] | 2.8% | 36 | 100.0% |
| | **5,000–10,000 DH** | 21[a] | 65.6% | 11[a] | 34.4% | 32 | 100.0% |
| | **10,000–20,000 DH** | 10[a] | 30.3% | 23[b] | 69.7% | 33 | 100.0% |
| | **20,000–40,000 DH** | 6[a] | 10.3% | 52[b] | 89.7% | 58 | 100.0% |
| **The mother's monthly income** | **No income** | 74[a] | 66.1% | 38[b] | 33.9% | 112 | 100.0% |
| | **L<5000 DH** | 11[a] | 78.6% | 3[b] | 21.4% | 14 | 100.0% |
| | **<5,000–10,000 DH** | 9[a] | 60.0% | 6[a] | 40.0% | 15 | 100.0% |
| | **10,000–20,000 DH** | 4[a] | 10.0% | 36[b] | 90.0% | 40 | 100.0% |
| | **20,000–40,000 DH** | 2[a] | 10.5% | 17[b] | 89.5% | 19 | 100.0% |

*Notes:* The values in the same row and subtable that do not share the same index differ significantly at $p$ <.05 in the bilateral column proportion equality test. Cells without a clue are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.[1]
[1]The tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each most internal subtable, using the Bonferroni correction.

**Table 8.** Pearson chi-square test: economic status of parents of public/private university students

| Pearson Chi-Square Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Father/guardian's monthly income is | Chi-square | 82.328 |
| | Df | 4 |
| | GIS | <.001* |
| Mother's monthly income is | Chi-square | 54,185 |
| | Df | 4 |
| | GIS | <.001* |

*Notes:* The results are based on the nonempty rows and columns of each of the innermost subtables. GIS means dll, in SPSS.
*The chi-square statistics are significant at the .05 level.

Analysis of the data using the Chi-square test indicates that the difference between the type of institution and the monthly incomes of the father/guardian (chi-square = 82.328; ddl = 4; $p$ = 0.001) and mother (chi-square = 54.185; ddl = 4; $p$ = 0.001) are statistically significant (Table 8).

In this table, fathers' monthly incomes are well below the minimum required to preserve a decent life for "Public" students. Indeed, more than half of the population in the "Public" sector has no income at all, even for working fathers (it is difficult to maintain an income of up to 5000 MAD). The rate of high salaries is recorded in the ranks of students in the "Private" sector. The same observation of incomes is observed for the mothers of students in both sectors. A very high rate of mothers of

students in the "Public" sector who do not have a monthly income is recorded, while working mothers cannot provide a monthly income exceeding 5000 DH (Moroccan) (Table 7).

**Table 9.** Educational level of parents of public/private university students

| | | Institution | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | | Private | | Total | |
| | | n | (%) | n | (%) | n | (%) |
| **Educational level of father/tutor** | **Out of school** | 34[a] | 94.4% | 2[b] | 5.6% | 36 | 100.0% |
| | **Baccalaureate and less** | 40[a] | 69.0% | 18[b] | 31.0% | 58 | 100.0% |
| | **Professional diploma** | 18[a] | 46.2% | 21[a] | 53.8% | 39 | 100.0% |
| | **University degree** | 8[a] | 11.9% | 59[b] | 88.1% | 67 | 100.0% |
| **Mother's educational level** | **Out of school** | 47[a] | 90.4% | 5[b] | 9.6% | 52 | 100.0% |
| | **Baccalaureate and less** | 33[a] | 55.0% | 27[a] | 45.0% | 60 | 100.0% |
| | **Professional diploma** | 10[a] | 30.3% | 23[b] | 69.7% | 33 | 100.0% |
| | **University degree** | 10[a] | 18.2% | 45[b] | 81.8% | 55 | 100.0% |

*Notes:* The values in the same row and subtable that do not share the same index differ significantly at $p$ <.05 in the bilateral column proportion equality test. Cells without a clue are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.[1]
[1]The tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each most internal subtable, using the Bonferroni correction.

**Table 10.** Pearson chi-square test: educational level of parents of public/private university students

| Pearson Chi-Square Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Father/tutor's academic level | Chi-square | 75.841 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | <.001* |
| Mother's academic level | Chi-square | 61.917 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | <.001* |

*Notes:* The results are based on the nonempty rows and columns of each of the innermost subtables. GIS means dll, in SPSS.
*The chi-square statistics are significant at the .05 level.

The table shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the school and educational levels of fathers (chi-square = 75.841; ddl = 3; $p$ = 0.001) and mothers (chi-square = 61.917; ddl = 3; $p$ = 0.001) (Table 10).

A very high rate of fathers' status as "uneducated" is recorded in the "Public" sector, whereas in the "Private" sector, the fathers are practically all educated. The latter are even holders of university degrees. The same observation about the "mothers' level of education" is observed in the mothers' environments. Indeed, the rate of "mothers not attending school" reaches very alarming levels, while a low rate

is recorded in the "Private" sector. For university degrees, we note that the mothers of students in the "Public" sector are better represented than their fathers but still remain much lower than their counterparts in the "Private" sector (Table 9).

**Table 11.** Financial and cultural autonomy of public/private university students

| | | Institution | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | | Private | | Total | |
| | | n | (%) | n | (%) | n | (%) |
| **Help and support sought by parents** | **Never** | 12[a] | 75.0% | 4[b] | 25.0% | 16 | 100.0% |
| | **Rarely** | 16[a] | 40.0% | 24[a] | 60.0% | 40 | 100.0% |
| | **Often** | 25[a] | 48.1% | 27[a] | 51.9% | 52 | 100.0% |
| | **Always** | 47[a] | 51.1% | 45[a] | 48.9% | 92 | 100.0% |
| **Nature of help and support from parents** | **No** | 3[a] | 75.0% | 1[a] | 25.0% | 4 | 100.0% |
| | **Financial** | 49[a] | 43.4% | 64[b] | 56.6% | 113 | 100.0% |
| | **Cultural** | 10[a] | 41.7% | 14[a] | 58.3% | 24 | 100.0% |
| | **Advice/guidance** | 38[a] | 64.4% | 21[b] | 35.6% | 59 | 100.0% |
| **Occupational activity during studies** | **No activity** | 65[a] | 47.8% | 71[a] | 52.2% | 136 | 100.0% |
| | **Half time** | 27[a] | 52.9% | 24[a] | 47.1% | 51 | 100.0% |
| | **Full time** | 8[a] | 66.7% | 4[a] | 33.3% | 12 | 100.0% |
| **Reasons for income from activity** | **Studies** | 15[a] | 57.7% | 11[a] | 42.3% | 26 | 100.0% |
| | **Hobbies** | 10[a] | 41.7% | 14[a] | 58.3% | 24 | 100.0% |
| | **Family** | 14[a] | 60.9% | 9[a] | 39.1% | 23 | 100.0% |
| | **Other** | 61[a] | 48.0% | 66[a] | 52.0% | 127 | 100.0% |
| **Financial estimate of studies per year** | **<10,000 DH** | 66[a] | 95.7% | 3[b] | 4.3% | 69 | 100.0% |
| | **10,000–20,000 DH** | 19[a] | 95.0% | 1[b] | 5.0% | 20 | 100.0% |
| | **20,000–30,000 DH** | 5[a] | 13.5% | 32[b] | 86.5% | 37 | 100.0% |
| | **>30,000 DH** | 10[a] | 13.5% | 64[b] | 86.5% | 74 | 100.0% |
| **Orientations of future studies** | **Grades obtained in the baccalaureate** | 15[a] | 32.6% | 31[b] | 67.4% | 46 | 100.0% |
| | **Limits of financial resources** | 76[a] | 86.4% | 12[b] | 13.6% | 88 | 100.0% |
| | **Lack of guidance counselling** | 2[a] | 12.5% | 14[b] | 87.5% | 16 | 100.0% |
| | **Family recommendation** | 7[a] | 14.0% | 43[b] | 86.0% | 50 | 100.0% |

*Notes:* The values in the same row and subtable that do not share the same index differ significantly at $p$ <.05 in the bilateral column proportion equality test. Cells without a clue are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.[1]

[1]The tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each most internal subtable, using the Bonferroni correction.

**Table 12.** Pearson chi-square test: financial and cultural autonomy of public/private university students

| Pearson Chi-Square Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| I seek the help and support of my parents | Chi-square | 5.720 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .126 |
| Help and support from parents is natural | Chi-square | 8,556 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .036*[b] |
| I carry out a professional activity during my studies | Chi-square | 1.770 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .413 |
| The income from activity is intended for | Chi-square | 2.566 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .464 |
| Financial estimate of studies per year is | Chi-square | 132.830 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .000* |
| Studies at the higher were guided by | Chi-square | 87.031 |
| | Df | 3 |
| | GIS | .000* |

*Notes:* The results are based on the nonempty rows and columns of each of the innermost subtables. GIS means dll, in SPSS.
*The chi-square statistics are significant at the .05 level. [b]More than 20% of the cells in this subtab have an expected cell size of less than 5. The results of the chi-square test may not be valid.

Parental help and support are sought equally by students in both sectors. However, the nature of the help and support in the form of "advice and guidance" is much more representative in the "Public" sector (chi-square = 8.556; ddl = 3; $p$ = .036) (Table 12).

The costs of education are diametrically opposed for the two sectors. For the "Public" sector, the costs are capped at 10,000 DH/year (Moroccan), while in the "Private" sector the costs are well over 30,000 DH. The factors "grades obtained in the baccalaureate" as well as "parents' recommendation" influence the choice of higher education considerably in the population of the "Private" sector. The limit of financial means constitutes the real handicap that constrains and delimits the choice of studies and types of higher education institutions (Table 11).

**Table 13.** Social inequality representations and perceptions by public/private university students

| | | Institution | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | | Private | | Total | |
| | | n | (%) | n | (%) | n | (%) |
| **Prospects** | **Wishing for a social position better than that of parents** | 76[a] | 58.5% | 54[b] | 41.5% | 130 | 100.0% |
| | **Borrowing the same career from parents** | 9[a] | 18.4% | 40[b] | 81.6% | 49 | 100.0% |
| | **Aiming for modest horizons** | 15[a] | 71.4% | 6[b] | 28.6% | 21 | 100.0% |
| **Many students at our institution come from socioeconomic level of the families of the students of the establishment** | **Disadvantaged** | 57[a] | 87.7% | 8[b] | 12.3% | 65 | 100.0% |
| | **Favored** | 43[a] | 31.9% | 92[b] | 68.1% | 135 | 100.0% |
| **Most students at our institution come from sociocultural level of the families of the students of the establishment** | **Disadvantaged** | 58[a] | 87.9% | 8[b] | 12.1% | 66 | 100.0% |
| | **Favored** | 42[a] | 31.3% | 92[b] | 68.7% | 134 | 100.0% |
| **Teachers and administrative staff ensure that equal opportunities are respected for students** | **Strongly disagree** | 14[a] | 45.2% | 17[a] | 54.8% | 31 | 100.0% |
| | **Disagree** | 37[a] | 59.7% | 25[a] | 40.3% | 62 | 100.0% |
| | **Totally agree** | 49[a] | 45.8% | 58[a] | 54.2% | 107 | 100.0% |
| **The level of learning depends on the social level of the student** | **Strongly disagree** | 33[a] | 64.7% | 18[b] | 35.3% | 51 | 100.0% |
| | **Disagree** | 34[a] | 38.2% | 55[b] | 61.8% | 89 | 100.0% |
| | **Totally agree** | 33[a] | 55.0% | 27[a] | 45.0% | 60 | 100.0% |
| **Considerable link between the choice of university courses and the social status of the student** | **Strongly disagree** | 41[a] | 59.4% | 28[a] | 40.6% | 69 | 100.0% |
| | **Disagree** | 37[a] | 50.7% | 36[a] | 49.3% | 73 | 100.0% |
| | **Totally agree** | 22[a] | 37.9% | 36[b] | 62.1% | 58 | 100.0% |
| **Social justice is better understood in the private institution than in the public institution** | **Strongly disagree** | 25[a] | 55.6% | 20[a] | 44.4% | 45 | 100.0% |
| | **Disagree** | 33[a] | 50.8% | 32[a] | 49.2% | 65 | 100.0% |
| | **Totally agree** | 42[a] | 46.7% | 48[a] | 53.3% | 90 | 100.0% |
| **Social difficulties are detrimental to academic failure** | **Strongly disagree** | 32[a] | 65.3% | 17[b] | 34.7% | 49 | 100.0% |
| | **Disagree** | 36[a] | 48.0% | 39[a] | 52.0% | 75 | 100.0% |
| | **Totally agree** | 32[a] | 42.1% | 44[a] | 57.9% | 76 | 100.0% |
| **The more one evolves in one's studies, the more one's social status rises to highly considered levels** | **Strongly disagree** | 18[a] | 60.0% | 12[a] | 40.0% | 30 | 100.0% |
| | **Disagree** | 23[a] | 48.9% | 24[a] | 51.1% | 47 | 100.0% |
| | **Totally agree** | 59[a] | 48.0% | 64[a] | 52.0% | 123 | 100.0% |

*Notes:* The values in the same row and subtable that do not share the same index differ significantly at $p < .05$ in the bilateral column proportion equality test. Cells without a clue are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.[1]
[1]The tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each most internal subtable, using the Bonferroni correction.

**Table 14.** Pearson chi-square test: social inequality representations and perceptions by public/private university students

| Pearson Chi-Square Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| My prospects | Chi-square | 27.192 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | <.001* |
| The majority of students at our institution come from socioeconomic level of the families of the students of the establishment | Chi-square | 54.724 |
| | Df | 1 |
| | GIS | <.001* |
| The majority of students at our institution come from sociocultural level of the families of the students of the establishment | Chi-square | 56.536 |
| | Df | 1 |
| | GIS | <.001* |
| Teachers and administrative staff shall ensure that equal opportunities are respected for students | Chi-square | 3.370 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .185 |
| The level of learning depends on the social level of the student | Chi-square | 9.967 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .007* |
| Relationship between university courses and the social status of the student | Chi-square | 5.842 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .054 |
| In your opinion, socially, private education supports students better than public education | Chi-square | 2.388 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .303 |
| Social justice is better understood in the private establishment than in the public establishment | Chi-square | .971 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .615 |
| Failure in higher education is mainly due to the social difficulties of the student | Chi-square | 6.607 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .037* |
| The more I evolve in my studies, the more my social status rises to highly considered levels | Chi-square | 1.425 |
| | Df | 2 |
| | GIS | .491 |

*Notes:* The results are based on the non-empty rows and columns of each of the innermost subtables.
GIS means dll, in SPSS.
*The chi-square statistics are significant at the .05 level.

We observe that there is a statistically significant difference between the type of institution and future prospects (chi-square = 27.192; ddl = 2; $p$ = .001), the

level of learning which depends on the student's social level (chi-square = 9.967; ddl = 2; $p$ = .007), as well as failure which is due to the student's social difficulties (chi-square = 6.607; ddl = 2; $p$ = 0.037) (Tables 13 and 14).

For social mobility, students in the "Public" sector are significantly more committed to occupying a significantly better social status than their parents. The table also shows that "Public" students are aware of the socioeconomic and cultural climate at their institution, which is far from adequately meeting students' basic needs.

## 3.2 Discussion

Our study is based on the concept that socioeconomic status (SES) encompasses not only earnings but also educational attainment, economic security, and subjective perceptions of social status and social magnificence. We will try to highlight, in the framework of a comparative analysis of the social situation of students belonging, respectively, to the two types of higher education institutions (Public and Private), not only what the family represents for the student—as a structure of support, consultation, and solidarity—but also as a source of variations and even substantial inequalities between students belonging to different socioeconomic categories and coming from families that do not provide the same material support, nor the same incentives to work and to succeed.

This will necessarily lead us to take into account various variables, such as social status, parental occupation, and education, and to a lesser degree, the number of siblings, gender, and educational background.

The results of our study show that there is a strong and stable correlation between SES and academic achievement and cognitive development of university students. The concept of cultural capital is used as a prism to reveal inequalities that reside in family life and are exacerbated within education, drawing attention to the hidden and complex processes by which cultural capital is transmitted from one generation to another.

The results also show that families are motivated by a tendency to reproduce their powers and privileges through a series of strategies such as matrimonial, inheritance, and economic. Still, in the same comparative framework, we find that the more cultural capital a family possesses, the more it will invest in education, especially as regards socially privileged families and the benefits they can gain from it.

In our study, the social background variable was justified by the results of the analysis of status inconsistencies and the cumulative and countervailing effects of social background resources on the inequality of opportunity. This finding leads us to consider parental education, parental class, and parental status as family resources that influence students' educational opportunities.

Hung (2005) [42], using corroborating work, studied parental involvement in their children's education as it relates to their children's academic performance, taking into account differences in three areas: family social status, family social structure, and learners' perceptions of their learning environment.

Indeed, the results of this research concluded that: (a) mothers were more involved in their children's education than were fathers; (b) children's academic performance is related to their family's social status and social structure; (c) children's self-concepts are related to their perceptions of their school environments, their parents' aspirations, and their parents' involvement at home; and (d) the family's social structure and the variables associated with the school environment in the

theoretical model mediate the relationships between family social status, children's academic performance, and children's self-concepts.

On the other hand, the results of research by Cheng and Furnham (2014) [43] showed that parental social status indicators and childhood intelligence were associated with the five major personality traits: extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and intellect.

Thus, indicators of parental social status, childhood intelligence, personality traits, education, and occupation were all significant correlates of mental well-being.

A key discrepancy between higher education systems is their elitist orientation, which results in duality, i.e., large differences between "Private" and "Public" higher education.

## 4 CONCLUSION

Thanks to the use of a methodological approach with a quantitative aspect, we have highlighted relevant results that have answered our research hypotheses (H):

H1: Social origin influences the aspirations and decisions of students to pursue higher education with the same intensity in both public and private settings;
H2: The combination of school level and social and professional status of parents affects the way students learn at university;
H3: Equality of opportunity is perceived with the same vision on both sides of the two worlds (public and private).

Research continues to link low socioeconomic status to decreased academic achievement and slower academic progress compared with higher socioeconomic communities.

Students from low socioeconomic homes enter college with average literacy and speaking skills, in contrast to students at high-income universities.

Low-income students' success rates in technological know-how, engineering, and arithmetic are much lower than those of students who do not come from underrepresented backgrounds.

Although the contributions of our study are shown in the interpretation of the results and the answers to the hypotheses, our work also has a number of limitations: hesitant answers to some questions considered troubling by students from the "Public" sector, such as "monthly income" or "educational level" of parents, marred the analysis of factors on social inequalities.

From the perspective of our work, we propose that future studies investigate the following:

An interesting avenue for future research would be to design comparative studies based on other criteria of variation, such as rural-urban geographic disparities. In addition, we may be interested in studies that focus on the development of differentiated instructional engineering that takes into account the social background as well as the parental background of students.

We can make use of the three key transitional challenges, presented by Budny et al. (2014) [44], that new students face, offering an approach to productive interactions between orientation facilitators/first-year schoolteachers and parents to alleviate these challenges.

Also of interest is the work by Brzezinska (2018) [45], which focuses on a project that encompasses place-based and problem-based learning in the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Another inspiration for future work comes from Technical and Vocational Education and Training. As the demand for new skilled workers increases and the clientele of technical and vocational education and training is constantly diversifying, there is a need to raise awareness of the key role played by education and training in economic competitiveness and social inclusion [46].

This will allow us to move towards programs that are based on learning outcomes and competencies. This new orientation towards know-how, knowledge, and skills will materialize through learning objectives precisely describing the training chosen [47].

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