



Research paper

Teacher identity in elite schools in Israel: Shared habitus, a sense of chosenness, and an open future[☆]Ilanit Pinto-Dror, Avihu Shoshana^{*}

Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel



H I G H L I G H T S

- The nature of teacher identity in elite high schools was described.
- The role teacher identity plays in cultivating privileges was examined.
- Teachers described specific metaphors of teacher identity.
- Teacher identity was characterized by shared habitus, a sense of chosenness, and cultivating an open future.
- Teacher identity acts as a mechanism for ensuring privilege.

A R T I C L E I N F O

Article history:

Received 27 February 2021

Received in revised form

4 December 2021

Accepted 9 December 2021

Available online xxx

Keywords:

Teacher identity

Metaphors

Elite schools

Cultural capital

Shared habitus

A B S T R A C T

This article examined two key questions: What characterizes teacher identity in elite high schools? Whether and how does teacher identity play a role in producing and cultivating privileges? To resolve these questions, 20 teachers in elite high schools in Israel were interviewed. The main research findings revealed three unique characteristics of teacher identity: a shared habitus experience between teachers and students, a sense of chosenness, and the cultivation and practice of an open future. Teachers also described specific metaphors of teacher identity in elite high schools. The Discussion describes how teacher identity in elite high schools acts as a mechanism for ensuring advantage and privilege.

© 2021 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The education literature has described how elite educational institutions (schools, boarding schools, and universities) play a crucial role in the reproduction of privilege and in the work of preparing for power (Cookson & Persell, 1985). This literature has depicted how educational institutions function as 'distinguished spaces' (Kenway & Prosser, 2015) through producing and cultivating specific discourses such as the meritocracy discourse (Koh & Kenway, 2016), the cosmopolitan discourse (Howard & Maxwell, 2021), and the psychological discourse (Demerath, 2009;

Shoshana, 2017). Several school mechanisms have been shown to foster privilege. These include awarding citations such as "student of the month" or "stellar senior" (Demerath, 2009); cultural capital such as a sense of entitlement, sense of comfort with authority figures, being "polished" (Tylor, 2021); boundary work and the distinction between and within various elite groups (Binder & Abel, 2019); teacher-student interaction (Calarco, 2020) and parent-school interaction (Lareau, 2011). These findings describe how admission to an elite educational institution and education in elite educational institutions are markers of high status, power, superiority, and exceptionalism (Prosser, 2020). This linkage also elucidates, as Gaztambide-Fernández and Maudlin (2016) aptly put it, that "Eliteness is not a fait accompli; it is a process that must be achieved." (p.60). In general, teacher identity in elite schools has hardly been investigated (for an exception, see Variyan, 2019). Filling this gap by delineating the dynamics of teacher identity in elite schools can facilitate obtaining a nuanced understanding of

[☆] This work was supported by Israel Science Foundation, Grant Number: 2505/21.

^{*} Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: ilanit.dror@gmail.com (I. Pinto-Dror), avihush@gmail.com (A. Shoshana).

the linkage between position and disposition and of the important research task of “making privilege visible” (Howard et al., 2014, p. 1) in various educational institutions. These efforts are expected to help understand how inequality is reproduced.

The current article will explore two questions that have yet to be sufficiently studied: (1) What characterizes teacher identity in elite high schools? (2) Whether and how teacher identity plays a role in producing and cultivating privileges, and thereafter, reproducing processes related to educational stratification and social inequality. In other words, is privilege acquired and legitimized through teacher identity in elite high schools, and if so, how is teacher identity manifested to this end?

This article first presents the theoretical framework through three sections: identity and teacher identity, teacher identity in different class contexts, and teacher identity in elite educational spaces. Subsequently, we describe the Israeli context in which elite high schools operate. This is followed by a section on the study's research design. The Findings section is divided into three parts: shared habitus, sense of chosenness, and future orientation. Finally, the Discussion, Conclusions, Limitations and recommendations for future research complete the article.

2. Theoretical frameworks

2.1. Identity and teacher identity

The concept of identity has been widely reviewed; it has been the object of many conceptual and empirical discussions in various disciplines (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Callero, 2003). Moreover, these review articles revealed the potential inherent in the identity concept to study the linkage between the personal, social, and political domains. Following this line, we define individuals' identity in terms of the definitions, the descriptions, and the accounts of individuals about themselves. In line with the sociocultural approaches, we presume identity to be a social achievement related to the social and structural circumstances in which individuals are immersed (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). These approaches also suggest that we examine identity as a process of becoming rather than one of being and as a process of ongoing dialectic between structure and agency.

In the spirit of these descriptions of the concept of identity, we define teacher identity as teachers' understandings about their roles or the ways they argue for themselves (Maclure, 1993) regarding their work environment, interactions with their role partners (colleagues, students, parents), and professional aspirations. Researchers have applied a variety of descriptors in their investigations of teacher identity: dominant discourses about teaching professions, prevalent discourses in local school culture, and the discourses produced by them (Alsup, 2006); metaphors for defining their role or for describing professional ideals (Ben-Peretz et al., 2003); characteristics of teacher-student relationships (Tylor, 2021); professional and pedagogical knowledge (Beijaard et al., 2000); and the social and organizational contexts that influence teacher identity and their work (Flores & Day, 2006).

Zembylas and Chubbuck (2018) identified three major theoretical approaches to studying teacher identity: psychological, socio-cultural, and political. The psychological approach suggests examining the association of teachers' individual, personality, and developmental characteristics with the various aspects of their teacher identity. Rodgers and Scott (2008), for example, delineated stages in the development of teacher identity. The sociocultural approach (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Sfard & Prusak, 2005), which underlies the present article, proposes to examine how cultural and organizational contexts are expressed in teacher identity or in the definitions and accounts that accompany their

descriptions. The political approach to the study of teacher identity, which shares many features with the sociocultural approach (for a broader description, see Clarke, 2009) and influenced the present article, suggests examining how power relations shape teacher identity (Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018).

2.2. Teacher identity in social class contexts

Only a few studies have examined teacher identity in their work in educational institutions of different social classes. Studies dealing with teacher identity and teaching in low socioeconomic (SES) class schools have claimed that teaching in low-SES schools is characterized by a relationship based on formal authority and traditional learning, highlighting conformity and obedience (Köpsén, 2014). Applying discipline is essential to perceiving these teachers' roles (Kershen et al., 2018; Kerstetter, 2016). Also, teachers in these schools perceived their role as therapists (Meo & Tarabini, 2020) due to the many problems (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) they attribute to their students (Lappalainen et al., 2013).

Teaching in elite schools has been characterized by teachers' commitment and dedication to advancing their students' learning and development processes (Kershen et al., 2018; Khan, 2011). Teachers in elite schools reported pursuing excellence based on performance assessment and competitive processes (Variyan, 2019). Alongside the commitment to academic excellence, these teachers viewed their professional duty as facilitating their students' self-fulfillment, preparation for future leadership roles, and ensuring the benefits of their socioeconomic class (Prosser, 2020).

Ben-Peretz et al. (2003) suggested comparing teacher identity in different class contexts using metaphors. Their study revealed that teachers of high-SES students tended to choose the metaphor of “conductor” (in an orchestral context). This metaphor, alluding to a guidance role for teachers, was described in positive terms of working harmoniously with the students. In contrast, teachers in low-SES schools chose the metaphor “animal keeper” to describe their role as teachers. This metaphor revealed a teaching concept of acting on concern and care for a demanding and challenging population. In addition, these teachers used teaching metaphors applied in the therapeutic field (therapist) and family (father, mother, or parents; Meo & Tarabini, 2020). These metaphors, linked to caring and concern, were also chosen by teachers who instructed high-SES students to describe their teacher identity. However, teachers in high-SES schools, in addition to their caring, emphasized the value of acquiring academic knowledge and academic excellence (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2009; Howard, 2008; Khan, 2011). Thus, teacher identity in elite schools is based on cultivating academic and cultural capital, which is critical to maintaining privilege (Halvorsen, 2020).

2.3. Being a teacher in an elite school

Studies examining teachers' work in elite schools over the past decades have portrayed teachers as dedicated and loyal to their work (Cookson & Persell, 1985; Khan, 2011). Cookson and Persell (1985) described them as the “heart and soul” of elite schools, operating as “missionaries to the rich,” with devotion and sacrifice as the norm. Teacher dedication is also described in the context of their relationships with their students (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2009; Khan, 2011). These relationships are depicted as occurring in a climate of love and caring by teachers who are described as “experts of the body, mind, and soul” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2008, p. 234). These relationships are also characterized by their depth and a high commitment to advancing their students' learning and development processes (Kershen et al., 2018).

Kenway (2018) recounted elite schools' teachers' commitment as evincing passion and love that serve as a driving force in their teaching work. Teachers' dedication and love for schools are described against the backdrop of demands to meet high pedagogical standards, pressed by parents to achieve impressive academic results. Teachers' devotion to elite schools can be explained by various other socioemotional reasons, such as pride in school success, the schools' graduates, and the school's social status (Kenway, 2018). Belonging to an elite school fosters the identity of being "select" teachers, affiliated with the best schools ("the best of the best"; Gaztambide-Fernández, 2009), and perceived by parents and students as the best teachers.

The teachers' choice to work in elite schools has also been described as driven by the desire to teach at an academic level in their field (Connell et al., 1982). Teachers in elite schools are likely to share a common cultural background with their students, an appreciation of formal education, and the schools' ability to reward those who thrive in it (Fitz et al., 1997). Furthermore, the schools' abundant resources enable them to adopt innovative pedagogies and international educational programs, which provide a competitive edge over colleagues who teach in other schools (Kenway, 2018).

Studies have shown that elite school teachers' involvement in cultural-educational processes produces and maintains an elite class identity among their students. Teachers in elite schools use targeted curricula (Goodson et al., 1997) to establish a distinction regarding the student's exceptional subjectivity (Demerath, 2009; Gaztambide-Fernández, 2009) and foster students envisioning a privileged future (academic and professional) for themselves. These teachers have been thus described as "cultural guides" (Lareau, 2015). Their perception of their teaching role encompasses a fundamental engagement in their students' future concept by expressing ongoing high expectations and imparting knowledge about the game's rules. These unique resources that the teachers provide serve as cultural capital that enhances the students' prospects of integrating into the employment market and academia (Rivera, 2015).

Several studies have reported that teachers in elite schools cope with "helicopter parents'" high level of involvement (Calarco, 2020; Hamilton, 2016). Due to the schools' reliance on elite families' economic and social support (Leachman et al., 2017), the schools seek to woo these parents and please them (Lewis-McCoy, 2014). Variyan (2019) noted that these teachers tended to transform the tensions and difficulties they experienced into productivity. They described the demanding work with parents as deliberate (rather than imposed from above) for establishing trust, perceiving this investment of time as essential to the child's success.

The school's reliance on the elite families' privileged status also influenced school regulations and teachers' decisions (Leachman et al., 2017). In this context, for example, it was found that teachers modified their stated policy regarding homework preparation and granted selective exemptions with various justifications to children of highly involved families. These efforts stem from the desire to avoid conflict with these parents (Calarco, 2020).

3. Elite high schools: the Israeli context

Since the 1980s, following the growth of neoliberalism in Israel, several initiatives emerged in education, as in other fields, that emphasized privatization of services, individualism, and globalism. These dynamics marked the movement from strong collectivism to individualism in Israel. Indeed, Israel has been characterized over the past several decades by the presence of individualism and collectivism in tandem. Individualism is related to the dominance of neoliberalism and the effects of globalization. Collectivism in

Israel is linked to the close connection between religion and state and the dominance of its security concerns and the military (Fatehi et al., 2020). Israel is a conflict-ridden society engaged in long-running wars and crises with Arab countries in the Middle East. Thus, among the contributing factors to Israel's relatively strong collectivist character are mandatory conscription into the Israeli army for Jewish citizens and their military service (Grosswirth-Kachatan, 2017). One of the consequences of these dynamics is that military service in Israel fosters a military elite closely linked to the civilian elite. Military service not only distinguishes between Jewish and Arab identity in Israel, often limiting some rights to those having served, but also creates hierarchies within Jewish society. Jewish citizens serving in elite units receive cultural and symbolic capital benefits, also known as "military capital" (Swed & Butler, 2015), that assist them in obtaining senior positions in post-military civilian life.

Moreover, military service in Israel is stratified. Low-SES soldiers from stigmatized ethnic groups (mainly Mizrahim - Jews whose families originated from Arab countries) predominantly populate the army's working-class positions. In contrast, high-SES soldiers or those from the hegemonic ethnic group in Israel (Ashkenazim - Jews whose families originated from Euro-American countries) are assigned to elite units and positions such as intelligence, pilot training, and computer sciences.

This dominance of compulsory military service in Israel influences the educational work performed in high schools, particularly in ways unique to Israel. During high school, Jewish students receive their initial military draft notices. Immediately after graduating from high school, at the age of 18, the boys (for three years) and the girls (for two years) are drafted into the army. Thus, many high schools in Israel offer preparatory activities for military service, including seminars describing the various army units and sessions where commanders and officials are invited to give lectures to students. Furthermore, workshops are provided to enhance skills needed to achieve high army selection testing scores (general knowledge tests, simulations for personal interviews, simulations for group interviews, and courses to improve physical fitness). These high schools take pride in graduates who have held senior positions in the military and use this as *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu, 1984) to establish a prestigious identity. A study of elite high schools noted the prevalence of activities aimed at priming students for prestigious military service (Haybi-Barak & Shoshana, 2021). This study revealed, for example, how elite high schools particularly encourage their students to take an interest in army-relevant domains, such as intelligence, computer, and cyber, that equip them with the cultural and symbolic capital that would ultimately facilitate obtaining senior positions in prestigious employment fields, such as high-tech (Haybi-Barak & Shoshana, 2021).

Other studies have reported how high-SES schools in Israel have been encouraged to implement unique leadership tracks. These tracks, called "Year of Service" or "Pre-Military Preparatory Classes," enable students to postpone their military enlistment for a year to participate in selective programs that include developing social leadership and community volunteering (especially in low-SES communities). The programs have been described as elite, are populated by high-SES youth, and help the youth prepare for officer positions and other prestigious posts in the military (Agbaria & Shmueli, 2019).

As elite high schools in Israel have been depicted here, one may conclude that these high school students pass from one elite space (high school) to a second elite space (military service), with both equip them with the cultural and symbolic capital that serves as a marker of elitism. A further implication is that elite high schools in Israel are fully engaged in preparing students for staffing the

military elite. This educational task was cited in the interviews with the teachers in the current study, as the Findings section will illustrate.

4. Study design

This qualitative study is based on in-depth semi-structured interviews with 20 teachers teaching in three elite high schools in Israel in different geographical areas (neighborhood and teacher names are pseudonyms). Two of these high schools have been operating for almost a century, boast a rich heritage, and are commonly described in Israel as highly elite. These schools are located close to prestigious universities and have maintained a relationship with them over the years. The third school was established as an elite private school about a decade ago; its motto is to be an educational institution, “educating for eliteness in the format of the aristocratic schools in the United States and Britain.” The three schools boast graduates who hold key positions in Israel’s legal, medical, academic, artistic, and financial upper crust. The schools are typically populated by high-SES students who live in localities rated high on a national SES index.

4.1. Procedure and participants

A letter of invitation to participate in the study was distributed by the schools’ principals to teachers in the schools’ WhatsApp groups. Initially, only three teachers responded positively to participate in the study. To expand this initial group of interviewees, the school principals extended personal requests to four additional teachers, who agreed to participate in the study. In this request, the principals emphasized to the teachers the importance, in their opinion, of being interviewed for the study because, to the best of their understanding, there are no academic studies on elite schools in Israel. Moreover, principals stressed that research on elite schools could contribute to a deeper understanding of educational work in elite high schools.

This initial group of seven teachers formed the basis of the “snowball sampling” technique, with the interviewees referring us to peers in the profession, resulting in a total of 20 participants. Ten interviews were conducted by the first author, and 10 interviews were conducted by the second author. All interviewees volunteered to participate in interviews and received no monetary payment for doing so.

The interviewees ranged in age from 34 to 65. The teachers’ seniority in the profession ranged from six to 30 years, with 15 holding a minimum of a master’s degree and five having a Ph.D. Fifteen teachers held school leadership roles in addition to their teaching position (i.e., stratum coordinators, subject coordinators, pedagogical director, teacher facilitators, development staff, and outstanding and gifted student coordinator). In addition to their work at the school, five teachers lectured at universities or teacher training colleges. All the interviewees had undergone a complex screening process to be hired as teachers. The screening process, conducted by an external selection company, included individual and group interviews, teaching simulations, and writing a personal, educational vision. These screening processes are more comprehensive than the screening procedures for teachers in public schools.

4.2. Research tools

The principal research tool in the current study was a semi-structured in-depth personal interview. The interviews included three main parts: general background (academic training, experience in education, and position in the school); description of the

interviewees’ daily educational work routine (agenda, prevalent pedagogies); and their teacher identity in an elite school (What is fundamental to your identity as a teacher? How do you define your role? What metaphor would you choose to express your identity as a teacher? How would you describe your relationship with your students?). The interviews, lasting from 60 to 90 min, were recorded and transcribed. The study was authorized by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the authors university. All interviewees signed a consent form that allows them to stop the interview at any stage or ask us not to use the interview at all in our research. Moreover, all interviewees were promised complete anonymity, and therefore their names and other possibly identifying details (place of residence, location of the school, unique biographical background) were changed.

4.3. Data processing method

The research epistemology that guided this study derived from Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; [Smith et al., 2009](#)). IPA offers an analysis of personal lived experience, focusing on how individuals assign meaning to their personal and social life spheres. This analysis facilitates clarifying how individuals understand their experiences in the world and their interpretations of the sources of these understandings. The data were analyzed using IPA principles in six stages. The first stage included reading the raw data, recording the descriptive and linguistic aspects of the content, and formulating preliminary interpretive notes. The second stage included an initial conceptualization of the fundamental themes identified by each of the authors. The third stage included reading the interviews in the context of the initially extracted themes. The fourth stage comprised an open reading to identify additional themes not detected in the previous phase. The fifth stage included a focused reading of the interviews based on the two authors’ suggested themes. The final stage included an additional reading of the interviews to identify themes that the authors had not detected in the previous stages.

The two authors extracted the three themes key themes manifested in all the interviews. These themes will be presented in the Findings, highlighting the content expressed by the majority of the interviewees. Special attention was given to the theme of chosenness, derived from the suggested metaphors of teacher identity. Analyzing these metaphors required a relatively extensive interpretive dialogue between the two authors. After identifying the different metaphors, we sought to discover commonalities among metaphors, such as “wings,” “high-tech,” “a palace,” “dance,” and “a bee in beautiful flowers,” beyond the apparent emphasis on prestige, creativity, and movement. The extensive interpretive conversations led us to conclude that the sense of being chosen, which teachers attributed to their teacher identity and their students, is critical to understanding our findings and establishing and cultivating an elite identity.

5. Findings

All teachers described that high scholastic achievements and academic excellence are the primary goals of their work and of an elite school in general. Academic excellence has been described as critical to future educational and professional success. However, all teachers also emphasized how inculcating specific traits and skills (or ‘cultural capital’ in Bourdieu’s [1984] terms) are fundamental to their work and for preparing students for a future typifying “strong or elite populations” (Dan, science teacher). Many teachers have also described how elite schools promote cultivating cultural capital because the students are academically talented, often due to the private tutors funded by their parents. (“There is a glorious private

school industry here that directs us to engage in the important aspects of teaching, i.e., educating for values and preparing students for a strong future" - Oren, English teacher.) The teachers depicted elite schools as organizations that encourage intellectuality, inquisitiveness, creativity, and critical thinking as part of the teacher's everyday work and as qualities to equip students for a successful future.

Many teachers have also described how they express love, concern, and caring for their students alongside cultivating academic capital, achievement, and competitiveness. These caring expressions have been described as occurring in an educational environment that favors friendly, informal relationships with students, preferring dialogue over discipline and hierarchy. (For a description of the intense cultivation of a flattened hierarchy in an elite school in England, see [Tylor, 2021](#).) Teachers reported a high workload, citing lofty expectations from the administration, parents, and students. Their teaching was described as rewarding, satisfying, and enabling them to progress pedagogically. These findings align with other descriptions concerning elite schools ([Connell et al., 1982](#); [Gaztambide-Fernández, 2009](#); [Kenway, 2018](#); [Variyan, 2019](#)).

A key finding of our study is identifying three components of teacher identity that are unique in the context of elite schools, as reported in the literature. We will now describe these components in detail.

5.1. Shared habitus: "we even have the same sense of humor"

In response to the question, "What characterizes your identity as a teacher in an elite school?" Talia, a social studies teacher, replied:

The similarity between me and my students. It makes the job very easy ... this similarity creates a common language with the students; It is not like the non-elite schools I have worked at in the past. For example, my spectacular student, Emma, who spoke to you this morning, is a 'mini me' [spoken in English]. We even have the same sense of humor—a sense of humor seasoned with colorful sarcasm, a subtle sense of humor. It is, of course, no coincidence that we are similar—we grew up and were educated under the same conditions, a similar family; my father is a doctor like her father. We came from the same world; I studied at this school, and my children are enrolled at this school.

Talia's descriptions appear to highlight three critical elements: a biographical similarity between the identity of teachers and the identity of students; the lack of coincidence or the interpersonal and cultural congruence between teacher identity and student identity; and ramifications of the biographical similarity on teaching and teacher identity.

Continuing with Talia's analysis, the biographical similarity includes a parallel family structure, living under comparable socioeconomic conditions, similar parental occupations, being educated in the same elite school (or other elite schools in the case of other interviewees), parenting children who attend the school, and similar worldviews. Talia also indicated the "lack of coincidence" of the biographical similarity characterizing the lives of the teachers and students in a similar socioeconomic class. Finally, like many other teachers, Talia described how a biographical similarity between teacher identity and a student identity establishes unique teaching experiences that include a common language, a relationship based on trust, and a sense of familiarity.

In Bourdieu's (1984) terms, the biographical similarity can be designated the *shared habitus* between teachers and students as a predominant feature of teacher identity in the present study. [Bourdieu \(1977\)](#) described habitus as the internalization of social order in terms of dispositions, life views, emotional orientations, and aspirations. [Bourdieu \(1977\)](#) further emphasized that the

habitus is the historical that has become natural or "second nature."

Tomer, a science teacher, described other common characteristics between the students and the teachers, the shared habitus:

I grew up in a home similar to the students'; I grew up in exactly the same social class, albeit in a different elite school, but completely comparable. I share many traits with them and their parents, like a family that invests in child development, exposure to cultural wealth, encouragement for critical thinking, and even the same politics.

When we asked Tomer, "Does this similarity affect your identity as a teacher?" he replied:

I have more time to engage in values education, leadership, to awaken them with important skills that I know for sure will assist them later in life, like general knowledge, intellectual curiosity, defending your opinion with reason and intelligence, and of course, perseverance, i.e., grit [said in English]. It frees us from being regular teachers who teach academic knowledge. These kids already have skills and academic knowledge, and they have private tutors for every subject and parents who are willing to pay a fortune for these private lessons [laughs]. It makes me a facilitator, a tutor [spoken in English] who equips them with qualities and nurtures them for their future. My identity is that of a facilitator and not a teacher. We do not use the word teacher here. We base ourselves here on dialogue at eye level. Our children need a different type of education to be successful and flourish in life.

Tomer's description included the traits and characteristics that [Bourdieu \(1984\)](#) called "cultural capital" and others call "emotional capital" ([Reay, 2000](#)) and "soft skills." *Cultural capital* includes resources such as diplomas, general knowledge, and dispositions ("intellectual curiosity"). *Emotional capital* is a concept proposed by several researchers to emphasize that emotions can also serve as markers of class and as a badge of distinction that includes, for example, emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and positive energy ([Reay, 2000](#)). Soft skills ([Forbes & Lingard, 2015](#)) have been described in recent years as markers of success in the employment world. They include skills such as "standing before an audience," "leaving a positive impression," and "the ability to speak appropriately to different audiences." This emotional capital, linked to the habitus of high socioeconomic class, has been described as the *comme il faut* habitus required in service-based economies ([Friedman & Laurison, 2019](#)).

Maya, an art teacher, defined the similarities with her students through aesthetic tastes and embodied characteristics. These tastes and characteristics resonate with the definitions of habitus, as delineated by [Bourdieu \(1977\)](#). When we asked Maya to characterize the similarity with her students that she often cited in the interview, she replied:

They are similar to me, or I am to them. It doesn't matter. Their deliberations about army service and future life in general and even this pretense of deliberation [laughs], I know it well. I'll tell you something funny—me and one of the students I love even have the same-colored hairclips; we buy them at the same store. I run into her there with her mom regularly. We also have similar tastes in fashion. She dresses just like I dressed when I was her age, and she will dress just like I dress when she reaches my age [laughs]. Another student, who I especially like, is deliberating whether to become an army education officer or enlist in the 8200 unit [a prestigious army intelligence unit]. I love it. That was my dilemma at that age, and I chose to be an

education officer. And I know, really know, I'm sure that she will be an education officer. I speak with her privately and allow her to experiment with choosing between two great options. The choice for me is a kind of freedom that my students need to experience ... My teacher identity obliges me to open up possibilities for them now and in the future.

Maya's description dovetails with Bourdieu's (1984) definition of high socioeconomic class as a habitus of choice and a habitus of freedom from material limitations. When we asked Maya, "How do you know your students need all the experiences and skills you described throughout the interview?" she immediately replied:

What do you mean? I have taken all the roads they will take [Meaning?]. And so, I know very well what it takes to be successful in all this eliteness. It is a privilege, and perhaps even my duty as a teacher, to pass on to them the knowledge and tools to succeed and stand out. In addition, I am among my people, I am up to date, and I know what it takes today to star in this world, to be the best of the best and the cream of the crop [said in English]. I have friends in the business sector who tell me what the new positions are and what it takes to succeed in job interviews. I have friends who are organizational consultants who give workshops that are the hottest thing in the market today. Just an example: If once, emotional intelligence was in, then 21st-century skills, which include, among other things, getting used to rapid change and creative thinking, are the new hit. I keep up to date, study the subject, bring workshops on the subject to students and the school.

Maya described how the shared habitus encourages not only a sense of familiarity and partnership with her students but also encourages sensitivity to the cultural capital, habitus, and the distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984) required to become "the best of the best and the cream of the crop," as she said. Maya's biographical similarity to her students, her past experiences, and her present experiences in elite spaces help her, as she puts it, to maintain a teacher identity to which she is committed. Maya also explicitly describes how she uses her social capital (Bourdieu, 1984) to keep abreast of the cultural capital required for success in the various elite arenas. Thus, like many other teachers we interviewed, Maya was well aware of the "conjunction of disposition and position" (Wacquant, 2013, p. 5).

5.2. Sense of chosenness: metaphors of teacher identity

The teacher identities were examined in interviews, along with other means, by completing the following sentence stems: "Being a teacher in an elite school is ...". Analyzing the metaphors yielded three primary features: advantages ("wings" and "springboard"), distinctiveness ("ivory tower" and "palace"), and innovation ("high-tech," "locomotive," and "laboratory").

Teachers who chose the wing and springboard metaphors depicted their identity as providing opportunities for learning and deepening processes. Thus, for example, Hila, a Bible teacher and administrator who chose the wing metaphor, described her rationale:

The first thing that comes to mind is *wings*. I look at the teachers and see a calm flight, but rising with a perception or vision of a clear horizon ... We are constantly experimenting and learning additional new pedagogies, a feeling of constantly flying and evolving with the students.

Hila described the teachers' learning and development processes as rewarding, providing a positive sense of calm and a relaxed and elevating flight while viewing an undisturbed clear horizon. The use of "horizon" implies a teaching experience of wealth and intellectual expansion, for as one ascends upward, the horizon line recedes. The learning and deepening processes are endless, but the horizon is bright, suggesting a clear and coherent educational compass that provides the sense of security that allows teachers and their students to devote themselves to the learning process. "Wings" provide momentum to height and distance, and the school also provides an enriching, elevating, and uplifting teaching experience that offers advantages over teachers in other schools.

Tomer, a science teacher, who also used the wings metaphor to describe his identity as a teacher, noted how this metaphor related to the exclusivity of the teachers and the students:

We were chosen because we have wings as teachers, similar to the wings that our students need to develop, children who were also handpicked for the school. We can fly with the students to different worlds, fly high, experience different experiences that will enrich and envelop them. My job is to equip the students with every conceivable advantage. One criterion evaluated in the rigid selection process for teachers who want to be accepted to this school is whether you have wings. Only those who have wings will be selected for the position—wings to guide the students to places they have not visited and to a unique future.

Teachers who chose the metaphors of "ivory tower" and "palace" described the school as distinct spaces. Talia, an art teacher, who suggested the palace metaphor, emphasized the teachers' singularity and exclusivity:

Who lives in the palace? Royalty, lucky people, like us and like the students, it is a great privilege to be here. It is no coincidence that we were chosen out of many candidates who want to teach here. We provide outstanding educational service, and we must [therefore] be exceptional.

Dan and Shai chose the metaphors of "locomotive" and "laboratory," emphasizing innovation and leadership. Dan, a social studies teacher and stratum coordinator, said, "We are the locomotive that pulls forward." Just as the locomotive leads the other train cars, the school is a groundbreaking institution whose job is to innovate educational trends. Similarly, Shai, a history teacher, who chose the metaphor of a "laboratory," referred to leading innovative processes:

It is to operate in a laboratory, educationally and socially ... Being liberated from the shackles of contracts and agreements that other education systems are bound by has liberated us and provided experiences in both a pedagogical and social laboratory on one level or another.

The "high-tech" metaphor implies a teacher identity influenced by occupational worlds perceived as prestigious and rewarding. Gal, a history teacher, expanded on his metaphor:

The image is "to be without and feel with." I am a teacher who does things that teachers do, but I am not really a teacher like the teachers in "Ramot" [a public school], I am something a little different, something that is more of a 'teacher plus,' with a wink to worlds that are more coveted in terms of their branding, on a continuum between high-tech and teaching.

Gal has created a link between education, perceived as a social mission, and hi-tech, characterized as a world of technology,

efficiency, innovation, and creativity. His comparison resonates with the processes of globalization, neoliberalism, and a market economy. These processes have affected elite schools due to their need to position themselves competitively to ensure maximal benefits to their graduates (Kenway & Fahey, 2014).

Leon, a computer science teacher, who also adopted the “high-tech” metaphor, emphasized the selectivity, prestige, and exclusivity associated with this image:

For me, being a teacher in an elite school is a kind of high-tech that symbolizes exclusivity, prestige, quality, and exclusivity. You have to be exceptional to be in the elite, whether an educational elite or a technological elite. I may sound like a capitalist pig, but not everyone can be accepted into such a special school that equips the elite figures of the future. It is impossible to admit every teacher and every student. They need to choose the remarkable.

Ornat, a biology teacher who also used the high-tech metaphor, described how using this metaphor even helped her pass the rigorous screening tests for her admission as a teacher at the school:

One of the questions we were asked in the group dynamics exercise when I was considered for the position was, ‘Do you know how to do high-tech with students?’ Some did not understand the question; I immediately understood and answered yes and described how for me, an elite school is the Palo Alto or Google of contemporary life. I was accepted for the job [laughs]. I was accepted for the position because I immediately understood the high-tech metaphor, and many did not understand. I was chosen because I know how to use the gold standard for the ‘cream of the crop,’ ‘icing on the cake’ [spoken in English]

The metaphors the teachers chose to depict the context in which they operate and their being teachers in elite schools reflects a teacher identity characterized by an extraordinary subjectivity of a sense of excellence. Many teachers defined themselves as chosen teachers, selected after rigorous screening tests, comparing their exclusivity to their students. The match between the sense of chosenness of the teachers and the students has even been described as offering a teaching experience that does not exist in other schools. The sense of chosenness was described as producing a specific teacher identity that requires creativity, exceptionalism, distinction, and constant engagement in preparing students for an elite future. These findings are intriguing, as the origin of the term ‘elite’ derives from the Latin ‘eligere’: “the same root as the word ‘elect,’ suggesting that the elite are ‘the chosen’ ... to be elite means to be chosen” (Gaztambide-Fernández & Maudlin, 2016, p. 59). This sense of chosenness, which produces a specific teacher identity, serves as a central mechanism for the establishment and cultivation of privilege, to be established in the Discussion.

5.3. The strategic cultivation of future orientation and the capacity to aspire

During his interview, Hillel, a homeroom and social studies teacher and stratum coordinator, described his students as geared attuned to their future orientation: “I think we [teachers] also have a very clear vision of the future; there is an atmosphere of future perception in the school.” He described a congruence between the students’ and teachers’ perceptions. Hillel stressed the importance of working on the future with his students—through exercising

envisioning and talking about dealing with barriers—as significant to his teacher identity. Hillel used the description of “the atmosphere of future perception” because both teachers and students understand, according to his depictions, the importance of engaging in the future and of facilitating the students’ future orientation.

Teachers described their engagement in the students’ future concept as a vital component in their role as educators. This engagement is reflected in their descriptions of practicing envisioning the students’ future and guiding them through the post-high school frameworks’ admissions processes. These include the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the service year, and the pre-military preparatory course. References to the guidance role for preparing students for these post-high school frameworks were particularly prominent among the 11th- and 12th-grade teachers, as these years were critical for navigating admissions procedures and making crucial decisions regarding the students’ future.

The teachers described exercising the students’ future orientation through classroom activities, such as writing assignments to express the students’ future self-vision, guided imagery regarding the future, and lessons devoted to the subject. The teachers described the students’ envisioning their future image as an ongoing process, applied at various junctures of their high school studies. Dana, a 12th-grade homeroom and English teacher and subject coordinator, stated, in this context:

Just now, I prepared a page for them [the students] to write where they see themselves in 10 years and in 20 years ... they also completed questionnaires like these about where they see themselves in the 12th grade when they were just starting 10th grade, and tomorrow, I will hand them back.

When Dana’s students were in 10th grade, they wrote of their future self-vision as students near the end of their high school studies. At the time of the interview, Dana’s students, nearing graduation, reviewed the future self-vision they had composed two years earlier regarding their image of themselves as 12th graders. Thus, in addition to imagining two years ahead as 10th graders and comparing their vision with its actualization, they were now continuing to practice this future self-vision skill and were asked to imagine themselves in 10 and 20 years. Michal, a homeroom and literature teacher and pedagogical facilitator, described her use of guided imagery:

I do guided imagery with them about their future, what their lives will look like in 10 years, and the implications of their choices for many years ahead. This is how I clarify to them the importance of their actions.

Thus, Michal administered guided imagery regarding the future, stressing the implications of her students’ current decisions on their lives for many years ahead as adults. Guided imagery regarding the future facilitates internalizing the importance of their choices in the present. Practicing students’ future orientation has been found to help them take control over their future and actively shape reality (Silva & Corse, 2017). Moreover, active practice of future vision or the capacity to aspire, as Appadurai (2004) emphasized, functions as cultural capital that enhances life opportunities.

The teachers’ guidance and emotional support help students confer meaning on their experiences and persevere toward their objectives despite setbacks along the way. Shiran, a 12th-grade homeroom and literature teacher and a subject coordinator,

referred to the support she gives her students regarding the IDF screening process as “one of the important roles of the 12th-grade homeroom teacher”:

I speak with them about the military [screening] interviews; I devote quite a few lessons to these interviews. I try to advise them in advance and encourage them when they are involved in the process. I know when they are invited to the testing, and I will always ask them the next day how it went; this is particularly important, in my opinion.

Shiran conveyed that she devotes classes to preparing her students for interviews, which form a significant part of the military service screening process. Success in interviews affects the assignment to the military occupation that her students will fill. As a 12th-grade homeroom teacher, Shiran views the continuous contact with her students regarding pre-enlistment testing for the IDF as a fundamental part of her job.

When we asked Tamir, a science teacher, why he emphasizes preparing for the future and cultivating the students' future image as key to his identity as a teacher, he immediately replied:

The most critical component of a teacher's job in an elite school is to open up the future for their students and generate many options for them, especially envisioning many possibilities that will bring about their fulfillment. Our students are academically strong and come from homes that will help them achieve anything. We are obliged to teach them to envision, to open possibilities through envisioning, and most of all, to conquer the future.

Since the statement, “They [the students] need to learn to conquer the future,” was suggested by other interviewees, we asked Tamir to expand:

It is not enough to help students envision the future, the wildest and most exceptional possibilities; one also has to acquire the skills of seizing the elite future that awaits them.

Like many interviewees, Tamir's portrayal resonates with the findings of several researchers about the constructive qualities of positive future orientation (Sulimani-Aidan, 2017) and the existence of future orientation, including practicing the capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2004). Future orientation comprises the cultural capital that is linked to acquiring economic and symbolic capital. Scholars have reported in this context that cultivating high aspirations, especially directing individuals to practice anticipating them as a skill, turns them into reality. It is also noteworthy how Tamir and several other interviewees emphasized the importance of envisioning and practicing the future, what Demerath (2009) called *the colonization of the future*. Internalizing this colonialization becomes cultural capital for elite students. Bourdieu pointed out in this context that the “alignment between objective probabilities and subjective aspiration, is a central element of the habitus” (Bourdieu, 1996; cited in Forbes & Lingard, 2015, p. 118). Appadurai (2004) also emphasized how cultivating future orientation and the capacity to aspire and subsequent success in colonizing the future are related to the individuals' SES background. Few studies have examined how teacher identity is based on strategic engagement with students' future and the practice of navigational capacity (Oshri et al., 2018). Moreover, only a few studies have examined how the pursuit of future orientation and its practice by authority figures affects how privilege and elite identity

are produced (Baillergeau & Duyvendak, 2020). The Discussion section will develop these critical research issues.

6. Discussion

The present study's findings reveal three characteristics of teacher identity in elite schools in Israel, which also constitute a mechanism for producing and cultivating elite identity, privilege, and advantage. These characteristics and mechanisms join a series of findings published in recent years about the processes associated with becoming an elite subject and about how schools, through teacher identity, ensure their students' future privileges (Forbes & Lingard, 2015; Howard et al., 2014; Maxwell & Aggleton, 2013; Taylor, 2021; Variyan, 2019).

The initial significant finding of the present study revealed the *shared habitus* experience between teachers and students. Many teachers saw themselves in their students (“She is a mini-me”) and identified with students' dilemmas and challenges in light of their own lives as elite children who attended elite schools and in light of their participation in other elite spaces (military service, academia, and employment). The interviewed teachers also described how shared habitus allowed them to easily identify the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to orient their students for future success because of their biographical similarity. The teachers emphasized how they keep abreast of the cultural capital and skills needed for success in various business and cultural elite arenas because their social capital of family members and friends hold senior positions in different elite spaces. Furthermore, the teachers in the present study described how they use shared habitus to create a relationship of trust with the students and give them advice and guidance.

Our findings on teacher identity, based on shared habitus, resonate with one of Bourdieu's (1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979) classic claims about the differences in the educational experiences of high-SES students and low-SES students, which, in turn, influence their academic achievement. Bourdieu suggested that these differences are related to the relationship between family culture and school culture. Bourdieu emphasized that high-SES students experience cultural continuity: Family values and school values were comparable. Low-SES students, on the other hand, experience a clash between family culture and school culture. Their family values are not respected by the school and are not defined as cultural capital. Against this background, low-SES students are expected to adopt the school's cultural capital of the school in order to succeed in their studies and to learn to navigate between family life and school life. This cultural clash not only affects academic achievement but also creates a sense of alienation and resistance among low-SES students.

Several studies have found that the cultural match between school habitus and family habitus among high-SES students promotes a sense of entitlement (Lareau, 2011), a sense of ease (Khan, 2011), a sense of sureness (Maxwell & Aggleton, 2013), and a habitus of assured optimism (Forbes & Lingard, 2015), which includes an elevated level of confidence regarding future educational and professional successes. A recent study also found this cultural alignment in a relationship characterized by a flattened hierarchy between teachers and students in an elite school in England. These relationships helped students develop a sense of comfort with authority figures, supporting a sense of ease in interactions characterized by power and hierarchy (Taylor, 2021). Moreover, alumni of elite schools reported that having experienced these relationships in high school facilitates their interactions at the elite universities where they are currently enrolled (Taylor, 2021).

Other studies have formulated the concept of shared habitus, proposed in this study, using dynamics of homophily, meaning interpersonal and cultural similarities between subjects. Homophily has been found to function in job interviews as cultural capital that facilitates attaining lucrative positions in business firms (Friedman & Laurison, 2019; Rivera, 2015). The experience of interpersonal and cultural similarity has been described as the “emotional glue” that produces feelings of relaxation, trust, and excitement in interactions. Emotional responses in the course of cultural similarity were found to be advantageous in many and varied ways, even as a basis by which abilities and talent are estimated (Rivera, 2015).

Our study reveals how teacher-student cultural matching is manifested in comparable family cultures, school cultures, and their shared habitus. Our findings show that the shared habitus experience operates as cultural capital because it prompts teachers to see their students as they see themselves: as “unique” subjects worthy of “different” education and as “exceptional” students distinguished from students from other cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the shared habitus encourages teachers to stay current, as they reported, on the academic capital, cultural capital, and emotional capital characterizing other elite spaces that their students will reach following high school graduation (i.e., military service, academia, and employment). Against this backdrop, they do not call themselves teachers but rather mentors and facilitators.

A second essential finding in the present study revealed the *sense of chosenness* of teachers in elite schools. The teachers described the careful selection process for the position of teacher in the elite school, recounting that they were chosen because they were more exceptional, creative, and “different” than the other candidates. The metaphors they proposed for depicting their teacher identity alluded to advantages, uniqueness, innovation, and chosenness. The teachers indicated that teachers' dispositions are critical to selecting a teacher appropriate for an elite school, similar to how their students were similarly “chosen” subjects. The students and teachers are chosen based on rigorous school admission tests and their unique dispositions. The teachers in our study even recounted how they speak with their students about how the teacher-student resemblance and chosenness produce a unique educational experience. The students' subscribing to this sense of mutual chosenness produces, in turn, similarity, closeness, and camaraderie between teachers and students, leading to close bonding (Forbes & Lingard, 2015).

Against this background, we argue that the teachers in the present study carry their sense of chosenness as a badge of distinction and as a mark of superiority. This is not the identity of a teacher claiming luck and happenstance, which, in turn, obscures the structural privilege of obtaining the position as a teacher at an elite school, as Variyan (2019) identified among teachers in Australia. It is a teacher identity that claims chosenness, singularity, and unique dispositions, which produce privileges and distinctions.

Our third critical finding highlights the teachers' strategic engagement in the students' future. This critical component of teacher identity in the investigated elite schools comprises a privileging habitus. This phenomenon alludes to Forbes and Weiner's (2015) contention: “While habitus is the embodiment of the past. It also frames the future” (p. 118). One of the tasks many teachers in our study have described as central to their teacher identity is preparing students for a privileged future, befitting their privileged present. This is achieved by portraying the future as open to the students, replete with creative existential alternatives, and practicing the students' capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2004). Many teachers have described how they equip their students with the capacity to navigate the future through explicit conversations, guided imagery, and exposure to school graduates who hold senior

positions in educational, cultural, and corporate elite spaces. Teachers described how envisioning the students' future, preparing for its conquest, or colonizing the future (Demerath, 2009) enables them to make the envisioned real. Wong et al. (2019) found that teachers who help students project themselves into the future increase the chance of a significant association between current choices and future outcomes.

Appadurai (2004) emphasized that transforming the envisioned into reality, through authority figures (parents and teachers) speaking with their children about the future and practicing the capacity to aspire, is cultural capital that improves life opportunities and maintains privilege. Appadurai also pointed out differences among various socioeconomic classes regarding future orientation. High-SES individuals are more likely than low-SES individuals to describe a relatively open future, detailing their ability to control it and envisioning themselves in elite social positions. Moreover, they report how the adults in their lives (parents and teachers) speak with them about the future and help them navigate it (Silva & Corse, 2018; Tevington, 2018).

These findings are significant against the background of findings describing how positive future orientation relates to positive outcomes such as academic achievement (Adelabu, 2008), occupational success, mental well-being, resilience, self-esteem, and social competence (For a review, see Sulimani-Aidan, 2017). Thus, as Bourdieu noted, the “alignment between objective probabilities and subjective aspiration is a central element of the habitus” (Bourdieu, 1996; in Forbes & Lingard, 2015, p. 118). The type of teacher identity that views cultivating and envisioning positive future orientation as an “intrapersonal asset” (Oshri et al., 2018, p. 1465), as the teachers in the current study expressed, constitutes an “agentic protagonist” (Forbes & Lingard, 2013, p. 52), who controls their own future. This teacher identity can teach us how privilege works. Several contemporary studies have identified parenting styles that include intensive parenting (Hays, 1998) and concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2011; Warikoo, 2020). Alluding to these parenting styles, our research has discerned a teacher identity that also plays a vital role in cross-generational class reproduction processes. This teacher identity does so primarily by producing and cultivating the psychic landscape of social class (Reay, 2005) and by the psycho-social production of a particular habitus among teachers and students in elite schools.

7. Conclusions

This article examined two key questions: What characterizes teacher identity in elite high schools? Does teacher identity in an elite high school play a role in producing and cultivating privilege, and if so, what defines this role? To answer these questions, 20 teachers in elite high schools in Israel were interviewed. The main research findings revealed three unique characteristics of teacher identity in elite high schools in Israel. The first finding, *shared habitus*, revealed how teachers identify common cultural capital among themselves and their students in terms of biographical similarity. Other teacher-student similarities include dispositions, political views, aesthetic tastes, and physical gestures. A second key finding, which was examined using teacher-suggested metaphors as a component of their teacher identity, revealed a strong sense of teachers' chosenness. Thus, having been chosen to work in the school comprises a badge of distinction or a mark of high status compared to the teacher identity more typical among non-elite school teachers. The third major finding revealed how *developing and practicing future orientation*, what was called by some teachers an “open future,” is critical teacher identity in an elite school.

We characterized this teacher identity as representing mechanisms for ensuring advantage and privilege. Moreover, these

mechanisms highlight the linkage between *positions* and *dispositions* and the educational and interpersonal processes associated with becoming an elite subject in educational spaces. Although this study was conducted in one country and with a relatively small number of interviewees, we believe that our findings suggest contributions to the task of making privilege visible (Howard et al., 2014). This crucial task may facilitate a complex understanding of how educational stratification and educational inequality are maintained.

8. Limitations and recommendations for future research

This study is based on 20 interviews in elite high schools that implement “traditional” curricula (natural sciences and humanities). We recommend examining teacher identity in elite schools that use “alternative” programs, such as schools that focus on nature and the environment or schools of the arts. Expanding this research is essential, given the contention of the sociocultural approach that schools’ organizational-cultural context influences teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

This study was based solely on interviews to discern teacher identity. Future studies should examine teacher identity through observing interactions between teachers and students in different arenas: classroom instruction, enrichment activities, informal conversations, and field trips.

Our findings regarding shared habitus were derived from in-depth interviews solely with teachers. Examining students’ understanding of the features of teacher identity presented in this study, particularly elements of the shared teacher-student habitus, would further expand our understanding of the dynamics of teacher identity. It would also be valuable to examine the implications of this teacher-student match on students’ school experiences and identity.

Finally, it would also be helpful to examine how teachers engage with their students’ future and practice it in other educational contexts, such as elite elementary and middle schools, elite boarding schools, and schools implementing non-traditional curricula. These comparisons may offer nuanced understandings about future orientation as cultural capital in diverse elite schools.

References

- Adelabu, D. (2008). Future time perspective, hope, and ethnic identity among African American adolescents. *Urban Education*, 43(3), 347–360. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0042085907311806>.
- Agbaria, A., & Shmueli, Z. (2019). The “social soldier” and the mission to “retrieve the lost honor”: An ideal image of the desired graduate of an Israeli general pre-military academy. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 66, 88–95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2019.02.002>
- Alsop, J. (2006). *Teacher identity discourses: Negotiating personal and professional spaces*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Appadurai, A. (2004). The capacity to aspire. In V. Rao, & M. Walton (Eds.), *Cultural and public action* (pp. 59–84). Stanford University Press.
- Baillargeau, E., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2020). Dreamless futures: A micro-sociological framework for studying how aspirations develop and wither. *Critical Studies in Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2019.1707250>
- Beauchamp, C., & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: An overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(2), 175–189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640902902252>
- Beijaard, D., Verloop, N., & Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teachers’ perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(7), 749–764. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(00\)00023-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00023-8).
- Ben-Peretz, M., Mendelson, N., & Kron, F. W. (2003). How teachers in different educational contexts view their roles. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 19(2), 277–290. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(02\)00100-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(02)00100-2).
- Binder, A. J., & Abel, A. R. (2019). Symbolically maintained inequality: How Harvard and Stanford students construct boundaries among elite universities. *Sociology of Education*, 92(1), 41–58. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040718821073>
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1979). *The inheritors*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond identity. *Theory and Society*, 29(1), 34–67.
- Calarco, J. M. C. (2020). Avoiding us versus them: How schools’ dependence on privileged “helicopter” parents influences enforcement of rules. *American Sociological Review*, 85(2), 223–246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122420905793>
- Callero, P. (2003). The sociology of the self. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29, 115–133. <https://doi.org/10.1146>
- Clarke, M. (2009). The ethico-politics of teacher identity. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41(2), 185–200. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2008.00420.x>
- Connell, R. W., Ashenden, D. J., Kessler, S., & Dowsett, G. W. (1982). *Making the difference: Schools, families and social division*. Allen & Unwin.
- Cookson, P. W., & Persell, C. H. (1985). *Preparing for power: America’s elite boarding schools*. Basic Books.
- Demerath, P. (2009). *Producing success: The culture of personal advancement in an American high school*. University of Chicago Press.
- Fatehi, K., Priestley, J., & Taasobshirazi, G. (2020). The expanded view of individualism and collectivism: One, two, or four dimensions? *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 20(1), 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470595820913077>
- Fitz, J., Halpin, D., & Power, S. (1997). Between a rock and a hard place: Diversity, institutional identity and grant-maintained schools. *Oxford Review of Education*, 23(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305498970230103>
- Flores, M. A., & Day, C. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers’ identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(2), 219–232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.09.002>
- Forbes, J., & Lingard, B. (2015). Assured optimism in a Scottish girls’ school: Habitus and the (re)production of global privilege. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 36(1), 116–136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.967839>
- Friedman, S., & Laurison, D. (2019). *The class ceiling: Why it pays to be privileged*. Policy Press.
- Gaztambide-Fernández, R. (2009). *The best of the best: Becoming elite at an American boarding school*. Harvard University Press.
- Gaztambide-Fernández, R., & Maudlin, J. (2016). ‘Private schools in the public system’: School choice and the production of elite status in the USA and Canada. In C. Maxwell, & P. Aggleton (Eds.), *Elite education: International perspectives* (pp. 55–68). Routledge.
- Goodson, L., Cookson, P., & Persell, C. (1997). Distinction and destiny: The importance of curriculum form in elite American private schools. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 18(2), 173–183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0159630970180201>
- Grosswirth Kachtan, D. (2017). Acting ethnic—Performance of ethnicity and the process of ethnicization. *Ethnicities*, 17(5), 707–726. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796815610353>
- Halvorsen, P. (2020). A sense of unease: Elite high school students negotiating historical privilege. *Journal of Youth Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2020.1844169>. Onlinefirst.
- Hamilton, L. (2016). *Parenting to degree: How family matters for college women’s success*. University of Chicago Press.
- Haybi-Barak, M., & Shoshana, A. (2021). Ethnic mobility: Ethno-class identities and self-negation. *Social Identities*, 27(3), 326–341. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2020.1822796>
- Hays, S. (1998). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. Yale University Press.
- Howard, A. (2008). *Learning privilege: Lessons of power and identity in affluent schooling*. Routledge.
- Howard, A., & Maxwell, C. (2021). Conferred cosmopolitanism: Class-making strategies of elite schools across the world. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 42(2), 165–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2020.1866494>
- Howard, A., Polimeno, A., & Wheeler, B. (2014). *Negotiating privilege and identity in educational contexts*. Routledge.
- Kenway, J. (2018). The work of desire: Elite schools’ multi-scalar markets. In C. Maxwell, U. Deppe, H. H. Krüger, & W. Helsper (Eds.), *Elite education and internationalisation*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-59966-3_6.
- Kenway, J., & Fahey, J. (2014). Staying ahead of the game: The globalising practices of elite schools. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 12(2), 177–195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2014.890885>
- Kenway, J., & Prosser, H. (2015). Distinguished spaces: Elite schools as cartographers of privilege. In J. Fahey, H. Prosser, & M. Shaw (Eds.), *The realm of the senses: Social aesthetics and the sensory dynamics of privilege* (pp. 55–68). Springer.
- Kershen, J., Weiner, J., & Torres, C. (2018). Control as care: How teachers in “No Excuses” charter schools position their students and themselves. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 51(3–4), 265–283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2018.1539359>
- Kerstetter, K. (2016). A different kind of discipline: Social reproduction and the transmission of non-cognitive skills at an urban charter school. *Sociological Inquiry*, 86(4), 512–539. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soin.12128>
- Khan, S. (2011). *Privilege: The making of an adolescent elite at St. Paul’s School*. Princeton University Press.
- Koh, A., & Kenway, J. (2016). *Elite schools: Multiple geographies of privilege*. Routledge.

- Köpsén, S. (2014). How vocational teachers describe their vocational teacher identity. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 66(2), 194–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2014.894554>.
- Lappalainen, S., Mietola, R., & Lahelma, E. (2013). Gendered divisions on classed routes to vocational education. *Gender and Education*, 25(2), 189–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2012.740445>.
- Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life, with an update a decade later*. University of California Press.
- Lareau, A. (2015). Cultural knowledge and social inequality. *American Sociological Review*, 80(1), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122414565814>
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2008). *The good high school: Portraits of character and culture*. Basic Books.
- Leachman, M., Masterson, K., & Figueroa, E. (2017). A punishing decade for school funding. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/11-29-17sf.pdf>.
- Lewis-McCoy, R. (2014). *Inequality in the promised land*. Stanford University Press.
- Maclure, M. (1993). Arguing for four self: Identity as an organising principle in teachers' jobs and lives. *British Educational Research Journal*, 19(4), 311–322. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141192930190401>
- Maxwell, C., & Aggleton, P. (2013). Becoming accomplished: Concerted cultivation among privately educated young women. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 21(1), 75–93.
- Meo, A., & Tarabini, A. (2020). Teachers' identities in second chance schools: A comparative analysis of buenos aires and barcelona. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 88, 102963. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102963>
- Oshri, A., Duprey, E. B., Kogan, S. M., Carlson, M. W., & Liu, S. (2018). Growth patterns of future orientation among maltreated youth: A prospective examination of the emergence of resilience. *Developmental Psychology*, 54(8), 1456–1471. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000528>
- Prosser, H. (2020). Provoking elite schools' defences: An antistrophon. *Discourse*, 41(4), 532–544. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2018.1509840>
- Reay, D. (2000). A useful extension of Bourdieu's conceptual framework? Emotional capital as a way of understanding mothers' involvement in their children's education? *Sociological Review*, 48(4), 568–585. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.00233>
- Reay, D. (2005). Beyond consciousness? The psychic landscape of social class. *Sociology*, 39(5), 911–928. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038505058372>
- Rivera, L. A. (2015). *Pedigree: How elite students get elite jobs*. Princeton University Press.
- Rodgers, C., & Scott, K. (2008). The development of the personal self and professional identity in learning to teach. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntyre, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions and changing contexts* (pp. 732–755). Routledge.
- Sfard, A., & Prusak, A. (2005). Telling identities: In search of an analytic tool for investigating learning as a culturally shaped activity. *Educational Researcher*, 34(4), 14–22. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X034004014>
- Shoshana, A. (2017). Ethnographies of "a lesson in racism": Class, ethnicity, and the supremacy of the psychological discourse. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 48(1), 61–76. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12183>
- Silva, J. M., & Corse, S. M. (2018). Envisioning and enacting class mobility: The routine constructions of the agentic self. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 6(2), 231–265. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41290-017-0026-x>
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research* (Sage).
- Sulimani-Aidan, Y. (2017). Future expectations as a source of resilience among young people leaving care. *British Journal of Social Work*, 47(4), 1111–1127. <http://doi:10.1093/bjsw/bcw077>
- Swed, O., & Butler, J. (2015). Military capital in the Israeli hi-tech industry. *Armed Forces & Society*, 41(1), 123–141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X13499562>
- Tevington, P. (2018). Privileged to worry: Social class, cultural knowledge, and strategies toward the future among young adults. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 59, 204–233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00380253.2017.1389251>
- Tylor, E. (2021). 'No fear': Privilege and the navigation of hierarchy at an elite boys' school in England. *British journal of sociology of education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2021.1953374>. Onlinefirst.
- Variyan, G. (2019). Missionaries or mercenaries? How teachers in elite private schools embrace privilege. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 40(8), 1204–1218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2019.1659753>
- Wacquant, L. (2013). Homines in Extremis: What fighting scholars teach us about habitus. *Body & Society*, 20(3), 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X13501348>
- Warikoo, N. (2020). Addressing emotional health while protecting status: Asian American and White parents in suburban America. *American Journal of Sociology*, 126(3), 545–576. <https://doi.org/10.1086/712820>
- Wong, T. K., Parent, A. M., & Konishi, C. (2019). Feeling connected: The roles of student-teacher relationships and sense of school belonging on future orientation. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 94, 150–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.01.008>
- Zembylas, M., & Chubbuck, S. (2018). Conceptualizing 'teacher identity': A political approach. In P. Schutz, J. Hong, & D. Cross Francis (Eds.), *Research on teacher identity* (pp. 183–193). Springer.