

## Abstract Template

**TITLE:** Ethnic school composition, parental involvement and the social competences of primary school students in the Netherlands

**Author/s:** *Karien Dekker<sup>1</sup> and Margje Kamerling<sup>2</sup>*

**Affiliation/s:** RMIT

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Access to good quality education is an important dimension of the current debate around equal opportunities for all children, particularly for those living in areas with concentrations of low income and ethnic minority households. Much is expected from both schools and parents in providing a good quality education for the children. Schools, on the one hand, are expected to provide a good, caring, safe, happy learning environment and good examination results (Taylor, 2002<sup>3</sup>). Parents, on the other hand, are expected to participate in school-based activities and support their children. Much is expected of the 'participation society'; civic participation in schools, neighbourhoods and sports clubs supposedly creates tailor-made solutions for social problems, according to the Dutch king (Van Oranje, 2013<sup>4</sup>). However, participation rates for individuals with a low socio-economic status and/or from an ethnic minority background, are often low (Dekker and Van Kempen, 2009<sup>5</sup>).

Despite the current political attention for participation, and a long standing academic interest in political and civic participation, little is known about the effects of parental participation. Does parental participation in schools have a positive effect on the children? And is this different in schools with many

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Karien Dekker is an associate professor at RMIT University, School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, Melbourne. Email: [karien.dekker@rmit.edu.au](mailto:karien.dekker@rmit.edu.au)

<sup>2</sup> Margje Kamerling MSc works at the Algemene Rekenkamer, The Hague, the Netherlands.

<sup>3</sup> Taylor, C. (2002). *Geography of the 'New' Education Market: Secondary School Choice in England and Wales* (Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing)

<sup>4</sup> Van Oranje, W.A. (2013), Troonrede 2013, The Hague.

<sup>5</sup> [Dekker, K.](#) and [Van Kempen, R.](#) (2008). Places and participation: Comparing resident participation in post-WWII neighborhoods in Northwest, Central and Southern Europe. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1, 63-86.

children from ethnic minority or low socio-economic status families? This research examines to what extent and why socio-economic and ethnic school composition and parental participation influence the social competences (social position, social skills) of students. We used the COOL5-18 database (2010) with 553 Dutch primary schools and nearly 38.000 students in group 2, 5 and 8. The first analyses indicate that parental participation has strong positive effects on both kinds of social competences. Ethnic composition of the school does not influence the social competences. However, the socio-economic status and parental participation of the pupil's family, as well as the socio-economic status of other students in de school does influence the social competences.