

## Research Paper

## Spatial inequality in the context of city-suburb cleavages—Enlarging the framework of well-being and social inequality

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## ABSTRACT

Suburbanization has been accused of imposing a significant cost on spatial equity. The study examined suburbanization (as a form of urban sprawl), not necessarily as the primary driver of fundamental social inequalities, but as an important vehicle by which inequalities might be extended over time and as an important product of fundamental social inequalities. It suggests an innovative measurement that relies upon Amartya Sen and Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical conceptions. The current study suggests that economic, cultural and social forms of capital, formed in an individual's living environment, determine a space's equality of opportunity.

The paper examines this theory by means of a case study that includes a medium sized city and eight of its suburbs located within Israel's central metropolitan region. By using diverse statistical methods, data from 1063 sampled households is analyzed in new indices that measure spatial inequality. The results reveal that suburbanization is related positively to highly unequal patterns of social stratification. Social groups in the suburbs were found to benefit from better life-chances than their urban counterparts. This inequality is positively related to the accumulation of capital forms and the formation of the physical environment. We conclude that urban residents would not be able to fulfill their freedoms to do and to be, a situation that could hurt the distribution of real equal opportunities in space.

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## 1. Introduction

Questions regarding equity and inequality have been discussed occasionally with respect to different spatial processes (Wei, 2015). In recent years, for example, geographers and urban planners have raised allegations of inequality regarding the negative social externalities of suburbanization and urban sprawl. These allegations include the claim that unrestricted suburbanization causes deep social inequality, group segregation and exclusion. The nature of these effects ignited a polemic debate, initially in the United States, where suburbanization was first created and developed (Williamson, 2010), but also in Europe (Denssen, Driessena, & Slegers, 2005; Richardson & Bae, 2004) and in Israel (Frenkel & Ashkenazi, 2008). In spite of the fierce arguments, the current research that explores social costs of intense suburbanization suffers from a lack of empirical evidence. More specifically,

this body of literature has neglected an analysis of life-chances, equal opportunities, and of social reproduction.

The aim of this paper is to fill the theoretical and empirical lacunae in the study of the effects of suburbanization. It suggests an epistemological framework by which the notion of equal opportunity can be spatially tested and measured. The current study explores the notion of equal opportunity in relation to suburbanization's social effects in democratic and liberal societies. It employs tools and concepts borrowed from political philosophy and the social sciences, applying them in the context of city-suburb cleavages. It relies on the theory that conceptualized the class structure of modern capitalist societies as conceived by the French sociologist, Bourdieu (2001), relating it to Amartya Sen's (1992) 'capabilities' approach. Capabilities are regarded as life-chances (Robeyns, 2005a, 2005b), while Bourdieu's characterization of class structures acts here as the social and spatial conditions in which capabilities are formed. Thus, social equality in this article will be defined as equality between person's life-chances. The paper examines this suggested theory, by means of a regional case study that includes a medium-sized city and eight of its suburbs located within the boundaries of Israel's central metropolitan region.

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## 2. Suburbanization and social equalities

Suburbanization and sprawl in the developed world reflect low-density patterns of development of residential areas (Frenkel & Ashkenazi, 2008). This phenomenon, according to economic theories, is the product of rational decisions of individuals resulting from the interaction of various variables: demographic, socio-economic, level of urbanization and spatial location (Brueckner, 2000). Factors encouraging cities' decline and the proliferation of suburbia include changes in lifestyle and consumer preferences, along with deteriorating urban living conditions. The widely described dynamics that characterize suburbanization reflect the ongoing motivation of social groups to create homogeneous living environments, and to avoid socially-integrated ecosystems like cities (Williamson, 2010).<sup>1</sup>

The study of inequality under conditions of urban sprawl has grown in popularity recently amongst those interested in understanding, measuring and managing the outcomes of suburbanization (Ewing, Hamidi, Grace, & Wei, 2016). Various studies have produced several claims that suburbanization comes at the cost of social equity (Jargowsky, 2001; Ledwith & Clark, 2007; Masked for blind review, 2015). There are those that show that when more affluent populations migrate from cities to suburban fringes this results in extreme distributive inequality and social segregation (e.g., Freilich & Peshoff, 1997; Jargowsky, 2001; Williamson, 2010). In Amartya Sen's (1992) terminology, this migration implies that the deep social cleavage between cities and suburbs might have concealed deep inequality in human capabilities to flourish and prosper (Masked for blind review, 2015).

The fact that sprawl is associated with a reduction in personal liberties is not a surprise, as research shows that sprawl within metropolitan areas diminishes trust and social interaction between communities (Freeman, 2001; Leyden, 2003; Rahn et al., 2009). Some speculate that big and ethnically diverse cities reduce social solidarity and, therefore, social capital (Putnam, 2007), while the homogenous conglomerations of the elite at the edges of the metropolitan region seems to produce strengthened social ties (Brueckner & Largey, 2008).<sup>2</sup>

Although the exploration of suburbanization and urban decline has created a large body of studies, not many of them empirically address issues of social inequality. Contemporary scholars tend to use economic indices in their efforts to measure spatial-social gaps and the costs of urban sprawl (e.g., Foster-Bey et al., 2001; Jargowsky, 2001; Persky & Wiewel, 2000), thus overlooking comprehensive issues of life-chances, equal opportunities, and social reproduction. This seems to impose a serious impediment to potential attempts in measuring and understanding the social externalities of suburbanization. Using Pierre Bourdieu's and Amartya Sen's concepts of class structures and capabilities could be beneficial, as their integration enlarges the traditional assortment of economic indices or variables used in most of the studies that explored the social costs of urban sprawl.

<sup>1</sup> It is worth to mention that along suburbanization, urban areas within their metropolitan context experienced a renewed interest and redevelopment (Lees, Slater, & Wiley, 2008). Counter sprawl, urban renewal and gentrification were well witnessed during the last decades within metropolitan region across the developed world. These re-urbanization trends were explained by globalization and the formation of new urban life styles of socially and spatially mobile young groups seeking to be distinct from the suburban middle class mainly by relocating in the inner cities (Lees, Bang-Shin, & Lopez-Morales, 2015; Brown-Saracino, 2010). Although alluring, this 'resurgent city' optimism was critically studied, pointing to the deep inequalities that accompany cities' prosperity (Lees et al., 2015; Hamnett, 2003). All in all, it seems that the new construction in cities does not match that in the suburbs, as central cities continue to decline (Beauregard, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> This theory inspired a body of study that refines or criticizes Putnam's (2007) observations. For a comprehensive review of these research, see: Portes and Vickstrom, 2011.

## 3. Sen's capabilities and Bourdieu's forms of capital as a theoretical framework

In order to measure spatial inequality in the context of city-suburb cleavages, the current study adopts the concept of inequality borrowed from Sen's (1992) political philosophy regarding 'capabilities' and 'functionings', along with Pierre Bourdieu's (1985) theory of capital forms. Under the suggested framework, equality of opportunities implies a balance in the production, accumulation and transmission of different forms of capital. The accumulation and intergenerational transfer pattern of capital forms in certain urban entities, such as a suburb, alongside the erosion and injury of the ability to produce these forms in another urban entity, such as a city, may impair social equality of opportunities (Fig. 1). In the following paragraphs, this theory is explained.

Capabilities are opportunities given to people to choose the lifestyle they want in order to live and function effectively in different social fields (Robeyns, 2005a, 2005b). In Sen's definition, equality of opportunities does not address functions (or results) per se, but rather the ability to obtain them. The liberty to be, to do, and to accomplish one's aspirations (i.e., life-chances) are thus the political goal of this liberal theory (Robeyns & Brighouse, 2010). Accordingly, human capabilities are the result of a person's social environment (e.g., social institutions, social norms, traditions and the behavior of others in society), the physical environment in which he or she lives and internal and external personal endowments such as one's mental and physical attributes (Anderson, 2010; Robeyns, 2005b).

Based on these arguments, the means that enable a person to gain liberties (opportunities) are constituted from a person's bundles of capital (i.e., social space). The notion of capital forms is derived from Pierre Bourdieu's theory, which offers an explanation for the complexity of social stratification (1985, 2001). For Bourdieu, society is a network of fields (e.g., arts, religion, academe and science) that are structured systems of social positions anchored in particular forms of power or capital, whether social (social networks and connections), economic (material wealth) or cultural (knowledge of the arts, good education). However, capital forms have spatial substance, as they pronounce human interactions that exist in a certain place and time (Masked for blind review, 2015). They signify a set of strategies aimed at establishing and maintaining social divisions, classification, and distinction (Marom, 2014). These strategies eventually become physical in nature, as they organize space into communities where people share similar social status. It is assumed that suburbanization likewise shapes and amends the urban social space.

People gather into different spatial configurations, as they realize their potential of their various capital forms. As such, one can assume a polarized social space (i.e., the social class ladder) in which individuals and groups that are rich in economic, social and cultural capital exclude individuals and groups located at the opposite pole of the social space. The paradigm of the polarized social space serves here as a platform for discussions and exemplification. A social space is a continuum that contains populations with different combinations of capital between the two poles. Those located at the dominant pole can use their economic, cultural and social forms of capital to constitute spatially distinct communities.

Here, suburbanization may serve as a good example of a phenomenon which enlarges inequalities in the capabilities between social groups in a given metropolitan region. The increased inequality is related to the ability to inculcate and foster capital forms, as a function of the neighborhood's amenities and creative social-cultural environments (Carpiano, 2006; Podmore, 1998; Wynne & O'connor, 1998). In that sense, a given community acts as a laboratory in which the individual accumulates capital. Space

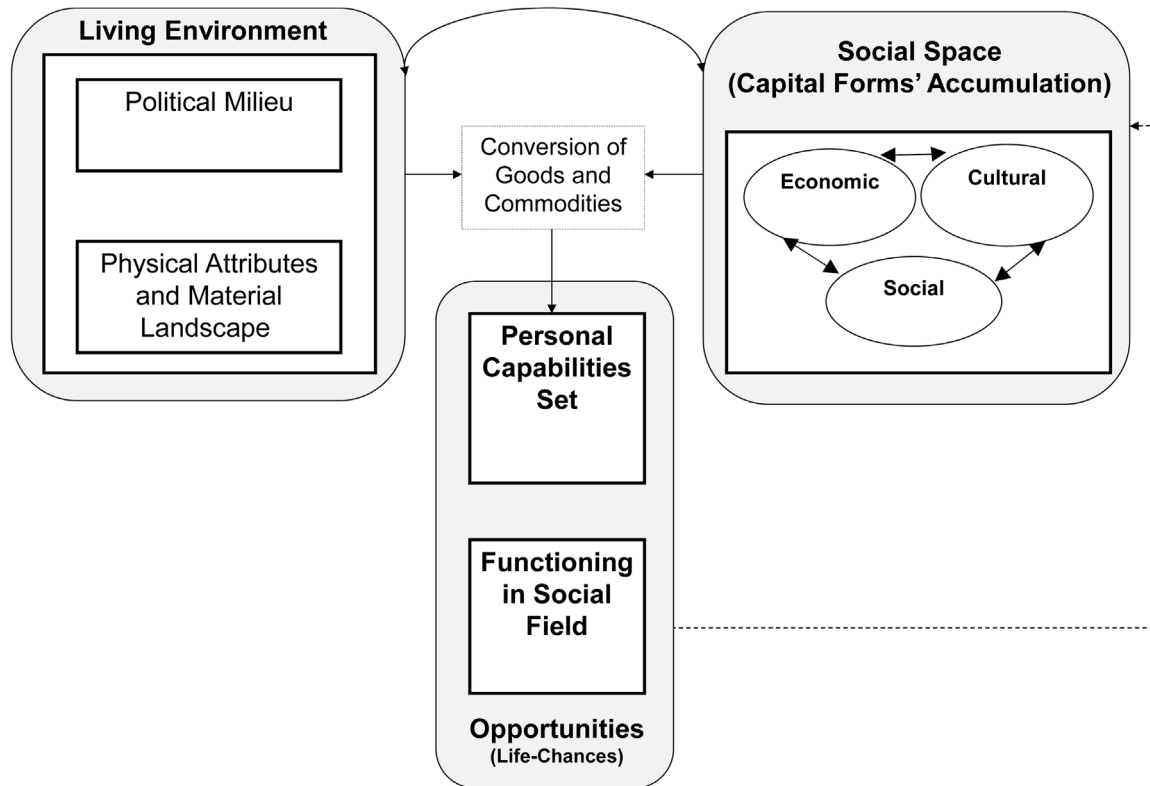


Fig. 1. Social Justice as a Function of Living Environments and the Social Space.

and capital accumulation are interrelated, because social distinction in space, as in the case of suburbanization, facilitates a type of appropriate sociability that helps to internalize capital within the person and in the community as a whole (Masked for blind review, 2015; Watt, 2009; Webber, 2007).

The degree to which a community is homogenous or heterogeneous with regard to its members' accumulation of capital affects, amongst other things, the formation of the local political milieu, which is manifested in the way in which local resources are allocated (Ostrom, 1990). The more homogeneous a given community, the easier it is to execute a policy that reflects peoples' ambitions and aspirations (Fischel, 2001; Ford, 1999). In this regard, deploying different forms of capital creates and shapes the characteristics of the material landscape (Watt, 2009; Wynne and O'Connor, 1998). The establishment of new and affluent suburbs seem to reflect these spatial dynamics.

It appears that the social space shapes the spatial arrangements and alignments of settlements, reflecting differences in peoples' ideology, their stigmas of others and of themselves (Carpiano, 2006; Painter, 2000). Those with social power in some of the suburbs have a monopoly over ways of seeing and classifying objects (such as neighborhood design and architectural form) according to their criteria of good taste. It enables them to put their economic capital to use to objectify their cultural capital (such as knowledge and skills), thus securing the spatial distinction of their neighborhoods (Bridge, 2006; Podmore, 1998). In the end, the depicted spatial dynamics between city and its suburbs manifest 'relational power,' that forces the segregation of unwanted populations (Marom, 2014; Young, 2000).

According to this theoretical framework, an individual's set of capabilities is influenced by how many different forms of capital are available to him or her and by the conditions of the living environment. Life-chances are expected to be formed and to be determined by one's relative position in the social space, and by the

built and political environment (Fig. 1). People who have ample capital forms would probably benefit (and would themselves expect to benefit) from a larger range of liberties to perform in different social fields. They may actively use their relative position in the social space to better convert different goods and commodities into advantages, such as choosing their own community and their own social networks, and eventually be able to control their job opportunities, educational qualifications and the school performance of their offspring (Fig. 1). In the end better exposure to life-chances results from better personal capabilities to function as a social creature in a liberal-capitalist society, thereby shaping and enhancing the mix and degree of different forms of capital.

The extent to which a person is exposed to life chances affects equal opportunities and well-being. Equality of opportunity within the theoretical framework implies a balance in the production, accumulation and transmission of capital forms. Damaging the balance may lead to the denial of peoples' choices, affecting their ways of thinking and being, as well as their political behavior regarding the allocation of resources. Social inferiority causes individuals to concede larger ambitions that would facilitate their abilities to flourish beyond a relative position in a given social field (Bourdieu, 2001). These dynamics produce and reproduce the conditions of domination affecting peoples' capabilities and functioning (i.e., life-chances), determining in aggregate the equality of opportunities in a given space and at a given time.

In this regard, the accumulation of Bourdieuan capitals and the exposure to life chances are influenced by the spatial organization of settlements (cities vs. suburbs). Suburban social homogeneity may facilitate the creation, accumulation, and transfer of capital forms, whereas urban heterogeneity may erode them. It follows that suburbanites are expected to benefit from a better ability to accumulate capital in contrast to their urban counterparts as a direct function of the creation of a distinct affluent community (i.e. suburbanization).

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1. Research hypotheses

The social stratification analysis proposed by Bourdieu provides the theoretical basis in this study for an understanding of class structures of liberal-democratic societies.

The study hypothesizes the existence of a relationship between a person's location, his or her social status, and the existence of social inequity. If confirmed, this relationship allows examination of the spatial dimension hypothesis regarding the alleged existence of city-suburb cleavages.

**Hypothesis H1.** Social space consists of different accumulations of capital forms within different spatial entities of human settlement.

Living environments that reflect class topography consist of capital profiles describing social stratification in space.

**Hypothesis H2.** The accumulation of capital forms is positively related to the individual's exposure to life-chances.

The amalgamation of capital forms characterizing each individual in social space enables the identification of interpersonal differences that affect the conversion of capital forms into 'capabilities' and 'functionings' in different social fields.

**Hypothesis H3.** Suburbanites enjoy a greater accumulation of Bourdieuan capital forms that shape the social space, along with ample and diverse life-chances, than do many of their urban counterparts.

Based on the suggested hypotheses, we speculate that suburbanization affects the social stratification that characterizes a given metropolitan region. Groups and individuals with a high potential for accumulated capital forms tend to migrate to and concentrate in the suburbs, thereby increasing the accumulation of capital forms on which their life-chances and the life-chances of their descendants are based, thus leading to more regional inequality.

### 4.2. Research methods

The existence of social space that affects a person's life-chances was examined by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and multiple regression models.

As a first step, EFA was employed to serve as a data-reduction procedure (Cattel, 1965; Robson & Sanders, 2010). This procedure is required due to social space's intricacy, which requires multi-dimensional measurement (Bourdieu, 2001). It requires a multi-variate setting and the use of quantitative analysis of numerous variables and measures. This intricacy is well represented in the life-chances concept, which relates to a set of capabilities and functionings measured in the present study using quantitative analysis that involves a wide set of indicators.

The EFA was employed using a set of variables derived from the literature and collected through a field survey. This procedure created a capital profile through latent variables that were obtained from the analysis, thereby defining the social space as well as the profile of life-chances that denoted 'capabilities' and 'functionings' in the study area.

The results obtained from the factor analysis were also used to test the hypothesis regarding the spatial variation between a city and its suburbs. Factor scores had been ascribed to each observation (household) through the EFA model. These scores indicated the accumulated capital that characterized persons, i.e., household heads (see discussion in the next section): the higher the score, the higher the individual's accumulated capital, and vice versa. Similarly, higher factor scores for the life-chances factors identified

were indicative of a greater level of exposure to these factors, and vice versa. These standardized scores were then employed to examine whether a significant difference in accumulated capital and exposure to life-chances existed between the city's and its suburbs' inhabitants. The analysis was performed with the Mann-Whitney a-parametric test.

In the next step, multiple regression models were employed. A weighted index of life-chances scores obtained from the EFA served as dependent variable. By controlling for the living environment attributes and settlement type, we aim to empirically test the impact of each form of capital (produced from the component scores obtained from the EFA), on the exposure to life-chances.

The specification of the proposed models is given in Eq. (1):

$$WLC_i = \beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^q \beta_j CF_{ij} + \sum_{m=1}^t \beta_{m+q} LE_{ie} + \beta_{j+t} CS_i + \varepsilon_i$$

$WLC_i$  is the weighted index scores of life-chances (i.e., capabilities and functionings) of household  $i$ ;  $CF_{ij}$  is the standard score of capital form  $j$  ( $j = 1..q$ ) for household  $i$ ;  $LE_{ie}$  is the characteristic  $e$  ( $e = 1..t$ ) of the living environment in which household  $i$  lives (e.g., density of the living environment, building type, quality of building maintenance);  $CS_i$  presents a dummy variable that distinguishes between household  $i$  living in the city ( $CS = 0$ ) and household  $i$  living in the suburbs ( $CS = 1$ );  $\beta$  are the parameters to be estimated, and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the error term so that  $E(\varepsilon) = 0$ .

## 5. Data collection

### 5.1. Population and research area

The empirical study took place in the Sharon region, which is located in the Tel-Aviv metropolis, Israel's largest and most central metropolis and Israel's cultural and financial capital. The Tel-Aviv metropolitan area has 3.5 million inhabitants, or more than 40% of the Israeli population (CBS, 2013). In the last decades, this metropolitan region has exhibited significant changes in spatial structure because of population-decentralization trends and the expansion of its physical structure, which led to the development of many suburbs alongside the major cities (Gonen, 1995). The trend reflected the emigration of many affluent social groups from the metropolitan core to its fringes, which manifested in a spatial segregation between cities and suburbs (Masked for blind review, 2015). In this way, Tel Aviv's suburbanization followed sprawl processes detected in many metropolitan areas located all over the developed world (Razin, Dijst, & Vazques, 2007).

To examine the difference in the accumulation of capital by households live in a city in comparison to those that live in a suburbs and its relation to their life chances, it was necessary to plan ahead a sample that include both households that live in the city and in the suburbs. The selection of the Sharon region for the empirical study was based on a spatial typology that helped in identifying clusters of cities and their suburbs within the Tel-Aviv metropolis (Masked for blind review, 2015). Several clusters were identified, including the Sharon region, which was found to be the most established and integrated cluster; the region includes the central city of Netanya and eight of its suburbs (see Fig. 2).

Netanya numbered 197,000 inhabitants in 2013 and experienced moderate population growth of less than 2% annually in the last two decades. In contrast, the suburban sector of the region, containing approximately 80,000 inhabitants, underwent a rapid population growth of 4.5% annually. The region's rural area offered access to and a view of open spaces, as well as the availability of relatively inexpensive detached housing. Therefore, many rural settlements gradually became semi-urban communities; in addi-



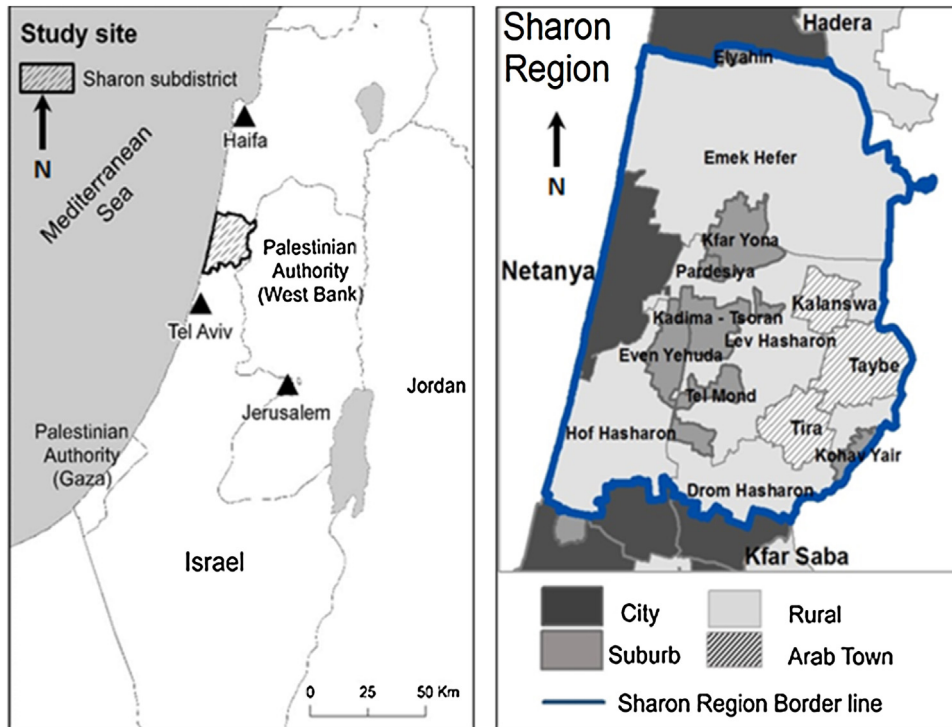


Fig. 2. Map of Study Area.

tion, new suburban communities were established in response to the demand for suburban residence.

A field survey was conducted among households in Netanya and the eight suburbs; these serve as the research population for an examination of social space and the exposure to life-chances. The study population numbered 79,000 households, 70% of which were in Netanya and 30% in its eight suburbs.

### 5.2. Population sample

A multi-stage sampling of the study population was conducted through the Stratified Random Sampling method. This sampling method, which consists of several layers, has the advantage of dividing the study population into sub-groups that more appropriately represent each sector, locality and type of urban fabric (social and physical). Accordingly, the different layers contribute an unequal number of observations to the sample relative to the size of the population they represent (Fife-Schaw, 1995). The first layer relates to the division between Netanya and the suburban sector. The share of the suburbs in the sample was increased at the expense of the urban sector to avoid under-sampling for the former. The second layer relates to the division within the suburb sector in proportion to the size of each of the eight suburbs. The third layer referred to the division of the city of Netanya and the suburbs into sub-areas. The division was based on demographic and socio-economic characteristics of its populations in different areas of the region (according to census data), as well as the characteristics of the built-up fabric of the areas (based on aerial photos and tours in the area), in order to produce homogeneous areas as possible to select the sample.

### 5.3. Questionnaire design

Data was collected by means of a questionnaire that was built for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first part, which was devoted to collecting data on education and

cultural characteristics, enabled the characterization of the accumulation of cultural capital by the household heads, their parents and their children. The second part related to questions about the characteristics of the production and accumulation of social capital; i.e., social relationships. The third part addressed questions about the material aspects of economic capital. Finally, the fourth part asked respondents to indicate their exposure to life-chances, such as the ability to find alternative employment in the event of a loss of employment (whether by resigning or being fired), the ability to finance academic study for their offspring, etc.

Most of the variables collected were converted into categorical variables. Some of the variables demanded redefinition and the construction of complex variables to represent the common accumulation of capital by both household heads and their common exposure to life-chances. The new variables formed indices that represented both household heads effectively as one investigating unit (household).

### 5.4. Sample characteristics

Data was collected through personal interviews conducted with the heads of households in their place of residence. The respondents were household heads that live in the city of Netanya and household heads that live in the suburbs according to the selected stratified random sample. Detailed guidelines and maps directed the interviewers to select households' addresses in each of the sample's strata by which the city and the suburbs were pre-divided.

A total of 1063 completed questionnaires were received, representing 1.5% of the total households in the region, 680 households in Netanya and 383 households in the suburbs. The sample was representative in terms of the demographic, economic and educational characteristics of the population in the study area (CBS, 2008, 2011). The respondents' socio-economic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Heads of households in the suburbs were younger than their urban counterparts. This is especially noticeable in the adult

**Table 1**  
Respondents' socio-economic characteristics.

Variable	Categories (%)						
Household size	<2	3–5	6+	Total	N		
Netanya	39.6%	51.3%	9.1%	100.0%	680		
Suburbs	16.9%	76.2%	6.9%	100.0%	383		
Total	31.4%	60.3%	8.3%	100.0%	1063		
Statistical test	$\chi^2 = 66.2$ , $df = 2$ $p \leq 0.000$						
Age of household's heads <sup>a</sup>	18–40	41–64	65+	Total	N		
Netanya	28.8%	44.3%	26.9%	100.0%	680		
Suburbs	25.5%	64.8%	9.7%	100.0%	383		
Total	27.7%	51.6%	20.7%	100.0%	1063		
Statistical test	$\chi^2 = 56.1$ , $df = 2$ $p \leq 0.000$						
Income level	low income	Low- medium income	Medium income	High income	Very high income	Total	N
Netanya	39.0%	38.1%	14.2%	4.9%	3.8%	100.0%	680
Suburbs	5.5%	20.1%	33.4%	16.4%	24.5%	100.0%	383
Total	26.9%	31.6%	21.2%	9.0%	11.3%	100.0%	1063
Statistical test	$\chi^2 = 299.3$ , $df = 4$ $p \leq 0.000$						
Level of education	Grade school or less	High School	B.A.	M.A. or Ph.D.	Total	N	
Netanya	29.8%	37.5%	21.9%	10.9%	100.0%	1216	
Suburbs	7.1%	33.7%	37.2%	22.0%	100.0%	745	
Total	21.2%	36.1%	27.7%	15.1%	100.0%	1961	
Statistical test	$\chi^2 = 191.1$ , $df = 3$ $p \leq 0.000$						
Occupation	Academic professional and associate professional	Pedagogy, Art and Humanities	Clerical, Agents, Sales & Service Workers	Unskilled Workers	Total	N	
Netanya	16.3%	10.8%	55.6%	17.3%	100.0%	1216	
Suburbs	35.2%	17.1%	43.0%	4.6%	100.0%	745	
Total	23.8%	13.3%	50.6%	12.3%	100.0%	1961	
Statistical test	$\chi^2 = 187.3$ , $df = 5$ $p \leq 0.000$						

<sup>a</sup> At least one of the household heads is in the older age category.

middle age range of 41–64, representing a population that enjoys relative economic strength. The majority of households consisted of three to five persons (60%), with suburban households being significantly larger than urban households. The income level of households in the suburbs was higher than that of urban households, and the difference was statistically significant. This also applied to educational level. The percentage of college graduates among suburban households was double that of urban households. This finding was also reflected in the significant differences in respondents' occupations. The rate of suburban household heads employed in academic, professional positions and as associate professionals, technicians and managers is double that of their urban counterparts.

### 5.5. The variables

Table 2 presents the total of 35 variables that were used to examine spatial inequality in the context of city-suburb cleavages, their means, and standard deviations. The relatively high standard deviations indicate a large variance around the average. This may reflect the heterogeneity of the population that lives in the city versus suburbs. It thus supports the assumption regarding the existence of spatial disparities between urban and suburban households.

Within the total 35 variables, 22 variables represented the social space in the study area based on Bourdieuan capital forms approach. These variables included three variables representing economic capital forms and constitute direct and proxy inputs of material resources that are available to individuals and their families (Robson, 2010; Jaeger & Holm, 2007; Gatrell, Popay, & Thomas, 2004; Bourdieu, 1977, p. 502). Twelve variables represented cultural capital and indicated the individual's actual level of accumulated capital; these 12 variables included inputs that contribute to magnifying a person's cultural capital as well as variables representing educational training, which contributes to the accumulation and shaping of this capital through the social-symbolic meaning that social training and various academic institutions pro-

ject (Robson, 2010; Wildhagen, 2009; de Vries & de Graaf, 2008; Jaeger & Holm, 2007). Four variables represented social capital and indicated a person's social networking, friendships and trust relations within a given community (Hjellbrekke & Korsnes, 2010; Robson, 2010; Carpiano, 2006).

Four variables were used to define the individual's living environment, expressing the physical characteristics of a household's living area (Wedem, Carpiano, & Robert, 2008; Altschuler, Smokin, & Adler, 2004; Echeverria, Diez-Roux, & Link, 2004).

Nine variables measured capabilities and functionings based on Amartya Sen's approach (thus representing life-chances). The choice of variables was dictated by the need to focus on a widely accepted definition of a 'worthy' life in a liberal-democratic society. Five variables formed the concept of the individual's capabilities according to Sen's approach. These consisted of variables that referred to the individual's faith in the stability of the household's financial base, the ability to improve one's conditions of living and to ensure educational resources for one's offspring, and the individual's access to employment opportunities. The concept of 'functionings' was defined by three variables that referred to three social fields: employment, housing, and academic and professional training conceived in an inter-generational perspective.<sup>3</sup>

## 6. Results

### 6.1. Capital forms and life-chance concepts

An explanatory factor analyses (EFA) of instrumental variables collected in a field survey allowed for the identification of the social space in the study area and life chances associated with it. The data was used to construct compound variables representing

<sup>3</sup> Capabilities and functionings measurements in the current study rely on the operationalizing of Sen's approach within different empirical studies (e.g., Krishnakumar and Ballon, 2008; Anand, Hunter, & Smith, 2005). It is worth mentioning that the United Nations developed the Human Development Index (HDI) to measure capabilities according to Sen's theorization.

**Table 2**  
Variables used in the EFA and Regression models.<sup>a</sup>

Concept		Variable Code	Name of Variable	Mean	S.D.
Social space	Economic capital	STUS_JOBUN2	Scope of the position in which household heads are employed	3.2	1.9
		CAR_PVRCD	Number of privately owned cars	1.8	0.6
		INC_HLD2	Household's income level	2.5	1.3
	Cultural capital	Engl	Level of English knowledge	3.3	1.6
		Bigrf_BK	Interest in history, biographies and autobiographies	3.1	2.1
		Romns_BK	Interest in fiction	3.2	2.1
		PopScn_BK	Interest in reference books and popular science books	2.7	1.9
		BKNO_HDCAT	Average number of books read by heads of household per month	2	1.1
		CONFR	Frequency of attending conferences and professional workshops	1.9	1.1
		CONS_OPRA	Frequency of attending performances of a concert/opera/ballet	1.5	0.8
		MUSM	Frequency of visiting galleries, exhibitions and museums	1.9	1
		THATR	Frequency of going to the theater	2	1
		ACDM_CONJ	Prestige of the highest academic certificate the household heads earned	2.7	1.8
	Social capital	DIPLM_RNK	Highest academic degree obtained by the heads of the household	2.1	1.3
		COJ_UNIGRPRD	Prestige of academic institution where household heads acquired their highest academic certificate	2.9	2.2
		NEIB_HLP	Neighbors' willingness to help	4.4	1.5
		NEIB_VLU	The extent to which neighbors share similar values	4.2	1.3
		NEIG_WTCH	The extent to which adult neighbors are responsible and serve as a source of authority for young people in the neighborhood	3.8	1.8
		NEIG_RLTN	Level of social relationships with neighbors	2.7	0.8
		SocNet	Scope of the social network used for counseling on major issues	2.7	1
Living environment	FRND_ELC	Frequency of indirect social contacts (i.e., cell phones and computers)	4.1	1	
	FRND_FTF	Frequency of direct social contacts (i.e., face-to-face meetings)	3.5	1	
	LIVING_AREA	Dummy variable (0=living in the city; 1=living in the suburb)	0.36	0.48	
	ENVIRONMENTAL_CARE	The appearance of the residential area and cleaning	4.6	1.09	
	BULD_TYP	Type of residence where the household lives	4.5	2.7	
	MAINT_HUS	Level of housing maintenance	4.8	1.1	
	JBCNG_JN2	Ability to find a job in the event of voluntary loss of job	1.2	0.5	
	CNJB_FNDJN2	Ability to find new job in the event of involuntary loss of job	1.4	0.6	
	PLWK_INOT2	Household heads' workplaces in relation to their residence	3.2	0.8	
	HSMOV_POS	Household's financial ability to improve housing conditions	2.4	1.4	
Life-chances	CHFND_UNV	Household's ability to fund academic studies for children	3.6	1.4	
	HSPRS_NO	Number of persons in a household (indicating the ability to raise children and maintain a stable family)	3.5	1.5	
	CONJ_MOBIL	Social-academic mobility between household heads and their parents'	4.4	1.5	
	OCCU_PRSTG3	Household heads' job prestige	2.6	1.1	
	OWNSP2	Residence tenure (homeowner, renter etc.)	2.8	0.4	

<sup>a</sup> The variables in the social space and life chances were built on ordinal scales in order to express the value of the variable common to both heads of household. The mean and standard deviation of each variable were calculated according to the ranking that the observations received in the sample.

the common value attributed to both heads of a household (the investigation unit).

Tests of internal consistency and sample adequacy constituted the necessary preliminary conditions for conducting EFA. The forms of capital and the life chance items obtained in the survey demonstrate good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.870–0.646 with regard to the social space concept and to the life-chances concepts, respectively) and provided appropriate sampling adequacy for performing EFA according to the overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO = 0.872–0.725, respectively) (Kaiser, 1970, 1974). The Spearman correlation matrix among the indicators provided the input for both the tests and the factor analyses. The correlation matrix contains correlations with absolute values of 0.1–0.5, and the value of its determinant is 0.001; hence, the existence of correlations without multi-collinearity is established. The result of the Bartlett's sphericity test rejects the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix ( $p = 0.000$ ) (Bartlett, 1954).

Exploratory principal axis factor analysis with orthogonal rotation (Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization) produced six factors (in the case of social space) and three factors (in the case of life-chances). The factor loadings are presented in Tables 3 and 4. A factor-loading threshold of 0.43 served as the basis for retaining the items for factor analysis and for factor labeling (although most of the variables received factor loadings greater than 0.61) (Prato, Bekhor, & Pronello, 2005; see also Frenkel, Bendit, & Kaplan, 2013).

#### 6.1.1. Social space

The EFA procedure included 22 observed variables that constituted a six-factorial structure that represents the social space in the study area (Table 3). The six factors, which manifest different forms of Bourdieuan capital, all together explain 68% of the variance, thus confirming the first hypothesis of the study, which underlies the social space concept of the study area.

**Table 3**  
Explanatory Factor Analysis of capital forms: major factors<sup>a</sup> and factor loading.

Factor	Variable	Component (groups of factors) <sup>b</sup>						% variance explained
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Embodied Cultural Capital	Bigrf_BK	<b>0.881</b>	0.113	0.129	0.015	0.149	0.046	14.6
	Romns_BK	<b>0.836</b>	0.159	0.097	0.129	0.142	0.068	
	BKNO_HDCAT	<b>0.833</b>	0.047	0.167	0.120	0.123	0.026	
Economic capital and its enhancing competence	PopScn_BK	<b>0.812</b>	0.198	0.131	-0.008	0.185	0.038	12.4
	STUS_JOBUN2	-0.012	<b>0.716</b>	0.122	0.059	-0.051	0.115	
	CAR_PVRCD	0.149	<b>0.694</b>	0.051	0.133	0.105	0.115	
	INC_HLD2	0.171	<b>0.654</b>	0.193	0.181	0.325	0.032	
Institutional-symbolic cultural capital	Engl	0.231	<b>0.646</b>	0.237	0.152	0.186	0.028	12.3
	CONFR	0.145	<b>0.611</b>	0.199	0.033	0.324	0.010	
	ACDM_CONJ	0.167	0.169	<b>0.921</b>	0.029	0.123	0.057	
Neighborhood cohesion and its social support	DIPLM_RNK	0.177	0.153	<b>0.907</b>	0.054	0.150	0.045	11.5
	COJ_UNIGRPRD	0.176	0.332	<b>0.841</b>	0.085	0.139	0.031	
	NEIB_HLP	0.047	0.118	0.055	<b>0.820</b>	0.015	0.040	
Fostering inputs of enhancing social and cultural capital	NEIB_VLU	0.058	0.059	0.020	<b>0.773</b>	-0.041	-0.040	9.7
	NEIG_RLTN	0.028	0.066	-0.026	<b>0.759</b>	0.175	0.095	
	NEIG_WTCH	0.082	0.160	0.095	<b>0.731</b>	-0.078	0.059	
	CONS_OPRA	0.189	-0.074	0.216	-0.102	<b>0.715</b>	0.094	
Social interaction	MUSM	0.258	0.251	0.169	0.001	<b>0.698</b>	0.064	7.4
	THATR	0.215	0.223	0.093	0.022	<b>0.695</b>	0.023	
	SocNet	-0.030	-0.050	0.266	0.145	<b>0.435</b>	0.121	
	FRND_FTF	0.039	0.057	0.019	0.070	0.122	<b>0.890</b>	
	FRND_ELC	0.096	0.188	0.086	0.056	0.091	<b>0.864</b>	

<sup>a</sup> Major factors were defined by eigenvalues >1.

<sup>b</sup> Dominant measures were defined as those with an absolute value of the component coefficient greater than 0.5. In order to facilitate labeling the factors, the dominant items are marked in bold.

**Table 4**  
Factor analysis of capabilities and functionings (life chances): major factors<sup>a</sup> and factor loading.

Factors	Variables	Component (groups of factors) <sup>b</sup>			% variance explained
		1	2	3	
The ability to feel control over life and material environment	JBCNG_JN2	<b>0.896</b>	0.076	-0.020	19.8
	CNJB_FNDJN2	<b>0.864</b>	0.150	0.100	
Freedom of occupation, reflecting in the ability to be engage in high- status professions	PLWK_INOT2	0.029	<b>0.767</b>	-0.010	17.5
	CONJ_MOBIL	0.129	<b>0.612</b>	0.099	
Social-economic ability to stabilize the nuclear family	OCCU_PRSTG3	0.191	<b>0.533</b>	0.419	17.2
	HSPRS_NO	0.034	-0.215	<b>0.795</b>	
	CHFND_UNV	0.234	0.404	<b>0.583</b>	
	HSMOV_POS	0.336	0.213	<b>0.443</b>	
	OWNSP2	-0.099	0.165	<b>0.426</b>	

<sup>a</sup> Major factors were defined by eigenvalues >1.

<sup>b</sup> Dominant measures were defined as those with an absolute value of the component coefficient greater than 0.5. In order to facilitate labeling the factors, the dominant items are marked in bold.

The social space's factors are as follows: (a) Embodied cultural capital, representing the individual's accumulated knowledge and cultural dispositions; (b) The individual's economic capital and his or her competence to enhance it. The factor mostly consists of variables indicating the household's material assets, along with cultural manifestations of a person's economic abilities (familiarity with a foreign language and the attendance of professional conferences); (c) Institutional-symbolic cultural capital. This factor relates to the symbolic prestige that is associated with educational and research institutions where persons acquired their academic training. It indicates a person's cultural capabilities; (d) Neighborhood cohesion and its social support, a factor that represents the individual's relationship with his or her social environment; (e) Inputs directed to enhance and to foster a person's social and cultural capital. These inputs are invested by the household heads and exhibited in the frequency of their visits to highbrow cultural activity (e.g., attendance of classical music, opera and ballet performances), as well as to their instrumental social network, utilized for promoting personal needs. (f) Social interaction. A factor that relates to a person's degree (depth and breadth) of un-instrumental friendships.

6.1.2. Life-Chances

Employing the EFA procedure on the nine observed variables that represented capabilities and functionings produced three concepts of different life-chances. These new latent variables explained together 54.5% of the variance, pointing to the scope of opportunities of the heads of the household as follows:

- (a) The ability to control one's material environment and life conditions. This factor, which explains 19.8% of the variance, represents the individual's subjective assessment regarding his or her performance in the job market. That is, the individual's assessment regarding his or her ability to find alternative employment in case of job loss and an assessment of his or her ability to improve working conditions in case of unsatisfactory terms of employment, thus reflecting feelings about job-security. As such, the factor represents one's perceived ability to work and earn a living while seeking employment on an equal basis to others (Nussbaum, 2006; Robeyns & Brighouse, 2010).
- (b) The second factor refers to an individual's freedom of occupation and the ability to engage in high-status professions. It



explains 17.5% of the variance and consists of three variables. The first refers to the ability to commute and to reach job opportunities across geographic space. The second variable refers to academic and professional training when examined from a perspective of an inter-generational mobility. The third variable relates to the status and prestige of a given job, reflecting the ability to achieve positions and duties in the upper rank of the employment field. This factor presents the conversion of individual capabilities into real functionings an individual aspires to achieve.

- (c) The third factor relates to the nuclear family's socio-economic stability. It explains 17.2% of the variance and represents the individual's social conditions under which he or she could thrive and prosper. The factor is composed of variables relating to parents' competence to raise children and maintain a stable family (taking household size into account). The factor also represents parents ability to ensure educational resources for their children, and the ability to function in the housing market (residence tenure and improving housing conditions).

## 6.2. City–Suburbs inequality

Factors scores obtained from the EFA were used to examine spatial differences between individuals (i.e., household heads) residing in the city of Netanya and its related suburbs, in terms of their position within the social space, as well as their exposure to life-chances. The EFA was employed separately on the variables measuring Bourdieuan capital forms and life-chances. Mann-Whitney a-parametric analysis was used to examine the difference between Netanya and its suburbs. The dependent variable was the factor scores that each observation received from the EFA model, while the spatial location (city versus suburbs) served as the independent variable. The results are presented in [Table 5](#).

### 6.2.1. Social space inequality

Generally, there is a gap between household heads in Netanya and in the suburbs relating to the capital factors scores built in order to define the social space concept in the study area (except for the Social Interaction concept). As such, it seems that suburbanites succeeded in accumulating a stronger set of economic, cultural and social capital forms than their urban counterparts. These differences in accumulation of capital forms are statistically significant at a high level ([Table 5](#)).

Suburbanites received a higher average factor score in embodied cultural capital, indicating a difference in the reading preferences between the two sectors. It seems that, on average, the suburbanites prefer more elite genres of literature than those living in the city.

Findings regarding Economic Capital and an individual's ability to enhance his or her competence over social space indicate the existence of a polarized regional structure. Material capital inputs held by suburbanites were higher than those of their urban counterparts. This difference, which is statistically significant, points to the deepest gap in relation to social space of all the capital factors identified (Z value of  $-15.2$ ).

The relative strength of the suburbanites in the social space is also reflected in the differences in levels of higher education attainment, as expressed in their Institutional-Symbolic Cultural Capital accumulation. According to the data, the institutional training and academic qualifications of the household heads in the suburbs surpass that of their urban counterparts.

Neighborhood Cohesion and its Social Support characteristics in the suburbs differ significantly from those in the city of Netanya. They suggest a more coherent identity in the suburbs, along with deeper relationships based on trust, compared to similar relations in the city. The results coincide with [Putnam's \(2007\)](#) observation that the diversity often present in cities tends to, reduce social solidarity and social capital. The result in the current study indicates that suburban communities benefit from an environment that may encourage the creation of a more cohesive civil society.

Investment in the inputs that enhance social and cultural forms of capital is expressed in the relationship between the embodied cultural capital (here associated with a distinct consumption of culture activities) and the scope and depth of consulting social networks that promote the interests of the individual in society. The average value among suburbanites is higher than that of the urban residents, and the difference is statistically significant.

In contrast, Social Interaction that indicates a person's (i.e., household head) degree (depth and breadth) of un-instrumental friendships was found to be stronger for urban individuals than suburban ones. However, this tendency does not indicate friendship's ability to promote personal interests, since, as discussed above, these are more significant in the suburbs than in the city.

### 6.2.2. Life-Chances inequality

The results obtained in regard to life-chances match those identified in the social space. Suburbanites benefit from higher average

**Table 5**  
City–suburbs inequality in the fields of social space and life chances.

Concept	Factor	Location	Mean	S.D.	Mann-Whitney U test
Social Space	Embodied culture capital	Netanya	1.807	0.987	Z = $-3.604$
		Suburbs	2.082	0.999	Sig.= 0.000
	Economic capital and its enhancing competence	Netanya	2.392	0.938	Z = $-15.239$
		Suburbs	3.353	0.789	Sig.= 0.000
	Institutional-symbolic cultural capital	Netanya	1.783	0.929	Z = $-4.598$
		Suburbs	2.119	1.082	Sig.= 0.000
	Neighborhood cohesion and its social support	Netanya	2.75	0.958	Z = $-11.483$
Suburbs		3.436	0.918	Sig.= 0.000	
Cultural and social capital enhancing fostering inputs	Netanya	2.055	0.979	Z = $-4.057$	
	Suburbs	2.283	1.020	Sig.= 0.000	
Social interaction	Netanya	3.013	1.130	Z = $-2.496$	
	Suburbs	2.989	0.714	Sig.= 0.013	
Capabilities and Functionings (life chances)	Ability to feel control over life and material environment	Netanya	0.914	0.899	Z = $-1.933$
		Suburbs	1.195	1.135	Sig.= 0.053
	Function in the field of employment and academic training	Netanya	2.807	0.967	Z = $-14.973$
		Suburbs	3.754	0.735	Sig.= 0.000
	Social-economic ability to stabilize the nuclear family	Netanya	3.054	1.035	Z = $-11.850$
Suburbs	3.786	0.729	Sig.= 0.000		

N=Netanya = 680 households; Suburbs = 383 households.

standard scores related to life-chances than do their counterparts in the city, and the differences are statistically significant. This trend is consistent with the exposure to all life-chance factors.

In regard to the first concept (Table 4), it seems that suburban household heads are characterized by the heightened ability to control their material environment and life conditions. They have a better chance to ensure continuity of income inputs than do their urban counterparts; this advantage holds as well in regard to their attitudes towards their capability to change their workplace while achieving better economic well-being, even in the event of an involuntary loss of job.

The life-chance concept that relates to the individual's freedom of occupation and his or her ability to engage in high-status professions displays a significant statistical difference between suburban household heads and those in the city of Netanya. Suburbanites had, on average, more prestigious jobs than did urban inhabitants, and enjoyed a higher level of accessibility to the more elite professions than the urban residents. The gap is significant, and the largest among the factors representing life-chances (Z value  $-15.0$ ). The ability to engage in high-status professions, thereby achieving positions and duties in the upper rank of the employment 'field', relates to the suburban household heads' improved ability to function in the field of academic and professional training when examined from an inter-generational perspective. It seems that migration to a suburban entity magnifies inter-generational mobility. These migrants may provide their offspring with a living environment that empowers a child's ability to thrive in social space more than does the living environment provided by the city.

Finally, there is a statistically significant difference between suburban and urban families, in relation to the nuclear family's socio-economic stability. This ability is significantly higher among households in the suburbs than among households in the city. The nuclear family's socio-economic stability establishes the social conditions that promote a person's dignity, while strengthening the possibilities to develop and fulfill self-aspirations, particularly in the early years of life.

### 6.3. Results of the regression models

In the last stage of the study, we employed multiple regression models in order to examine, among other things, the effect of capital forms on a person's life-chances, whether he or she lives in the city of Netanya or in one of its suburbs. The three models (Table 6) were estimated separately to avoid inclusion of independent variables that are highly correlated, thus preventing multi-collinearity. A weighted index of the household heads' life-chances served as the dependent variable in the regression models. The weighted index was calculated by multiplying the standard score of each factor obtained in the factor analysis of life-chances variables by the relative weight each factor contributed to the explanation of the total variance between households (see similar use of this methodology by Ewing & Hamidi, 2014).

The results (Table 6) confirm the research hypothesis regarding the relationship between the social space and life-chances.

Interestingly, among the social space concepts influencing the exposure to life-chances, the most influential is the institutional-symbolic cultural capital (in all the models). The concept that related to cultural capital has a statistically significant positive relationship, at the highest level ( $p < 0.001$ ), with the exposure to life-chances. The positive relationship is probably due to the importance attributed to this concept in developed countries, where human exposure to life-chances depends on academic accreditation and its symbolic deciphering by economic and cultural elites (Bourdieu, 2001).

Economic Capital and its enhancing competence (Models 1 and 2) is the second-greatest influence on the individual's exposure to

life-chances. The positive and statistical significant impact of this factor is consistent with most of the studies regarding social inequality in space. In this sense, it can be determined that institutional-symbolic cultural capital, together with economic capital and its enhancing competence, are key factors in the formation of social space and the influence on the individual's exposure to life-chances.

All the other concepts (cultural and social) were also found to have a positive and significant impact on the exposure to life-chances. Excluding the economic capital variable from Model 3 in order to remove its impact on one's exposure to life-chances enables the examination of the impact of other variables (which are not purely economic indicators) on a person's life-chances.

It is worth noting that in spite of the role that the social space has on the individual's exposure to life-chances, capital forms do not tell the full story of equality of opportunity between the city and its suburbs. Life-chances are explained by additional variables related to the individual's living environment.

For example, the dominance of the "LIVING\_AREA" dummy variable in Model 3 (also in Model 1) demonstrates that the transition from the city to the suburbs may bring significant and positive change in the exposure of individuals to life chances. Increased exposure to life-chances is also associated with a built environment characterized by detached housing (a suburban feature), and a larger apartment size (BULD\_TYP in Model 2). The suburban environment is also associated with a high level of building maintenance (Models 1 and 3), as well as of the neighborhood upkeep and cleanliness (Models 2). These two variables reflect to some extent how local resources are allocated by their communities, shaping the characteristics of the material landscape and of the living environment.

## 7. Spatial inequality in the city/suburb domains—discussion

The decline of many cities in the developed world seems to express worsening of polarization and inequality in liberal-democratic societies. In this regard, the theoretical discussion on the subject of suburbanization raises the fundamental question of whether urban sprawl has societal positive or negative implications. One of the allegations against the phenomenon claims its negative effect regarding the ability of large sectors in a given metropolitan region to materialize their liberties. These are the capabilities, as Sen defines the term (Sen, 1987, p. 36): "the ability to be free to realize legitimate aspirations and, therefore, to benefit from this spatial process." Despite attempts to answer the question, the literature remained vague and polemic, lacking sufficient empirical examinations to confirm or refute the allegation.

The current study strives to cope with the deficiency by introducing theoretical framework employed to examine the spatial gap in the equality of opportunity between a city and its suburbs. The proposed framework made it possible to examine the results of spatial inequality in the study area by exploring the extent and variance to which people are exposed to a set of life-chances across space as a function of capital forms accumulation and living environment characteristics. The examination of Israel's Sharon region in the current study provides an empirical demonstration of the proposed framework.

The results showed that the interrelationship of the social space and the living environment, which influence the creation of 'capabilities' and 'functionings', provides a foundation for the definition of social equality in a spatial context and confirms our first hypothesis. The statistical analyses show that suburbanization is related to highly unequal patterns of social stratification in the region investigated. Social groups in the suburbs were found to benefit more than their urban counterparts from background conditions

**Table 6**  
Capital forms, habitus and living environment impacts on life-chances – regression models (dependent variable – life-chances super index).

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Estimate	Std. Error	Estimate	Std. Error	Estimate	Std. Error
Embodied Cultural Capital	0.0809	0.0119***	0.0919	0.0121***	0.0691	0.0127***
Economic capital and its enhancing competence	0.1557	0.0123***	0.1688	0.0124***	–	–
Institutional-symbolic cultural capital	0.2723	0.0165***	0.2998	0.0166***	0.2640	0.0177***
Neighborhood cohesion and its social support	0.1237	0.0180***	0.1473	0.0181***	0.1220	0.0193***
Fostering inputs of enhancing social and cultural capital	0.0734	0.0136***	0.0801	0.0139***	0.0657	0.0146***
Social interaction	0.0387	0.0133**	0.0345	0.0134**	0.0365	0.0143**
LIVING_AREA	0.2816	0.0311***	–	–	0.3279	0.0332***
MAINT_HUS (Building maintenance level)	0.0309	0.0123**	–	–	0.0464	0.0131***
BULD_TYP	–	–	0.0344	0.0133***	–	–
ENVIRONMENTAL_CARE	–	–	0.1905	0.0295**	–	–
CONSTANT	–0.7193	0.0916***	–1.0637	0.0939***	–0.3462	0.093***
Number of observations	1062		1062		1062	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.517		0.494		0.445	
F	143.36		130.71		122.41	

that probably allow such groups to be exposed to more life-chances that enable improving their quality of life thus confirms our second hypothesis.

The capital forms approach, drawn from the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu, determines, according to the theoretical framework, the entire material, mental, cultural and social means that impart to the individual the actual liberty to do and to be. The statistical analyses presented here showed that suburbanization is related to highly unequal patterns of social stratification in the region investigated. It shows that the higher the level of the individual's capital accumulation, the greater are the individual's chances to be exposed to life-chances. As such, social groups in the suburbs were found to benefit, more than their urban counterparts, from ample and diverse packs of capital forms, which probably allow such groups to be exposed to better life-chances. These findings confirm our second and third research hypotheses, showing that the social space that influences the creation of 'capabilities' and 'functionings' provides a foundation for the definition of social equality in a spatial context.

The results are consistent with the findings of many studies that emphasized the creation of the inner cities' underclass, compared to the relative affluent suburbia (Jargowsky, 2001; Yang & Jargowsky, 2006; Freilich and Peshoff, 1997). These past studies revealed economic disparities that exists in cities as opposed to suburbs, as well as social cohesion challenges related to suburbanization versus urbanization patterns of settlement (Williamson, 2010). Enlightening as they are, the argument here is that they neglected many of the intricacies that are related to the social life, affecting eventually the achievement of human flourishing. The current study manifests therefore an ongoing effort to measure human well-being through the adoption of an innovative approach that broaden simplistic indices, mainly economic in their nature. Although, several social studies used different variables to study spatial differences in capital accumulation (see, e.g., Gatrell et al., 2004), or even to explain suburban distinction strategies through Pierre Bourdieu's social space (Oldrup, 2015; Watt, 2009), the present study is unique in the way it ties this theory to the idea on people's exposure to a set of life-chances.

Our case study is situated within the Tel Aviv metropolitan region which experienced the same path of urban sprawl as many other Western metropolises, characterized by a similar path of disurbanization and functional decentralization (Frenkel, 2007; Razin et al., 2007). It represents, to some extent, the laissez-faire nature of Israel's spatial development over the last decades, embracing privatization while rejecting over-regulation. Therefore, it has the potential to represent the dynamics of other metropolitan regions in the developed world.

However, it should be recognized that the discussion about social equality and the processes of suburbanization is largely a discussion of cause and effect. It is quite possible that the spatial gap between the city and its suburbs, such as found in this study, is a product of an existing inequality rather than something that generates it in the first place. For example, it can be assumed that urban elite groups immigrate to suburban communities in order to differentiate themselves socially, economically and culturally, and thereby to maintain their supremacy.

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