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ABSTRACT

Supplementary schooling can play an important role in the educational trajectory of minoritised youth. Yet, our knowledge of the communities' motives for organising education and the purposes the schools pursue remains limited. Existing literature tends to understand supplementary schools either as resisting ongoing inequity in mainstream society or as transmitting the heritage language. We argue that it is valuable to transcend this fragmented view by taking a more comprehensive approach to the diversity of purposes of supplementary schools and by revealing how purposes respond to various motives. Methodologically, semi-structured in-depth interviews with initiators of 12 supplementary schools in Flanders took place to learn about the pursued purposes and the motives underlying them. Rather than the fragmented view often presented in the literature, the initiators show a strong sensitivity to the variety of needs and are deeply invested to support and strengthen youth in navigating the different educational and socio-cultural contexts they are part of. These findings shed light on the variety of educational needs and desires of minoritised communities in continental Europa, highlighting opportunities to tackle enduring inequalities experienced by minoritised youth in mainstream school

Introduction

Minoritised communities from various ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds have a long history of organising bottom-up educational initiatives or so-called 'community education' (Steenwegen et al. 2022; Wei 2006). Among the various types of educational initiatives undertaken by minoritized communities, supplementary schools, sometimes also referred to as complementary schools, are the most frequent type. They are organised after the hours of formal, mainstream schooling or at the weekend (Creese et al. 2006). They are particularly interesting to study because they are situated explicitly at the intersection of the mainstream (public) school and the home and community environment (Arthur and Souza 2020). A recent review of the literature illustrates that the current understanding of supplementary schools' purposes remains rather narrow either emphasising the resistant character of these school vis a vis mainstream education or its

singular focus on transmitting the heritage language (Steenwegen et al, 2022). Such fragmentation does not do justice to the complex interplay of different purposes found in the literature and is unable to grasp the variety of motives underlying the establishment of these schools. The interplay between supplementary schools' initiators engagement with communities' educational desires and their consideration of mainstream education' challenges is complex. Investigating their perspective on the school's purposes will broaden our understanding of supplementary schools in general, and of the needs of minoritised communities and how schools engage with them in particular (Burman and Miles 2018).

To deepen our comprehension of the mechanisms at play, an important – but currently missing – step is to systematically study the purposes and underlying motives of these initiatives from the perspective of the initiators. Important in this regard is to recognise the insights from research on the motivation-achievement paradox, that is, the strong educational desires and high aspirations of minoritized youth and their lower performance rates (Mickelson 1990). The challenges to which supplementary schools respond relate to enduring academic and social inequities in mainstream education. Though the educational aspirations of minoritised youth and their parents are as high (and often higher) as those of majority youth (OECD 2018), the motivation-achievement paradox shows that this does not necessarily translate into higher achievement (Salikutluk 2016). Supplementary schools aim to address both the challenges in mainstream schooling and the community's high educational desires when formulating specific purposes (Hall et al. 2002; Simon 2018).

The school's purposes, which we define as the concrete goals that the schools seek to reach for their pupils in organising lessons, are assumed to serve the needs of the community. In the academic literature, these purposes range from providing support for students to perform well in mainstream education (Bridglall, Green, and Mejia 2005; Maylor et al. 2013; Strand 2007) to preserving and/or nurturing the students' heritage language and culture (Francis, Archer, and Mau 2010; Vally Lytra 2011) and nourishing pride by offering alternative histories to the mainstream narratives (Andrews 2014; Mirza and Reay 2000). In this paper we aim to fill this gap and go beyond this fragmentation and apply a more comprehensive approach mirroring the threefold categorisation of purposes into qualification, socialisation and individual development that is commonly applied to mainstream education (, Biesta 2009). Investigating not only the purposes but also the motives for pursuing specific purposes which have not been the focus of research yet (exception Simon 2018), will elaborate our understanding of how supplementary schools respond to the communities' educational desires and needs.

A second gap we aim to fill is that most research into supplementary schooling has looked primarily at single cases and has mostly done so in Anglo-Saxon countries (Steenwegen et al. 2022). Though many religious and ethnocultural communities in continental Europe self-organise education, research into spaces beyond the UK remains surprisingly scarce (e.g. Hall et al. 2002; Piqueray, Clycq, and Timmerman 2016; Tereshchenko and Archer 2013). The emphasis on supplementary schools in Anglo-Saxon contexts means that the functioning of these spaces in different settings, especially those characterised by (more) significant achievement gaps such as Flanders, remains to a large extent unaccounted for.

We use semi-structured interviews to analyse the perception of the initiators of supplementary schools regarding the schools' purposes and their underlying motives. This study will examine a variety of cases in Flanders, the semi-autonomous northern Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. The Flemish public education system is characterised by a significant achievement gap (one of the largest in Europe) between ethnic majority and ethnic minority students; minoritised pupils are disproportionately referred to vocational tracks, underrepresented in higher education and overrepresented in early school leaving rates (Danhier and Jacobs 2017). Furthermore, for years, Flanders has implemented a strict monolingual education system, wherein pupils are often not allowed to use their heritage language in mainstream public schools, and most schools ban religious symbols, in particular the Islamic headscarf (Agirdag 2010; Franken 2020). This makes the educational situation for minoritised pupils very challenging as they not only face obstacles to perform well academically but also have a lower sense of school belonging and self-worth, despite having a very high achievement motivation (D'hondt, Van Houtte, and Stevens 2015). Given that supplementary schools respond to the communities' specific contextualised needs, this challenging context is likely to affect their purposes.

First, we will outline the current state of the literature, arguing that an exploratory and comprehensive approach towards the school's purposes can further our understanding. Then we will describe the set-up of our data collection. In the results section we report the purposes pursued by the initiators and the motives underlying those purposes. We then conclusively reflect upon the position of supplementary schools in contemporary society and formulate recommendations for future research.

State of the literature on supplementary education

In the current literature on supplementary education, two broad types of purposes can be distinguished. On the one hand, the literature looks at supplementary schools from a relational perspective as spaces of resistance, and the school's main purpose is understood as resisting racism (Andrews 2014). On the other hand, a second body of literature studies supplementary schools as learning spaces serving to maintain the community's language and culture (Creese et al. 2006; Wei 2006). As a conceptual starting point for our study, we will outline these approaches and argue that by using a comprehensive approach, we allow for a broader understanding of the purposes of supplementary schools.

The earliest descriptions of ethnic minoritised communities organising supplementary schooling go back as far as the time of slavery in the US, when people of African descent would clandestinely set up schools to teach their youth (Franklin 2002). Education was an act of resistance; literacy was used to defy the system and would bring harsh punishments (Douglas and Peck 2013). This element of resistance remains an important narrative in supplementary schools, and Black schools specifically, even though its meaning has evolved with the changing circumstances and the specific obstacles, inequalities and opportunities faced by different communities (Dove 1993; Johnson 2013; Kifano 1996). In offering alternative histories and narratives, these schools aim to decentralise the dominant discourses taught in mainstream education (Andrews 2014; Mirza and Reay 2000) and offer alternative representations of Black and

minoritised communities (Howard and James 2019). Thus, these supplementary schools provide a refuge from racist experiences in dominant society as well as a space where youth familiarise themselves with positive role models often absent from mainstream education (Wong 2010).

Through a different lens, scholars look at supplementary schools primarily as spaces in which community languages and cultures are taught (Creese et al. 2006). Their purposes are understood as encouraging a sense of belonging to one's ethnic community by nurturing one's heritage and ethnocultural identity (Szczepek Reed et al. 2020). These schools are often established not primarily in response to processes in mainstream society but as intrinsically connected to and focused on the heritage community via the preservation of heritage languages and traditions (Vally Lytra 2011; Simon 2018). The purposes described include initiating contacts with co-ethnic peers and learning the community's language, history, and traditions. Yet, supplementary schools have a variety of purposes. They seek to encourage pride and offer a safe space free from racism or stigmatisation; they also organise homework support and tutoring as well as language learning, and they are even described as tools for empowering the community as a whole (Kim and Zhou 2006).

Although there is little cross-referencing between the 'heritage schools' and 'spaces of resistance' strands of literature, the purposes described certainly overlap. A review of community-based educational spaces reveals that the notion of 'resistance' is often inherent to these learning spaces but can also take on a broader meaning (Baldridge et al. 2017). In organising education, these spaces offer opportunities to resist the inequality that is reinforced in mainstream contexts. Even though supplementary schools themselves are not free from reproducing inequality, they are described as successful in offering support and tools that 'help strengthen academic performance, and cultivate strong social, cultural, and political identities' (Baldridge et al. 2017, 396).

A comprehensive approach to supplementary schooling

Conceptualising purposes in community education

The drawback with forementioned focusses of research is that they seem unable to grasp the wide variety of purposes that the schools' initiators set. An educational perspective mirroring the purposes of mainstream education can help to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the different purposes. while addressing the often-implicit assumption that supplementary schools will have an impact on academic outcomes at the individual level. By structuring the purposes under qualification, socialisation and individual development (Biesta 2009) and understanding them as flexible and not as mutually exclusive, we can grasp the richness of these learning spaces (Steenwegen et al. 2022). Examining the existing literature through this lens, we encompass the broad variety of purposes served.

First, regarding qualification purposes, the initiators of supplementary schools often respond to academic inequality in mainstream schools by organising academic encouragement via tutoring and homework support to increase success in mainstream education (Arthur 2003). Additionally, they prepare pupils for additional certification, either a diploma recognised in the heritage country or a certificate of (heritage) language skills

(Ee 2017), and teach language skills and familiarise the pupils with different cultural settings. This aims to increase the students' intercultural competences, in the hope of broadening their opportunities on the labour market (Francis, Archer, and Mau 2009).

Second, in line with the purposes of socialisation in mainstream schools, which teach pupils to be members of mainstream society, supplementary schools pursue the maintenance of community languages and culture as well as the transmission of values and norms (Vally Lytra 2011). For instance, heritage language schools teach their community's mother tongue and culture to strengthen a sense of belonging by enabling communication with family members as well as fostering the heritage identity (Li 2008). These purposes are focused on the ethnocultural group and enhance the feeling of connectedness.

Third, supplementary schools are also focus on the development of the pupils in their individual identity and identification processes. Schools support and/or further encourage the development of a positive heritage identity, a learners' identity and a positive attitude towards education (Archer, Francis, and Mau 2009; Tereshchenko and Archer 2015). They strive to counter negative experiences and offer safe spaces where pupils can develop a sense of pride in their heritage.

This threefold approach focusing on the educational nature of supplementary schools not only recognises the value of both the traditional 'resistance' versus 'heritage' perspectives but also incorporates them into a more comprehensive framework enabling scholars to interpret processes from different perspectives and be attentive to the learning processes taking place in these schools. This educational framework encompasses 'resistance' to racism but also broadens it to include different purposes with other educational outcomes. Given the significant gap in the research on cases of supplementary schools in different settings characterised by different political contexts with persistent inequality, a broader framework such as this one is needed to review the schools' purposes. However, to fully understand the mechanisms at play, research must also probe deeper and seek to grasp the motives underlying the purposes.

Conceptualising the motives behind community education

As the purposes formulated by the initiators are rooted in their interpretations of the communities' educational desires, it is vital to investigate the motives that underlie them. By looking into why communities choose to set certain goals and not others, an understanding of minoritised communities' educational needs and specific situation in society emerges. However, up until now the motives underlying the described purposes have not received much attention. Simon (2018) offers an analytical perspective on supplementary schools and their motives by conducting interviews with different school leaders. We can broadly distinguish three main thematic categories. The first motive is to respond to experiences of exclusion, racism or ongoing inequity in mainstream society and offer a space free from feelings of exclusion (Shirazi 2019). The second is to connect the pupils to their heritage country by enabling communication and safeguarding the survival of the specific cultural character of the ethnic group. Supplementary schools teaching heritage languages are established in light of the risk of assimilation (Lytra and Martin 2010; Simon 2018). Another reason frequently given for maintaining the heritage language is to enable contact with family members in the heritage country. In their research on Chinese schools in the UK, Francis and colleagues (2010) explored the motives of pupils, parents

and teachers for participating in supplementary schooling. Though pupils mostly described their motives as learning the language, parents and teachers described attendance to Chinese schools as an important tool for preserving their heritage identity and being able to build connections within the community, specifically by enabling contact with family members. The third motive relates to bridging the gaps experienced between mainstream schooling and the home culture. Parents and teachers describe bringing school culture closer to home culture as their reason for opting for supplementary schooling (Ahmed, 2012). A gap is assumed between the school and home culture, and the supplementary schools seek to bridge it by offering a more holistic worldview.

Method

To learn how initiators describe the purposes of the supplementary schools and the motives that underly them, we specifically sought out a variety of communities self-organising education. In an initial phase of explorative fieldwork, we contacted community leaders and different umbrella organisations. Through contacts in the field and a further snowballing effect, we then sampled 12 after-hours supplementary schools in Flanders, the northern Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. The 12 cases were chosen to build a diverse sample allowing us to study the purposes and motives of schools from a variety of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. A diverse sample of schools enables us to develop the comprehensive view we argued for in our theoretical framework. The following schools are included in our sample: a Russian, Thai, Chinese, Albanian, Syrian, pan-African, Turkish, Armenian, Greek, and Italian schools and two Polish schools (see Table 1 for an overview). The sample was diverse in terms of location, with schools from different cities. Some of the schools were established two years ago while others exist for more than 20 years. In each case the initiators, our respondents, that originally set up the school are still part of the current management of the school. Overall, the initiators contacted were very welcoming and all, except for one school, agreed to be interviewed. The schools are similar in their approach in that they organise classes after-hours, either in the weekend or on Wednesday afternoon. They all use pre-set timetables and are to a large extent depending on volunteers. Some schools are connected to the heritage country and receive funds from that government. Teachers are sometimes volunteers from the minority community and sometimes are sent from and employed

Table 1. Supplementary schools'charachteristics.

Organising Ccommunity	Gender of Initiator/Respondent	Date of Establishment	Number of Pupils
Turkish	f	Less than 5 years	Between 20–50
Armenian	m	More than 10 years	Between 50–100
Pan-African	m	Less than 5 years	Between 20–50
Polish	f	Less than 5 years	More than 100
Polish	f	More than 10 years	Between 20–50
Syrian	m	Less than 5 years	More than 100
Chinese	f	More than 10 years	More than 100
Greek	f	More than 10 years	Between 20–50
Italian	m	More than 10 years	More than 100[1]
Russian	f	Between 5 to 10 years	Between 50–100
Albanian	f	Less than 5 years	less than 20
Thai	f	Between 5 to 10 years	Less than20

by the heritage country to teach in the supplementary school. In our sample 10 out of 12 schools offer heritage language classes. Most of the schools offer tutoring and homework support. Some schools organise dance classes, and some teach heritage geography and history. We spoke to the school leaders, who, in all these cases, also initiated those schools. Their role as initiators gives us specific insights into the pressing needs of the community as well as the responses formulated. Table 1 shows elemental characteristics. We use categories for the pupils' count and for how many years ago the schools were established. The initiators stated that the pupils' count varied a lot during Covid and found it hard to give exact numbers. Using the categories gives an indication of the schools' size. We use three categories for establishment too, as it would often take a few years from the first steps initiating the schools to organising the first classes. The categories (0–5 years, 5–10 years, and more than 10 years) give an indication of how established the schools are.

To grasp the initiators' perception of the schools' purposes and their underlying motives, a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions was used (Silverman, 2020). Semi-structured interviews were chosen for their flexibility, and their open nature allows new and rich information to emerge (Yin 2003). Participants can use their own words, which is particularly important when taking an exploratory approach (Savin-Baden & Howell, 2013). The interviewer has an ethnic-majority background, by which all communities could be approached from a similar 'outsider' perspective. Although it is possible that, facing a majority-culture interviewer, the respondents felt the need to filter their answers, we found that this did not keep them from describing negative experiences in Flemish society.

An ethics approval was given by the university ethics committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences prior to contacting the organisations. The interviewees all gave their informed consent before taking part in the interviews as well as their permission to record.

The interviews took place between October 2020 and January 2021. Most were conducted in Dutch and some in English, depending on the preference of the interviewee, and lasted between 35 minutes and 75 minutes. Due to Covid-19-related restrictions, 10 of the 12 interviews were conducted online. To analyse the data, the interviews were transcribed verbatim and then coded using the Nvivo 13 software. To make sense of the data we first categorised the initiators' descriptions on the purposes pursued thematically, based upon our threefold approach discussed in the theoretical section. We distinguished the purposes (1) under qualification if they referred to academic achievement in the mainstream context, (2) under socialisation if the purposes were aimed at learning about the community and (3) under individual development when the purposes were aimed at supporting the individual pupil. For each of these strands we subsequently looked at the different approaches described by the initiators. More specifically, how do they support their pupils academically, socially, and individually.

While the existing literature concerning motives is scarce, we could distinguish three main motives: 'negative experiences in mainstream education', 'connection to heritage country' and 'seeking to bridge experienced gaps between the mainstream and heritage cultures'. Like the coding process of the purposes, we used these broad categories to structure our data in a first phase. Again, for more fine-grained coding, we relied on our data to learn about the specific motives. We derived seven different subcategories;

responding to 'inequality' and 'exclusion' for the negative experiences made in mainstream education; 'communication with family members', 'facilitating return' and 'language preservation' for connection to the heritage country; and bridging the gaps between 'parents and children' and between 'mainstream and heritage community'. We subsequently looked at how the motives relate to the purposes pursued.

Results

Purposes

For each case, we look at which purposes the initiators put forward as crucial for the school. To understand how they viewed these purposes, the initiators were asked to reflect upon them in their own words. Their descriptions offer insights into the complexity of the purposes.

Qualification

The notion of 'qualification' was paramount in the interviews. The initiators saw their supplementary school primarily as a *school*, where children and young people come to learn, using the terms 'school', 'classes' and 'teachers'. Thus, the supplementary schools as described by the initiators mirror mainstream education in terms of both purposes and terminology. Support in achieving mainstream educational success was discussed by the initiators as one of their key purposes. Regarding their understanding of 'educational success for their pupils', we found that their main concern was to compensate for learning gaps in mainstream education. They described the pursuit of success along three axes: (1) enhancing overall academic success by closing the achievement gap and improving the pupils' test scores in mainstream education; (2) supporting the obtention of a heritage country diploma; and (3) increasing future economic opportunities.

Academic support

The initiators strongly emphasised the importance of helping pupils to achieve better test scores in school. To this end, they organise homework support or tutoring programmes, as explained in the following example, where the Armenian school set up a team of teachers to teach support classes in Dutch, French and mathematics:

R: [...] When many children are bad at maths – when they are bad at it in their regular Belgian schools – then we have special teachers who can help them.

I Ah, yes? And they help . . .

R With the Dutch language, French language, maths . . . and then the teacher will help them. We have special teachers to help the children.

I To tutor?

R Yes!

(Armenian school)

The pan-African school described an achievement gap, with pupils with an African heritage consistently underachieving compared to their white peers. The school initiator stressed the school's purposes as closing that gap by offering homework support:

R [...] So we try to close that gap. Just by offering homework support, by tutoring. And we tried to tutor online, on Zoom, to close the gap where possible.
(Pan-African school)

The initiator of the Turkish school also argued that enhancing academic success in mainstream education was one of their core tasks. She emphasised the crucial role of parental participation in the pupils' academic betterment; as a result, the school offers homework support to pupils and the staff regularly discuss the (potential) progress made with the parents. The Turkish school's initiator responded to these challenges by actively involving the parents and teaching them how to support their children.

Heritage country diploma

According to some of the initiators, the purpose was to help pupils obtain a diploma from the heritage country. For the Polish school's initiator, this goal is specifically aimed at easing the return to the heritage country. The Greek school's initiator emphasised the economic value of the diploma, presuming that a recognised diploma conforming to European norms would be an asset on the pupils' resumes:

R [...] So and then you also have secondary school and secondary school is actually mainly the preparation of a recognised diploma from the Ministry of Education in connection with the language. [...] which is also recognised by the whole of Europe, that is, for example to get your B1, B2, C1, C2 and so on. So, we actually prepare the students for that. [...] Young people are also encouraged to enrich their CV with a certificate or diploma in language skills and to take the exam.
(Greek school)

Economic opportunity

In addition to academic success, some schools viewed their purpose as improving the pupils' economic opportunities. This can take on different meanings depending on the communities' societal situation. Some initiators stressed the value of a heritage language on the labour market in Belgium or internationally. The language taught was understood as an asset, for instance in the case of the Chinese school.

I How do you see the mission of the weekend school? Why is the weekend school so important?

L [...] it gives more opportunities. If you later find work in the trading business in Belgium, if you know the Chinese language, if you can write Chinese [...] extra chance to give later good, good career.

(Chinese School)

Similar explanations were given by the Greek and Italian schools. It was explicitly assumed that knowledge of the Greek, Italian and Chinese languages would benefit the pupils in their future professional careers. Interestingly, this point was not made by the other communities.

While the initiator of the pan-African school also saw enhancing the pupils' economic opportunities as a key purpose, his interpretation was very different. He did not describe the acquired knowledge as an asset but rather as a tool for countering the narrative of inequality that the pupils have been exposed to in mainstream society. Economic opportunity is understood as changing the pupils' perception of what they are capable of and which opportunities present themselves to them:

R Suppose you don't want to do anything with your diploma after your studies, that's your choice, but it must be your choice. You must be able to make the choice of 'I want to do that job now or I don't want to do it' and it shouldn't be like 'no, society says you have to become a worker so to speak', that you choose, 'no, actually for me personally I'd rather choose [to be] a worker'. So that's why it's really kind of important that we support them so that they themselves have the freedom to make that choice.
(Pan-African School)

The result that he hoped to achieve was that the pupils would look for a job, see plenty of possibilities and not limit themselves to certain jobs. He sought to enhance economic opportunities by changing the pupils' mindsets.

Socialisation

Purposes related to socialisation were often emphasised by the initiators. We identified language learning and learning about the heritage culture as the main purposes.

Language

Various initiators painted 'learning the heritage language' as central to the supplementary school. This can be interpreted from a 'qualification' perspective, as seen above, but also from a 'socialisation' perspective. Learning the language was presented as a gateway for pupils to understand their heritage.

The initiator of the Turkish community school was an exception. She described her school's main purpose as academic betterment, and the school does not offer Turkish language classes but teaches only in Dutch, which opens the classes for pupils of all heritages. This also means that the school seeks volunteers from diverse backgrounds and even discourages the pupils from speaking Turkish. The hope is to enhance the pupils' Dutch-language skills, assuming it will help them in their mainstream schools. Only when an explanation in Turkish would help the pupils understand complex tasks do the teachers speak Turkish.

Cultural elements

When discussing the importance of teaching the heritage language, several initiators mentioned teaching pupils about the heritage culture and traditions as key purposes. Culture is often taught from an almost outsider perspective as the pupils are taught what being part of the heritage group is supposed to mean. For example, they learn dances and songs that children in the heritage country would not know, as described in the following example:

A I can say that maybe the children that follow our school or lessons, from some perspective, [they] know more than the children in Poland. I don't want to say that we push but we put a little bit of pressure on topics, for instance in our school we also have dance lessons, folk dancing, and if you just compare our children, we dance the traditional dance and this music. Children in Poland in some school will never hear it or dance it. (Polish school)

Learning about cultural heritage is presented with an element of show. The children perform the dances that they have learned for their parents, which often involves the waving of the heritage country's flag.

Individual development

Individual development was a major purpose for many of the initiators. Distinct from socialisation, this purpose focuses on the pupils as individuals, and initiators aimed to strengthen their identity. The initiators identified two components: nourishing pride and supporting multiple identities. They were conscious of the challenges that the pupils are confronted with when negotiating their heritage identities in mainstream society. The purposes concerned supporting the pupils in balancing these different aspects in the construction of their identity.

Nourishing pride

As the quotes below illustrate, 'nourishing pride' or 'being proud' of what makes the pupils 'different' from the majority in the white Flemish society and education system was often a response aiming to counter negative self-images related to their ethnocultural background. We will return to this when exploring the underlying motives, but it is relevant to show here how nourishing pride is an explicit purpose put forward by several initiators.

> [...] we try to show them are special because they can speak two languages, which is not a normal situation. They are special and they don't need to be shy, they don't need to cover their part of Polish.
>
> (Polish school)

In organising events to discuss hair care and the pupils' attitude towards their hair, acknowledging their complex relationship with their visibility and appearance as 'different' from the white majority group in society, the pan-African school hopes to nourish a sense of pride:

R I think, um, one of the most successful events that we have organised is the 'Afro' event, where we just – from the hair part – just … Yes, that is part of our identity anyway. Further we want to look at 'what is the impact on our lives?' And then we look at the

problems. For example, many young ladies have very negative connotations with their hair, don't like their hair for some reason, are very insecure about their hair, don't know what to do with it.

I Uh-hm.

R By organising an event like that and giving tips and tricks can 'you can take care of it so, so, so', you kind of give a, um, um, how do you say that? A new power to say of 'ah, okay, if I do this and this my hair is – in quotes – "prettier"'. Trying to give them that, along with 'why don't you like your hair? How come?' and then they get the impression of 'ah well, actually it's not true at all how I think', you renew their self-confidence and I think that's just very important.
   (Pan-African school)

Multiple identities

A second dimension of the notion of individual development that various initiators referred to is constructing a heritage and a Flemish identity that are not mutually exclusive. They emphasised the importance, for the pupils, of knowing their heritage to know themselves. In the following excerpt, the Albanian school initiator argues that pupils must know the 'routes' that they have travelled to continue their life:

A What for your origin and so on, what kind of earth did I grow or come from and origin is very important. You have to know your route, admit to yourself where you came from in order to move on in life. And you may also be sad about that . . . and be proud about that.
   (Albanian school)

The initiator's personal experience of never feeling fully accepted as a Belgian made it so important to her that the Albanian school support youth in the construction of their identities. Knowledge of the heritage country was overall understood as crucial to that process by the interviewees.

Motives

For a deeper understanding of why initiators point to the purposes above, the underlying motives must be studied. In our interviews, we took a closer look at the initiators' desires, which underly the purposes and their need to emphasise some of them. As can be observed in the examples above and in line with the expectations arising from the existing literature (Andrews 2014; Hall et al. 2002), the purposes described by the initiators are often a response to experiences in mainstream society. We derived three different themes in the motives underlying the various purposes. The first is directly related to mainstream society and responds to the experiences had there. The second centres around the idea of connectedness to the heritage country. The third aims to bridge the gaps perceived by the initiators between the youth and their parents on the one hand, and between the mainstream and heritage culture on the other hand.

We found that similar motives can lead to a variety of purposes and that the same purpose can have different motives as its cause for different communities as we show in table 2. The table below shows how the purposes, in the columns, correspond to the most

Table 2. Purposes and motives.

		Motives						
		Mainstream			Heritage Country			'Bridging'
		Inequality	Exclusion	Return	Communication	Preservation	Parents–children	Heritage–mainstream culture
Purposes Individual Development	Multiple Identities	x				x	x	
	Pride		x			x		
Socialisation	Cultural Elements		x	x	x	x	x	
	Language			x	x	x	x	
Qualification	Economic opportunity	x						
	Diploma			x				
	Academic Support	x					x	x

important underlying motives, in the rows. The needs experienced by the initiators are met with different purposes within the same school and across schools. For example, the need to counter inequality is met by formulating purposes individually as well as academically. The desire to bridge the gaps perceived between parents and their children is reflected in all three categorisations of purposes. In other words, in organising supplementary schooling, the initiators found a variety of solutions to the communities' needs and desires. This indicates that solely looking at the purposes is insufficient to fully comprehend the mechanisms at play in supplementary schooling. Furthermore, the table shows that schools serve a variety of purposes, transcending the fragmentation found in the current state of the art.

Mainstream society: responding to inequality and exclusion

The initiators explained that one of their motives for establishing the supplementary school was to respond to experiences in mainstream society. Participants carefully chose their words but would sometimes reflect on their personal experiences of exclusion or racism to highlight the importance of the supplementary school or refer to educational inequality and differential treatment based on the pupils' heritage. In the example below, the initiator shares her view on why pupils from immigrant backgrounds are referred to technical and vocational tracks more often than ethnic-majority children:

> We also notice that there is a very high chance to repeat a year or to be sent on to a different kind of education, but we notice very often that there are children who are sent straight to BSO education [the practical track]. Again, I don't necessarily think there's a distinction in our different types of education, but it's obviously very bad to start putting that stamp on the child right away. Purely because they assume you will do better there. They try to come up with that and play devil's advocate maybe, but we don't see it that way. It's really like standing up for, no there is indeed an authority that stands behind them and certainly believes in them. These children have more to offer.

> (Turkish school)

The interviewee chose her words carefully and did not name specific communities. Yet, acknowledging that minoritised pupils are referred to vocational tracks more often than their white peers and that the supplementary school she initiated hosts pupils from a Turkish background almost exclusively and puts the emphasis on academic betterment shows that she is very conscious of the academic challenges that the pupils face. The school responds to inequality by enhancing the pupils' academic opportunities via tutoring and homework support.

In other instances, participants referred to experiences of racism or exclusion in mainstream society – either their own or those of the children in their schools. These experiences were highlighted in the interviews as reasons for initiating the schools, specifically with regards to nourishing pride and the development of multiple identities. In the following example, an interviewee describes the experience of Belgian youth with Moroccan heritage, who feel a sense of exclusion in Belgium as well as when they visit Morocco:

And when they go to Morocco. They are also Moroccan. They are Moroccan, but they don't speak Arabic or Moroccan languages. Therefore, they too . . . They really don't feel at home. There and here. Therefore, those children should really learn Dutch and should also learn the [. . .] mother tongue, also to know . . . to communicate with his homeland.

(Syrian school)

In this context, learning to speak and write Arabic is understood as combatting a sense of exclusion and as a vehicle to develop multiple identities and even counter feelings of inferiority. The example above also shows that the Syrian school hosts pupils from a variety of backgrounds. Syrian, Moroccan but also Afghan and Sudanese pupils attend the weekly classes. This is not uncommon in the schools in our sample: many supplementary schools host pupils from diverse backgrounds. Although the pupils' personal experiences are different, they seem to be united in their shared needs and desires, to which the school seeks to respond.

The pupils can share experiences, and the initiators also hope to undo feelings of shame and inadequacy by teaching the children to be proud of their heritage. Multilingualism was often mentioned in this context. Specifically, the school initiators explained that the pupils are often confronted with negative stereotypes regarding their heritage language and discouraged from speaking their mother tongue, even at home. Meanwhile, the school initiators themselves often stated their desire for the pupils to be proud of their multilingualism. This tension between the pride of being bilingual and the mainstream schools' rejection of this bilingualism was a recurrent theme throughout the interviews.

Connection to the heritage country

In the interviews, the need for preservation often appeared as a crucial motive for teaching the heritage language. For some initiators, this desire to preserve the heritage language arose from a more general wish to ensure ethnocultural and linguistic continuity; for others, it was rooted in a very specific context and a history of explicit and state-led marginalisation or suppression in which language conservation is a reaction against the risk of assimilation. Both the Albanian and Armenian communities stressed the importance of learning about the heritage language and culture specifically because of the situation in the heritage country. With reference to the history of war in their heritage countries, keeping the language alive as immigrants in Belgium was understood as a way to show respect for the battles fought to maintain the heritage language. As shown in the following excerpt, the ancestors' fight for the language is used as a motive for the pupils to learn the Albanian language:

They know that also in history . . . that also it has to do with history and what our ancestors have done to maintain language. We have huge . . . a lot of great movies, to see how hard they fought to protect a language. You know very well, not so long ago, very many people did not have possibility of education. A lot of people, even in time of today are illiterate. [. . .] Language is never bad.

(Albanian school)

For other communities, the importance of learning the language was based on more practical considerations. The first-generation immigrants that we interviewed, such as the initiators of the Syrian and the Polish school, linked the reasons for acquiring a good knowledge of the language to the prospect of returning to the heritage country

> Each person does not guarantee to stay here forever. Or yes . . . uh, maybe after a few years . . . nobody knows, if the parents want to return to their homeland. The kids are going to decide that to go with them, some kids won't, but if the kids decide to go with them, they really need to know Arabic.
>
> (Syrian school)

To facilitate a possible return to the heritage country and schooling in the heritage country, a good command of the language is vital. Some supplementary schools, such as the Polish school, even teach the same courses as the heritage country to enable a smooth return.

Furthermore, across communities, initiators stressed the need to speak the heritage language to communicate with family members on social media or when visiting the home country, as in the following example, in which knowledge of the Thai language is deemed a prerequisite for connecting to family in Thailand:

> [. . .] and especially when we go back to Thailand even on holiday, you know . . . And I see all day a lot of my family, no problem, my kids speaks perfect Thai but just know maybe he speaks more *Dutch* with me. We speak, you know, like in daily life language. When he goes to Thailand, after a few days, he picks it up very quickly. And he could go, when he was baby, he could stay with my sister, he could stay with my parent no problem at all.
>
> (Thai school)

'Bridging' the perceived gaps between mainstream and community cultures

The schools' initiators described their school's function as 'building bridges' and highlighted two components. First, they intend to bridge the gap between the community to which they tailor their education and mainstream society, as in the example below:

> Because our mission is simply: we want to bring Albania, Albanians closer to Belgium. (Albanian school)

This suggests that the initiators perceive a gap between the heritage community and the mainstream Flemish community, as well as between the generations of the schools' pupils and their parents. The initiators further see themselves as dedicated to bridging those gaps and do so in various ways. They go out and tidy the streets with the pupils to leave a positive impression on the neighbourhood, they organise classes to discuss the differences in customs and how to handle them or they contact teachers in the Flemish schools to explain a particular home situation.

Several of the interviewees interpreted their role as one of mediation between the values transmitted at home or traditionally within the community and the values prevalent in Flemish society. One of the subjects discussed by the initiators was how to help the pupils to cope with cultural and religious diversity, both on the street and in the mainstream classroom. In other situations, the initiators seek a middle ground between

parental expectations and Flemish customs. For example, several interviewees noted that parents tend to find the qualification standards of Flemish schools insufficiently high. Compared to the country of origin the parents find the Flemish schools too easy. According to the initiators, their role is to explain that the Flemish didactics are indeed different but can produce good results.

Second, another 'bridging function' that came to light is that between parents and pupils. The schools' initiators perceived a significant generational gap between pupils and their parents and looked for ways to bridge this gap. Both learning the language and gaining a cultural understanding transcends the purposes described earlier and is understood as pivotal in strengthening the relationship between the parents and children.

In the following example, the Chinese community school's initiator argues that the language is a prerequisite to facilitate communication between parents and children, but cultural knowledge is also deemed important to understand the parents' reasoning:

> If you know Chinese language then you can better communicate with your parents. Then you can understand better your parents' opinion. So good communication and with understanding . . . and then you can understand more Chinese culture, thinking style, everything. (. . .)maybe the Chinese parents have different decision, but you understand more.
>
> (Chinese school)

In the following quote from the Polish school, the interviewee describes the importance of learning the Polish language and Polish mathematical jargon to enable parental involvement in schoolwork:

> If they want to get help. They get help from their Polish parents, but they don't understand what the parents say about math or something else. So that terminology they get from [the Polish] school, the parents can reuse it at home when explaining . . .
>
> (Polish school)

Lastly, in an example from the Thai school, Thai language skills are understood to enable the children's emotional availability for their parents:

> I also know a lot of people who don't speak Thai to their kids. They speak Dutch, broken Dutch and broken English and in the end, you know, when the kids grow up like 9, 10 years ago they not listen to mama anymore and I feel so sad about that.
>
> (Thai community)

Discussion

In our problem statement we argued that the current understanding of supplementary schools' purposes is limited and fragmented. We set out to go beyond the fragmentation in the current state of the literature of resistance or heritage language transmission by taking a more comprehensive approach. This enables us to grasp the diversity of ways in which the school leaders formulate purposes and which motives underly these purposes. Our results indicate that the initiators position themselves and their schools at the crossroads between the communities' educational desires, on the one hand, and the challenges that their youth face in mainstream education, on the other hand. They

navigate the community's and mainstream society's expectations in versatile ways. A comprehensive approach reveals the variety and complexity of purposes, and the underlying motives shed light on their views of the communities' educational needs as minoritised communities. An educational frame recognises the educational character of the supplementary schools which aim to mirror mainstream schools, even using the same scripts. Our analysis paints a more multifaceted picture of these purposes than previously described in the literature. For example, by teaching the language, the supplementary schools pursue a variety of goals to support their youth. Teaching the heritage language can be understood as relating to socialisation. In some schools, such as the Chinese and Greek, however, the knowledge of the heritage language is seen as an asset on the job market and can thus be associated with qualification. For other initiators, such as the one from the Syrian school, knowledge of the language is understood to nourish pride and can thus be connected to individual development. These differences or nuances relate primarily to the specific position of the minorities in broader society. Further research into specific communities and their situations, which the framework of the present paper did not allow, would add greatly to an even more nuanced understanding of the communities' educational needs.

The motives underlying the described purposes are an important gateway to understanding the educational reality of minoritised communities. Differences in motives for learning the language, for example, are not only of importance when seeking to understand the mechanisms underlying supplementary schooling but also likely affect the pupils' and parents' attitudes in mainstream education. Those communities oriented towards a possible return to the heritage country might interact with mainstream education in a different way than communities that see their future in Belgium and want to learn the heritage language to facilitate communication with family members. Communities with a history of suppression and resistance to assimilation are likely to emphasise the importance of speaking their language in different ways. The reasons behind their emigration from the heritage country (e.g. war or economic reasons) affect how the communities relate to the host country (van Hear 2010) and how they motivate the purposes of the supplementary schools.

Previous literature assumed that supplementary schools respond to the gaps experienced in mainstream education (Andrews 2014; Hall et al. 2002). Our findings indicate that they not only address these gaps but also exist within and respond to the complex social situation in which they are embedded. Not only are they often located within the mainstream classrooms, which they borrow 'after hours' (Tsolidis and Kostogriz 2008), but they also continuously negotiate the expectations of mainstream education. The schools sought to formulate responses to negative experiences in mainstream society, the need for connection with the heritage country as well as the urge to successfully 'integrate' in Flemish society. They are resourceful in the ways they respond to the educational needs of contemporary minoritised youth. These findings indicate that to encompass the richness of these spaces, we must go beyond the dichotomy of resistance and preservation found in the existing literature. Moreover, whereas supplementary schools are often described as places of resistance where the dominant mainstream narratives are displaced (Andrews 2016; Mirza and Reay 2000), the supplementary schools in our sample were reluctant to offer alternative norms. Although they did transmit alternative narratives, they did not seek to replace or displace the mainstream

ones but rather add to them. The initiators explained that the supplementary schools reflect on and complement what the pupils learn in their mainstream schools. For example, the Polish school elaborately discusses the meaning of national holidays in Belgium and Flanders and subsequently complements those histories with Polish history. In their descriptions of the workings of the schools, the interviewees were very careful not to be 'oppositional' to Flemish mainstream culture and repeatedly underlined their desire to be well-functioning members of Flemish society. Even when describing instances of racism, enduring inequality, or exclusion, they did not criticise Flemish society but rather diminished those negative experiences and tried to find ways to respond to them within the supplementary school. The desire was to fit in, even when this means not speaking the heritage language, as was the case with the Turkish school, which discouraged the pupils from speaking Turkish in the supplementary school to support academic success in their mainstream school.

Moreover, as the initiators explicitly shy away from presenting their mission as resistance and rather seem to focus on compensating for the inequality experienced in mainstream society, this could raise new issues. For example, by applying these types of strategies the schools might also inadvertently help to maintain the reproduction of inequality instead of tackling it in the long run (Baldridge et al. 2017). Of course, given the structural nature of these enduring inequalities it is arguably an almost impossible task for these often-voluntary supplementary school initiatives to tackle these challenges. The schools do provide various forms of support to their pupils and such empowering individual pupils might enable betterment for the whole community (Kim and Zhou 2006).

The initiators' reluctance to come across as oppositional should also be understood specifically in the Flemish political context, which has a much more assimilative approach towards minoritised communities than the UK or the US, which have a more multicultural approach. Moreover, the interviews were done by the first author of this paper – a white Flemish native woman – which might also affect the ways initiators frame their answers and might lead them to avoid delving too deep into issues of racism from white Flemish people to minoritised youth.

These findings open avenues for further research. First, research focusing on the workings of the supplementary schools is necessary as it will expand our knowledge of how the purposes are translated into classroom interactions. Having studied the purposes of supplementary schools and the motives underlying them in the current paper, it is crucial to learn how the pupils experience learning in these schools and what they take away from them. Second, our knowledge of the interaction between mainstream and supplementary schools remains limited. Although an estimated 20–25% of minoritised youth attend a supplementary school while growing up (Maylor et al. 2010), we know very little about how the pupils manage to navigate various educational settings. Early research seems to indicate that differential teaching attitudes and expectations affect the perception of these pupils in the mainstream school (McPake and Powney 1998). Expanding our understanding of how attending supplementary schools relates to behaviour and perception in mainstream schools could offer important insights, which are especially valuable when seeking ways to disrupt ongoing inequality. And third, the initiators describe their efforts as agents for the community in presenting them outwards. This suggests a different way to confront the deficit views

the communities find themselves confronted with. Further research could look further into the effects of community education both on the individual pupils and the whole community. How do the pursued purposes affect the pupils in their mainstream schools? And what is the role of the supplementary schools in the strive for equality for the whole community?

Our findings in this study indicate that supplementary schools offer a richness of support to minoritised youth. Yet, they tend to exist at the margins of mainstream society (Fishman 2001; Lee and Wright 2014), which hinders the use of these spaces as a resource and does not (fully) recognise the meaning and value they have. Expanding our knowledge of supplementary schools can allow us to involve them more commonly in the support of minoritised youths' educational trajectories.

Notes

1. The Italian school has more than 1 location. The interviewee managed all the locations which together offered classes to more than 100 pupils.

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Ethical statement

The authors declare that this project was approved by the ethics committee of the social sciences department of the Antwerp University

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