

**Symbol or Structure: The Effects of Family Structure on
Youth's Education**

by

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B.A., (Honours) Acadia University, 1996

Thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (Sociology)

Acadia University
Fall Convocation 1998

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0-612-33821-5

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Dianne Looker, for her time, energy and endless support and encouragement, as well as the use of her data. As well, thank you to the external and internal readers who took time to read and take part in helping me achieve my end goal.

Most of all I would like to thank my children, Michael and Marley, for their patience and understanding over the last two years. Next, I would like to acknowledge and thank my partner, Leonard Paul, for his kind and gentle ways. Thanks for having faith in me and giving me the encouragement and support I needed.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank Kim and Susan for being the people they are. As well I would like to say thank you to Cheryl MacDonald, administrative secretary, for her support. Once again, my deepest appreciation goes out to all those who helped me through this educational pursuit.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the effect that living in single parent versus dual parent family structure has upon youth's educational outcomes. In particular, this thesis examines the impact the different family structures have upon the educational expectations and outcomes of youth. This study draws on Bourdieu's Theory of Practice, in particular his notion of capital, to help examine and fill some of the gaps in our knowledge as to how and why some parents have a positive influence upon their child's educational outcomes, while others do not. This thesis is a secondary analysis of data from a quantitative study of Hamilton, Ontario and Nova Scotian youth who were followed over a five year period, from 1989 to 1994. At a bi-variate level, family structure was found to have an impact upon the youth's educational expectations and attainment levels. The key finding from the exploration at the multi-variate analyses found that living in a one-parent family, in and of itself, does not constitute grounds for expecting that a child will do worse than one who lives with two parents.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the effect that living in various types of family structure has upon youth's educational attainments. Over the past two decades there has been considerable change in the family structure in Canada. According to Statistics Canada (1993, 1996), the majority of families (77%) are still headed by two people, but the incidence of married couples with children has steadily decreased from 83% in 1981. This decrease has been attributed to the increase in the number of lone-parent families in Canada. In 1971, there were approximately 478,000 families headed by lone-parents; this number has doubled since then to a reported 955,000 children living within a single parent family structure in 1991. The same studies show that women head the vast majority (80%) of these lone-parent families. The high incidence of lone-parenting in Canada is attributed to the increase in the rate of divorce in Canada over the past few decades, as well as a growing number of women who, by choice, never marry.

Studies conducted by Statistics Canada (1993) on family structure and income found that the typical two parent family had an average annual income of \$59,000, whereas the average income of a single parent family was found to be \$22,000. Furthermore, Statistics Canada's 1993 report showed that 1.2 million children, under the age of 18, lived in a family with incomes below the Low Income Cut-off. In fact, three out of every five female headed lone-parent families live below the Low-Income Cut-off¹.

¹ Low-income cut-off—financial information is obtained from annual nationally representative surveys which look at household gross incomes. The low income cut-off varies by size of family unit and population of an area. These cut-offs represent levels of gross income. Statistics Canada suggests that the average Canadian family spends 36 percent of their gross income on food shelter and clothing, but for those who fall within the realms of low-income spent 56% or more of their income on life's necessities.

Given these findings it is not surprising that more and more research is looking into the possible effects that living in the various types of family structure has upon youth's life trajectories. In particular, this thesis examines the impact that different family structures have upon the educational expectations and outcomes of youth. The family structures that will be examined include lone-parent and dual parent families.²

It is widely recognized that parents play an important role in their child's educational aspirations and outcomes, but there are gaps in our knowledge of how and why some parents in different family structures influence their children in different ways. This thesis will help to fill this gap by examining the relationship of family structure on educational outcomes. In doing so it draws on Bourdieu's Theory of Practice.

1.1 Bourdieu's Theory of Practice

Bourdieu's Theory of Practice highlights some of the ways society's practices can be explained or accounted for by examining life events that lead up to these practices. The concepts central to Bourdieu's Theory of Practice are capital, habitus, and field. By employing these concepts Bourdieu argues that the sociologist/anthropologist can "avoid the dilemmas of necessity and choice that have bedeviled sociology...allow[ing] us to understand how social imperatives prompt individual position-taking in a manner which, avoid[s] a mechanistic model of determined action..." (Fowler, 1997:3).

² This study does not include details on youth who live in households headed by gay or lesbian couples although this is an important and under researched area—see Currie, 1998.

1.2 **Cultural Capital**

In Bourdieu's approach, "[C]apital can exist in objectified form[s], such as properties, ...the kinds of capital, like trumps in a game of cards, are powers which define the chances of profit in a given field" (Andres Bellamy, 1994:121). Given this definition it is understandable why some researchers find the notion of cultural or social capital attractive, as it can provide the conceptual link between the attributes possessed by an individual actor and her/his immediate social contexts. Bourdieu regards social institutions, such as schools and the family, as vehicles by which society transmits the culture of the dominant class. Schools are found to effectively promote the ideology of the dominant class by promoting those students who enter the field equipped with the necessary tools: attitudes, values, belief, and behavioral patterns (Fowler, 1997).

Bourdieu argues that it is viewed as 'natural' for society to see those students who do not fair well in school as lacking in some ways. This failure is attributed to a personal inadequacy of that person, not the system. The same can be said for those youth who do well in school; their success is seen as 'natural' for they are seen as hard working and desiring of it. Simply by virtue of re-enforcing these beliefs the schools help to conceal the hidden 'real nature' of power in society.

The educational system reproduces all the more perfectly the structure of the distribution of cultural capital among classes (and section of a class) in that the culture which it transmit is closer to the dominant culture and that the mode of inculcation to which it has recourse is less removed from the mode of inculcation practiced by the family (Bourdieu, 1977: 493).

Bourdieu (1977) further argues for those who believe that:

[i]ndividuals who have hoped for nothing that they have not obtained and obtained nothing that they have not hoped for, are simply the least forgivable victims of the ideological effect which is produced by the school when it cuts off the social conditions of production all predispositions regarding the school such as 'expectations', 'aspirations', 'inclination', or 'desire', and thus tends to cover up the fact that objective conditions--and in the individual case, the laws of the academic market--determine aspirations by determining the extent to which they can be satisfied....[T]he educational system which merely records immediate or deferred self-elimination (in the form of the self-relegation of children from the underprivileged classes to the lower educational streams) or encourages elimination simply by the effectiveness of a non-existent pedagogical practice...masks more thoroughly than any other legitimation mechanism ...the arbitrary nature of the actual demarcation of its public (p. 496).

Bourdieu argues that the school, along with other social institutions, is working on the assumption that all students enter into the field with the tools needed to decode and interpret the ideology of the dominant class. This assumption denies and masks the biases inherent in the school system. Denying these biases and downplaying the discriminatory practices of schools have far reaching consequences since cultural capital over time can be converted into economic capital (Andres Bellamy, 1994; Bourdieu, 1977).

Furthermore, Bourdieu argues that as long as differences in educational outcomes are viewed and accepted by society as reflecting simple differences in personal ability, and not the fault of the educational system, the privilege of dominant groups is reinforced and legitimated. According to Bourdieu cultural capital inherited through the family "remains the best hidden and socially most determinant educational investment" (Andres Bellamy, 1994:123).

1.3 **Social Capital**

Social capital is one important form of capital discussed in Bourdieu's Theory of Practice. Bourdieu views social capital as being gained through family members, retainers (credit slips), or network of supporters. Therefore,

[T]he volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected (Bourdieu, 1986: 249).

In a similar vein, Coleman (1988) states "social capital exists in the relations among persons" (S100). At this point I turn to Coleman's conceptualization for it offers a deeper level of understanding into the concept of social capital.

Coleman (1988) examines social relationships in order to gain a fuller level of understanding of how they can be used and transformed into useful capital resources. Coleman argues that social capital can come in three forms: obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness. What each of these three forms of social capital have in common is the investments one can create through social relationships which can, in turn, generate capital that improves an individual's life chances. Obligations come in the form of 'credit slips' or 'favors' an individual holds. The ability to cash in 'credit slips' depends upon the trustworthiness of the individual or group who owes the 'favor'. Obligations are, therefore, seen as reciprocal.

"An important form of social capital is the potential for information that inheres in social relation" (Coleman, 1988: S104). The gathering of vital information provides the basis for future actions. Coleman sees parents and the community in which one lives as the key to youth development.

Social capital is generated when the family is embedded in social relationships with other families and community institutions. Parents command greater social capital when they are members of a community that has dense social ties and adheres to common values (Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995:582).

1.4 Field

Field is a term which is central to Bourdieu's theoretical argument. Field is the area in which objective social relations occur, and it is space where personal development and growth occurs. Field in its most global sense is a combination of overlapping spheres (political, economic, cultural, educational, family structures) which address power relationships in society. Each of these individual fields have their

own rules and patterns of thought and production – and has a structure which, at any one moment in time, is determined by the specific relation which participants in the field have with one another, with activity in other fields, and with the overall power structure (Crowther, 1994:156).

Therefore, by examining the institution of family as a separate field one could argue that depending upon the amount and style of capital one brings into the field and that person's relative position within the field, one can predict an individual's level of success within another field (education). Bourdieu believes that those who have a feel for the game of life can enter into it with a stacked deck which will, in turn, enable them to either invest their capital wisely or not (Bourdieu, 1977). Looker (1994) expands upon this notion to include parents as a source of capital requires a two way action before its benefits can be actualized. Parents make advantages available; these advantages have to be used ('invested') by the children to lead to a pay off in terms of education or jobs.

Capital, which, in its objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to

persist in its being, is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible. And the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e., the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices (Bourdieu, 1977; 241-242).

1.5 Habitus

Bourdieu makes the argument that every agent (person/structure) located within a field (family/educational/occupational/political) brings to the field a personal set of dispositions, beliefs, and strategies which indicates her/his position relative to the field.

The habitus creates an active willed choice to occupy certain spaces, even if behind the choice there is also necessity...[Habitus]...continuously transforms necessities into strategies, constraints into preferences and without any mechanical determination, it generates the set of choices constituting life-styles (Bourdieu, 1993, cited in Fowler, 1997:50).

Habitus can be viewed as a “practice-unifying and practice-generating principle that is capable of generating an infinity of practices depending on changing objective situation” (Andres Bellamy, 1994: 126). Bourdieu (1990) feels that in order for successful practice to occur it requires that “the actor both to operate within a specific habitus and to act creatively beyond the specific injunctions of the rules” (cited in Fowler, 1997:18). In other words students must not only have a feel for the game called school, they must also be capable and prepared to anticipate its wants and desire and, in turn, find ways in which to enact them in order to succeed educationally.

This thesis uses Bourdieu’s and Coleman’s concepts of social capital to focus upon the role that parents (in particular parents from various family structures) play in the educational outcomes of their children. Data from a longitudinal study of youth’s educational expectations and outcomes will allow me to explore the extent to which

social capital within a family and community affects educational paths.

Chapter Two presents a review of the literature that identifies parental variables that can be seen as sources of capital and that, in turn, have an impact upon the youth's educational expectations and attainments. Chapter Three gives a detailed account of the data collection and the measures and methods chosen to analyze the data. Chapter Four is comprised of the data analysis that examines various background characteristics of the youth and their parents. Chapter Five contains the results of data analysis performed at the bi-variate level (forms of capital by family structure). Chapter Six presents the results of the linear regression analysis. As well, Chapter Six explores the ways in which the educational system uses embodied 'symbolic capital' to help re-enforce the social stigma attached to single parents. Finally, Chapter Seven contains a discussion of the findings, reflecting upon the impact that symbolic capital has upon the youth's educational outcomes.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research indicates that the number of children growing up in single-parent households is on the rise (Statistics Canada, 1996). As a result a substantial body of research has been conducted to try and explain the consequences of this shift in family structures upon the well-being of children involved (Acock & Kiecolt, 1989; Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Amato & Keith, 1991; Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Downey, 1994; Dronkers, 1994; Ekstrom, 1986; Krein, 1986; Morrow, 1986; Mueller & Cooper, 1986; Okey & Cusick, 1995; Parsons, 1990; Rumberger, 1987; Sandefur et al., 1992; Shaw, 1982; Thomson et al., 1994; Watts & Watts, 1991). Other studies show that more and more youth and parents are placing a greater importance upon education. In fact, youth and their parents are looking at post secondary education as an expected path that is thought to hold the key to future success (Amato & Keith., 1991; Downey, 1994, 1995; Dronkers, 1994; Looker, 1994, Looker & Dwyer, 1998; Sandefur et al., 1992; Shaw, 1982; Statistics Canada, 1993; Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Thomson et al., 1994).

Given the findings that youth and their parents are placing a greater importance upon education, it is relevant that numerous other studies have shown that children who grow up in a lone-parent household are less likely to complete high school or attend some sort of post-secondary institution. These include research by: Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Amato & Keith, 1991; Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Brown & Mann., 1990; Cohen, 1987; Dornbusch et al., 1985; Downey, 1994, 1995; Dronkers, 1994; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Gringlas & Weinraub, 1995; Hao, 1996; Krein, 1986; Krein & Beller, 1988; Milne et al., 1986;

Morrison, 1995; Mueller & Cooper, 1986; Parsons, 1990; Rumberger, 1987; Sandefur, 1992; Shaw, 1982; Statistics Canada, 1993; Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Thomson et al., 1994.

These researchers suggest a number of reasons why children raised in single-parent families do not perform as well academically as their counterparts raised in two parent families. One central finding is that youth from single parent families (especially children from single female headed families) are more likely to be poor and that poverty creates barriers to obtaining higher levels of education (Andres Bellamy, 1993; Acock & Kiecolt, 1989; Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Amato & Keith, 1991; Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Downey, 1994; Dronkers, 1994; Ekstrom, 1986; Hanson, 1994; Hanson et al., 1995; Hao, 1996; Hao & Brinton, 1997; Krein, 1986; Morrow, 1986; Morrow, 1995; Mueller, 1986; Parsons, 1990; Rumberger, 1987; Sandefur et al., 1992; Shaw, 1982; Thomson et al., 1994; Watts & Watts, 1991).

Secondly, lone-parents have been found to have lower levels of education. In turn, parental level of education is found to have an impact upon the educational attainment levels of their children (Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Dronkers, 1994; Gringlas & Weinraub, 1995; Guppy & Pendakur, 1989; Keith & Finlay, 1988; Milne et al., 1986; Okey & Cusick, 1995; Seginer, 1983; Sewell & Shah, 1968; Smith, 1982). Children who are raised in single parent families also tend to have lower levels of expectations for their futures (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Dornbusch, 1985; Downey, 1994; Ekstrom, 1986; Gringlas & Weinraub, 1995; Manski et al., 1992; Morrow, 1995; Stevenson & Baker., 1987).

Still other researchers found that maternal employment has a negative impact upon the outcome of youth (Brown, 1990; Heyns et al., 1986; Milne et al., 1986; Ramanan, 1992;

Statistics Canada, 1993). Others, focusing particularly on urban-rural differences, have examined the effects that 'regionality' has upon youth's life outcomes (Ihinger-Tallman, 1995; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995; Lichter et al., 1993; Looker, 1993; Looker & Dwyer, 1998). The final major finding deals with parental attitudes, beliefs, and practices and how these variables can have either a positive or negative impact upon the youth's outcomes (Andres Bellamy, 1993; Aquilino, 1996; Astone & McLanahan, 1984; Biblarz & Raftery, 1993; Biblarz et al., 1997; Brown & Mann, 1990; Cohen, 1987; Downey, 1995; Gringlas & Weinraub, 1995; Leung & Foster, 1987; Leung, 1995; Looker, 1994; Morrow, 1995; Okey & Cusick, 1995; Rumberger, 1987; Smith, 1989; Teachman et al., 1997; Thomson et al., 1994; Turritin et al., 1980; Vickers, 1994; Wang, 1993).

A review of the above literature indicates that most researchers have combined single-mother and single-father families into one category and labelled it 'lone-parent' or 'single-parent' families, while others have excluded single fathers from their analyses all together. Research conducted on mothers and fathers indicates that they have distinct interactional styles with their child. As a result some researchers (Aquilino, 1996; Biblarz & Raftery, 1993; Biblarz et al., 1997; Bosman & Louwes, 1988; Downey, 1994; Eggebeen et al., 1996; Hanson et al., 1995; Morrison, 1995; Teachman et al., 1997) have begun to recognize that single-parent families are not homogeneous.

For the purpose of this literature review I will be discussing the variables that researchers suggested place children from single-parent families at an educational disadvantage, compared to children from dual parent families. The first section will discuss the socio-economic variables (potential sources of human/financial capital) found to influence youth's educational attainment levels. The second section will discuss the factors

that deal with parent/child interactional styles (potential sources of habitus) and how these different styles can influence the child's educational outcome.

2.1 Parental Socio-Economic Status

A growing number of studies have shown that family structure during childhood and adolescence has an effect upon the future outcome of these children as adults. It is a well-documented fact that youth's educational outcomes are linked to the socio-economic status of their family. The relevant socio-economic characteristics include: the parents' income, parental occupation and education, as well as the attitudes and actions associated with these characteristics (Andres Bellamy & Hovorka, 1993). No matter whether researchers have looked at a single variable or multiple variables, the findings have all been similar: family socio-economic characteristics have an impact upon the youth's educational outcome.

2.1a *Parental Income*

Overall, research has found that children from higher socio-economic backgrounds have a greater likelihood of staying in, and completing, their education and that they aspire towards higher occupational goals than do children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. (Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Andres Bellamy, 1993; Sewell & Shah, 1968; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Alwin and Thornton's 1984 data, from a 18 year longitudinal study of the role of family socio-economic status on youth's achievement outcomes, found that the child's early socioeconomic status had more of an effect upon attainment levels than did their later status. Their findings indicate that

...parental socioeconomic status (or SES) tends to be positively related to school-achievement variables...[and] it seems clear from [our] analyses that, except for the effects of family size, the addition of later socioeconomic variables contributes only trivially over and above what is contributed by the operation of the same factors in early life (p.799).

Focusing upon differences in family structures, Astone and McLanahan's 1991 literature review found that children who grow up in single-parent families are less likely to complete high school. This lower level of attainment is attributed to the precarious economic situation of most single-parent families. In fact, their review of the literature found that most studies indicate anywhere between 30 to 50 percent of children from non-intact families did not complete high school.

Statistics Canada (1993) found that more early school leavers came from lone-parent families and that the reason for this findings can be related back to the "high incidence of low incomes experienced by lone-parent families...[c]hildren living in poverty often suffer from malnutrition and other health problems, live in inadequate housing and experience discrimination" (Statistics Canada, 1993:4).

Acock & Kiecolt's 1989 study, using data which was pooled from thirteen General Social Surveys conducted in the United States between the years of 1972 to 1986, complements the above findings. The researchers found that by examining the type of family one lived within during their adolescent years they could predict whether it was family structure, per se, or the lower socio-economic status and income that had the largest impact upon the youth's life outcomes. Acock & Kiecolt found that low socio-economic status experienced following family break ups was a better predictor of youth's life outcome than family structure itself. The researchers caution the readers as they feel that further research needs to be conducted on future youth cohorts to properly identify the long term effects of growing up in a non-traditional household has upon the life trajectories of youth.

Gringlas and Weinraub's 1995 longitudinal study investigated how the lack of financial resources affects maternal and child functioning in households and, in turn, the

youth's life trajectories. In Gringlas and Wienraub's initial study the children were of pre-school age. At that time no significant differences in the child's academic achievement, behavioral, social or competence levels could be found between those children raised in single-female families and those raised in two parent families.

Seven years later, Gringlas and Weinraub (1995) re-examined their original sample group to reassess whether the children's outcomes had changed as they entered their adolescent years. Their findings indicated that by the time the children reached the age of adolescence distinct differences on all measures could be found between those raised, from birth, in a single-female household and those raised by two parents. The findings from the follow-up study indicate that lone-female parents tend to experience more frequent life stressors than married mothers. One reason given for the differences between family structures and stressful life events was reduced finances in single parent homes that created excessive levels of stress upon lone-parents.

Krein and Bellor's 1988 study supports the above findings that living in a single female-headed household during the preschool years appears to have more of a negative impact than this experience in later years. These researchers note that the impact varies according to the length of time and age at which a children lives in a single-family structure. This study also indicates that the negative effect is more pronounced for boys than it is for girls. On the other hand, Shaw's 1982 study explored the effects living in a lone-parent family on the educational outcomes of girls. The findings indicated that living in single-parent families, overall, was not detrimental to the girls' educational well being. What was found to have an effect was the low income status of most female single-parent mothers.

Parsons (1990) found that there was a limited amount of research conducted that compared female and male children of lone-female headed families. However, most of the studies, which do make this comparison find differences between the sexes. "Research that focuses on male children often proceeds from the argument that the effect of father absence should be more negative for male children, due to the unique role the father plays in a boy's life in terms of achievement" (p. 335).

The results from Parsons' 1990 study on the intergenerational transmission of status focusing upon the effects of family structure suggests that overall, dual-parent and male lone-parent families tend to have children who attain higher levels of education and occupational status than children from female lone-parent families. Upon closer examination Parsons (1990) found that the socio-economic status of females from male-headed families tended to be the lowest. Downey's (1994) study supports the above study's findings, concluding that:

[e]conomic parental resources are important mediators for understanding why children from both single-mother and single-father families do less well in school than children from two parent families...[but that examining the differences between the life outcomes of those who live in single father and those who live in single mother household can best be explained by contrasting]...interpersonal parental resources, such as time spent talking to the child and parental involvement in the child's school activities. [Downey found that] single mothers provide greater levels of interpersonal parental resources...whereas...single fathers provide greater levels of economic parental resources (p. 144).

In general, research on early school leavers (Okey & Cusick,1995; Rumberger 1987; Teachman et al., 1996) found that students who left school before completion, whether male or female, tended to come from poor single parent families and families in which the parents were poorly educated. The research cited above documents that parental socio-economic

status, in general, plays a significant role when it comes to explaining why some children choose to disengage from school earlier than others.

Okey and Cusick (1995) found that "[m]ost of the dropouts' parents were economically marginal" (p.263). As well most of the parents of dropouts had themselves been dropouts who came from economically marginal families and had left school early to seek employment in order to help support the family. Rumberger (1987) found similar findings and noted that in his study he found that "[E]conomic factors also influence students' decisions to leave school...[and that of the ones that left school early they did so because]...they wanted to or felt they had to work to help out their families" (p.110).

Mueller and Cooper (1986) also agree with the above findings but suggest that the "educational opportunities for children in single parent families seem to improve as the economic status of their families improves" (p. 175).

2.1b *Parental Education*

Cohen (1987) notes that parents are found to be both modellers and definers in their children's lives. Parents with high levels of education are found to be positive role models for their children. Downey's 1994 and Eggebeen et al.'s, 1996 studies both show that children from single-father families enjoy many background advantages that children from single-mother families do not. Furthermore, children from single-father families match the education profile of children from dual-parent families better than they do children from single-mother families.

Dronker's 1994 study examined the impact parental levels of education had upon the educational outcome of their children. Dronker found that

...living in a lone or natural parent family [as opposed to one natural parent or one step-parent] is not an important distinction in terms of school success

[that] a far more important characteristic for the prediction of school success is the educational level of the mother or father (p.189).

Dronker found that mothers in lone-parent families, on average, have a lower level of education than do mothers from dual parent families, but over all, regardless of family structure, lower levels of parental education equated with lower levels of youth educational attainment. Keith & Finlay (1988) conducted a study based upon a combined sample of national (US) data to explore the effects that parental divorce has upon the educational outcome of youth. The researchers used the mother's level of education as an indicator of family social class standing. Overall, the study found that parental divorce had a negative impact upon the educational attainment levels of the youth involved in the study. Again, the finding was that low levels of mother's education were related to low levels of youth education. Finally, single parent mothers with low levels of education themselves were found to be poor role models for their daughters. The daughters of mothers with low levels of education were found to have levels of education equal to or lower than their mothers; they were more likely to become a parent and get married at an earlier age than those youth who lived with two parents and those mothers had high levels of education.

Krein's 1986 study examines the effects growing up in a single-parent household has upon boys. The findings complement those found in Keith and Finlay (1988). Krein concluded that single parents are not good role models for boys based on male youth's attained level of education. The study also examined the number of years the male youth live in a single-family environment to see the effects on educational outcomes. The researcher found that "[c]hildren who spent even a short period of time in a single parent family completed fewer years of school on the average than those who always lived in intact families" (p.166).

Research conducted outside the parameters of family structure have made similar observations when looking at the impact parental education has upon youth's educational attainment levels. According to Stevenson and Baker (1987) their 1986 study found that mothers' level of education had a direct influence upon the educational outcomes of their children. Stevenson and Baker's findings indicate that educated mothers knew more about the school system and took a more active role in their children's schooling which was beneficial to the children's academic performance.

Stevenson and Baker, intrigued by their 1986 finding, decided they needed to expand their sample base and examine youth's educational transitions at various ages. Therefore, Stevenson and Baker's next studies included data which were nationally representative. One of the hypotheses Stevenson and Baker (1987) tested was "...the higher the educational status of the mother, the greater degree of parental involvement in school activities..." (p. 1350). Once again, their findings indicated that educated mothers tended to be more involved in the day to day schooling of their children than did less educated mothers. Also, regardless of the academic achievements of the child, the more educated mothers selected more university preparatory courses for their children than did less educated mothers.

Sewell and Shah conducted a similar study back in 1968, which followed a randomly selected cohort of Wisconsin school children. These children were studied over a seven year period and their findings show that

Both father's and mother's educational achievements are positively and significantly related to perceived encouragement, college plans, college attendance, and college graduation with or without controlling for child's intelligence...[but]...[i]f there is a discrepancy between the parents with low and middle education, generally it is father's rather than mother's education which exerts more influence on aspiration and achievement (p. 208-209).

Statistics Canada's (1993) study on early school leavers found that school leavers were more likely than high school graduates to have a least one parent with a low level of education. In fact, their study indicates that in 1991, 45% of early school leavers had a parent who had not graduated from high school and that 25% of leavers live with a lone parent.

Looking at influencing factors for those who chose to disengage from school Okey and Cusick (1995) found that "...dropouts came from families who had less education, valued education less, expressed less concern with school progress, and had lower educational expectations for themselves and their children" (p.245). As well, Rumberger's 1987 study on influencing factors associated with early school leavers found that "...family-related factors associated with dropping out include low educational and occupational attainment levels of parents, low family income, speaking a language other than English in the home, single-parent families and the absence of learning materials and opportunities in the home" (p.110).

The above findings compliment Looker's (1994) statement that "[P]arental education may provide potential capital for parents and their children, but...until this capital is translated into educationally directed expectations and active encouragement its potential impact will not be realized" (p.182). Cohen's (1987) study found that the effects parents have upon their children's educational aspirations and attainment can be attributed to both their modelling and defining influences. Furthermore in this study, the parental modelling and defining effect was found to influence girls and boys equally and there was no noted differences found between the parents (mothers versus father) modelling or defining influence.

2.1c *Parental Employment*

Maternal employment is another area that researchers have found to have an impact upon the educational outcomes of a child (Milne et al., 1986; Vandell & Ramanan, 1992). A review of the literature shows that researchers have different conclusions regarding maternal employment's effect upon children. Vandell and Ramanan (1992) examined the effect of maternal employment upon children from low-income family, primarily single-parent households and they found that maternal employment had a positive impact upon the children's educational outcomes. The researchers caution the reader against using their findings to make wide sweeping generalizations as they felt that due, to a number of limitations in their study, more studies needed to be done.

Milne et al.'s 1986 study looked at the effect that maternal employment had upon youth's educational outcomes controlling for race, gender and family structure. This study found that maternal employment had a negative effect upon youth's schooling except for youth who were black and lived in a single parent family. Working mothers in this instance were seen as positive role models.

Heyns and Catsambis (1986) also believe that the effects of maternal employment are not an easy phenomenon to explain. Maternal employment in the above study was found to have a positive effect on children's education as long as the parent was willing to invest her time and energy after work in her children's education. Contrary to these findings Sugar (1994) suggests girls whose mothers work experience a greater degree of life dissatisfaction and are prone to depression and low self-esteem.

2.2 Parental Active Involvement and Encouragement

Astone and McLanahan (1991) addressed the question of why certain family structures seem more likely to include children who are less successful in school. Their findings suggest that children from lone-parent families as well as step-parent families received less parental encouragement than children who live with two natural parents. Downey's 1994 study on youth school performance supports Astone and McLanahan's findings. Downey (1994) found that single-parent mothers provide needed time and encouragement to their children which is reflected in the children's educational outcomes. On the other hand, the single-parent fathers in his study were found to be lacking in interpersonal resources, but were more likely to provide economic resources instead.

Biblarz and Raftery's 1993 review of literature on the effects that family disruption has upon the social mobility of youth found parenting practices played a major role in the youth outcomes. The literature revealed that children from single-parent families reported less parental supervision and monitoring of school related activities. The reason given for the differences found between the practices of single-parent and two parent families concerns the issue of single-parent 'task overload' as a direct result of the loss of the second parent in the household. As well, a review of the literature also suggested that children from single-parent families were less likely than those from dual parent homes to report that a parent, either mother or father, was the most influential person in their lives. Youth from single parent families were also found to be less likely to report wanting to most like their parents when they grew up.

For the most part, Aquilino's 1996 study discounts the above findings. The study, using data from the 1988 National Survey of Families and Households, explored the impact

youth's childhood living arrangements had upon their adult life stations. Aquilino found that children who live with a single parent can receive that additional time and attention found to be beneficial to youth's life outcome from an extended family member (grandparents) or another adult figure or peer that they consider a mentor. The researcher notes that to assume that all children from single-parent homes can be treated as a unitary group will automatically bias the research, for youth from single-parent households do not share a common set of life experiences.

Researchers who examine the impact of parents upon their child's educational outcome outside the realms of family structure find that parental encouragement and support to be one of the best indicators of youth educational outcomes. Looker (1994) and Andres Bellamy (1993) demonstrate to their reader how parents who provide the needed capital (time, energy, and/or money) to their children will see the benefits through their children's educational successes. Looker's 1994 key findings concern parental encouragement level. Parental encouragement could be in the form of financial aid, giving educational advice or as simple as freeing the youth from household chores in order to have more time to do school work.

Other researchers (Astone and McLanahan, 1991; Brown and Mann, 1990; Leung & Foster, 1987; Stevenson and Baker, 1987; Van Stone et al, 1994) also found that interpersonal parental resources had an impact upon youth educational attainment levels. Leung and Foster's 1987 findings suggest that parental level of concern and encouragement was a very important component in youth educational outcomes. The element of perception plays a key role in their research. The researchers found that as long as children perceived their parent(s) to be concerned and encouraging the child benefited. Similarly, Sanefur et al.

(1992) found that "[p]erceiving that one has a parent who desires one to go to college increases the probability of high school graduation and college attendance" (p.118).

Smith's 1990 study explored parental rearing styles to determine if differences could be found in the mother-father levels of influences and how they influence the educational attainment levels among youth. The findings suggest that "students' educational goals and academic performance are influenced by parental reinforcement of achievement behavior...[and that]...mothers and fathers influence adolescents' educational performances and goals through different mechanisms" (p.96).

Still other researchers found a family's communication ability is the route to success (Kurdek & Fine, 1994; Morrow, 1995). Positive communication skills are believed to enrich the lives of all member of society in

...the way family members relate to one another and to the outside world builds (or undermines) the competence of the individuals and the group as a whole..[therefore]...[Q]ualities such as the ability to communicate, expression of appreciation and support of each other, a wise use of power, supportive networks...[are values that]...distinguish between families that strengthen their members from social stresses (Eastman, 1994:200).

2.3 Community

Looker and Dwyer (1998) note that, overall, researchers have paid little attention to the concept of 'rurality'. Looker and Dwyer feel that it is "a concept that it is useful for understanding rural-urban differences, it makes more sense to try to identify the *social* characteristics of rural as compared to urban areas. One of the characteristics which we would see as important are the social networks that exist in rural areas" (p. 9). Research on family structure, youth educational outcomes and 'regionality' are not easily found but of the ones which could be found one common theme prevailed: community can be a source of potentially positive reserves where youth's life transitions are concerned.

Shaw's (1982) study explored the effect that living in particular neighbourhoods and living within a single-parent household had upon the educational outcomes of girls. The findings reveal that single-mothers' low income status forced them to live in neighbourhoods where dropping out of school was an accepted trait, therefore it was the influence of their neighbourhood environment and their peers which appeared to have more of an effect. Ihinger-Tallman (1995) feels that the community in which one lives is a part of the institutional environment in which single-parent families are embedded. Ihinger-Tallman's review of literature on the functioning of lone-parent families found that community is relied upon and used as a means of extended positive network of support in their lives. The support networking that many single-parent families trust and rely upon helps the parents to raise well-adjusted, healthy, well-functionally children without financial support that other two parent families rely upon to achieve the same.

2.4 Summary

The literature finds there is a high degree of poverty that is associated with being a single-parent. Poverty is thought to come with its set of problems, including low educational attainment levels, and in turn low occupational outcomes. The research also suggests that family structure has an effect upon youth's educational attainment. Children of single-parent families are viewed as lacking the 'cultural tools' needed to survive in today's society. Many feel that youth from single parent families are lacking the finances, motivation and support needed to succeed in life. Although research finds that parental and community support and encouragement can increase the chances of youth succeeding in life, these components appear to be overlooked and downplayed. Most of the research still views parental socio-economic status as the best or only predictor of youth's life outcomes.

The present study explores the impact that parents at the family structure level have as potential sources of human/financial capital and sources of social capital, in the educational lives of their children. This review of the relevant literature indicates that longitudinal studies on youth's educational attainment levels are lacking. As well, none of the studies reviewed had surveyed the parents as well as the youth. Since the following study will include the above components, as well as all the key variables identified throughout the literature review, hopefully it will provide new insights and a greater level of understanding into the impact that the various family structures have upon youth's life outcomes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

3.1 Data Collection

This thesis is a secondary analysis of data from a longitudinal study originally conducted by Looker. The participants for the first part of the study come from a 1989 survey of twelve hundred and nine individuals born in 1971. In 1989, the sample consisted of four hundred and eight youth from Hamilton, Ontario; three hundred and ninety from Halifax, Nova Scotia; and the remaining four hundred and eleven youth from rural Nova Scotia.

The rural Nova Scotia sample included approximately one hundred participants from each of the four economic regions (South Shore, North Shore, Valley, and Cape Breton) located outside of the Halifax metropolitan area. The four economic regions are approximately equal in size and determined to be “relatively homogeneous in terms of variety of economic and demographic measures” (Looker, 1993:44). Statistics from 1986 census provided information about labour force participation and unemployment rates for men and women ages 15 to 24. These rates were examined to identify subareas that represented each of the four regions. Towns were chosen which best matched the figures for the county and the overall area. In each of the four areas, fifty participants were chosen from a *town* school and fifty from a school located in an *unincorporated area*.

The names, addresses, and phone numbers of the sample, born in 1971, were obtained from school lists in the rural and urban areas. A supplemental list was also supplied which included the names and addresses, if known, of school dropouts and/or graduates. Twelve of the participants were already attending post-secondary institutions,

and contact was made through the registrar's office of the relevant post-secondary institutions. It should be noted that there is some variation in the accuracy of the lists supplied by the various districts. Also, the study did not include names from native or from francophone schools, therefore, there was a low percentage of non-white youth included in the sample, and all youth respondents were English speaking.

Once the names and addresses were obtained, random samples were drawn in each area, and letters were sent to the individual participants, and to their parent(s). Pre-tests of the interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of Wolfville and area seventeen year olds. The Gorsebrook Survey Center conducted the interviews in Nova Scotia. Those undertaken in Hamilton, Ontario, were conducted by the firm, Social Data Research. The researcher (Looker) trained and debriefed the interviewers, as well as conducting a few interviews in each of the sample areas herself.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the twelve hundred and nine youth who agreed to participate, and questionnaires were provided for their parent(s). The interviews were, for the most part, conducted at the homes of the participants. If this was not agreeable, then the interviews were conducted at such places as the research office, or some local fast food outlet. The response rates for the youth were: 78 percent for Hamilton, 71 percent for Halifax and 72 percent for rural Nova Scotia.

Questionnaires were given out to the parent(s) only if the youth completed her or his interview. In the case of language variation, interpreters were used for the parent(s). In rural Nova Scotia literacy was a problem in some cases. When literacy was identified as a problem the youth read the questionnaires to her/his parent(s). The ideal situation occurred when both parents were present to complete the questionnaires while the youth

interview was being conducted. If this was not possible, the questionnaire was left behind to be mailed in, upon completion. The response rates for the parents, overall, were 74 percent for the mothers and 57 percent for the fathers. Upon adjusting for mother and father absent households, the rates were 77 percent for the mothers and 70 percent for the fathers. The interviews with the youth participants contained a number of open-ended questions which dealt with their future plans. The interviewers were instructed to record, verbatim, as much as possible of these responses.

In 1992, the same sample group from the 1989 study was contacted by mail asking for an update of information. A report from the 1989 study was included in the package. Current addresses and phone numbers were requested, as well as updates on current activities in the work force or post-secondary institutions. If the participants did not respond to the mailed request, they were contacted by phone and the questions were asked of whomever answered the phone.

In April of 1994 another more detailed questionnaire was sent out to the respondents who had replied to the 1992 study. A cover letter explained the nature of the study. An incentive, a chance to win five hundred dollars (\$500), was offered to those participants who completed the questionnaire and returned it no later than May 1, 1994. If by June, 1994 an individual had been tagged as a *non-respondent*, then a second questionnaire was mailed. Tracers were used to try and locate individuals who had moved. A subsample of respondents was interviewed in 1994 but these data were not used for the analysis in this thesis. No data were gathered from the parents in 1994.

This thesis will focus on the precoded information from the 1989 youth interviews, the 1989 parental questionnaires, and the 1994 youth questionnaires. Where

feasible information about parental attitudes will be taken from the parental questionnaires. In instances where parental non-response seriously reduces the case base, parallel questions asking the youth to report the parents' preferences and attitudes are used as proxy measures.

3.2 Measurement of Key Variables

3.2a Youth's Education

As mentioned earlier the primary focus of this thesis is on youth's educational expectations and attainment and the extent to which social capital found within different family structures influences the educational outcomes of the youth. Using longitudinal data allows the present study to examine the extent social capital transmitted through various family structures, over time, affects educational paths. This is a component which Furstenberg & Hughes (1995) note is essential to any study that is exploring parents as potential sources of social capital.

In 1989, there were a number of key variables that could have been used as a measurement of the dependent variable, namely the youth's educational outcomes. The possible measures include: the youth's preferred path after school, the youth's expected path after high school, and highest education they realistically expect to have after they finish all their schooling. The youth's response to the question "*What is the highest level of education you realistically expect to get?*" was chosen as the 1989 dependent variable which would best measure the youth's expected educational plans, since it measures not only their immediate past high school plans, but the amount of education they eventually plan to obtain.

Since this thesis examines youth's educational paths and outcomes over time it made more sense to focus upon their educational expectations rather than their preferences. I feel the question on '*highest expected*' educational level would best identify the youth's educational goals, rather than focusing on their immediate post high school plans. As more and more research is showing, precarious job markets are forcing youth to sway from a predetermined linear path to one which involves entering into and existing from the various life stages as circumstances demand (Looker & Dwyer, 1998).

In 1994, again the focus was on educational outcomes. Once again, there was more than one possible measure of the dependent variable to choose from. The potential measures included the highest obtained level of education and the highest expected level of education. Keeping in mind that one of the purposes of this thesis was to examine youth educational outcomes, "*What is the highest level of education you currently completed?*", was chosen as the dependent variable from the 1994 data.

3.2b Family Background

In 1989, the youth were asked to provide details on background family characteristics, current educational status and attitudes and beliefs concerning their educational pursuits. As well, the parents were asked to comment on such areas as their socio-economic status, along with some of their preferences and expectations for their child's life trajectories and some aspect of their attitudes and practices.

The following is a list of the questions, from the 1989 youth interview, the 1989 parental questionnaire, and the 1994 youth questionnaire that were used in the analysis. The response categories were recoded, as relevant, into manageable number for analysis

purposes (see Appendix A for the categories used, after recoding³).

Family Structure: (1989 Youth Interview)

- Who lives in the same household as you?

It was from this question that the various measures of family structure were created. For the purpose of this thesis, three separate measures of family structure were created. First, all combinations of parents (biological mother, biological father, step-mother, step-father) were obtained. Next, the various combinations of those living with two parents were combined into one category. A similar combination of responses was used to determine who was living with a lone-parent by selecting those who lived with their mother only or their father only. Finally, any who indicated that they did not live with any parents were categorized as living with “neither” a mother nor a father.

This variable was then further recoded into two categories: living with two parents, or living with a single parent. The youth who were found to be living with neither their mother or their father were excluded from the analysis at this point.

³ The categories used could be viewed as hierarchical but it is not the intention of the researcher to create such a division. The categories are created as a means to differentiate factor between those who stop their education at the high school level and those who go on to obtain a post-secondary certificate and those who chose to go to university.

Parental Financial/economic Capital (1989 parental questionnaire)

- What is the highest level of formal schooling that you completed?⁴
- What is your present (or most recent job) for pay or profit?
- Check the category which you would say best describes the yearly income from all sources before taxes for you and your spouse or partner?⁵

Social Capital

- How much would you say you encourage or discourage your daughter/son to continue her/his education beyond high school? (1989 parental questionnaire)
- How much did your mother/father encourage or discourage you to continue your education beyond high school?⁶ (1989 youth interview, 1994 youth questionnaire)
- How important have the following (mother/father) been in your decision about how much schooling to take? (1989 youth interview)
- How important do you think your opinion is to your daughter/son's educational plans? (1989 parental questionnaire)
- How often would you say you and your parents disagree with whether you do your homework? (1989 youth interview)

⁴ Due to poor response rates among the fathers, the mothers' and fathers' reports of the father's education were combined using the mothers' responses when the fathers' was unavailable. The youth's report of their parents' level of education was used if reports were unavailable from either parents.

⁵ The parents' responses to this question were combined to achieve as accurate a reading as possible on family income level. The youth's reports of family income level were used when information was unavailable from either the mother or the father.

⁶ Due to high non-response rates among the fathers, a combination of mothers', fathers' and youth responses to this question was used as a means to measure parental levels of encouragement/discouragement

Human Capital (1989 youth interview)

- What stream or programme in school are/were you in?
- What was your average on your report card this past term/or on the last report card you received? (1989 Youth interview and 1994 questionnaire)
- Have you ever, even once, failed a subject?
- Have you ever had to repeat a year in school?
- How are you perceived by others -- as a good student, as a trouble maker?
- What is the highest level of education you realistically expect to get?

As a means to ensure that the best possible measure of each variable was obtained a combination of responses was used to create the measures of parental socio-economic status and their level of active involvement in their teen's educational lives. The combined response variables were created by using the responses from mothers, fathers, and youth. The parental socio-economic status variables were created by combining, first the parents' responses to either their highest level of education, level of occupation or income. Next, if neither parent responded to the questions about their socio-economic status, the youth proxy responses were used.

For analysis purposes, in the remainder of this thesis the family structure variable included only two categories: dual parent and single parent. This variable was created by first examining the youth's 1989 response to "*Who is presently living in the same household as you?*"

3.3 Data Analysis

In Chapter Four a series of quantitative analyses are presented based on the coded data from the youth 1989 and 1994 interviews and questionnaires and the parents' 1989 questionnaires. Frequencies were run on a number of variables and presented on a large number of variables (youth and parental responses) as a means to give the reader a detailed description of the kind of social situation in which the youth live. This chapter is introduced in order to set the stage for the following chapters where only those variables that are actually found to have an impact on the youth's educational expectations and outcomes will be discussed.

Chapter Five examines the impact that family structure has, at the bivariate level, upon parental socio-economic status, parental levels of active involvement, youth's school performance indicators, regionality, and finally the two key educational variables: the youth's 1989 educational expectations and their 1994 obtained level of education.

Chapter Six takes the analysis one step further, examining the results of a multiple regression analysis. This analysis allows us to examine the effects of each of the independent variables, controlling on the others. More particularly, it allows us to examine the impact of family structure on the youth's educational expectations and attainments, controlling on measures of financial, social and human capital.

The youth's 1989 response to "*What is the highest level of education you realistically expect to get?*" was used as the dependent variable in the regression analysis performed at Time One. In 1994, the youth's responses to "*What is the highest level of education you have currently completed?*" was used as the dependent variable in the Time Two equations. The independent variables used at Time Two were the same as

entered into the Time One equation except for the measure of prior education level.

Much of the information directly from the parents, particularly from the fathers, could not be used as a single variable in the equations due to the severe case loss involved. Therefore, many of the variables included information created by combining the youth's proxy reports and the parents' responses to ensure the best possible measure of a variable with the least case loss. As well, dummy variables were created to allow for the inclusion of family structure, a categorical variable, into the equations.

3.4 Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to examine the role that parents from different family structures play in the educational outcomes of their children. Given the fact that past research found that active parental support and encouragement towards their child's educational pursuits and high parental socioeconomic status play an important and intricate part in youth's educational outcome and that there are discrepancies among the various family types (dual parent versus single parent) these aspects will become central in the following analysis. An attempt to accomplish this the following hypotheses will be tested using Bourdieu's Theory of Practice, particularly his discussion of the various forms of capital: 1) youth from single parent families receive the same level of active support and encouragement as those from two parent families; 2) high level of support and encouragement will outweigh the negative effects that parental socio-economic status may have on youth's education, and 3) having access to and making use of parental social capital will eliminate the differences found between youth from single parent and those from two parent where educational trajectories are concerned.

Using secondary analysis has allowed me to undertake a study of the impact that various family structures have upon youth's educational life course. Given the time and expense involved in conducting a study of this size, I would never have been able to accomplish such an analysis without access to existing data. Since the data set was a rich source of information on the youth's expected and obtained level of education, as well as containing vast amounts of information on potential sources of capital which can aid or hinder one along their educational paths, I had no problem fitting my research question to the data.

A common concern in using secondary data is the lack of control over the content. This was not a problem in this instance as the data set included several measures of all key dependent and independent variables. One area that is cause for concern includes the measure of the family structure variables. The literature (Eggebeen et al., 1996) indicates that, when measuring the effects that family structure has upon youth life trajectories, it is important to distinguish the length of time a youth spends in a single-parent household. As well the age or ages at which one enters into and exists from the various family structures and the frequency of times one enters into and exists a particular family type are important aspects to examine. The present data set has no information on these important variables.

Specially, there are no variables that allow for the identification of the length of time or the ages when the youth were in various family types. The only information available is whether or not the youth has at some lived within or is currently living in either a single family or dual parent family. Also, due to the high non-response rate on certain measures among variables that dealt with perceived or actual parental

involvement, a number of variables could not be included in the regression analysis. The large loss of cases base would hinder the researcher's ability to make generalizations about the role that human and social capital plays in the educational lives of youth.

Other limitations of the data set include such things as low rate of response from the fathers (1989), sample attrition from 1989 to 1994 and incomplete data from many of the youth in 1994 which all resulted in the serious loss of cases when multivariate analyses were performed. The low response rate from the fathers is the factor which caused the greatest loss of cases. These limitations should be kept in mind when considering the findings from the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sample Description

Before looking at the effects family structure has upon the educational plans and attainments of the youth, it is important to get a feel for the kinds of social situations in which these young adults find themselves. As well, it is important to give some descriptive details about their, as well as their parents', attitudes, beliefs and practices towards their educational careers. This chapter is introduced solely to give the reader a descriptive image of the sample that will help set the stage for the future chapters.

4.1 Youth –1989

The first stage of this analysis involves looking at some general characteristics of the sample of youth and their parents. All the youth participants involved in this study were born in 1971 and were between the ages of 17 and 18 at the time of the initial data collection. In 1989, the sample consisted of 1209 youth, four hundred and eight youth from Hamilton, Ontario; three hundred and ninety from Halifax Nova Scotia; and the remaining four hundred and eleven from rural Nova Scotia. There was a fairly even split between the males and the females. Five hundred and sixty-eight of the respondents were male and six hundred and forty were females (see Table 4.1).

The findings further indicate that, in 1989, eighty-two percent of the overall sample were living with two parents, 13% were living with their mother only, 3% were found to be living with their father only, and the remaining 3% indicated they were living with neither their mother nor their father (see Table 4.1).

TABLE 4.1: YOUTH CHARACTERISTICS—1989

	Percentage	Total N
Sex		
Male	47%	568
Female	53%	640
Community		
Hamilton Ontario	34%	408
Halifax Nova Scotia	33%	390
Rural Nova Scotia	33%	411
Family Structure		
Two Parents	82%	983
Mother Only	13%	159
Father Only	3%	31
Neither	3%	31

Overall, in 1989, ninety-five percent of the youth indicated they had at least one other sibling living in the same household. The average number of siblings was two with 51% indicating they had at least one brother and 46% a sister. Thirty-nine percent of the youth indicated they had at least one sibling who had attended university (data not shown).

In 1989, the youth were also asked their ethnic\cultural and religious backgrounds. The youth were asked about their families' country of origin. Fifty-four percent of the participants' families originated from the British Isles or North America. When this variable was examined at the community level the findings indicate that the Nova Scotia youth, especially those from rural Nova Scotia, were more likely to say that their families originated from the British Isles or North American than were those youth from the Hamilton area (Hamilton, 40%; Halifax, 57%; rural Nova Scotia, 66%).

Forty-one percent of those surveyed were found to be of the Roman Catholic faith. Once this variable was broken down by community the findings indicate that more of the Hamilton respondents were Roman Catholic than those from the Nova Scotia categories (Hamilton, 44%; Halifax, 37%; rural Nova Scotia, 40%). The youth from

Nova Scotia were more likely to be of the Protestant faith (Hamilton, 28%; Halifax, 39%; rural Nova Scotia, 44%).

The literature showed that two types of parental variables warrant attention when exploring the role family structure plays in the educational trajectories of youth: (1) background status that can affect the youth's social position, and (2) actions taken and attitudes actively communicated from parents to their children. In this section I will consider each in turn.

An examination of the parents' educational levels reveals that 73% of the mothers had a high school level education or less, 17% had a university degree and the remaining 10% had a non-university certificate. Although the findings for the fathers were somewhat similar to those of the mothers, more fathers than mothers were found to have a post secondary level of education. Twenty-five percent of the fathers were found to have a university level education and another 6% had a non-university certificate. Like the mothers, a majority of fathers (70%) were found to have a high school level education or less (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Parental Level of Education—1989

Educational Level	Mother	Father
Grade One	<1%	<1%
Grade Two	<1%	<1%
Grade Three	<1%	1%
Grade Four	<1%	1%
Grade Five	1%	2%
Grade Six	2%	4%
Grade Seven	2%	3%
Grade Eight	7%	7%
Grade Nine	6%	7%
Grade Ten	12%	11%
Grade Eleven	13%	9%
Grade Twelve/Thirteen	29%	25%
Other Post Secondary	10%	6%
University--Undergraduate	14%	14%
University--Post Graduate	4%	13%
Total N	1164	1087

The occupational status of the parents was the next variable to be examined in this section. The mothers and fathers were asked to respond to the question, "What is your present (or most recent) job for pay or profit?" The parents were asked to write in the name of their actual occupations which were coded into four digit Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (CCDO) codes. These codes were, in turn, collapsed into the fifteen category, Pineo, Porter and McRoberts coding scheme (see Pineo, Porter, McRoberts 1977). The answers to this question were then broken down into the categories: self employed professionals, high level management, employed professional, technical semi-professional, middle management, supervisors, foremen/forewomen, skilled clerical sales service, skilled craft trade, farm owner/operator, semi skilled clerical sales service, semi skilled craft trade, unskilled clerical sales service, unskilled labour, and farm labour (see Table 4.3). For the purpose of analysis at the bi-variate level the above categories were grouped into three categories and entitled: Managerial/Professional, Skilled, and Unskilled. For the regression multi-variate analyses the full range of the Pineo, Porter, McRoberts categories were used.

Table 4.3: Parental Occupational Status--1989

Occupation	Mothers	Fathers
Managerial/Professional	37%	45%
Technical/Skilled	39%	40%
Unskilled	24%	15%
Total N	1111	1111

Table 4.3 shows that 45% of the fathers involved in this study had occupations which fell within the Managerial/Professional category, 40% were skilled labourers and the remaining 15% were employed as unskilled. There was a slightly higher percentage of mothers than fathers found to be employed as unskilled labourers and fewer having occupations which fell within the managerial/professional category

(managerial/professional 37%; skilled 39%; unskilled 24%).

Next, the parents were asked if they were employed on a full-time regular basis, and seasonal basis, or if they were in a regular part-time or temporary position. Ninety-two percent of the fathers reported having a year round full time job, while 6% reported seasonal employment and the remaining 2% reported working on a part-time or temporary bases. As expected, the percentage of mothers working on a full time year round basis was lower than the percentage of fathers. Sixty-one percent of the mothers reported working on a full time year round basis, thirty-one percent reported a regular part time job and the remaining 9% reportedly worked on a seasonal or temporary basis.

Parental level of income was the next variable to be examined. Forty percent of the parents reported incomes which were below forty thousand dollars of year, while twenty-eight percent had incomes between the \$40,000 to \$60,000 range and the remaining 32% reported a gross family income of greater than \$60,000 a year (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Parental Income—1989

Income Level	Percentage	Total N
Less Than \$40,000	40%	452
Between \$40,000 to \$60,000	28%	308
Greater Than \$60,000	32%	352

4.2 Five Years Later--1994

Five years later, in 1994, the youth were re-surveyed to see how life had changed for them over the past five years. In 1994, there were a total of eight hundred and forty-two participants who provided information, down from twelve hundred and nine in 1989. The 1994 sample group, broken down by community, proved to be in proportion to the 1989 sample group. Sixty percent of the participants were female and forty percent were male. At this point, seventy-eight percent of the youth indicated they were from a dual parent family and twenty-two percent from single families. The average age of the participants in 1994 was 23.

Eleven percent of the youth indicated they had married by the time of the survey in 1994. More of the youth indicated they had married at age 21 (26%) than any other age, with the youngest age at which marriage occurred being 18. Sixteen percent of the females indicated they had married while only 6% of the males had. The findings also indicate that four, or less than 1%, of the youth that had married before 1994 had also divorced their partners by 1994 (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Youth Characteristics 1994

Percentage who said they:	Male	Female
Had Married	6%	16%
Had Divorced	<1%	1%
Had a child	7%	16%
Were Employed full-time	39%	36%
Were Employed-part-time	23%	31%

Eleven percent of the youth indicated they had at least one child by 1994. More females than males (16% versus 7%) had a child by 1994 (see Table 4.5). While the percentages of those married and those who had a child are similar, they are not necessarily the same individuals.

The next set of questions examined deals with the youth's employment status as of April 1994. Thirty-eight percent of the youth said they were employed on a full-time basis between the period of January and April of 1994. Another 28% indicated they were employed on a part-time basis over the same time period (see Table 4.5). As well, youth were also asked to respond to a question which dealt starting their own business (data not shown). Six percent of the youth indicated they had started their own business before 1994, more of those from Halifax area (9%) than in the other two areas (Hamilton, 6%; rural Nova Scotia, 2%).

4.3 School Performance Indicators—1989

A major focus of this analysis is on educational plans and outcomes. This section will examine a variety of in-school variables that would, undoubtedly, have an effect on youth plans and outcomes. Ninety-three percent of the youth indicated they were in full-time attendance at school at the time of the 1989 survey. A majority (61%) of the youth reportedly were enrolled in the eleventh grade and another 22% were enrolled in grade 10. There were a total of 61 youth (6%) who indicated they were no longer registered in school. The majority of these (71%) had left in or before Grade 10.

Seventy-nine percent of the youth indicated they were enrolled in the academic or honours streams while the remaining 21% were enrolled in the general stream, or another non-academic path (see Table 4.6). However, it is important to keep in mind that courses not students are 'streamed'. An individual could be in a variety of types of courses (e.g. Academic grade 11 English, General grade 11 mathematics, and un-classified grade 10 French).

Also relevant to this analysis are various measures of the youth's school performance. One question which addresses performance concerns the marks the youth obtained on their last report cards. In 1989, 14% of the youth said their marks were 60 percent or below, another 31% percent indicated their marks were between the 61 to 70 percent range, and 35% reported that their marks fell between the 71 to 80 percent range. The remaining 20% indicated they had marks over the 80 percent range (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: 1989 School Performance Indicators—1989

Performance Indicators	Percentage	Total N
Attendance Status At School		
Yes - Full Time	93%	1109
Yes - Part Time	1%	15
No	6%	61
Highest Education Completed		
Grade Nine or Less	9%	116
Grade 10	22%	262
Grade 11	61%	723
Grade 12/13	8%	94
University	<1%	1
School Stream		
Academic	79%	895
Non-Academic	21%	247
Marks		
Less Than 60%	14%	164
61-70%	31%	358
71-80%	35%	407
Over 80%	20%	238
Failed a Course		
Yes	44%	638
No	56%	558
Failed a Grade		
Yes	20%	250
No	80%	953

Another measure of school performance is whether or not the student has failed a course or grade. Overall, 44% of the youth indicated they had failed a course at least once by 1989. Twenty percent of them reported they had failed or repeated a grade. Sixty-three percent of the youth who had failed a grade had done so only once. It is interesting to note that when the youth were asked how they felt they rated academically

in comparison to their fellow class mates, a majority (70%) indicated they would rate themselves about the same as others (data not shown).

The next stage is to examine the youth's 1989 educational plans, specifically, what the youth state they would *like to do* and what they *expect to do* after high school will be examined. Fifty-two percent of the youth reported they would like to go on to university once they had completed high school, compared to 31% who indicated they would like to go on to some other form of post secondary education and 17% who would like to go directly into the workforce. Responding to the question about expected educational paths, even more (60%) of the youth indicated they expected to continue on to the university level, whereas 27% expected to enter into some other kind of post secondary institution and the remaining 13% indicated they expected to go no further than the high school level (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Plans After High School--1989

	Percentage	Total N
<u>Youth--Like to Do</u>		
Work	17%	199
Other Post Secondary	31%	375
University	52%	621
<u>Youth--Expect to Do</u>		
Work	13%	156
Other Post Secondary	27%	311
University	60%	697

4.3 School Performance Indicators—1994

This section will begin with a review of the youth's last set of high school marks and then proceed to examine their obtained level of education in 1994. An examination of the last set of high school marks reveals that 61% of the youth received marks between the 61 to 80 percent range, another 31% indicated they had received marks which were higher than 80 percent and the remaining 8% had received marks which were in the 60 percent and below range.

Forty-four percent of the youth indicated they had finished all their formal education by 1994(data not shown). The findings show that more females (47%) than males (40%) had finished all their formal education by 1994. More of the rural Nova Scotia youth (55%) indicated they had finished all their formal education than had the respondents from either Hamilton (38%) or Halifax (38%).

Table 4.8: Obtained Level of Education – 1994

Education Level	Percentage	Total N
High School or Less	18%	159
Other Post Secondary	27%	225
University - Undergraduate	49%	410
University - Post Graduate	6%	47

Next, frequencies were run on the youth's 1994 obtained level of education. The findings show that 55% of the youth had obtained a university degree, while 27% had obtained some other kind of post secondary degree and the remaining 18% had gone no further than high school (see Table 4.8). This is one of the key dependent variables that will be examined in more detail in the remainder of this thesis.

4.5 Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices

This next section deals with the youth and parental attitudes, beliefs and practices in 1989 and the youth 1994 attitudes, beliefs and practices about their perceived educational ability. Fifty-one percent of the youth perceived themselves as 'somewhat' of a good student, whereas 31% saw themselves as very good students and the remaining 12% saw themselves as poor students. Although the majority of youth (57%) disagreed with the statement that they found schoolwork difficult, 18% did agree with the above statement and another 19% said they found it hard to adjust to the school routine (data not shown).

A review of the literature indicates that such things as a regular place to study at home and parental interest in youth's schoolwork can help increase the chances of positive educational outcomes. When asked if they had a study area at home 94% of the youth responded 'yes', but slightly less than half (47%) indicated they had good study habits. Furthermore, 83% of the youth indicated that if they had worked harder they might have been able to achieve high marks. Only thirteen percent of the youth agreed that they wished their parents were more interested in the schoolwork (data not shown).

The parents were asked who was responsible for ensuring homework was completed. The categories the parents were given to choose from were: *mostly myself*, *mostly spouse*, *shared 50-50*, and *other*. The mothers and fathers appear to be in agreement that the responsibility of ensuring the youth's homework is done rests mainly with the mothers.

It is interesting to note that neither the mothers nor the fathers felt that they had regular disagreements with their child over the issue of homework (see Table 4.9). Both

the mothers and fathers appeared to be fairly evenly split between sometimes and not at all (sometimes, 39% & 40%; not at all, 40% & 39%). As well, when the parents were questioned about the amount of overall conflict they had experienced with their child over the last month forty-four percent of the mothers and forty-seven percent of fathers indicated they had very *little* conflict with their child (data not shown).

Table 4.9: Disagreement Over Schoolwork—1989

	Mother	Father
Often	22%	22%
Somewhat	39%	40%
Not At All	40%	39%
Total N	1157	1048

Research suggests that parental level of concern and encouragement is a very important component in youth educational outcome. In fact, educational goals and academic performance are shown to be directly related to the amount of influence a parent has upon her/his child. The following section will look variables such as the parental responses to the importance of their opinions concerning the youth educational plans, their level of educational encouragement, their level of help with homework, their perceived closeness and level of conflict with their child.

A majority of the mothers (94%) and fathers (90%) felt that their opinions about their child's educational future were *very to moderately important*. An overwhelming majority of youth indicated that they felt their mother, especially so, and their fathers to be encouraging when it came to their educational pursuits. Overall, ninety-four percent of the youth found their mother to be *very to somewhat encouraging* and eighty-seven percent felt the same about their fathers (see top row of Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Level of Encouragement—1989

	Percentage	Total N
Youth's Response – Mother		
Encouraging	93%	1012
Neutral -- Discouraging	7%	79
Youth's Response – Father		
Encouraging	87%	937
Neutral -- Discouraging	13%	149
Mothers' Response		
Encouraging	96%	792
Neutral -- Discouraging	4%	31
Fathers' Response		
Encouraging	93%	573
Neutral -- Discouraging	7%	148

The bottom section of Table 4.10 presents the parents' responses to the question, *How much would you say you encourage or discourage her/him to continue her/his education beyond high school?* A majority of the mothers (82%) and the fathers (72%) felt that they were *very encouraging* concerning their child's educational career. Interestingly, none of the mothers felt that they were *discouraging*.

The youth were also asked to address the issue of parental level of influential importance towards their academic careers. Overall, ninety-five percent of the youth said they found their mothers to be an important influencing factor in their education pursuits and 78% felt the same way about their fathers (data not shown).

The next series of questions deals with the youth's beliefs about university, their chances of successful university completion, disappointment level if they did not graduate, and if they thought they could afford to go to university. The majority of youth indicated they felt they had a *very good* to *good* chance of successfully completing university (76%), while 14% felt they had a *fair* chance and the remaining 10% indicated they felt their chances were *poor* to *very poor* (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11: Youth's Beliefs About University--1989

Beliefs	Percentage	Total N
Chances of successful university Completion		
Very Good to Good	76%	905
Fair	14%	169
Very Poor to Poor	10%	118
Disappointed If I Don't Graduate University		
Strongly Agree to Agree	69%	807
Neutral	14%	165
Strongly Disagree to Disagree	17%	205
Afford to Go To University		
Strongly Agree to Agree	62%	718
Neutral	15%	190
Strongly Disagree to Disagree	23%	270

Another way of getting at a similar issue is to ask the youth if they would be disappointed if they did not graduate from university. While the majority (69%) either *strongly* or *somewhat agreed* with the statement that they would be disappointed if they did not graduate from university. The affordability of continued education, especially at the university level, is an important issue facing today's students. Who is denied access on this count? In 1989 the youth were asked to address the issue of affordability and its effects upon their chances of obtaining a university degree. The findings indicate that a majority of youth (62%) *agreed* that they could afford to go to university, compared to 23% who felt they could not afford to continue on to university (see Table 4.11)

In 1994 the youth were asked whether they felt the cost of tuition or the availability of student loans had an impact upon their decision to continue on past the high school level with their education. A majority of youth (53%) indicated they felt that the cost of tuition did not influence their decision one way or the other when it came to deciding to continue on with their education, whereas 18% indicated that the cost of tuition had a positive impact upon their decision to attend a post-secondary institution and 30% felt it had a negative impact upon their decision (data not shown).

A majority of youth (62%) felt that the availability of student loans did not have an impact upon their decision to continue on with their education, while 26% felt it had a positive influence upon their decision to continue on and another 12% felt availability of loans had a negative influence upon their decision. It is interesting to note that in 1989, for a majority of youth, finances were not an issue where their educational pursuits were concerned.

When the youth were asked in 1994 about the role their parents played in their educational pursuits, a large majority of them indicated that their parents' expectations for them had an influence upon the educational paths they chose. Seventy-three percent of the youth indicated that their parent(s) had a *very strong* to *strong* positive influence upon their educational choices, while only twenty-four percent felt their parent(s) had no impact and the remaining 3% felt their parent(s) had a *strong* to *very strong* negative impact. When questioned as to who was the *most important* person behind their decision to continue on with their education, 31% felt that they themselves were. As well, 20% felt their mothers were and 15% felt their fathers were the most important person in their decision to continue on with their education (see Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: Importance to Education Decision—1989

Level of Importance	Percentage	Total N
Mother	20%	275
Father	15%	167
Both Parents	16%	196
Self	31%	322
Someone else	18%	228

Overall, this descriptive section shows that for the most part the youth are doing well in school and have parents who are actively involved in and supportive of their children's educational pursuits. Very few of the youth see themselves as lacking the potential to continue past high school to university. However, the fact remains that not all youth expect to continue on to university; furthermore, not all the youth, in fact, continue on past high school.

The next chapter involves an analysis at the bi-variate level of a select grouping of variables as a means to explore the effect living within various family structures may have upon the youth's lives. This analysis sets the stage for the multi-variate analysis presented in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE

BI-VARIATE ANALYSIS—Family Structure

This chapter will explore the ways in which living in a dual parent family versus a single parent family affect to the youth's social situation. For the purpose of this discussion an analysis at the bi-variate level will be employed examining the impact that family structure has upon parental socio-economic status, parental level of active involvement in youth's educational careers, the youth's school performance indicators and the community in which one lives.⁷

Parental socio-economic status (financial/economic capital) indicators include: parental income, parental level of education, mother's and father's occupational status. Next, parental active involvement (social capital) includes: parental encouragement/discouragement, level of parental importance in educational decisions, and parental/youth conflict over school work. The variables used as a measurement of the youth's school performance indicators (human capital) include: highest grade completed to date (1989), marks (1989 & 1994), school stream, failing a course or a grade, being perceived as a good student or a troublemaker, youth's 1989 response to the highest expected level of education and their 1994 response to their obtain level of education. Finally, community in which one lives is categorized into urban and rural.⁸

⁷ Due to the high non-response rate among the fathers, any variables that use data from the 1989 parental questionnaire are computed from the mother's, father's and youth's responses to the questions as a means to ensure the highest case base possible.

⁸ The variables examined at this stage are only those variables that have a large enough case base to be included the multi-variate analysis later.

5.1 Parental Socio-Economic Status--Financial/economic Capital

The review of the literature in Chapter Two clearly suggested that, for the most part, single parents are disadvantaged economically. Researchers give a number of reasons for this pattern, which include single parents (particularly mothers) having lower levels of education, single parents having lower occupational status than dual parents and having only one wage earner in the family.

In the current analysis, an examination of parental income reveals that more of the single parents were found to earn incomes that are less than forty thousand annually, than were those parents who had two adults in the household (49% vs 37%). The reverse was found to be true for those earning an annual income of more than \$60,000. Thirty-three percent of the parents from dual parent households, compared to 29% of those from a single parent family were found to have annual income in excess of \$60,000 a year (see Table 5.1). Thus, income level is found to be weakly related to family structure; the strength of the relationship is shown through the correlation of .10, $p < .01$.

Table 5.1: Parental Income by Family Structure--1989

Income Level	Both Parents	Single Parents	Total %
Less than \$40,000 ⁹	37%	49%	40%
Between \$40 to \$60,000	30%	23%	28%
Greater than \$60,000	33%	29%	32%
Total N	875	294	1169

$r = .10$ $p < .01$

Next, when parental level of education was examined at the family structure level the findings indicate that there is *no* significance difference between parents in a dual parent family compared to a single parent context. It is interesting to note that 72% of the

⁹ The income category is not meant to reflect the low income cut-off as the sample group came from three different locales (see footnote #1).

parents reportedly had obtained an education at the high school level or less, compared to 10% who received an education at the post secondary level with 18% of those indicating they had a university degree (see Table 5.2). Whatever difference may be found in outcomes between the two family types cannot be accounted for by differences in parental education.

Table 5.2: Parental Education by Family Structure—1989

Parental Level of Education	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
High School or Less	73%	72%	72%
Other Post Secondary	9%	10%	10%
University	18%	18%	18%
Total N	875	294	1169

Mothers' and fathers' occupational status is the last set of variables to be examined in this section. The findings reveal that once again there is no significant difference between dual parents and single parents when examining their individual occupational levels (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Parental Occupational Status by Family Structure—1989

Occupational Status	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
Mothers' Occupation			
Unskilled	19%	16%	18%
Skilled/Technical	45%	45%	45%
Professional/managerial	36%	39%	37%
Fathers' Occupation			
Unskilled	16%	14%	15%
Skilled/Technical	38%	46%	40%
Professional/managerial	46%	41%	45%
Total N	875	294	1169

Parental income is the only parental socio-economic status variable proven to vary significantly at the family structure level. As well it is interesting to note that parental occupational status was found not to vary by at the family structure level, but differences can be found between the mothers' and fathers' occupational levels. The

mothers' occupations were more concentrated in the skilled/technical sector while the fathers more likely to indicate that they were employed in the professional/managerial sector. This difference could help to explain the difference found between income levels at the family structure level.

5.2 Parental Level of Active Involvement—Social Capital

Parental level of encouragement is the first variable to be examined in this section. Overall, ninety-nine percent of the youth reported that their parents were a source of encouragement throughout their child's educational life course. No significant difference can be seen between parents in dual parent families and those in single parent families in terms of levels of parental encouragement. Similar findings were evident when parental importance to the youth's educational decision making was examined at the family structure level. Once again, a majority of the youth (77%), regardless of family structure, were found to report their parent(s) as the most important influence when dealing with educational issues (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Parental Involvement by Family Structure—1989

Parental Involvement	Dual Parents	Single Parents	Total %
Level of Parental Encouragement/Discouragement			
<i>Encouraging</i>	99%	98%	99%
<i>Not Encouraging</i>	1%	2%	1%
Parental Importance in Educational Decisions			
<i>Parents</i>	77%	78%	77%
<i>Someone Other Than Parents</i>	23%	22%	23%
Parental/youth Level of Conflict Over School Work			
<i>Disagree Often</i>	41%	48%	43%
<i>Disagree Sometimes</i>	38%	33%	37%
<i>Disagree—Not At All</i>	21%	19%	20%
Total N	875	294	1169

The final variable to be examined in this section deals with the level of conflict the youth experienced with their parents over school work. For the purpose of this study, level of conflict is used as a measure of parental involvement in their teen's educational careers. The findings indicate that 43% of the youths disagreed often with their parents over the issue of homework, compared to 37% who disagreed sometimes and 20% who did not have any disagreements with their parents over school work. Once again, no significant difference was found at the family structure level. Overall the parents involved in this study were found to be actively supportive and encouraging towards their child's educational pursuits.

5.3 School Performance Indicators—Human Capital

A review of the literature shows that children from single parent families are academically less likely to perform favorably in school than children from a two parent household. Therefore, it is relevant to examine measures that address the teenagers' school performance by the family structure in which they live. One such question concerns the marks (1989 & 1994) the youth obtained. In 1989 the youth were asked to respond to a question that looked at the average marks on their last report card. The findings indicate that a majority of the youth (55%) reported marks over seventy percent. When examined at the family structure level the findings indicate that more of the youth from dual parent families (58%) achieved marks of over seventy percent than did those youth from single parent families (48%) (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: School Marks by Family Structure—1989 & 1994

	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
Marks—1989 •			
<i>Less than 50%</i>	2%	2%	2%
<i>51%-60%</i>	11%	13%	12%
<i>61%-70%</i>	29%	37%	31%
<i>71%-80%</i>	36%	32%	35%
<i>Over 80%</i>	22%	16%	21%
Marks—1994			
<i>Less than 50%</i>	<1%	—	<1%
<i>51%-60%</i>	6%	8%	7%
<i>61%-70%</i>	25%	28%	26%
<i>71%-80%</i>	35%	39%	36%
<i>Over 80%</i>	34%	25%	32%

• $p < .05$

In 1994, the youth were asked once again about their marks. At this point the youth were asked to give their last set of high school marks. The overall findings indicate that 68% of the youth achieved marks over seventy percent. No significant difference was found when this is broken down by family structure (see Table 5.5). This shift could signal a change for children in single parent homes in their last year of high school or it could reflect a bias resulting from sample attrition. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine attrition patterns in detail, but the effect of differential attrition should be kept in mind when dealing with the 1994 data.

Another measure of school performance is to look at the highest grade the youth had completed by 1989. A majority of the youth (61%) had completed grade eleven by this point. When this variable is examined at the family structure level the findings shows that more of the youth from a dual parent family have completed grade 11 or higher than did those from a single parent family (see Table 5.6), suggesting a problem for those in single parent homes.

Table 5.6: Highest Grade Completed to Date by Family Structure—1989

Highest Grade Completed to Date	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
Grade 9 or Less	8%	14%	10%
Grade 10	19%	29%	22%
Grade 11	63%	53%	61%
Grade 12/13	9%	5%	8%
Some University	<1%	—	<1%
Total N	875	294	1169

$r=.10$ $p<.01$

The type of courses or the school stream students are in can have an impact upon the educational choices they have after they have completed high school. The majority of these youth report themselves to be in an academic stream (79%). On further exploration at the family structure level the findings indicate that more youth from a single parent family (27%) were in a non-academic stream than were those who lived with two parents (19%) (see Table 5.7).

Table 5.7: School Stream by Family Structure—1989

School Stream	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
Non-academic	19%	27%	21%
Academic	81%	73%	79%
Total N	875	294	1169

$r=-.08$ $p<.01$

In 1989 the youth were also asked if they had ever failed a course and if they had ever failed a grade. The findings indicate that over fifty percent of the youth had failed a course at least once in their academic careers, whereas only 20% were found to have failed a grade. Examined at the family structure level the findings reveal that there is a significant difference among those who failed a course or a grade and those who had not (see Table 5.8). More of those from single parent homes had failed a course (62% versus 38%) and more had failed a grade (32% versus 16%).

Table 5.8: Failing a Course and Grade by Family Structure—1989

	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
Failing a Course *			
No	50%	38%	47%
Yes	50%	62%	53%
Failing a Grade **			
No	84%	68%	80%
Yes	16%	32%	20%
Total N	875	294	1169
* $r = .10$ $p < .001$	** $r = .17$ $p < .001$		

Being perceived as a good student or a troublemaker were the next set of questions examined at the family structure level. As previous findings indicated a majority of the youth (88%) perceived themselves a good students and only 17% indicated they were seen as a troublemaker. No significant difference was found when these variables were cross tabulated by family structure.

The community in which one lives (urban/rural) can present a set of social characteristics that is inherently unique to the area. For example rural areas are known for their close knit ties, a characteristic which can build strong social networks. Bourdieu argues this is an important component when one exploring youth's links to potential forms of capital. The data show that, overall, 17% of the youth who live with a lone parent live in an urban area, compared to 14% of the same youth who live in a rural area. However, this difference is too weak to reach statistical significance.

It is noteworthy that many of the youth's school performance variables were found to vary at the family structure level. In agreement with past research, youth from dual parent families were found to academically outperform those from single parent families. Analyses at the multi-variate level will hopefully help explain the reason for this variance.

5.4 Educational Outcomes

Finally, the last two variables to be examined in this chapter are the two key educational variables: the youth's 1989 expected level of education and the youth's 1994 obtained level of education. Both of these variables are weakly related to family structure (see Table 5.9). In 1989, fewer of the youth from single parent families expected to obtain a university degree; fewer of them had, in fact, attended university by 1994.

In 1989, sixty-three percent of the youth from a two parent family expected to continue on to the university level, compared to 52% of youth from a single parent household who felt the same. The findings are similar in 1994: fifty-seven percent of the youth who lived in a two parent household were found to have attended university, compared to 48% of the youth who lived with a single parent. It is interesting to note that in 1989 and again in 1994 more of the youth from single parent families expected to and did attend some non-university post secondary institution than did those youth who live with two parents (see Table 5.9).

Table 5.9: Youth's 1989 Educational Expectations and 1994 Obtained Education by Family Structure

	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
1989 Expected Education *			
High School or Less	12%	17%	13%
Other Post Secondary	25%	30%	27%
University	63%	52%	60%
1994 Obtained Education **			
High School or Less	17%	23%	18%
Other Post Secondary	26%	29%	27%
University	57%	48%	55%

* $r = .10$ $p < .01$ ** $r = .09$ $p < .05$

5.5 Discussion

Overall, thus far, a majority of the findings are consistent with past research. Youth who live within a lone parent structure appear to expect and obtain lower levels of education. In 1989 the youth who lived with a single parent were found to have completed fewer years of education, were more likely to have left school at the secondary level, they were more likely to be enrolled in a non-academic stream, received lower marks and had failed a course or grade more frequently than those who lived with both a mother and a father.

Past research has found that youth from single parent families were more likely than those from dual parent families to have parent(s), especially for mothers, with a low levels of education, low occupational status and in turn low levels of income. In this study, only income was related to family structure. Another key finding involves the issue of parental active involvement in their child's educational careers. Overall, no significant difference was found when examining parental active involvement at the family structure level. It is noteworthy that the parents, in general, were found to be encouraging and supportive of their teenager's educational pursuits. If one refers back to the previous chapter the findings demonstrate that mothers are found to be more actively involved in their child's education than the fathers. Whether the fathers were actively involved appears to be contingent upon whether they are residing in the same household as the child or not.

Father absence could also affect monetary support which would help further explain why the single parent household have lower overall incomes. Unfortunately the survey instruments do not provide data on how much money is provided by the non-resident parent. If the father has chosen to totally disengage himself from the family the likelihood of him adequately supporting his family monetarily is slim. Data to support this speculation are lacking, which is one of the downfalls of using secondary data. In fact, the parents were simply asked to indicate their level of income, but they were not asked the source of this income.

Overall, the findings thus far support those of the literature which found that family structure does have an impact upon youth's educational trajectories. Although the overall strength of the relationship between family structure and educational expectation and attainments is weak, none the less there is a relationship. The next step will involve an analysis which will hopefully give some insights into the how's and why's behind the impact of family structure on levels of education.

CHAPTER SIX

LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSES

Central to this study is the fact that the youth's 1989 response to their *expected level of education* and their 1994 response to their *obtained level of education* were found to be significantly related to family structure. The next step in the analysis is to explore how and why family structure has this effect. This section will explore the effects of financial/economic capital (measured by parental income, parental education, parental occupation), social capital (measured by parental level of encouragement /discouragement, parental-youth conflict over schoolwork, how important parents are to educational decisions and community in which one lives) and the student's human capital (marks, school stream, highest grade completed to date, failing a course, failing a grade, perceived as a good student or as a troublemaker) on youth's educational outcomes.

The analysis will document the effect of these variables (a) on the youth's 1989 educational expectations and their 1994 attainments and (b) on the effect of family structure has on these two dependent variables. This analysis will proceed in stages as a means to explore the effect that the family structure has upon first, the youth's 1989 educational expectations and secondly, their 1994 obtained level of education. First family structure will be entered as the sole independent variable in the regression equation. Then the different forms of capital will be entered, in blocks, one, then two, then all three at a time.

6.1 Linear Regression – Youth’s 1989 Expected Education – Time One

When entered on its own we see that family structure has a small but statistically significant effect on the youth’s educational expectations in 1989. The R^2 shows, that by itself, family structure accounts for less than one percent of the variance in educational expectations (see Table 6.1). When the other set of variables are entered into the equation, the effect of family structure effectively disappears (see Table 6.2). The exception to this statement is in Model 1 which controls on the effects of parental economic capital. Here family structure still has an effect.

**Table 6.1: Regression Analysis Youth’s 1989 Expected Level of Education
by Family Structure**

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	BETA	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
Family Structure	.09	.003
R^2	.007	
N	1126	

When the other sets of variables are included in the regression equation, the effect of family structure reduces to non-significance. In terms of explained variance, the ‘human capital’ measures of the youth’s own performance in school seems to be the factor that has the largest effect (the largest increase in the value of R^2). Looking at the standardized coefficients in Model 7, we see that school stream has the largest effect of all the individual variables ($\beta=.30$). Also significant are the effects of parental encouragement (.14), marks (.13) and parental education (.12). Income, surprisingly, has little direct effect.

Table 6.2: Regression Analyses

Youth's 1989 Educational Expectations, Controlling on Three Forms of Capital

Independent Variables	Models						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Family structure	.07*	.03	-.01	.03	.01	.04	.02
<i>Financial Capital</i>							
Parental Income	.19*			.11*	.11*		.05
Parental Education	.21*			.20*	.11*		.12*
Mother's Occupation	.14*			.14*	.09*		.09*
Father's Occupation	.03			.07*	.01		.02
<i>Social Capital</i>							
Parental Level of Encouragement/discourage		.25*		.22*		.15*	.14*
Parental/Youth Level of Conflict over Homework		.10*		.12*		.02	.02
Level of Parental Importance in Educational Decisions		.02		.03		.02	.09*
Community		-.16*		-.06*		-.14*	-.09*
<i>Human Capital</i>							
Failed a course			-.11*		-.09*	-.09*	-.08*
Failed a Grade			-.07		-.04	-.07*	-.04
Stream			.35*		.30*	.35*	.30*
Highest Grade Completed to Date			.13*		.10*	.10*	.07*
Marks			.17*		.13*	.18*	.13*
Perceived as good student			.07*		.08*	.07*	.07*
Perceived as troublemaker			-.04		-.03	-.01	-.01
R ²	.19	.10	.38	.24	.40	.41	.42
Total N	902	1097	1016	880	824	997	083
*p<.05							

6.2 Linear Regression – Youth’s 1994 Obtained Level of Education – Time Two

The second regression analysis performed uses the youth’s *1994 obtained levels of education* as the dependent variable. The same independent variables were used for this analysis as were used in Time One with the exception of the measure of highest grade completed to date and the inclusion of the youth’s 1989 expected level of education.¹⁰ As was done in section 6.1, the variables were entered in blocks and in stages and the measure of family structure is entered and held constant at each stage.

Once again when family structure is entered into the equation on its own it is found to have a small but statistically significantly significant impact upon the youth’s 1994 obtained level of education. Furthermore, the R^2 shows that, by itself, family structure is, once again, found to explain less than one percent of the variance in educational attainment (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Regression Analysis Youth’s 1994 Obtained Level of Education
by Family Structure

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	BETA	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
Family Structure (dummy)	.08	.024
R^2	.006	
N	822	

The key point in this analysis is to note that inclusion of **any** measures of capital, as operationalized here, reduces the effect of family structure to non-significance (see Table 6.4). Again, we see the pattern that the student’s ‘human capital’ in terms of school performance contributes most to explaining the variation in level of education obtained by 1994 (as indicated by the increase in R^2 when this block of variables are included).

¹⁰Highest grade completed to date is omitted from this analysis as it is in essence another measure of obtained level of education. That is, it can be seen as a measure of the dependent variable.

Table 6.4: Regression Analyses

Youth's 1994 Obtained Level of Education, Controlling on Three Forms of Capital

Independent Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Family structure	.06	.05	.02	.04	.01	.01	.00	.00
<i>Financial Capital</i>								
Parental Income	.20*			.16*	.17*		.14*	.13*
Parental Education	.09*			.09*	.01		.00	.01
Mother's Occupation	.13*			.13*	.03		.04	.05
Father's Occupation	.12*			.12*	.06		.06	.06
<i>Social Capital</i>								
Parental Level of Encouragement/discourage		.17*		.14*		.09*	.08*	.02
Parental/Youth Level of Conflict over Homework		.15*		.17*		.04	.07	.07*
Level of Parental Importance in Educational Decisions		.00		.02		.02	.01	.02
Community		-.12*		-.05		-.12*	-.08*	-.01
<i>Human Capital</i>								
Failed a course			-.16*		-.09*	-.15*	-.08	-.03
Failed a Grade			-.11*		-.09*	-.09*	-.09*	-.09*
Stream			.27*		.24*	.26*	.24*	.16*
Marks			.25*		.24*	.22*	.22*	.20*
Perceived as good student			.05		.09*	.05	.08*	.07*
Perceived as troublemaker			-.03		-.05	-.02	-.03	-.04
1989 Educational Expectations								.21*
R ²	.17	.06	.35	.21	.41	.35	.41	.44
Total N	674	807	645	665	541	634	531	515

* p<.05

The individual variables that have the largest direct impact on obtained education (as indicated by the standardized coefficient) are: the youth's 1989 educational expectations ($\beta=.21$), marks in high school (.20), and school stream (.16). It is interesting that parental income has a consistent and statistically significant effect across all models in this set of analysis. Its effect was less clear in the prediction of expected education (see Tables 6.2 and 6.4). Given the high costs associated with post-secondary education, income can play a role in supporting or barring their children's further education.

6.3 **Discussion**

First and foremost, it is important to point out that the family structure variable was found **not** to have an effect upon either the youth's 1989 educational expectations or their 1994 obtained levels of education overall, once the measures of capital are introduced. On the one hand, we cannot rule out the possibility that this 'lack of effect' reflects the weakness of our measure of family structure. It could also be, in part, due to fact that there are only a small number of single parent families in the sample. The effect of family structure would have to be large to maintain statistical significance. Or it could be the case that,

Statistical significance only tells what is likely. It cannot prove anything with absolute certainty...statistical significance is not the same as practical, substantive, or theoretical significance. Results can be statistically significant but theoretically meaningless or trivial (Neuman, 1991: 315).

Nevertheless, the results do suggest that the effects of family structure are more complex than some of the literature might suggest.

Overall, the findings indicate that active parental encouragement and support can positively influence the youth's educational pursuit. However, as we saw in Table 5.4 of Chapter 5, level of encouragement was not related to family structure. This finding once again supports the idea that it is family interactions and functioning and not family structure, per se, that are central to youth's educational outcome.

The findings consistently indicate that it is the youth's human capital that has the greatest impact upon youth's educational trajectories. It appears that the major effects (positive or negative) are experienced by the youth prior to the time they are seventeen years of age. The effects of parental capital and/or family structure may be indirect in their impact on the child's performance while in secondary school.

The data set has only a limited number of questions that allows us to explore these educational experiences, but there are a few questions which could give further insights into the present findings. One possible explanation for the fact that the controlling on human capital of the student, as measured by school performance, reduces the effect of family structure on educational expectations and attainments is that family structure affects earlier school performance. Another possibility is that schools react to and treat students from single parent homes differently from students in dual parent homes.

To test this later suggestion we can examine the youth’s descriptions of their school and their self-images. In 1989 the youth were asked to comment on their level of satisfaction with their school in terms of effectiveness of discipline. They were also asked whether they agree or disagree with a series of statements which include: “People treat me like dirt”, “The last few years have been difficult for me”, “I feel I can do things as well as others”, and “Everytime I try to get ahead someone or something stops me”, and finally, “Adults don’t take kids seriously”. These variables were examined to see if there were any differences by family structure. Three variables were found to be significantly related to family structure: one dealt with the fairness of the school and the other two addressed issue of subjective perception.

Table 6.5 shows there is a difference in how students from different family structures describe the discipline at their school.

Table 6.5: Fairness of School Discipline—1989

Fairness of School Discipline	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
Poor	12%	15%	13%
Fair	31%	37%	33%
Good	46%	44%	46%
Excellent	10%	5%	9%
Total N	864	288	1152
r=.10 p<.01			

Fewer of the youth from single parent families (49%) felt that the fairness of their school's discipline was good to excellent, compared to 56% of the youth from dual parent families who felt the same. Are the teachers stigmatizing these students, or are they reacting differently to the same form of discipline?

Measures of the youth's self-image show that children from single parent families were more likely than those from dual parent families to say that they felt others *treated them like dirt*. As the second parallel Table 6.6 shows, they are also more likely to agree that *adults don't take young people seriously*.

Table 6.6: Self-image--1989

	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Total %
People Often Treat Me Like Dirt *			
Strongly Agree	2%	2%	2%
Agree Somewhat	6%	11%	8%
Neutral	15%	17%	16%
Disagree Somewhat	35%	32%	34%
Strongly Disagree	42%	37%	41%
Most Adults Don't Take Kids Seriously **			
Strongly Agree	17%	21%	18%
Agree Somewhat	39%	43%	40%
Neutral	17%	14%	16%
Disagree Somewhat	21%	20%	21%
Strongly Disagree	6%	3%	5%
Total N	859	290	1149
*r= .10 p<.05	**r= .09 p<.05		

These responses suggest that youth from single parent homes are getting different messages from the adults around them than are their counterparts in dual parent families. But as we saw earlier, they see their parent(s) as equally encouraging and supportive. The other adults with whom these young people regularly interact are teachers and other staff at their school. It is the discipline they receive in their school that they criticize as unfair. While these results are not definitive they do suggest that some of the variation in school performance of children from different types of families can be understood not in

terms of how their families treat them, but how they are perceived and treated in the school itself.

These findings bring up some interesting questions about the significance of the ways schools treat children from different families. There may be a stigma associated with single parent families that teachers and other school staff inadvertently assign to students. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully test these ideas, there are some suggestive comments made by the youth respondents in 1994 when asked, *“How do you think this school could be improved? What advice would you give them?”*

One respondent stated:

Eliminate patronizing, sexist, racist, classist, attitudes among administrators and counsellors. Give equal respect to student regardless of their interests. Inform students about educational alternatives, even if they aren't having trouble in school. Treat students with respect, the teachers are for the students not vice [sic] versa, and make teachers stay current in their knowledge and their teaching methods.

Building upon this theme another respondent found that:

This school could be improved by paying attention to all students regardless of income, grade averages, family name, or sport team membership. Rather than focusing on selecting specific students rather than how the school looks or ranks in the community or the province.

Still another respondent focuses directly on the issue of class:

The counsellors and teachers were predominantly from mid to upper middle class while the overwhelming majority of students were from economically lower classes and as such the teachers and staff failed drastically at offering relevant advice or guidance.

These voices clearly demonstrate the need for further exploration into area of the school's use of its power and its negative impact on children from households that teachers may define as “underprivileged”. Single parent, particularly mother headed families, may

well be stereotyped in this way. If they are, this may be a form of negative “symbolic capital” (Andres, Bellamy, 1994; Bourdieu, 1984) that translates into social barriers.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

Initially, at the bi-variate level, family structure was found to have an impact upon the youth's educational expectations and attainment levels. Those youth who lived in a lone-parent family were found to have lower overall academic standings than did those who live with two parents. It is interesting that no differences could be found at the bi-variate level between parental levels of encouragement and active support and the family structure in which the youth lived. For the most part the youth said they had parents who were encouraging and supportive of their educational pursuits. For the purpose of this study the analyses performed at the bi-variate level were used as a means to show the impact that family structure had upon the youth's educational paths. As well, it served as a point of departure for the analysis of parents as potential sources of capital.

Given the above findings, the next step in the analysis was to test the effect of different types of capital. Regression analyses were performed as a means to determine what forms of capital explained the greatest amount of variance in the youth's educational expectations and outcomes, while controlling on family structure. It is safe to infer from the findings that living in a one-parent family, in and of itself, does not constitute grounds for expecting that a child will do worse than one who lives with two parents. Lewis et al. (1976) comment about a famous study conducted on successful two-parent families can also be applied to single-parent families:

[I]n all successful families....success appeared more like a piece of needlework with multiple colors, weaves, and themes creating unique and dynamic patterns of interacting individuals. However, this work of art was unfinished, with new threads and patterns appearing as the family worked through new challenges and struggled to maintain its self-identity of success (cited in Morrison, 1995: 218).

Other researchers agree with the above summary, stating that much has been written on single parenting and there still exist too many myths about the functioning of the family. Hanson et al. (1995) notes that “treating single mothers and welfare mothers interchangeably continues” (p. 18). Furthermore, Aquilino (1996) states that studies have demonstrated extensive variability in the life trajectories of those born outside the traditional two parent family and that “these children cannot be treated as a unitary group that shares a common set of life experiences” (p. 309).

Given the finding, at the bi-variate and multi-variate level, that parental encouragement and support positively influences youth’s educational outcomes and that parental encouragement and support were found *not* to be related to family structure raises a number of interesting questions. Hanson et al.’s 1995 article discusses the importance of looking not to family structure (notably non traditional structures) as the primarily source of youth’s negative life trajectories, but to parenting styles per se. What qualities makes a “good” parent and what qualities make up a “not so good” parent? More and more researchers (Bosman & Louwes, 1988; Hanson et al., 1995; Ihinger-Tallman, 1995) are regarding positive parent-child interactions as an important keys for the production of socially well adjusted, healthy, well-functioning children and young adults.

Furthermore, according to Ihinger-Tallman, 1995 and Hanson et al., 1995, families can not be separated from the environments in which they exist. Single parents,

for the most part, are viewed as resourceful individuals who understand the importance of interpersonal networks. Networking support can come from a variety of areas such as relationships with extended kin, friends and community members, as well as from an ex-spouse or a new partner. Thinger-Tallman (1995) views individuals who are integrated into social networks as positively adjusted as the “benefits of a support network include less distress, more responsiveness and attentiveness to children and increased interest in children’s development” (p. 520).

Only when researchers find new ways of conceptualizing single parent families and examining the issues that they share, as well as those they rarely share with dual parent families can we gain a clearer idea of the effects of family structure on children. As well, more researchers need to include data from the parents themselves in their studies. Understanding how single parents feel or think at various stages of their life course, may also prove useful in unlocking the ‘Pandora’s box’ that illustrates the complexities and variability of single parents and their children over their life course. Statistics Canada’s National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (1996) of children aged 4 to 11 supports the above findings and emphasizes the importance of longitudinal data which highlights the difficulties experienced by children from all types of families.

Finally researchers must stop viewing the educational system from a purely functionalist, equalitarian viewpoint. More attention needs to be directed at the forms of embodied capital found within the school system itself which Bourdieu (1993) defines as the ‘school sickness’. Bourdieu (1993) (cited in Fowler, 1997) argues that

the school offers ‘salvation chances’ to the dutiful members of the working class [and in doing so] the school excludes ... but keeps in her

bosom those she excludes. The school gains the power to undermine the cultural dignity of manual labour. Within the heightened aspirations, disappointment in the school abounds this school sickness [is] unknowingly one of the fundamental contradictions of the social world, especially in relation to the consumption of material, symbolic or even political goods (p. 39-40).

This thesis has shown some of the effects of school performance, in terms of access to higher levels of educational credentials. In order to better understand the complex relations between home and school we need to understand both families and the way children from different families are treated in the school context.

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APPENDIX A -- VARIABLES FROM 1989 AND 1994 DATA SET

Dependent Variables:

- 1) What is the highest level of education you realistically expect to get?
Recoded to:
 1. High School
 2. Other Post Secondary
 3. University

- 2) What is the highest level of education you have currently completed?
Recoded to:
 1. High School
 2. Other Post Secondary
 3. University

Independent Variables:

Family Structure

- 1) Which of the people live in the same household as you?
Recoded to:
 1. Both Parents
 2. Single Parent

Parental Economic Capital

- 1) What was the highest level of formal education you completed?
Recoded combination of mother/father/youth responses:
 1. Elementary
 2. Junior High School
 3. High School
 4. Other Post Secondary
 5. University - Undergraduate
 6. University - Post Graduate

- 2) Check the category which you would say best describes the yearly income from all sources before taxes for you and your spouse or partner?
Recoded combination of mother/father/youth responses:
 1. Lower Than \$40,000
 2. Between \$40,000 to \$60,000
 3. Greater Than \$60,000

3) What is your present (or most recent job) for pay or profit? (Mother and father 1989 responses)

Recoded to:

1. Managerial/Professional, this category includes:

- a. Self Employed Professional
- b. High Level Management
- c. Technical Semi-Professional
- d. Middle Management
- e. Supervisor

2. Skilled, this category includes:

- a. Foreman/Forewoman
- b. Skilled Clerical/Sales
- c. Skilled Crafts & Trades
- d. Farm Owner/Operators
- e. Semi-skilled Manual
- f. Semi-skilled Clerical Sales & Service

3. Unskilled, this category includes:

- a. Unskilled Sales & Service Clerks
- b. Unskilled Labour
- c. Farm Labour

Parental Social Capital

1) How much would you say you encourage or discourage her/him to continue her/his education beyond high school? (Combined mother/father/youth response).

1. Very Much Encouraged
2. Encouraged Somewhat
3. Neither
4. Discouraged Somewhat
5. Very Much Discouraged

2) How often do you and your daughter/son disagree about whether s/he does her/his homework? (Combined mother/father/youth response).

1. Often
2. Somewhat
3. Not At All

3) How important do you think your opinion is to your daughter/son's educational plans? (Combined mother/father/youth response).

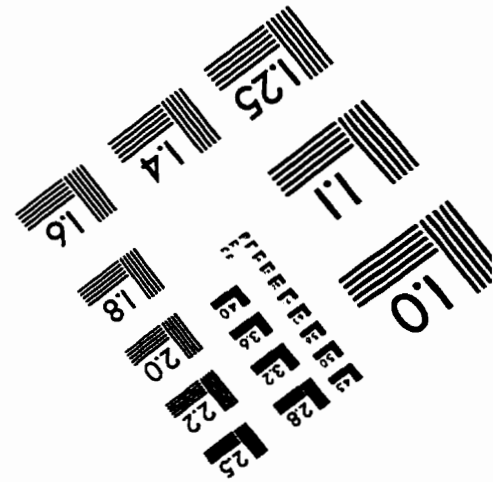
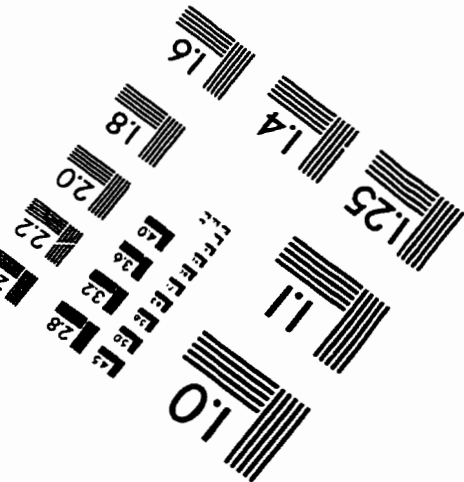
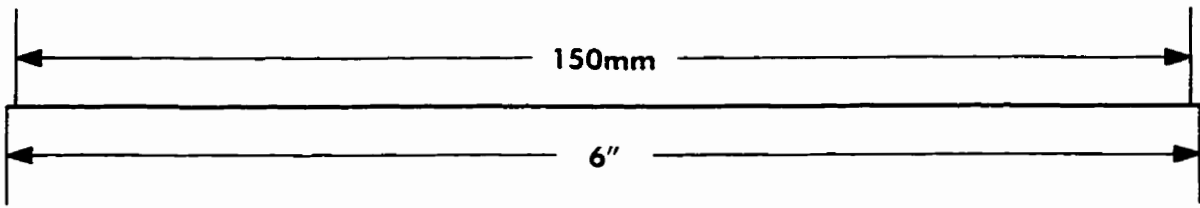
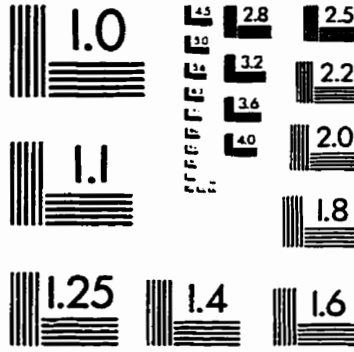
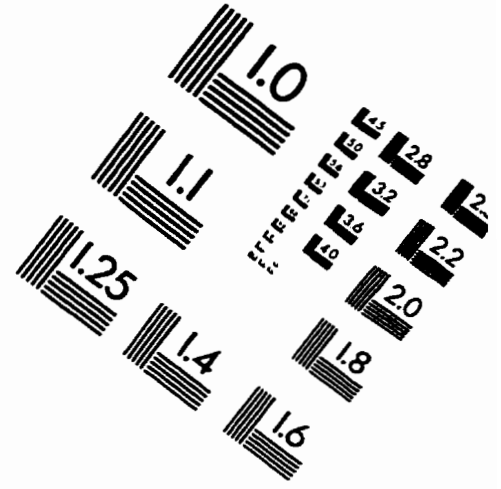
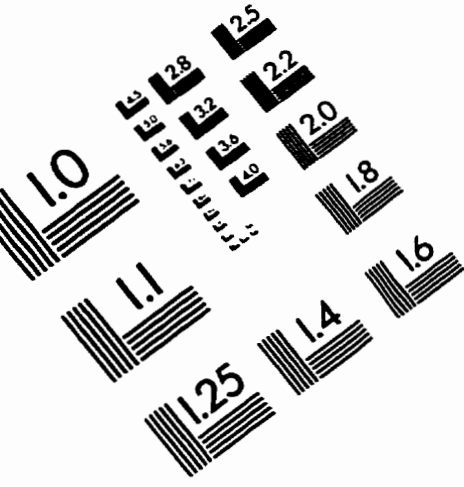
1. Very Important
2. Somewhat Important
3. Not Very Important
4. Not At All Important

- 4) Where are you living?
Recoded to:
1. Urban (Halifax & Hamilton)
2. Rural

Human Capital (Youth)

- 1) Are you attending school full-time, part-time, not at all?
1. Yes, Full-time
2. Yes, Part-time
3. No, Not at all
- 2) What was your average on your report card this past term (1989)/ or on the last report card you received? (1994)
1. Less Than 50%
2. 51%-60%
3. 61%-70%
4. 71%-80%
5. Over 80%
- 3) What stream or programme in school are/were you in?
Recoded to:
1. Academic/Honours
2. General/Other Non-academic
- 4) Have you ever, even once, failed a subject?
1. No
2. Yes
- 5) Have you ever had to repeat a year in school?
1. No
2. Yes

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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