Inequality in the Academic Achievement and Trajectory of "French Students with an Immigrant Background" and the Working Class: The mechanism of self-selection and marginalisation in secondary education

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Abstract

In this study, we explore how immigrants' trajectories are determined and what improvement has been seen over the last few decades by examining the mechanism of school orientation determination in France. The study aims to shed light on the fact that, while there has been improvement in their academic achievement, second-generation immigrants do not see this as a positive outcome and do not view the process of school orientation determination as sufficiently fair.

As demonstrated, differences in the quantity of schools' cultural capital influence students' trajectory decisions in secondary education. In addition, some structural elements remain in the system that encourage these differences. While there has been some improvement over the last 40 years, households with a high level of academic attainment retain an advantage in elite education. As Goblot showed approximately 100 years ago and Bourdieu(1989) demonstrated in *The State Nobility*, elitism continues to be maintained in the French educational system. Minorities, such as immigrants and women, have realized these problems and begun to express their dissatisfaction. It is not beyond our imagination that young people who cannot see a future for themselves in French society or who are in despair would seek their place in the outside world.

The destruction of workers' group culture among the working class has weakened their pride and undermined the authority of parents over their children. It is also related to the massification of secondary education in France, doubling the number of those with *Baccalauréat* degrees since the 1980s. Needless to say, immigrants are no exception. The same social anxiety underlies the narrative of Michaël, the Portuguese immigrant, and those of the Muslim women. What we find in both accounts is anxiety about the future after education, regardless of academic attainment or the acquisition of a qualification. This is likely not limited to France or to second-generation immigrants; therefore, there must be young people who suffer from a shared sense of anxiety in Japan. There are also signs of chauvinism and xenophobia in Japan, childhood poverty is worsening, and young people's isolation is deepening. There is a gap in the motivation to learn, and economic disparity has a

major influence on progression in education. Therefore, it is dangerous to consider this as a Western problem, and Japan must also overcome challenges in education and society from a macro perspective by giving greater visibility to the difficulties young people experience in their transitions. The creation of a society oriented toward convivialism and altruism is, therefore, required, and the humanities and social sciences can contribute to the construction of such a society.

Key words: inequality; academic achievement; trajectory; second-generation immigrants; working class

1. Introduction

France adopted national policies to accept foreigners to counteract its declining birth rate and labor shortage decades ago. Though it stopped accepting unskilled workers after the oil crisis of the 1970s, family reunions among unskilled male workers who had already entered France and an influx from its former colonies increased. Immigrant children faced the challenges of adapting to the school system and learning French, with a new challenge gradually emerging related to their academic achievements (Sonoyama 2009, 2016a, 2016b). Due to the economic stagnation of the 1980s and the deterioration of collective social housing in the suburbs, immigrants began to attract renewed attention as a suburban problem. The "March for Equality and against Racism" ("*La marche*," a large-scale demonstration by immigrants) in the fall of 1983, which was initiated by young people in the Les Minguettes district in the suburbs of Lyon and spread nationwide, is well known for ultimately achieving a direct negotiation with the President. It is now remembered as a quiet resistance movement by young people studying and working in France to put forward a plea for equality under the law and equal opportunities in work, housing, and culture for second-generation (French-born) immigrants.

When nationwide "riots" started in the suburbs of Paris, approximately 20 years later in the fall of 2005, more radical forms of protest, such as burning cars parked in the streets at night, were adopted. In 2012, about 30 years after the 1983 immigrant protest, a shooting took place at a Jewish school in Toulouse in the south of France. Thereafter, on January 7th, 2015, the Paris offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo were attacked, and on November 13th of the same year, multiple terrorist attacks took place in the city. On October16th, 2020, in a suburb of Paris, a French junior high school teacher, Samuel Paty was killed and beheaded by an Islamist terrorist. These incidents involved so-called home-grown terrorists, immigrant children born in France or Belgium who expressed their dissatisfaction with society through violence as members of radicalized groups. Terrorist incidents including the bombing of

Atocha railway station in Madrid, the assassination of film director Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam in 2004, the London bombings in 2005, the Glasgow Airport bombing in 2007, the incident at the "freedom of expression" symposium in Denmark in 2015, the bombings of Brussels Airport and the metro system in 2016, and the truck attack in Nice in July of the same year, 22-year-old man drove a van into pedestrians on La Rambla in Barcelona in August 2017 are fresh in our memory. Some of the perpetrators of these incidents were young people with "an immigrant background," born in Europe. Why did they choose to become terrorists?

One of the reasons is said to be the failure to socially integrate immigrants. In France in particular, a country with a strong orientation toward assimilation, immigrants have been urged to integrate with the country's "Republican model", which is deemed as unified and indivisible. While they could acquire French nationality, it was thought that immigrants' backgrounds should be kept in the private sphere as cultural diversity is rarely shared publicly. In terms of citizenship, immigrants can choose between two options: becoming French, which involves acquiring multiple nationalities, or remaining as foreign citizens with a restricted range of rights. According to French public education, which aims to cultivate citizens, citizens are considered nationals, while others are considered foreigners. Time and space for immigrants' culture and views on education to be shared with those in the host society are limited. Meanwhile, there is a growing trend for ethnicity-based community formation, and the resulting communitarianism tends to create isolation and withdrawal among the young people in these communities. Some of these isolated young people are attracted by the space provided by the Internet and by biased, religiously oriented solicitation from extremist groups.

Other reasons include the weakening of social cohesion due to a decrease in tolerance triggered by worsening economic conditions and the isolation of the poor and young, who feel cornered (Ott 2009). In addition, changes in workers' social space and the resulting social developments must be considered. As Castel (1995) pointed out, we are witnessing the weakening of the bond (*désaffiliation*) among workers, and the solidarity that used to be centered around the trade union is becoming lost (Labbé 2009; Beaud and Pialoux 1999; Beaud and Cartier 2009).

Moreover, unlike their parents, many second-generation immigrants do not want to become manufacturers. They show a strong aversion to becoming (un)skilled workers and are sometimes discriminatory, and changes in their perspectives on work are a significant barrier. Immigrants may experience racism when looking for work, which is a social problem in itself; however, many young people are very conscious of this issue. Consequently, they tend to be sensitive to being viewed as people with "an immigrant background" and insist on being considered "French," both of which are characteristics of "second-generation immigrants".[1] When their origin is visible, immigrants' instincts against racism are intensified. This can be observed in their reaction during the processes of deciding on destinations and schools and during interviews and training sessions whilst job hunting (Santelli 2014; Dhume-Sonzogni

2014).

Women, in particular, have developed an awareness of the waves of massification of education and the difficulties with social integration and have become successful. Among young people with an immigrant background, women surpass men in academic achievement and are more successful in entering the labor market; they are more successful in finding employment, although the types of jobs they acquire are female-dominated, such as *employé* roles.[2] If they are visibly immigrants, unlike men, women tend to look for jobs based on realistic expectations.

In this study, we explore how immigrants' trajectories are determined and what improvement has been seen over the last few decades by examining the mechanism of school orientation determination in France. The study aims to shed light on the fact that, while there has been improvement in their academic achievement, second-generation immigrants do not see this as a positive outcome and do not view the process of school orientation determination as sufficiently fair.

2. In what ways does the process of school orientation determination impact inequality in education?

Studies have already shown that the massification of secondary education in France since the 1980s has not evenly impacted various strata of society (Beaud 2002; Prost 1986; Merle 2002; Sonoyama 2016a). For example, Lemaire (2008) pointed out that, while 15% of junior high school students have parents who are employed in managerial positions, 55% of students in first-grade preparatory classes (CPGE)[3] have parents in managerial positions. On the other hand, while 38% of junior high school students are from working-class families, only 9% of students in preparatory classes are of working-class origins. Put differently, the rate of entering preparatory classes among those from wealthy households who obtained general Baccalauréat of Science degrees is three times that of those from poor households (Lemaire 2004).

While working-class students' academic achievements have improved, they tend to face more difficulties, demonstrate lower progression rates, and be forced to choose vocational education and training. In addition, as Duru-Bellat (2002) observed, many studies have found that difficulties in academic work originate in primary education, even from maternity school (Millet and Croizet 2016). These studies have also revealed that class divides and the gender gap are produced in the process of school orientation determination. In particular, Berthelot (1993), a leading scholar in the study of students' school orientation, demonstrated that there is a discrepancy between the school orientation that students and parents hope for and the choices that schools offer. In other words, there is a problem of inequality in the guidance on orientation. First, there is a difference in school orientation selection depending on class background and gender among students with the same level of academic achievement.

Second, guidance on orientation differs based on students' class background and gender, in addition to their academic achievements. Third, differences in the educational environment have been highlighted. The range of choices varies by class, school, and region. In the context of vocational education and training, in particular, not all qualifications are offered by local vocational institutions, and students are forced to choose a boarding vocational school or an apprenticeship training center (CFA) far from their parents' homes in order to pursue their interests. As many students choose an institution they can commute to from their parental home, they may ultimately choose a vocation that they do not like.

In France, students decide on their trajectory in the fourth grade (the last year) of junior high school, and preparation for school orientation determination begins even earlier. One type of preparation is the selection of foreign languages, which is a hidden process of selection for working-class and immigrant background families. Students who choose German or Latin in the first grade of junior high school tend to come from wealthy households and be high academic achievers (Caille 1996; Cibois 1996 ; Bourdieu et al. 1965; Bourdieu 1982). As many schools organize classes based on the foreign languages that are chosen, high achievers in the first grade who are also learning German and Latin tend to be put in the same class. This produces synergistic effects over the four years of school life, placing such students in an advantageous position in choosing their trajectory. We do not have to refer to Bourdieu's "distinction" theory to see that the choice of foreign language in the first grade is a result of both students' will and their home environment. At the same time, it can be deduced that working-class students would not choose languages such as Latin due to self-selection (*auto-sélection*),[4] although they may achieve the same results. When they begin junior high school, they do not know that choosing Latin will be advantageous for them when choosing humanities courses in their general Baccalauréat degree and when determining their high school trajectory.

This school culture inequality is why even in the 21st century the gap in school knowledge that is based on class background remains and maintains the inequality in educational outcomes. Before Bourdieu (1966) published his view, Goblot examined the privileged culture of the bourgeoisie in the 1925 book *The Barrier and Standard* and opined that such barriers were difficult for working-class people to overcome. In French society, class division is not visible at the surface; however, there are still significant differences, especially those mediated by the written language hierarchy in school education and the insufficient knowledge about the hidden process of unconscious evaluation and selection made by teachers in the school system (Charlot 1999; Lahire 1993, 2000). Since the Haby Act of 1975, when lower secondary education was streamlined ("*collège unique*"), selection within the French school education system has become tougher (Prost 1986).[5] In fact, competition for academic achievements resulting from improvements in the overall level has also spread to higher education (Beaud 2002; Duru-Bellat and Kieffer 2008; Orange 2010).

According to a panel survey conducted by the Ministry of National Education in 1995, 94% of wealthy students wanted to proceed to the general/technical Baccalauréat; the corresponding figure for working-class students was 56% (DEP 2003, p. 51). On the other hand, those who proceed to vocational education and training do not do so solely because of their academic achievements; in other words, their decision is also influenced by their class background (Grelet 2005).

After receiving guidance on school orientation in the second semester of the first grade of high school, though they may have the same levels of academic achievement, fewer students select a general Baccalauréat of Science (Landier and Nakhili 2010, p. 27). Furthermore, in the fourth grade of junior high school, female students tend to choose general/technical courses, while tending to choose science courses in the second grade of high school, apparently due to self-selection (Ibid., p. 28). This can be seen in the progression to science programs in higher education (Baudelot and Establet 2006). Among those who obtain the general Baccalauréat of Science and have not repeated a grade, twice as many wealthy students as working-class students proceed to preparatory classes (CPGE) (Landier and Nakhili 2010, p. 28).

What kind of school orientation determination processes have produced such trajectory outcomes? First, there is an inequality issue among schools, which can be seen in the range of optional subjects, such as foreign languages, as abovementioned. The types of Baccalauréat degrees offered at high schools and whether preparatory classes have been established depends on local needs, while optional subjects are offered based on the needs of local residents. Structurally, this has produced an outcome in which the range of choice at the junior-high-school or high-school levels in working-class neighborhoods is limited, which, in turn, restricts students' freedom to determine their trajectories. In addition, a difference in the proportion of immigrant students in schools has emerged due to ethnic/racial concentration in housing. In particular, school segregation, due to the avoidance of particular public junior high schools, which in collective social housing (HLM) in the suburbs increases the concentration of immigrants in certain schools has been observed (Felouzis 2005; François and Poupeau 2008; Oberti 2005; Trancart 2012).

Secondly, aspirations differ depending on the school environment. More concretely, the proportion of students progressing to science courses in general high schools is higher in schools with a stronger presence of wealthy students at a constant level of academic achievement. Proximity to a general/technical high school also significantly influences trajectory choice; for example, compared to high schools without preparatory classes (CPGE), high schools that offer these classes have twice as many students aiming to progress to preparatory classes when the level of academic achievement remains constant (Landier and Nakhili 2010, p. 29).

Thirdly, high schools that offer these classes have more "*agrégé*" among their teaching staff (those who have obtained the selected teacher's certification, "*agrégation*"),[6] leading to

differences in the quality of education available. *Agrégé* teaching staff encourage high school students to aspire to higher education; thus, students come to see progression to preparatory classes as a realistic option. It is not difficult to imagine that teaching staff in junior high and high schools in educational priority zones[7] are reluctant to encourage students to aim to progress to high schools with stricter selection criteria or preparatory classes.[8]

Let us now examine what kind of processes determine students' orientation against the background of inter-school inequality. According to Landier and Nakhili (2010, p. 31), when the level of academic achievement is constant, the number of women wanting to progress to science courses is approximately 10% lower than the number of men. Moreover, dissatisfaction with the guidance offered on orientation ranges from 9% to 39% among schools. In some schools, almost 100% of students follow the school's guidance, whereas other schools may recommend that students repeat the year or take a different course than the course the student wants to take. 73% of high schools in working-class neighborhoods would recommend a school orientation lower than what their students want, while this figure is 0% at urban high schools with good reputations (Landier and Nakhili 2010, p. 31).

What is problematic about these trajectory outcomes is that the decision is not solely based on academic performance. Guidance on orientation given in the last year of junior high school and the first grade of high school is fundamentally based on the views of teaching staff and school orientation counselors (COP) when the level of academic achievement is constant, while considering the students' wishes and academic performance. Consequently, we can assume that women and working-class students would choose more secure trajectories due to self-selection and that school orientation counselors tailor their advice by taking into account students' parents' academic achievement and jobs.[9] As a result, the school orientation determination system in France increases social inequality. The next section examines the responses to school orientation determination by students with immigrant backgrounds.

3. An attempt to repair through destination determination in secondary education reform

The Haby Act of 1975 unified four-year junior high school education from 1977. However, a curriculum focused on technical education remained within the unified junior high school structure. The curriculum reforms of the third and fourth grades of junior high school that took place from 1999 to 2005 completely removed the choice to progress to a technical curriculum. Instead, a module called "Discovering Occupation" was introduced in 2001, which eliminated supplementary classes in the third grade. Acceptance into the "*Classe d'insertion*" (a class aimed at progression to vocational training) in the fourth grade also nose-dived, and these classes were ultimately eliminated in 2011. Since then, the special curriculum in the lower secondary education phase has been limited to the Adapted General and Vocational Education

Section (SEGPA).

At the same time, rates of repeating grades decreased dramatically from 1996 to 2011: The rate was reduced to one-third in the first and third grades, to one-sixth in the second grade, and halved in the fourth grade.[10] Furthermore, the 2009 reform of the vocational Baccalauréat curriculum in high schools reduced the time required to acquire the qualification from four to three years, which meant students could obtain their qualification in the same number of years as those pursuing the general or technical Baccalauréat degree. Considering these changes in secondary education, we now compare the results of panel surveys from 1995 and 2007 based on Caille's analysis (2014).

If students choose to take technical classes in the lower secondary education phase, they are clearly disadvantaged if they want to progress to a general or technical high school. This is because they will have stopped learning a second foreign language, which is a prerequisite for progression to a general or technical high school. In addition, an early school orientation choice of this kind also increases the risk that students will leave education and training early (Caille 2000). On the other hand, the decrease in the rate of repeating grades led to a more problematic outcome in terms of the guidance on school orientation offered to students in the fourth grade, since it is also associated with low motivation to learn among those who repeat the year (Caille 2004). In particular, students who have repeated a year in the primary education phase tend to find it difficult to learn in the first grade of junior high school, which increases the risk of them leaving education early. Several studies have clarified the different influences of social class, parents' cultural capital, areas of residence, family structure, place of birth, and gender on academic achievement. We cannot ignore the influence these differences exert when fourth-grade students are deciding which high schools to proceed to (Broccolichi and Sinton 2011; Pirus 2013). Though lower secondary education has been reformed into a unified curriculum since 1975, the structure of exclusion within the school system has been maintained through the creation of the special curricula discussed above (Palheta 2011; Zaffran 2010).[11] Has the abolition of separate curricula in the lower secondary education phase and the decreased rate of repeating grades reduced inequality in school orientation guidance and students' trajectories?[12]

According to Caille (2014), there are seven trajectory patterns at the junior high school stage. As Table 1 shows, Trajectory Patterns 1 and 2 are taken by those students who progress to high school without repeating a year. The rate of repeating grades decreased over the 12 years between 1995 and 2007, and approximately 80% of students progressed immediately. As Trajectory Pattern 4 shows, the proportion of those who repeated one year or more declined to about 50% among those progressing to vocational high school, while the number of students who progressed directly to vocational high school doubled. This can also be discerned from the fact that the sum of Trajectory Patterns 5–7 halved from 27.6% to 13%.

This rise in the overall progression rate can be largely attributed to the reduction in the rate

of repeating grades in the junior high school phase from 31.5% to 12.9%. The second biggest contributing factor was a dramatic reduction in those choosing special curricula in junior high school, from 18.4% to 3%; in other words, it is an outcome of educational policies that were implemented during this period. The fact that three-quarters of those who progressed to vocational high school did not repeat a year or more contributed to enhancing the image of the vocational high school and its students. Only the rate of repeating in the fourth grade increased from 4% to 8% over the 12 years. Those who repeated one year or more included students who actively chose to repeat in order to progress to general or technical high school.

We now evaluate these outcomes of these policies in terms of fairness in education by using educational indicators, such as the result of the academic competence exam when students enter junior high school and the experience of repeating one year or more in the primary education phase, and social/demographic indicators, such as social origin, gender, and place of birth, as variables.[13]

First, according to the 1995 panel survey, 90% of students whose academic performance was within the top 25% in the academic competence exam in the first grade of junior high school progressed to the second grade of general or technical high school without repeating a year. On the other hand, only 7% of the students whose performance was within the bottom 25% progressed.

Table 1. Trajectory patterns (%)

Trajectory Patterns	Trajectory	Panel 2007	Panel 1995
1	JHS to General/technical	56.6	47.0
2	JHS to Vocational	21.1	11.2
Subtotal: Without grade repetition		77.7	58.2
3	General/technical with grade repetition	5.1	9.9
4	Dissatisfied with choice of vocational education with grade repetition	4.2	4.2
Subtotal: With negotiations		9.3	14.1
5	Satisfied with choice of vocational education with grade repetition	10.9	21.3
6	Repetition of several years in junior high school (more than 6 years)	0.4	2.4
7	School leavers	1.7	3.9
Subtotal: General/technical (2nd year)		61.7	56.9
Subtotal: Vocational course		36.2	36.7
%		100	100

Source: Caille 2014, p. 7. JHS=Junior High School.

In addition, 86% of students who were 10 years old or younger when entering junior high school (in other words, those who had not repeated a year or more in primary education)

progressed to general or technical high school. The corresponding figures among those aged 11, 12 and 13 years old when entering junior high school were 57%, 10% and 7%, respectively. In terms of occupational classification, 81% of students whose parents were teachers; 77% of students with parents in managerial positions; 50% of students whose parents were farmers, artisans, or merchants; 40% of students whose parents were employees; 30% of children whose parents were skilled workers; and less than 25% of children of unskilled workers and unemployed parents progressed to general or technical high school.

In reference to gender, 55% of female students and 40% of male students progressed to general or technical high school without repeating a year. About 30% of students with an immigrant background and 50% of students without an immigrant background or from households with one French parent progressed to general or technical high school. The 2007 panel survey showed that 93% of students with an academic performance within the top 25% progressed to the second grade of general/technical high school without repeating a year, as did 15% of students whose academic performance was within the bottom 25%. In this regard, there was no major improvement from the 1995 panel survey.

There was no change between the 1995 and 2007 panel surveys in the rates of progression to high school according to students' age when entering junior high school, parents' occupation (the gap between teachers and the unemployed), gender, and those with or without immigrant backgrounds. However, the rate of progression was higher among children of artisans, merchants, and unskilled workers. Similarly, among students with an immigrant background, the rate of progression was significantly higher for the Turkish, Asian, and Maghrebin groups. Finally, while 58% of students without an immigrant background progressed to the second grade of general or technical high school, two-thirds of Asian students progressed (in both the 1995 and 2007 panel surveys).

It has also been shown that students' academic performance prior to entering junior high school, as well as sociodemographic indicators, continue to exert a strong influence on progression. In addition, repeating a year or more influences students' choice of trajectory: Teachers are stricter in the guidance they provide on school orientation to those who have repeated a year or more than those who have not when the level of academic achievement is constant (Pirus 2013).

Furthermore, it was suggested that parents' academic attainment has a stronger influence than social class in determining whether students progress directly to general or technical high school. The level of academic attainment of either the father or mother had a stronger influence on encouraging students' progression than any other variable. Further, compared to the 1995 panel survey, the 2007 panel survey showed that fathers' academic attainment had more influence than that of students' mothers, and this tendency was stronger in the case of fathers who were teachers or managers. In other words, differences in parents' cultural capital (school knowledge) have more influence than class background in determining students'

destinations during the junior high school period.

A significant difference for female students was also found across the 12 years. As the rate of repeating one year or more of school when transitioning from the first to second grade in junior high school was more serious among male students than female students, the gender gap tends to grow in the first two years of junior high school. This also suggests that more male students are diverted to special curricula (SEGPA) than female students. As preceding studies have shown, when the same sociodemographic indicators are applied, there is no difference between students with an immigrant background and those without; in fact, Asian immigrants tend to have a higher rate of progression.

Consequently, over the 12 years, the choice to progress to a vocational institution (Trajectory Patterns 2 and 5) was more clearly conditioned by the low level of academic performance at the time of entry to junior high school than social background, and students who were older when they entered junior high school were more likely to take the vocational route. In other words, this was essentially a result of meritocratic decision-making. More concretely, the level of academic performance of two-thirds of students following Patterns 2 and 5 was within the bottom 25%, and 70% entered junior high school aged 12 or older (with an experience of repeating a year or more). Moreover, half of vocational students came from families of unskilled workers or unemployed families, and two-thirds were male.

Furthermore, although the 2009 reform had reduced the number of years necessary to obtain a vocational Baccalauréat degree by one year, requiring three years like other Baccalauréat degrees, there was, unfortunately, no change in the number of students progressing to vocational high school. However, the reduction in the rate of repeating a grade among those who had progressed to vocational high school contributed to the massification of upper secondary education. In France, education is compulsory up to the age of 16. This is the age at which students who have not repeated a year or more progress to the first year of high school, which likely reduces the probability of them leaving education and training early. In fact, 94% of students whose academic performance was within the bottom 25% when they entered junior high school were still in education five years later (in the 1995 panel survey, it was 84%). 20% of these students in the 2007 panel survey progressed to general or technical high school, while only 15% of the 1995 students did so. The proportion of those progressing to vocational high school was 74% and 69%, respectively. In other words, the rate of progression toward obtaining Baccalauréat degrees had certainly improved, even among low-performing students. Nevertheless, when we examine parents' occupations in the same educational indicator, compared to children of employees, workers, and farmers, the children of managers, middle-managers, business owners, or artisans/merchants tended to avoid following the vocational route. In a similar vein, children of parents who had academic attainment beyond Baccalauréat degrees had a lower progression rate to vocational institutions.

The impact parents had on their children's decision to progress to vocational institutions

was positive as it indicated occupational reproduction among farmers and workers. However, female students and students with immigrant backgrounds tended to avoid this path. The number of students with immigrant backgrounds choosing Trajectory Pattern 5 was lower when other conditions were constant. As preceding studies have shown, this suggests that students with immigrant backgrounds generally have higher aspirations and motivation and are determined to avoid following their parents' unskilled labor occupations, as is typically seen among second-generation immigrants (Caille and O'Prey 2002).

The number of students choosing Trajectory Patterns 3 and 4 declined over the 12 years. In both patterns, students shared the characteristic of low academic attainment in the primary education phase. The number of students with an immigrant background increased in 2007 compared with the 1995 panel survey due to the abovementioned tendency to reject progression to vocational high school. Such dissatisfaction with school orientation determination was evident among sub-Saharan immigrants when other conditions (in particular, educational and social indicators) were constant.[14]

Lastly, let us examine the issue of leaving education and training early without qualifications. Generally, the number of students leaving education and training early without qualifications decreased over the 12 years; however, this was still largely influenced by academic competence and parents' educational attainment. Three times more students, among the bottom 25% in terms of academic performance, at the time of their entry to junior high school than middle-performers left education and training early. Meanwhile, 10% of children from unemployed households left education and training early, which was five times that of the children of *employés* and other workers. Twice as many male students as female students, and twice as many students with an immigrant background as students without, left education and training early. However, when other conditions were constant, the rate of leaving education and training among Maghreb, sub-Saharan, and Asian immigrants was lower than among students without immigrant backgrounds. Overall, the number of students leaving education and training early halved over the 12 years.

4. Conclusion

As demonstrated, differences in the quantity of schools' cultural capital influence students' trajectory decisions in secondary education. In addition, some structural elements remain in the system that encourage these differences. While there has been some improvement over the last 40 years, households with a high level of academic attainment retain an advantage in elite education. As Goblot showed approximately 100 years ago and Bourdieu demonstrated in *The State Nobility*, elitism continues to be maintained in the French educational system. Minorities, such as immigrants and women, have realized these problems and begun to express their dissatisfaction. It is not beyond our imagination that young people who cannot see a future

for themselves in French society or who are in despair would seek their place in the outside world. Some of these young people look for work or education opportunities in foreign countries, such as Australia, while some pursue their ideals in Islamic society. Education is partly responsible for the latter. Has French school education been tolerant enough during the development of these students' identities? Has it acknowledged their language, religion, and cultural diversity?

According to a statement by Professor Peter Newman, the Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence at King's College, London, in January 2015,[15] approximately 4,000 Europeans joined extremist organisations in Syria and Iraq. Most were French (1,200), followed by 500–600 from the UK and Germany, 440 from Belgium, 200–250 from the Netherlands, and 150–180 from Sweden. Hence, French nationals accounted for approximately one in four extremists who joined organisations from abroad. As expressed in the story of Michaël, who joined an extremist organisation from Europe:

"Michael's parents migrated from Portugal, and they were Catholics. He converted in around 2009 (…) He progressed to a vocational high school and learned interior decoration and design. He was a big fan of techno street dance, which was extremely popular in France, and was very attentive to [trends] in fashion. It is not known why such a boy converted to Islam. It is said he started to attend the mosque in the nearby town while he was attending vocational high school. He slipped out of class for prayer, and in the end, left vocational high school without qualifications. He started to refuse to eat with other family members and gradually became withdrawn." (Mitsui 2015, pp. 32–33)

According to Geraldine Kashto, a research assistant studying Muslim women at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland:

"Many women strongly empathize with the oppressed. They hate that society is full of contradictions and want to create a just society. As a result, they are attracted by the extremists' appeal [that] 'there is a different, fantastic world.'" (Ibid., p. 24)

The above examples suggest that these journeys toward extremism began as a result of the sense of frustration and anxiety about the host society that second-generation immigrants feel, the insufficient social expectations of second-generation immigrants (and young people in general), and the inability to find a place in the labor market. Many appear to find their mission in the connection with a utopia that is mediated by the Internet since extremist organisations make clever use of young people's psychology. In this regard, European societies must start working on young people's transitions. It is not only the economy and unemployment that cause many students to show a strong interest in leaving education and training early; rather,

the problem lies in the way young people are connecting with society or are struggling with social cohesion and solidarity.

Castel (1995) warned against the weakening of the social bond (*désaffiliation*) as he became aware of the necessity to question the direction of capitalist society as a whole: As the extensiveness of wage labor increases, the system of subjugation to the ruling class is strengthened. Since the 1970s, the rate of unemployment has been increasing and work has become more flexible and unstable; the precariat has been established, robbing workers of their pride and solidarity. This also resulted in the emergence of individualisation. According to ethnographical research on factory workers at Peugeot by Beaud and Pialoux (1999), the introduction of a hierarchical system and competitive evaluation due to the technological innovation from the mid-1980s onward has encouraged the individualisation of workers and the strengthening of surveillance and management, which has led to the destruction of workers' group culture.

The destruction of this culture among the working class has weakened their pride and undermined the authority of parents over their children. It is also related to the massification of secondary education in France, doubling the number of those with Baccalauréat degrees since the 1980s. Needless to say, immigrants are no exception. The same social anxiety underlies the narrative of Michaël, the Portuguese immigrant, and those of the Muslim women. What we find in both accounts is anxiety about the future after education, regardless of academic attainment or the acquisition of a qualification. This is likely not limited to France or to second-generation immigrants; therefore, there must be young people who suffer from a shared sense of anxiety in Japan. If extremist organisations begin to communicate in Asian languages, including Japanese, more Asian young people may start joining them. There are also signs of chauvinism and xenophobia in Japan, childhood poverty is worsening, and young people's isolation is deepening. There is a gap in the motivation to learn, and economic disparity has a major influence on progression in education. Therefore, it is dangerous to consider this as a Western problem, and Japan must also overcome challenges in education and society from a macro perspective by giving greater visibility to the difficulties young people experience in their transitions. The creation of a society oriented toward convivialism[16] and altruism is, therefore, required, and the humanities and social sciences can contribute to the construction of such a society.

Acknowledgment

Notes

1) Such young people refuse to be described as "second-generation immigrants" or as having "an immigrant background" and insist that they are French. Consequently, we present the phrase "French with an immigrant background" in quotation marks in the title of this article. However, for convenience, the article uses expressions such as "with an immigrant background", "second-generation immigrants", or "immigrants' children".

2) "*Employés*" include secretaries, clerks, etc., which comprise a huge socio-professional category (PCS) in France. The majority of roles in this PCS are occupied by women.

3) In the French higher education system, there are about 300 elite training institutions, called Grandes Écoles, in addition to universities. Each government ministry/agency has at least one, and the aim is to develop civil servants. The best known among them is the École Nationale d'Administration (ENA). French universities accept those who have passed the nationwide unified Baccalauréat exam and do not set their own entrance exams. Conversely, each Grande École sets its own entrance exam to select its students; students enroll in the two-year "*classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles*" (CPGE) [preparatory classes] to prepare for these entrance exams. To be accepted into the preparatory classes, a student needs marks from both their high school career and the Baccalauréat exam. They also require a letter of recommendation from their high school. Not all high schools offer preparatory classes; these are usually offered in boarding schools, which are often the oldest school in a town. In other words, preparatory classes are mostly found in well-known, high-achieving schools.

4) Self-selection refers to the practice of voluntarily setting a lower goal in terms of destination. Self-selection is observed among students with working-class parents, those whose parents have low academic achievement and female students.

5) Bourdieu and Champagne (1992) were among the first to identify the danger of the "outcasts on the inside (les exclus de l'interieur)".

6) In France, teachers are divided into primary secondary and vocational education and training categories and all teachers must have at least a master's degree. To qualify as *agrégé*, a teacher must pass the national *agrégé* qualification exam upon completing a doctorate program at a university or graduating from the École Normale Supérieure. *Agrégé* teachers comprise a small percentage of teachers in each subject area across France and most of them teach at high schools or work as part-time lecturers at universities.

7) The Educational Priority Zones (ZEP) are an affirmative action initiative that was launched in 1981 under the Socialist government. It designates zones, mainly found in suburbs, which suffer from significant poverty, unemployment and insecurity and gives them priority when placing additional teaching staff. About 20% of junior high schools are designated as ZEP schools. For more details, see Sonoyama (2015b).

8) To enroll in preparatory classes, a letter of recommendation from the headmaster needed to be submitted (no longer a requirement). Consequently, it was regarded as advantageous to enroll in a high school with preparatory classes and sit the selection exam for these classes upon receiving a recommendation from the headmaster.

9) For more on choosing to progress to vocational high school, see Arai (2016), Beaud (2002), Moreau (2009), and Orange (2010).

10) As of 2015, the rate of single-year repeats in the primary education phase was 2.2, 1.9, 0.8, 0.5 and 0.7% in the first to fifth grade, respectively (Abdouni, 2015a). The rate of single-year repeats in the third grade decreased to 20% in 1978, 12% in 1997 and 6% in 2011. Those students with a higher rate of repeating were those with low academic achievement in the first grade and those from lower socio-economic strata; however, class inequality has been reduced over the past 30 years (Abdouni, 2015b). There is a learning period (cycle d'apprentissage) in primary education and since 1991, repeating the learning period is limited to one time. As a result of these policies, the rate of repeating grades has decreased. The proportion of those starting junior high school in the 2014–2015 academic year who had repeated a year was 10% (RERS, 2015, p. 89). At the completion of junior high school education, the proportion of those who had repeated at least a year decreased to 24% in 2013 from 46% in 1993. Furthermore, the proportion of those who had repeated two or more years decreased to 2% from 15% over 20 years (Mattenet 2014).

11) The Adapted General and Vocational Education Section (SEGPA) currently accepts about 3% of students. This includes those with mild disabilities; however, the section largely functions to accommodate students with learning difficulties, such as non-medical, social/ cultural disabilities. Consequently, the section accommodates students who keep repeating school years, those who are without motivation to learn and those who are not proficient in French. However, the section is likely to shrink in the future. A directive dated June 20, 1996, encouraged schools to make it possible for all students in the section to be able to participate in all junior high school activities. Regrettably, such exchange had been lacking before then. Another directive dated October 28, 2015, requested more active exchange, in other words, participation in classes. This was to be piloted over three years in the University of Lille and University of Grenoble districts and to be rolled out nationwide from the 2017–2018 academic year. This development can be regarded as the spread of so-called inclusive education. In addition, combining the last two years of primary school and the first year of junior high school in a single learning unit has effectively made it impossible to separate those with low academic achievement in primary school and those who have repeated two or more years before starting junior high school. All students are guaranteed an opportunity to obtain education; however, to achieve this, education that is tailor-made for different students' needs must be provided (Educational Code, Article 111; Act of July 9, 2013).

12)   For more on immigrants' dissatisfaction with and perception of racism in relation to the outcomes of guidance on destinations, see Sonoyama (2016a), Périer (2007, 2016), and Zirotti (2006).

13)   In addition to these perspectives, other variables such as family structure, parents' educational expectations, and the school's educational environment may influence the processes of school orientation determination; however, here, the number of explanatory variables is limited. In addition, Trajectory Pattern 6 was excluded due to a limited sample size.

14)   According to a nationwide survey on the immigrants' trajectories and origins (TeO survey), 43% of male immigrants are laborers; however, this ranges from 62% among Turkish immigrants to 47% among Algerian immigrants and 35% among Southeast Asian immigrants (Okba 2010). In the case of Southeast Asian men, 22% have completed junior college (Bac+2). 32% of Southeast Asian immigrants hold middle-management positions (20% among female Southeast Asian immigrants). As only 4% of their parents' generation held middle-management positions, this clearly shows upward social mobility among Southeast Asian immigrants in France. While 20% of male immigrants occupy middle-management positions, the proportion is lower among Turkish, Southeast Asian and Sub-Saharan immigrants. On the other hand, this type of position is favored by women as the popularity of job types differs by gender. Some of the differences among ethnic groups can be explained by their relationship with their parents' generation but cannot be fully accounted for by the culture of origin (Frickey 2010; Frickey and Primon 2006).

15)   ICSR (The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence), Peter R. Neumann. Available at: http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan- conflict-1980s/

16)   For an idea of a convivial school system, see Sonoyama (2015a).

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