

The Family's Cultural Capital and Its Reflections on the University Student



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Abstract:

The university is considered the primary source of knowledge and science, and it plays a crucial role in shaping a student's future by guiding their academic orientation, which is manifested through their personal cultural capital. This cultural capital reflects students' interests, largely influenced by the familial cultural capital that is reproduced in their children. To achieve the objectives of this study which aims to explore the impact of the Algerian family's cultural capital on the academic orientation of their children in which a descriptive approach was adopted, and an interview-based questionnaire was conducted with a group of students at Chadli Bendjedid University – El Tarf.

The study found that the educational and linguistic level, as well as the material (economic) condition of Algerian families, clearly influence students' choices of university specialization. The family tends to reproduce itself: students from well-off families demonstrate more academic development, and similarly, a more school-compatible linguistic pattern is observed among them, leading to stronger representation in universities.

key words: Cultural capital; family; scientific orientation; university student.

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Introduction:

Education is considered the cornerstone for achieving progress and civilization, and university education in particular holds great importance for development, as the university is one of the institutions responsible for building and preparing generations. Therefore, choosing an academic orientation is a highly important and sensitive matter, influenced by various factors most notably the family, especially in terms of cultural background, intellectual capital, and academic qualifications. Through this study, we seek to clarify this aspect and its implications for the academic orientation of university students.

Social justice has always been, and continues to be, a subject of interest and study, as it is one of the most pressing issues. It has been addressed by many scholars, especially in the field of sociology, in an attempt to interpret it. Since education is the underlying phenomenon that has driven sociology in this direction, the major focus has been placed on the family and the school of which education is one of the key mechanisms as it is the means of achieving personal development and the path to a better future for societies.

Given that university represents a decisive stage and a critical turning point in shaping this future, it plays an essential role, being the final transition in the life of a university student that enables them to define their ambitions and goals. However, in addition to this, other factors also have a significant impact on students' orientations, foremost among them being the family, as it is the primary social unit. The family, through its cultural capital, academic and intellectual qualifications, and the values it transmits to its children, may influence their academic orientation.

Education stands as the cornerstone of social progress, and university education, in particular, represents a critical stage in an individual's educational and social trajectory. In institutions of higher education, individuals are expected not only to acquire specialized knowledge but also to consolidate their personal and professional identities, build their life projects, and lay the foundations for their future social mobility. Therefore, the moment of academic orientation that is, the process of choosing university specializations is not a neutral decision based solely on the individual. Rather, it is a social choice shaped within a complex network of structural and cultural factors.

Among these factors, the family holds a central position, as it represents the first social agent that deeply influences the individual's cognitive development, value system, and educational aspirations. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of "cultural capital," we understand that families possess varying levels and types of cultural resources such as linguistic competence, educational attainment, and familiarity with symbolic systems and institutions which are often transmitted unconsciously to children. These forms of capital play a decisive role in shaping students' academic orientations and often contribute to the reproduction of class disparities and the deepening of inequality.

In Algeria, where the higher education system has experienced rapid demographic expansion in recent decades, issues of educational equity and social justice have become increasingly urgent. Despite the broader access to universities, disparities remain in terms of specialization choices, success rates, and long-term career orientations.

These disparities raise critical questions central to our research problem, expressed in the following key question: **To what extent does familial cultural capital (including parental education levels, economic resources, and linguistic practices) influence the academic orientations of university students in Algeria?**

This central question encompasses the following sub-questions:

- Does the student's academic orientation get influenced by the family's educational level?
- Does the family's financial situation reflect on the student's academic orientation?
- Does the family's linguistic background affect the student's academic orientation?

This study aims to examine the actual impact of familial cultural capital on the academic orientation of university students in Algeria. It assumes that students from families with high educational, economic, and linguistic capital are more likely to choose specializations with higher symbolic status or those associated with opportunities for social mobility and openness to the outside world. In contrast, students from families with limited cultural capital may be steered toward less selective or less socially valued fields of study, regardless of their individual competencies or aspirations.

This study seeks not only to enrich the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of educational inequality but also to contribute to an empirical sociological analysis of the social and educational realities of the Algerian university. Furthermore, this research is situated at the intersection of three fields of knowledge: the sociology of education, social inequality, and cultural reproduction. Through the topic of cultural capital and its relationship to students' academic orientation, the research field of this study is defined.

Furthermore, the main hypothesis was formulated as follows: **The family's cultural capital has an impact on the academic orientation of university students in Algeria.**

The sub-hypotheses are:

- The student's academic orientation is influenced by the family's educational level.
- The family's financial situation reflects on the student's academic orientation.
- The family's linguistic background affects the student's academic orientation.

2. Objectives of the Study:

- To determine whether the student's academic orientation is influenced by the family's educational level.
- To find out whether the family's financial situation reflects on the student's academic orientation.
- To explore whether the family's linguistic background affects the student's academic orientation.

3. Previous Studies:

In this section, we review some previous studies that fall within the scope of our current research. These include:

First: Faiza Farah's Study

This study aimed to shed light on the family's cultural capital and its influence on students choosing to specialize in medicine in English. It was a field study conducted at the University of Algiers, Faculty of Medicine to examine the relationship between family cultural capital and students' orientation toward medical studies. The researcher adopted a quantitative approach and used a questionnaire as a data collection tool.

The study concluded that the higher the family's cultural capital, the more likely students were to choose medical studies. It was also noted that students' orientation toward medicine was linked to their social background, as most medical students came from upper social classes. Furthermore, the family discourse and the topics discussed within the family were found to influence students' decision to

pursue medicine. The study also observed that most medical students attribute a high social value to the medical field.

Thus, the general conclusion of the study confirmed the relationship between the family's cultural capital (with all its indicators) and students' academic orientation.

Second: Study by Slimane El Wassine and Knioul Badr Eddine (2019)

This study aimed to highlight the cultural and economic capital of the family and its relation to high school girls' attitudes toward engaging in sports. It sought to understand how the family's cultural and economic capital influences the attitudes of female high school students toward physical education and sports.

The descriptive method was used, along with a Likert-scale questionnaire to measure the influence of the family's cultural and economic levels on the girls' attitudes toward practicing sports.

The study concluded that there is a strong correlation between the family's cultural level and female students' attitudes toward engaging in sports. It also found a positive correlation between the family's economic level and the same attitudes.

Thus, the general conclusion of the study confirmed the influence of the family's cultural and economic capital on high school girls' attitudes toward physical education and sports.

Third: A Study conducted by researcher Khadidja Kacchi, titled "Family Cultural Capital and University Orientation among Students – A Field Study on a Sample of Students from Constantine 1 University," was published in 2019 in the journal Al-Bahith Al-Ijtima'i (The Social Researcher), issued by Mentouri University of Constantine.

This study aimed to examine the influence of the cultural capital possessed by the family on the type of academic specializations chosen by university students. It did so by analyzing the relationship between the family's cultural and social background (such as parents' educational levels, number of books at home, cultural activities, and linguistic competence) and the students' academic tendencies and choices.

Methodology and Tools:

The researcher adopted the descriptive-analytical method, as it is most appropriate for understanding the relationship between social and cultural variables. A questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool, distributed to a random sample of 200 male and female students from various disciplines (natural sciences, social sciences, languages, law, etc.).

Key Findings:

- The results indicated that 72% of students from families with a high level of education (both parents holding university or postgraduate degrees) tended to choose rigorous scientific disciplines such as medicine, engineering, and pharmacy.
- The study showed that students who grew up in culturally rich family environments (availability of a home library, shared reading practices, discussions about public affairs, etc.) demonstrated higher academic ambitions compared to their peers.
- The findings revealed a positive correlation between the student's linguistic competence (particularly in French and English) and the family's cultural capital, which was reflected in students' tendencies toward disciplines that require high language proficiency.
- The researcher concluded that cultural capital not only affects the student's academic orientation but also plays a key role in shaping their future aspirations and their positioning within the university hierarchy.

Commentary on the Previous Studies:

The researcher called for the need to take students' cultural backgrounds into account within educational policies and academic guidance frameworks. She recommended strengthening educational and cultural support programs specifically targeted at students coming from culturally marginalized backgrounds.

This study serves as a significant reference for analyzing the dynamics of academic orientation from a sociological perspective, as it clearly demonstrates how the educational system reproduces symbolic and social inequalities through subtle mechanisms—chief among them being cultural capital.

Two previous studies were presented in the field of family cultural capital and students' academic orientation. Most of them are recent (2019) and are local in nature. These studies varied in their objectives and findings. Below, we highlight the points of agreement and difference between them and the current study:

Similarities between the previous studies and the current study include:

- Similarity in the study variable: *"family cultural capital."*
- Similarity in objectives, which aim to explore the impact of the family's cultural capital.
- Similarity in the field of study, as both the current and previous studies address family cultural capital and its influence on students' orientations.

Differences between the previous studies and the current study include:

- **Difference in the study sample:** Faiza Farah's study used a purposive sample (medical students), while the study by Slimane El Wassine and Knioul Badr Eddine used a random sample (female high school students).
- **Difference in statistical methods:** Faiza Farah's study used the SPSS statistical software, whereas the two researchers (Slimane El Wassine and Knioul Badr Eddine) used the Likert scale method.
- **Difference in research methodology:** Faiza Farah's study adopted a quantitative approach, while the researchers (Slimane El Wassine and Knioul Badr Eddine)

4 – Key Concepts of the Study:

4.1 – The Concept of Family:

According to the *Dictionary of Sociology*, the family is defined as "a group of individuals connected by bonds of marriage, blood, or adoption, who interact with each other. This interaction may occur between husband and wife, between parents, and between parents and children. Together, they form a social unit characterized by specific features." (Josef Sumpf & Michel Hughes, 1973)

4.2 – The Concept of Cultural Capital:

The essence of *Pierre Bourdieu's* concept of cultural capital lies in the individual's knowledge of refined aesthetic culture with high social status and their appreciation of its elements such as fine arts, literary culture, and linguistic ability.

Bourdieu identifies **three forms** of cultural capital: (Bourdieu Pierre, 1980, pp. 244–248)

- **First: The Embodied State**

This form refers to the internalized and embodied knowledge and skills, which involve the organization of mind and body. Acquiring this form of cultural capital requires time and effort, as the individual strives for intellectual development and comprehension.

- **Second: The Objectified State**

This includes material cultural goods (e.g., artworks, books, dictionaries, etc.). In this form, cultural capital is represented in tangible objects, making it transferable in its material form. Bourdieu emphasizes the link between this type of cultural capital and economic capital.

- **Third: The Institutionalized State**

This refers to officially recognized forms of cultural capital, such as academic qualifications. These credentials serve as proof of the individual's possession of cultural capital and are often used to validate and formalize such possession.

4.3 – The Concept of the Student's Academic Orientation:

Hoppock defines orientation as: "any activity carried out with the intention of influencing an individual in formulating their future plans" (Hoppock, 2001). In the university context, it refers to the scientific or academic direction chosen by the student, which defines the path of their academic and professional life. This choice should align with the student's abilities and personal talents. (Madas, Dictionary of Sociology Terms, 2003)

4.4 – The Concept of a University Student:

The term "university student" does not require a specific definition, as it holds the same meaning across all societies. It refers to someone who has successfully completed secondary education and then enrolled in a university.

5 – The Cultural Framework of School Justice from a Conflict Perspective:

The issue of social justice in general and educational justice in particular especially regarding students' academic trajectories and futures, remains a highly significant concern that affects everyone. It has occupied the minds of many thinkers and scholars, especially sociologists, who have developed various theories to address it, each from their own perspective. We will discuss the most prominent among these:

5.1 – The Thesis of Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron:

Pierre Bourdieu explored the concept of "**reproduction**" through analysis, study, and critique, focusing his sociological attention on the French educational system alongside his colleague Jean-Claude Passeron in their book "La Reproduction."

It can be said that Bourdieu and Passeron revitalized the sociology of education. They started from a fundamental sociological premise: learners do not have equal opportunities to succeed in school. This inequality is attributed to social hierarchy, class differences, and individual disparities even within the same classroom.

Through sociological and statistical research, Bourdieu and Passeron arrived at a core conclusion: the culture taught in the capitalist French school system is not objective, neutral, or fair. Rather, it is an ideological culture that reflects the dominant class's values and reinforces cultural hegemony. Thus, socialization through education does not liberate the student but integrates them into society within a framework of conformity, acculturation, and social discipline.

Consequently, the school system functions to reproduce existing social classes through mechanisms of selection and filtering. In this way, the school becomes a prime institution for perpetuating social inequality.

5.2 – Randall Collins's Thesis:

Collins argues that individuals are not selected or filtered based on intellectual or technical abilities, nor on academic achievements. Rather, selection is based on cultural affiliation with the dominant group by adopting its values and adhering to its perceptions. The real conflict lies in the pressure exerted by ruling groups on employers to use educational credentials as selection tools, in addition to criteria of cultural, political, or ideological conformity. (Hamdaoui, 2015)

5.3 – Basil Bernstein's Thesis:

The British sociologist Basil Bernstein worked extensively in the field of sociolinguistics, focusing on the relationship between language and social class. Bernstein believed that language usage patterns are linked to cultural variance and social inequality. According to him, students who acquire elaborated linguistic codes are better able to engage with and benefit from school education, in contrast to students with restricted codes, who struggle to integrate with school culture. This distinction gives the former group a significant advantage in continuing their education at the university level. (Anthony, 2005)

5.4 – Baudelot and Establet's Thesis:

Baudelot and Establet contend that the capitalist school system is divided into two tracks:

- One is vocational, geared toward working-class children through primary education.
- The other is academic and professional, intended for the bourgeoisie, via secondary and higher education.

As a result, working-class children are funneled into short-term vocational paths, while bourgeois children pursue long-term academic careers. This creates class and social conflict within the school system. Their thesis is noted for its sharp and deep-rooted critique of the capitalist (French) educational system.

5.5 – The Social Action School:

Max Weber, one of the most influential German sociologists, founded the Theory of Social Action. For Weber, the goal of sociology is to understand and interpret social action by linking observed behavior to its causes, effects, and meanings. Social action refers to the behavior of individuals within society whether visible or hidden, deliberate or imposed and takes on subjective meaning in the context of social interaction.

Weber shifted the focus from objectivity to subjectivity, and from external facts to human experience, surpassing positivist methods in favor of a hermeneutic approach based on understanding and interpretation. This shift marked an epistemological break in sociology, founding what came to be known as the School of Social Action, or Interpretive/Hermeneutic Sociology (*la sociologie compréhensive*). (Hamdaoui, 2015)

According to Weber, sociology is the study of social interaction and how people construct subjective meaning about the world that is, understanding (comprehending and interpreting social action). Justice, from this perspective, lies in legitimizing the interpretation of actions.

In conclusion, the aforementioned approaches view the school as a space of social, political, and economic conflict, and argue that achieving educational justice requires challenging the dominance of ruling classes and transforming the power structures embedded within the school system.

6. Pierre Bourdieu and University Orientation of University Students:

Pierre Bourdieu argues that both the school system and its function serve to continuously translate social inequality into educational inequality, through various symbolic means. The school's primary

role is to reinforce and legitimize the values of the dominant social class, and to reproduce existing class relations under the guise of meritocracy. (Malki, 2018)

According to Hamidi (2007–2008), the family reproduces itself through the structure of the school system, which in turn selects those who possess cultural capital and excludes those who do not. The school thus becomes an arena of class struggle, participating actively in the production of social and cultural disparities. (Watefa, 2007)

Children from upper social classes inherit cultural capital from their families internalized in the form of cognitive and linguistic tools. Through the interactions they experience within their family environments, these children demonstrate early cognitive development and acquire linguistic styles better suited to the school's expectations. This cultural capital is also objectified in their environment through access to books, artistic works, travel experiences, and media, creating a favorable context for educational practice.

Such accumulated resources give these children a strong advantage throughout their academic careers. It is, therefore, unsurprising that the so-called "heirs" students from bourgeois families are more strongly represented in universities compared to students from modest backgrounds. (Bazzaz, 2007)

Pierre Bourdieu emphasizes in this perspective that the cultural capital of the dominant class aligns with the culture of the school system, making it one of the key mechanisms for the selection and recruitment of the elite. Consequently, learners do not have equal opportunities for academic success, as the school culture reflects the culture of the dominant class.

Students from well-off families receive from their families a sense of profitable investment. They are in a position that allows them to invest their resources at the right time and in the right place that is, in the best university specializations, institutions, and thus in the most prestigious academic fields.

In contrast, students from underprivileged families are often forced, from the end of primary education, to entrust their academic fate to the directives of the school system or to mere chance in navigating an increasingly complex world. These students are also confined to investing their cultural capital, which remains very limited.

7. Basil Bernstein and University Orientation of the University Student:

Bernstein argues that the differences and disparities in academic performance among students from different social backgrounds are primarily due to the social inequalities of the families to which they belong, as well as the use of two different linguistic codes within their familial environment. He believes that the structure of social relations within these social groups explains and justifies the characteristics of these two codes.

According to Bernstein, the school uses elaborated codes, which are easier for students from wealthy and privileged social classes to understand and engage with. In contrast, students from poor and marginalized backgrounds struggle to comprehend and interact with the school culture. This, in turn, explains the academic failure often experienced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Gharib, 2007).

From this perspective, language constitutes the starting point of Bernstein's theory on academic success and failure. Bernstein attributes variations in academic achievement to differences in the mastery of formal ("standard") language, as well as individuals' ability to use and manipulate symbolic linguistic structures. This is a skill often found among children from upper social classes, who are able to immediately perceive and understand their surroundings.

In contrast, Bernstein suggests that working-class children tend to rely on vernacular or “restricted” language codes, which lack the symbolic variety necessary for complex expression and, as a result, are less compatible with the formal demands of school education.

8. University Orientation and the Influencing Factors:

University orientation is defined as: "A student's inclination and choice of a specific academic major, based on both subjective and objective factors resulting from social interaction, which is itself influenced by the family's cultural background, various personal factors, individual needs, new developments, and other variables. Meanwhile, guidance refers to the process of assisting an individual in understanding their abilities, potentials, and aptitudes, and using them to solve problems, define goals, and plan their future life."

There are several factors influencing academic orientation (Farah, n.d):

- **Personal factor:** This includes interest and the student's level of competence, which must align with the chosen major and the related profession.
- **Influence of relatives and friends:** Relatives and friends can often influence a student's orientation. A lack of personal aspiration may lead one to abandon their ambitions and follow others, without considering their own interests and capabilities.
- **Need factor:** A student may choose a specialization not out of passion, but rather to meet a personal need or to secure a financially rewarding career.
- **New circumstances:** Individuals may face sudden and painful life events that force them to pursue certain academic paths such as assuming the responsibility of supporting a family or dealing with other unforeseen challenges.

One of the most significant and impactful factors influencing academic orientation is:

- **The family's cultural capital:** Bourdieu concluded that *"Access to university, academic success, and the choice of prestigious fields (such as medicine, engineering, etc.) largely depend on the students' socio-professional background."*

In this sense, the family's cultural capital plays a key role in shaping individuals' future strategies and in guiding their academic and career choices.

II. Methods and Tools (Field Study):

1. Research Method:

The study relied on the descriptive method for data collection, as it is a scientific approach used to describe phenomena and subsequently reach logical interpretations. Given the nature of the topic, which requires delving into the depth of university students' social experiences and their academic orientations, it is essential to understand the university environment and the social interactions related to the family and its transmitted values and cultural capital. The social reality experienced by university students during this critical and decisive stage of their academic and professional future was explored by applying an interview questionnaire to a sample of university students.

2. Study Sample:

The study sample consisted of 60 university students: 30 students from the Social Sciences major and 30 students from the Natural and Life Sciences major. The aim was to examine the influence of family culture on students' orientation toward either scientific or literary fields.

Given the nature of the topic, a purposive sampling technique was adopted a non-random method where the researcher deliberately selects individuals who are most relevant to the objectives of the study.

Justification for Sample Selection:

A balanced sample of 60 university students was selected, consisting of 30 students from the field of social sciences and 30 students from the field of natural and life sciences. This was done with the aim of achieving a comparative diversity between students enrolled in humanities-oriented and science-oriented disciplines. This stratified distribution is intended to enable a clearer analysis of the influence of familial cultural background on students' orientation toward one of the two academic tracks. Moreover, this selection allows for the identification of potential differences in cultural capital, educational motivation, and orientation patterns, thereby enhancing the credibility of the results and their relevance to the research objectives.

3. Research Instrument:

A structured interview questionnaire was used as the primary tool for data collection to achieve the study's objectives. The questionnaire consisted of four (4) sections:

- The first section included demographic information about the participants.
- The second section contained questions about students' academic orientation and their families' educational background.
- The third section explored the material (financial) aspect and its relationship to students' academic orientation.
- The fourth section addressed the linguistic aspect and how it relates to students' academic orientation.

4. Study Results**❖ Answer to the first sub-question: Does the student's academic orientation get influenced by the family's educational level?**

The data obtained from responses to the questions in the second section of the questionnaire reveal that the educational level of the parents of students in the Department of Natural and Life Sciences is relatively high, with 90% having an acceptable or higher level of education. This significantly contributes to raising awareness in various areas, particularly regarding the educational path of their children. The results also show that parents with higher education degrees tend to give greater importance to scientific and professional specializations, particularly when it comes to securing better job opportunities and achieving notable social and economic status. Furthermore, 70% of the students reported that their siblings have a university-level education, which creates a culturally enriched family environment conducive to academic motivation. Additionally, 80% of students indicated that other family members had previously studied the same specialization, which served as an encouraging factor in their academic orientation.

In contrast, students from the Social Sciences Department also reported a good educational level for their parents (80%) and siblings (80%). However, when examining the type of specialization, differences emerged: 30% of their family members had pursued scientific fields, while 60% had studied literary disciplines, and 10% had not completed their education. While the ratios are relatively close, it is evident that most family members of social science students had studied literary subjects. Moreover, 90% of the Natural and Life Sciences students had already chosen this field during secondary school, and their Baccalaureate scores enabled them to pursue it. On the other hand, only 10% of Social Sciences students came from a scientific background in secondary school, while 70% were from literary streams. This suggests that their academic orientation was influenced not only by

their high school specialization but also by their Baccalaureate grades, which for 80% of them did not exceed a score of 12 out of 20.

It is also worth noting that female students outnumbered males in the Social Sciences group, whereas in the Biology group, the gender distribution was more balanced.

From the above, it is evident that the student's academic orientation is influenced by the family's educational level and their orientation in previous educational stages particularly secondary education. Most Biology students come from families with a high level of education, whether among parents or siblings, and there is a notable alignment between the students' specializations and those of other family members. This also applies to Social Sciences students, though their families generally have a lower educational level compared to the families of students in scientific streams. This aligns with Pierre Bourdieu's theory that the family reproduces itself through the educational system and that cultural capital is transmitted to children either directly or indirectly thus enabling the family to reproduce its social position by guiding children toward certain university specializations.

❖ Answer to the second sub-question: Does the family's financial situation influence the student's academic orientation?

From the answers to the third section of the questionnaire, it is clear that most families of Natural and Life Sciences students have relatively favorable economic conditions. 60% of their parents work as teachers, 30% in freelance professions, and 10% of mothers are housewives. The financial status of these families ranges from good to very good, which is to be expected, as a large proportion of parents are employed and provide a decent household income. In addition, many students reported that their siblings are also employed, contributing to an overall improved economic situation.

In contrast, students in the Social Sciences come from families with modest to moderate financial means, with only a small portion (10%) reporting a high-income household. 60% of the mothers are housewives, and most fathers are either retired or work in freelance professions. However, some siblings are employed, leading to a generally decent but comparatively lower economic level than that of students in Biology. Regarding modern learning tools (such as computers, internet access, etc.), 80% of students in both disciplines reported that their families provide these tools, recognizing their value in supporting and motivating academic efforts—positively impacting educational performance. In summary, Biology students generally come from families with higher occupational status particularly fathers and higher monthly income levels. All these indicators point to a higher social status, and such families strive to maintain this status by guiding their children toward scientific disciplines. In doing so, they reproduce their social standing by investing in their children's education. Students from wealthier families inherit a sense of profitable investment, allowing them to invest at the right time, in the right place, meaning in the best university majors, top institutions, and elite academic tracks, thereby preserving their social origin.

On the other hand, families from more modest backgrounds, as observed among Social Sciences students, are often compelled to invest their limited cultural capital, which restricts their ability to access elite opportunities. Thus, the material and financial status of the family significantly impacts educational success.

❖ Answer to the third sub-question: Does the family's linguistic environment influence the student's academic orientation?

The responses to the fourth section of the questionnaire reveal that the majority of parents and family members of students in the Department of Natural and Life Sciences engage in reading books,

magazines, or newspapers at a rate of 80% in contrast to 40% among the families of students in the Department of Social Sciences. This difference indicates the presence of strong cultural capital among Biology students. Moreover, it directly or indirectly contributes to the development of strong linguistic skills and symbolic language abilities.

Regarding the presence of home libraries, 70% of Biology students' families own extensive collections of books particularly in scientific fields and in both Arabic and foreign languages. In contrast, only 20% of Social Sciences students' families have home libraries, and most of the books in these homes are of literary or religious nature. This disparity is naturally linked to the family's income level and the cultural orientation of the household.

Additionally, dialogue among family members is present in both groups, with a relatively high rate of 80% among Biology students and 60% among Social Sciences students. While this interaction aids in language acquisition, the families of Biology students, who tend to spend time reading and possess a rich home library, are more likely to engage in refined and high-level language discussions. In contrast, Social Sciences students' families tend to rely more on colloquial or popular language, which lacks the symbolic richness necessary for academic expression.

According to Bernstein, differences in academic achievement are rooted in cultural disparities, particularly linguistic differences. Those who possess a rich linguistic code that aligns with the language of the school are more likely to succeed academically and enter prestigious university disciplines. Conversely, students from families lacking a strong linguistic foundation, even if they complete their studies, rarely enter elite academic fields. A family environment rich in intellectual discussions, focused on topics of scientific value, with high-quality familial discourse, reflects an elevated form of cultural capital—often associated with families that value knowledge and reading. This environment is more common among Biology students than among Sociology students.

Thus, the linguistic environment and family discourse have a significant impact on the student's university orientation.

Answer to the main research question: To what extent does familial cultural capital (including parental education levels, economic resources, and linguistic practices) influence the academic orientations of university students in Algeria?

Based on the analysis of the previous results, it becomes clear that the student's academic orientation is significantly influenced by the family's educational level, particularly that of the parents. The higher the educational level of the parents, the more likely it is that they will encourage their children to pursue scientific or prestigious fields of study, especially if a family member has previously studied in that domain. This is often done to secure better professional futures and to preserve the family's social status. In general, the higher the educational background of the family, the greater the emphasis on science, knowledge, and enrollment in high-status university programs.

In addition, the economic situation of the family also affects the student's academic orientation. The nature of the parents' occupations and the family's income level allow families to reproduce themselves by investing in their children and transmitting cultural capital that aligns with the values of the school system. This was evident among the families of Biology students, who were able to provide educational tools, organize cultural activities such as trips and cinema outings, and create a stimulating intellectual environment that nurtures awareness and encourages ambition toward

disciplines of high societal value. On the other hand, Social Sciences students, who mostly come from modest-income families, tend to have more limited academic aspirations.

Moreover, the linguistic environment of the family also plays a role in shaping the student's academic orientation. Families with home libraries, where parents read books and multilingual magazines, tend to develop a rich and diversified language repertoire. Regular communication among family members contributes to the acquisition of varied vocabulary and symbolic language, resulting in linguistic competence that supports academic success. This was particularly observed among Biology students, whose families maintained a high level of linguistic and cultural discourse. In contrast, families of Social Sciences students often lacked such language resources and predominantly used colloquial speech, which may not align with academic expectations.

In conclusion, the family's cultural capital which includes educational background, economic resources, and linguistic environment has a direct impact on the university orientation of students. These elements significantly influence students' choices of disciplines and academic pathways.

❖ Analysis of the Results in Light of Previous Studies:

As previously discussed, we reviewed earlier studies in order to identify areas of divergence or overlap with the findings of our own research. The key difference lies in the specific focus of our study: we examined the impact of family cultural capital on students' scientific orientation, whereas other studies though they also addressed the variable of cultural capital differed in the second variable. For instance, one study focused on students' choice to study medicine in English, while another examined the attitudes of female secondary school students towards practicing sports, along with the family's economic capital.

However, in terms of overlap, our findings confirmed that the educational level of the family significantly influences the choice of academic specialization, particularly as a strategy for future planning and maintaining social status. This aligns with previous research, which concluded that the higher the parents' level of education, the more likely students are to pursue prestigious university specializations.

Our results also highlighted the importance of the family's economic status, showing that it influences the student's academic direction and contributes to the family's reproduction of its social standing through investment in its children. This is consistent with the findings of earlier studies, which reported a positive relationship between the family's economic level and students' academic orientations.

With regard to the linguistic aspect, our study confirmed that the language environment within the family plays a critical role in supporting and aligning with educational goals. This, too, was consistent with observations made in previous research.

Recommendations:

- Integrating the cultural dimension into university orientation policies:
Educational institutions and governing bodies should incorporate students' cultural and social backgrounds into academic orientation tools. Guidance should not be based solely on academic grades but should also take into account the level of cultural capital acquired from the family, particularly linguistic competencies and cultural inclinations.
- Enhancing cultural support programs at university:

It is essential to establish cultural spaces within universities (interactive libraries, intellectual clubs, reading and language workshops, etc.) that help reduce symbolic disparities among students from different cultural backgrounds, thereby enabling genuine equality of opportunity.

– Reevaluating orientation and selection criteria:

It is recommended to reconsider the selection criteria for scientific specializations, giving importance to personal motivation and qualitative abilities alongside grades especially for students who have been deprived of sufficient cultural capital in their family environments.

– Organizing awareness campaigns for parents:

Regular pedagogical campaigns should be organized targeting students' parents, to raise awareness about their role in shaping their children's educational choices and the importance of valuing cultural practices in daily life—even within families with modest educational levels.

– Supporting students from marginalized areas:

It is recommended to implement incentive and support programs targeting students from culturally and socially disadvantaged families or regions, through special scholarships, intensive academic guidance, or psycho-pedagogical support to help bridge the cultural capital gap.

– Encouraging field research on the topic:

It is advised to intensify sociological field studies on the impact of cultural capital on university orientation, particularly in the Algerian context, in order to build a knowledge base that can inform the development of fairer and more inclusive educational policies.

Conclusion:

University specializations are among the most important milestones addressed in academic and especially social research, due to their significant role in determining a student's path and future. Many studies have examined this topic from various angles, as it is a complex phenomenon influenced by multiple and diverse factors.

In this research, we attempted to study one of the most important of these factors the family's cultural capital. It became clear that the educational, linguistic, and material levels of the family have a significant impact on students' scientific orientations. The family, in essence, reproduces itself: children from well-off families tend to demonstrate higher levels of academic development. This is also reflected in the linguistic patterns that are more compatible with the demands of school and university, leading to stronger representation of these students in higher education particularly in terms of the types of specializations they pursue.

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