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**Claims on and Obligations to Kin in
Cape Town, South Africa**

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Abstract

Qualitative and quantitative research has shown that non-nuclear family households remain common in post-apartheid South Africa whilst suggesting also that families are less extended than in the past. Most of this research focuses on who lives with whom. This paper goes beyond this by examining the claims that young people anticipate might be made on them, and the obligations they can envisage making on others. Data from the fourth wave of the Cape Area Panel Study, conducted in 2006, show that most young people report being able to make claims on only a narrow range of close kin. The range of kin on whom young black adults report being able to make claims is only marginally wider than for young white and coloured adults, and is heavily concentrated on the maternal side. This suggests that there has been some shrinkage in the extent of kinship ties among young black people, and a dramatic shrinkage on the paternal side. Unlike their coloured and white peers, young black adults report many prospective obligations to diverse kin, including more distant kin, although again almost entirely on the maternal side. Multivariate analysis suggests that 'race' – presumably as a proxy for cultural factors – is not important in shaping the claims that someone feels able to make, but remains important in shaping the obligations that someone anticipates having to make, after controlling for other variables. These patterns did not differ by gender. We find some evidence that claims and obligations entail reciprocal relationships, especially among less close kin. Overall, we find that relationships with more distant kin are largely limited to black South Africans, are highly conditional, exist predominantly with maternal kin and more frequently entail feelings of responsibility toward kin than reliance upon kin .

1. Introduction

In societies (such as South Africa) with high dependency rates and frequent disruptions of (or ‘shocks’ to) the incomes of individuals and households, the strength and range of relationships between kin are of great consequence for individuals’ well-being. If a breadwinner loses his or her source of income, or a caregiver becomes unable to continue to provide care, the effects on both them and their dependents will be mitigated if they can make claims on other kin, either through claiming financial support through transfers between residentially-separated households or by moving dependents, breadwinners or caregivers between households. In South Africa, very high unemployment rates, landlessness and AIDS-related sickness and death result in significant poverty, despite the country being a ‘middle-income’ economy. The quality of kinship networks is crucial in shaping the distributional effects of these. Kin are likely to be important not only for financial support and hence income poverty, but also for emotional support and practical assistance (such as assistance with care for children or sick people).

Changes in the family and household system are therefore extremely consequential for poverty. Insofar as South Africans are shifting from an extended-family household system to a nuclear-family household system, it is likely that the opportunities to make claims on kin are diminishing. Some sociologists have indeed argued that the nuclear-family household is becoming increasingly common or even predominant in South Africa (Steyn, 1993; Amoateng, 1997; Ziehl, 2002). There is also weak evidence that the real value of remittances has declined in recent decades (Posel and Casale, 2006), and strong evidence that South African households have been shrinking over time (see, for a detailed case-study, Wittenberg and Collinson, 2007). Russell (2003b) shows that urban African households in South Africa have norms and values that are in many but not all respects different to African households in deep rural areas, which she imagines are more ‘traditional’ in the sense of having probably changed less in the recent past. From other parts of Africa there is evidence that many people now restrict their responsibilities or obligations to a narrower range of kin than in the past. In Ghana, for example, adult children will support their parents but not elderly aunts and uncles (Aboderin, 2004). In rural Tanzania, according to Dilger (2006), social and cultural change have led to ‘the dissolution – or, in some cases, the modification – of family bonds’.

Other anthropologists and sociologists have countered, however, that most people across South Africa – and elsewhere in Africa – continue to live in extended-family households, or at least in an extended-family system (Russell, 1994, 1998, 2003a; Koen, 1998; Spiegel, 1990; Baber, 1998; Townsend, 1997).

A substantial minority of South African children do not live with either biological parent, and among these are many orphans, including AIDS orphans, who have *not* been abandoned on the rocks of nuclear-family indifference (Ardington, 2007; see also Zimmerman, 2003; Cichello, 2003). A series of anthropological studies have drawn attention to ‘domestic fluidity’ (Spiegel, 1996). Ethnographic research reveals ‘a level of domestic diversity and fluidity among Africans in Cape Town that throws any model of a “standard”, nuclear family based household into question’ (Spiegel, Watson and Wilkinson, 1996: 25; see also Henderson, 1999; Ramphela, 2002). The membership of both urban and rural households is often ‘fluid’ in that individuals change their relationships with other clusters of individuals (‘households’) over time. On the other hand, households are often ‘porous’ in that individuals are often members of more than one household in the same area, eating with or sleeping under the same roof as or sharing their own resources with more than one other residentially-rooted group of people or ‘household’. Many people co-reside with non-nuclear kin and have close relationships with non-resident kin.

Some of these critics of the supposed trend towards nuclear-family households are themselves also aware of the transformation of the extended-family system. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the transformation of kinship is the decline of marriage and of patrilinearity. Declining rates of marriage and rising rates of divorce or separation result in a situation in which there is no age category in which a majority of African women in South Africa is currently married (Seekings, 2010a). Rising numbers of children live with mothers or maternal kin, with little contact with fathers or paternal kin (Bray *et al.*, 2010). Another aspect is the rising importance, at least in some neighbourhoods, of neighbours rather than kin (Ross, 1996, 2003, 2010).

Nonetheless, the debate about households and families in South Africa has been couched primarily in terms of an either/or dichotomy: *either* South Africa is characterized by a stable and contained nuclear-family household system *or* it is has a system based on the extended family with considerable fluidity and porosity. There is a risk here of constructing something of a ‘straw man’ out of the ‘nuclear-family household’. Even in north-west Europe and North America, many people live in households that do not comprise nuclear families, and many more live in households that resort to the extended family – usually *not* co-resident – for indispensable financial, emotional and practical assistance. In the South African context, as in other contexts, it might be more useful to ask *how* ‘extended’, ‘fluid’ and ‘porous’ are families or ‘households’? We need to move beyond the fact of ‘fluidity’ to identify patterns in the relationships that South Africans have with kin (and non-kin), and in changes over time in these patterns (see Seekings, 2008a).

Most research on families and households focus on the more easily observed variable of co-residence – i.e. who lives with whom – and how this relates to economic circumstances (such as unemployment). It has been shown, for example, that orphans are looked after by kin (Ardington, 2007), that grandparents often support grandchildren and even adult children (Sagner and Mtati, 1999), and that ‘the unemployed respond to their plight by attaching themselves to households with adequate means of private or public support to ensure access to basic means of survival’ (Klasen and Woolard, 2005). More rarely, studies consider patterns of inter-household financial transfers (e.g. Posel, 2001). These studies provide invaluable evidence on crucial aspects of relationships between kin, but they focus entirely on practices and neglect norms. Russell (2003b) shows that urban African men and women have a mixed bag of norms, including some that are typical of the extended-family in deep rural areas and others that are shared with middle-class white suburbanites. She does not, however, probe how norms vary between closer and more distant kin, i.e. just how extended is the remaining normative commitment to non-nuclear kin.

There are a few tantalizing suggestions as to the claims that people in Southern Africa feel they can make on, and the obligations they recognize to, others. Ansell and van Blerk (2004), for example, found that ‘most’ of the adults they interviewed in Malawi and Lesotho who were caring for orphans explained that they considered it their responsibility to take orphaned children into their homes. ‘Some relatives, however, seek to divest themselves of the guardianship of children’, perhaps because of the cost of additional dependents; one in four of the guardians interviewed said that the children in their care ‘had nowhere else to go’, suggesting limits to kinship (Ansell and van Blerk, 2004: 681). Møller and Sotshongaye (1996) seem to imply that South African pensioners favour younger kin (especially grandchildren) and regard adult dependents as, in general, less deserving. Indeed, some of the women quoted suggest that some adults are undeserving because they do not take responsibility for their own children, instead passing the responsibility to the grandmother.

Studies such as these suggest that the reality of kinship in Southern Africa today is far removed from the *ideal* (the ‘axiom of amity’) described by Fortes forty years ago: ‘Kinship is binding; it creates inescapable moral claims and obligations’ (Fortes, 1969: 242).

What the rule posits is that ‘kinsfolk’ have irresistible claims on one another’s support and consideration in contradistinction to ‘non-kinsmen’, simply by reason of the fact that they are kin. Kinsfolk must ideally share – hence the frequent invocation of brotherhood as

the model of generalized kinship; and they must, ideally, do so without putting a price on what they give. Reciprocal giving between kinsfolk is supposed to be done freely and not in submission to coercive sanctions or in response to contractual obligations. (*Ibid*: 238)

Patterns of claim and obligation can be thought of in terms of a ‘radius of responsibility’, which can be represented in terms of concentric circles of kin (and, on the periphery, non-kin) (see Figure 1)¹. In a nuclear-family society, the radius of responsibility will be very narrow, limited to co-resident partners and children. In an ideal extended-family society, in which the radius of responsibility extends beyond close kin to distant kin, and families are large, then the range of kin on whom one might make claims is extensive (as shown by the spread of crosses in Figure 1(a)). In practice, in extended-family societies, the radius of responsibility is unlikely to encompass kin evenly. In patrilineal societies, the radius is likely to extend more widely among paternal kin; in matrilineal societies, among maternal kin. In South Africa, given the decline in patrilinearity, we would expect that the radius of responsibility has shrunk disproportionately on the patrilineal side. If the radius of responsibility is shrinking, with relatively more relationships with close kin and fewer with distant kin, but doing so unevenly, with more relationships on the maternal than the paternal side, then we might expect that the overall pattern would be as illustrated in Figure 1(b). In comparison to Figure 1(a), this shows more crosses in the centre of the diagram, as well as fewer on the paternal side than the maternal side).

We would expect that kin are considered deserving not only according to the formal relationship, with maternal and close kin accepting more responsibilities than paternal or more distant kin, but also according to the identity of the prospective dependent. Research on perceptions of whether *citizens* are considered deserving in terms of state support finds that children and the elderly are considered to be more deserving than able-bodied adults (Seekings, 2008b, 2008c, 2010b). This may apply to assessments of deserving kin also.²

¹ After developing this analysis, we discovered that Finch (1989) had this basic idea long before Seekings.

² There are several reasons why perceptions of the state’s responsibility may help us to understand norms of kin responsibility. First, there is some evidence that people view the state as playing a kin-like role. Møller and Sotshongaye (1996) report that elderly women pensioners described the government pension as ‘doing the work of our husbands’ or of doing what sons are supposed to do. In other words, the legitimacy of state action might correspond to the norms that are expected to govern kin interactions. Secondly, there is some evidence that kin see state support as a substitute for kin support (the so-called ‘crowding out’ effect).

Figure 1(a)
An expansive radius of responsibility for kin

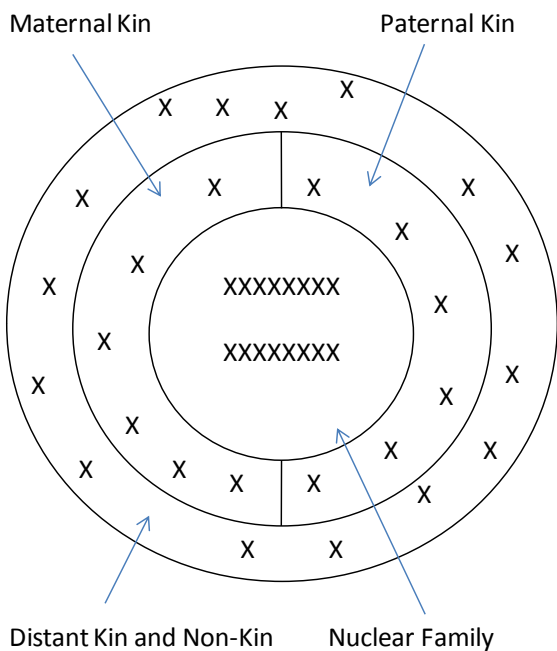
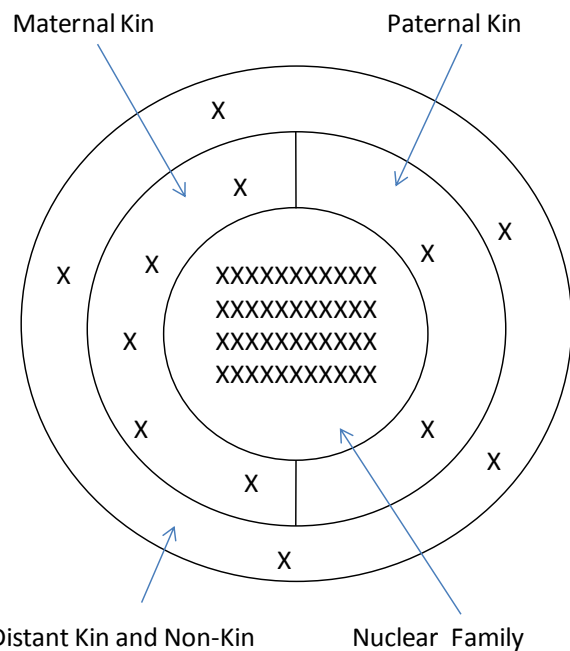


Figure 1(b)
A shrunken radius of responsibility for kin, with decline particularly on the patrilineal side.



We would expect that assessments of desert are shaped also by the personal characteristics of the kin involved. In the UK, individual kin are considered more deserving if they behave in ways that demonstrate some kind of reciprocity, i.e. they give or do something in return for assistance (Finch, 1989; Finch and Mason, 1993). Fortes argued that the responsibilities between kin were unconditional, in contrast to the conditional relationships between non-kin, which entail ‘a sort of book-keeping’ and ‘an element of deliberate calculation’ of reciprocity (Fortes, 1969: 246; see also Radcliffe-Brown, 1950). In practice, in South Africa as in the UK, the morality underlying kinship rarely seems entirely unconditional (as has been pointed out by Sagner and Mtati, 1999: 401). Indeed, it might be the very expectation of reciprocity which serves to bind kin together. In a paper studying extended family ties in the USA, Sarkisian and Gerstel (2004) describe the circular flow of resources, as opposed to unidirectional flows, as signalling and strengthening relationships characterised by trust and reciprocity. Sagner and Mtati report that people justified ‘their decision *not* to help a particular *needy* (grand)child or kinsperson’ by reference to the ‘unreasonable behaviour of the person needing support, be it that s/he had often eschewed her obligations in the past, or that s/he had severely defied gender and age-related roles’. They quote pensioners complaining about children who work but nonetheless fail to contribute to others, whether financially or in other, symbolic ways: ‘Children of today, they are more occupied with themselves’, said one; ‘they are just children by name, they are snakes’ (1999: 405-7).

This paper analyses data on the claims on and obligations towards kin that people say they would anticipate or expect in commonly occurring circumstances. The paper thus goes beyond the analysis of who lives with or who supports whom financially at any one moment in time. It uses data from the fourth wave of the Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS), conducted in 2006. The paper concentrates on two questions asked to more than three thousand young people in Cape Town:

- If you had a permanent full-time job, would other people (excluding your spouse and children) expect you to support them financially?
- If you were unemployed for a long period of time, could you turn to anyone other than your spouse to help with your monthly living expenses?

If a respondent answered yes to either of these questions, he or she was then asked to identify the relationship between him/her and the prospective claimant(s) or supporter(s) (respondents could mention multiple claimants or supporters). Asking about these *hypothetical* situations exposes supportive relationships that exist, even if they are not being exploited currently.

The paper pays particular attention to differences in reported claims and obligations by *race*. In South Africa, race coincides with cultural differences on some issues, rooted in the colonial past and the experience of segregation and discrimination under apartheid. Studies in the USA have found racial differences in kinship patterns which cannot be reduced to class. Recent scholarship suggests, however, that these racial differences are gender-specific, in that differences exist between white and African-American women but not between white and African-American men. Indeed, Sarkisian and Gerstel (2004) find, there is more diversity within racial groups than between them. This American research points to the importance of looking beyond the apparent fact of racial difference to examine how important it is relative to other social cleavages, whether it is uniform, and crucially whether it persists even when one controls for other material, social or cultural factors.

Section 2 of this paper discusses the data used in the analysis. Sections 3 through 5 analyse descriptive statistics on the density of kinship ties reported by young men and women, the apparent radius of responsibility in terms of the hypothetical claims and obligations, and the significance of reciprocity. We find that, in Cape Town, young adults of all racial groups and regardless of gender report having ties to a limited range of kin, i.e. primarily parents and (to a lesser extent) siblings. A minority of coloured and black young adults report that they could claim on other kin, primarily maternal kin. Only among black young adults is there strong evidence of acknowledged obligations to a wide range of kin. Sections 6 through 9 present a series of multivariate probit regressions which predict the probability that a relationship of responsibility exists between

a young adult and his or her kin. We find that ‘race’ is not a significant variable in determining directly the claims that might hypothetically be made on a young person. The effects of race are, at most, indirect: Individuals’ own prior experiences of kinship and relationships are the major determinants. Young black men and women report that they face a much wider range of claimants than their white and coloured counterparts because of their economic circumstances, cultural factors and (to a lesser extent) family structure.

2. Data

The Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS) is a longitudinal study of a cohort of adolescents in Cape Town, South Africa, as they undergo the multi-faceted transition into ‘adulthood’ (see Lam *et al.*, 2008). The first wave of interviews was conducted in 2002, with about 4,750 ‘young adults’ then aged 14-22. The selection of the original sample entailed three stages. First, random samples of neighbourhoods were selected within three strata, defined by the majority ‘racial group’ within the neighbourhood. Secondly, random samples of households were selected in each of these selected neighbourhoods. Thirdly, up to three young adults were selected in each of these selected households. Response rates were very high in predominantly African and coloured neighbourhoods, but in predominantly white – and middle class – neighbourhoods, response rates were disappointing. This panel of young adults was re-interviewed in 2003-04, 2005, 2006 and, most recently, 2009. This paper uses data from wave 4, conducted in 2006. Attrition reduced the size of the panel, especially among older and richer respondents. A total of 3,439 young men and women were re-interviewed in 2006, i.e. 72 percent of the unweighted, original, realised sample. This paper analyses weighted data, compensating for both differential response rates in the first wave and attrition rates thereafter. The weighted young adult sample is representative of the non-institutionalized population in metropolitan Cape Town aged 14-22, in 2002, when CAPS commenced, although they were four years older at the time of the actual wave 4 interviews. The standard errors are also adjusted to account for clustering at the household level.

CAPS has collected a wide range of data over time on co-residence, the fluidity and porosity of ‘households’, and on the allocation of resources within and between ‘households’. Some analysis has been conducted. In Cape Town as a whole, about the same proportion of adolescents live in loosely ‘nuclear’-family households (i.e. with no one other than parents and siblings) as in ‘extended’ family households (i.e. with other kin). About 80 percent of adolescents live with their mothers, and about the same proportion live with one or more siblings. Only about one in five lives with one or more grandparents, and the

proportion is the same for living with uncles or aunts, and living with cousins (Bray et al., 2010). CAPS data allow for the analysis of the impact on household composition and formation over time of (say) health or income ‘shocks’ (i.e. changes in health status or income of household members), but this analysis has not been undertaken yet.

This paper analyses specific variables in the CAPS data-set. The paper focuses on the two questions about the claims that the interviewee says he or she could make on others in the event of chronic unemployment, and the claims that would be made on him or her by others in the event that he or she had a permanent, full-time job (see above). Henceforth we refer to these as the ‘hypothetical claims’ made by interviewees and their ‘hypothetical obligations’ (i.e. the claims made on them).

We also analyse data on past patterns of assistance to and from kin. Here we have not made the maximum possible use of the panel data in CAPS. We use just wave 4 data on the ‘historical financial claims’ that the interviewee made and the ‘historical assistance’ that the interviewee has received. The ‘historical financial claims’ variable is constructed using data generated from two questions included in wave 4: Which members of the household contributed to the young adult’s large and small expenses in the year preceding the interview? Which kin (or non-kin) from outside the household contributed to the young adult’s large expenses in the year preceding the interview? The ‘historical practical assistance’ variable uses data on the practical assistance received by the interviewee, in the form of help with domestic chores, running errands, care when they were ill, or assistance with transportation; childcare is explicitly excluded. ‘Historic’ thus refers to recent history; a fuller analysis of the CAPS data would examine data from waves 1 to 3 on the patterns of young adults’ supportive relationships with other people across a much longer historical period.³

The 2006 wave 4 data have some shortcomings. The questions about hypothetical claims and obligations were accompanied by pre-coded response categories. These response categories combined mothers with fathers, and brothers with sisters. Furthermore, there are incomplete data on whether the interviewee has live kin in each of the categories. It is clearly important for some purposes to distinguish between a young person who cannot make a claim on a parent because his or her parents are dead and a young person who has living parents but nonetheless does not say that he or she can make a claim on

³ Some data on the quality of relationships from earlier waves of CAPS are used in the multivariate analyses reported below.

them. We do know whether each interviewee's parents are alive or not at the time of the wave 4 interviews, but the most recent data on grandparents and siblings are from previous waves, and we have no data on more distant categories of kin. Moreover, whilst various questions about the quality of an interviewee's relationships with parents and other key kin were asked in previous waves, only a few of these questions were included in wave 4. We therefore cannot control fully for family structure and relationships in the multivariate analysis.

Cultural differences are believed to be a key explanatory variable but have not been measured directly and form a residual category in the multivariate analysis. In a rare study that tries to measure culture, Sarkisian and Gerstel (2004) include scales of attitudes towards issues such as marriage, children and non-maternal care for children. Such variables are crucial if the cultural dimension of 'race' is to be analysed adequately. Unfortunately, there are almost no data in CAPS on such issues.

3: The density of ties

One measure of the 'extent' of family is the number of categories of kin (and non-kin) with whom a young adult reports having ties of claim or obligation, whether historical or hypothetical. We would expect that, in a 'nuclear-family' system, young people would report having claims on or obligations to only their spouse, and perhaps their parents and even siblings, whilst in more extended-family systems, young people would report having ties to various categories of more distant kin also. Spouses, boyfriends or girlfriends were not included in the list of people who might make a claim on the respondent or on whom the respondent might make a claim. This might help to explain why the average number of categories of kin mentioned by interviewees was low: between 0.7 and 0.9 for the four historical and hypothetical claim and obligation variables.⁴ Note that these data refer to *categories* of kin: an interviewee who reported only obligations to one category (siblings, for example), might be acknowledging either one person or many people in this category (i.e. one sibling or many siblings).

⁴ Young adults report slightly denser networks with respect to practical help. The average number of categories claimed upon was not higher for practical claims because a greater minority reported not receiving practical help from anyone. Those who had received practical help typically did so from a larger number of kin than the number from whom they would receive financial help.

When data are disaggregated by racial group, it emerges that a tiny minority of coloured and black young adults have very dense networks. The most striking difference is the high number of categories of kin that black young adults feel obligated to, relative to coloured and white young adults. Table 1 investigates this by looking at the number of categories of kin mentioned in questions about hypothetical obligations and claims, by race.

Table 1: Density of ties, in terms of the number of categories of kin mentioned

Number of categories of kin mentioned	Black		Coloured		White	
	Financial claims (who could you rely on if you were unemployed) %	Financial obligations. (who would rely on you if you had a full time job) %	Financial claims (who could you rely on if you were unemployed) %	Financial obligations. (who would rely on you if you had a full time job) %	Financial claims (who could you rely on if you were unemployed) %	Financial obligations. (who would rely on you if you had a full time job) %
0	22	15	32	53	19	75
1	65	47	59	45	70	23
2	13	35	8	3	9	2
3+	1	4	2	0	2	0
Total	101	101	101	101	100	100
Mean number of categories	0.9	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.3

Black young adults acknowledge prospective obligations to a wider range of kin than do coloured or white young adults. Approximately 40% of black men and women acknowledge obligations to two or more categories of kin, compared to only 2-3% of white and coloured respondents. For coloured and white young adults the density of claims is higher than the density of obligations; these individuals do not feel obligated to reciprocate all the claims they could make. By contrast, black young adults feel obligated to a broader range of kin than they feel they could claim on. Put another way, what distinguishes black from white or coloured young adults is not the number of kin on whom they could claim, but rather the number of kin who could be expected to make claims on the young adults. Young black men and women live in a world of anticipated obligation, not one characterised by distinctive opportunities for exercising claims oneself.

Density can also be explored in terms of how often a category of kin is mentioned in the sequence of four questions. Parents are mentioned most often. The average number of types of link with parents is 2.1, with a modal class of 3. This is highest for white young adults, who rely the most heavily on their parents. The average slips to 0.6 for siblings and is lower still among more

distant kin. Black men and women report more types of link than their white and coloured counterparts for all categories of kin except parents. In other words, coloured and (especially) white young adults are very focused on parents, whilst black young adults have a relatively diverse portfolio of kin in terms of claims and obligations. There are almost no differences between men and women in any racial group (except that white women report denser networks than white men, in terms of historical financial claims).

4. The radius of responsibility

Figures 2 to 4 depict the radius of responsibility for young men and women, in terms of both hypothetical claims and obligations, by racial group. The core of each diagram represents ‘nuclear’ kin, i.e. biological parents and siblings. The next circle is divided into closer maternal kin, i.e. maternal grandparents, aunts and uncles, and the corresponding paternal kin. Other, more distant maternal and paternal kin fall into the outer circle, which also accommodates non-kin. The more distant kin cannot be divided into paternal and maternal, because some categories of kin (including ‘cousins’) were not divided between paternal and maternal in the questionnaire. The number and location of crosses matches the actual distribution of ties reported by interviewees.

Figure 2: Radius of Responsibility for White young adults

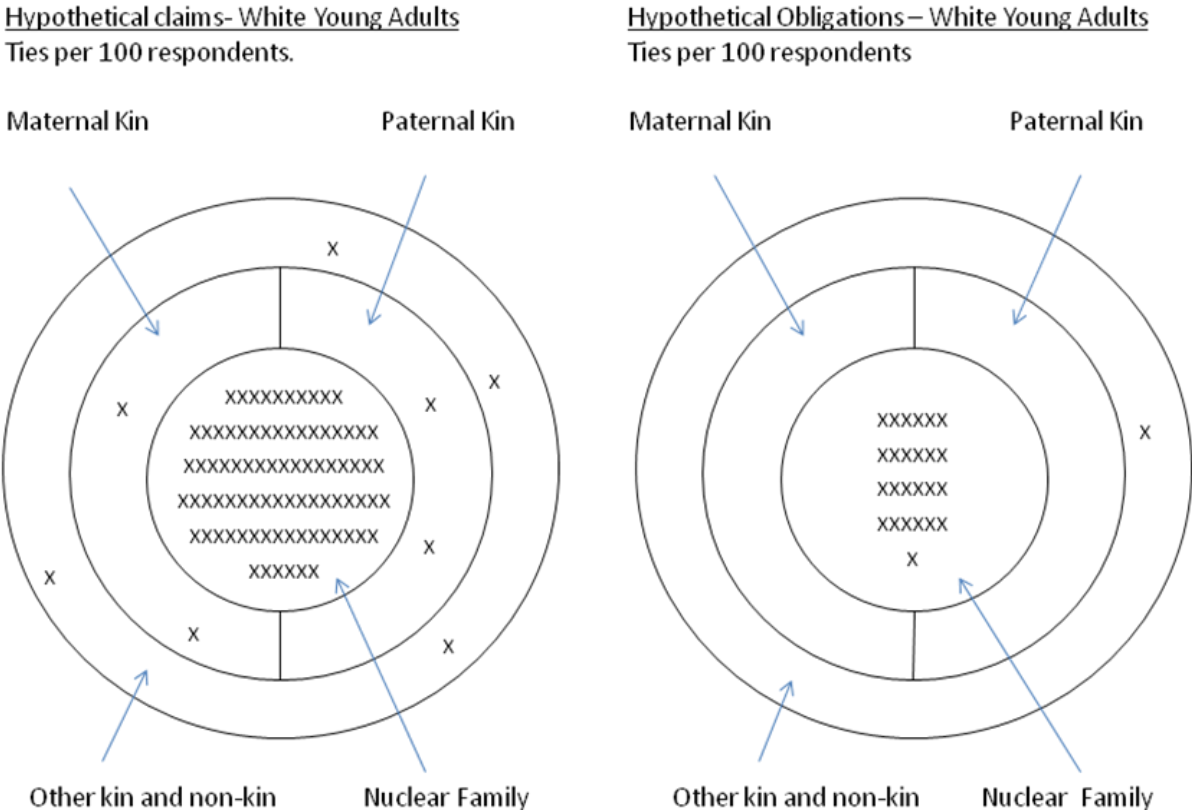
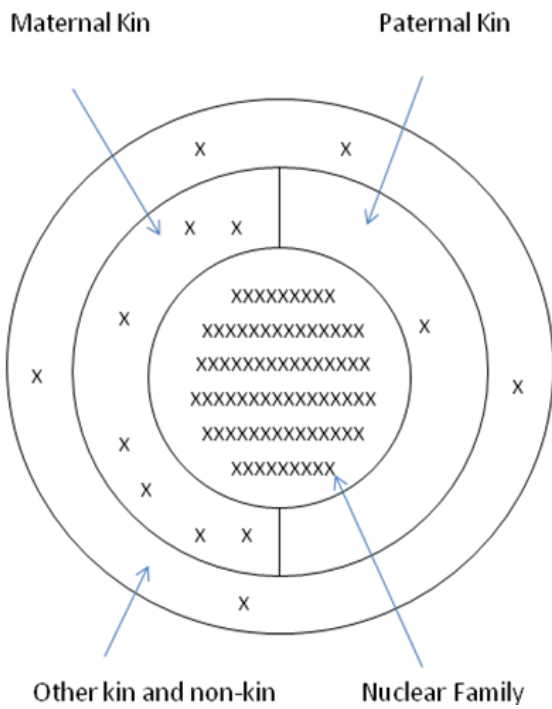


Figure 3: Radius of Responsibility for Black young adults

Hypothetical claims- Black Young Adults
Ties per 100 respondents



Hypothetical Obligations- Black Young Adults
Ties per 100 respondents

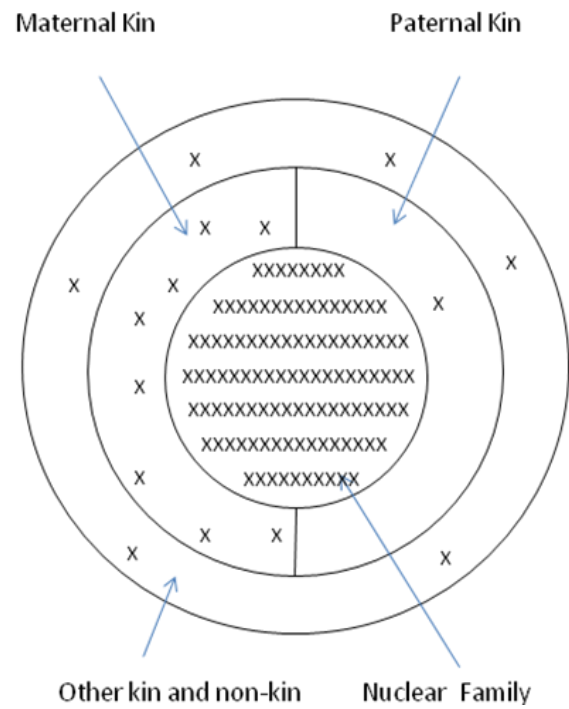
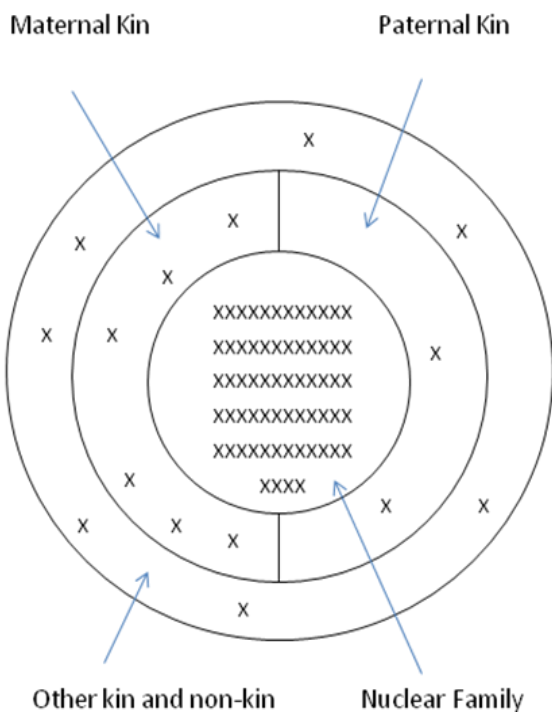
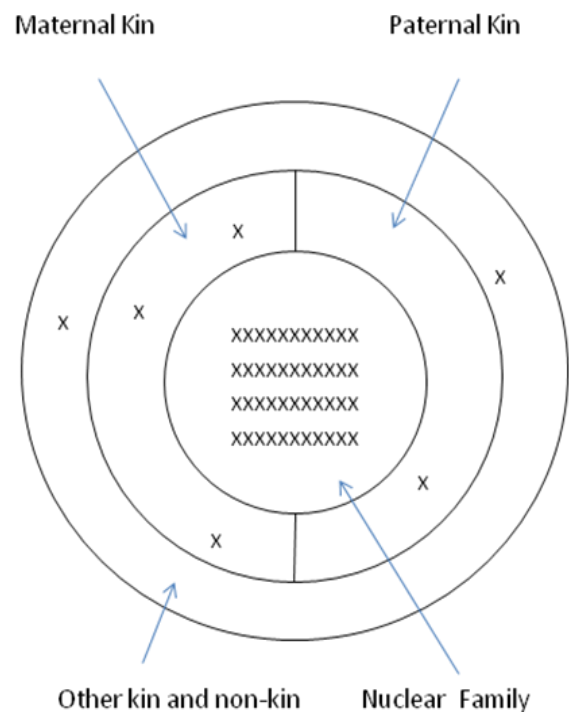


Figure 4: Radius of Responsibility for Coloured young adults

Hypothetical claims- Coloured Young Adults
Ties per 100 respondents.



Hypothetical Obligations- Coloured Young Adults
Ties per 100 respondents.



These figures illustrate the point that black young men and women have much denser relationships of obligation than their white and coloured counterparts, even though they anticipate being able to make claims on an approximately similar number of kin. Secondly, and without exception, these diagrams highlight the prevalence of nuclear family support systems. In every diagram, regardless of race or whether it is for claims or obligations, a large majority of the reported ties are located at the core. The vast majority of these refer to parents rather than siblings. Thirdly, coloured and (especially) black young adults live in societies that are not only matrifocal but also, de facto, matrilineal, in that both obligations and claims are concentrated on the maternal side and are scarce on the paternal side. In contrast, white young adults' relationships are equally sparse among maternal and paternal kin. Fourthly, black young adults' relationships in the outer ring are more often characterised by feelings of responsibility than dependence. Finally, more white young adults report obligations in the outer ring than in the intermediate ring. Almost all of these are to non-kin, i.e. to friends. Coloured and black young adults report ties in the outer ring with a mix of kin and non-kin. We have not provided separate figures for men and women because the differences between them are negligible.

5. Reciprocity

This section explores reciprocal relationships by comparing patterns of hypothetical claims to patterns of hypothetical obligations. Subsequent sections will extend this by examining whether reciprocity is a significant factor in explaining the reported patterns of obligation, in a multivariate analysis.

Figures 2 through 4 show that white young adults report exercising claims on a variety of non-nuclear kin without feeling obliged to reciprocate; their obligations are limited to close kin (and unrelated friends). Coloured young adults feel comfortable claiming from more kin than they would feel responsible for, though the difference is not as marked as it is among white young adults. By contrast, black young adults feel responsibility toward a much wider range of kin than they reportedly could claim from.

Table 3 shows whether the categories of kin that could be relied upon are the same categories of kin who are potential dependents. The first row shows the proportions of young adults who report that they could both claim on *and* feel obligated to kin in any particular category. The second row shows the proportions of young adults reporting at least one category of kin on whom they could claim without feeling any corresponding obligation. The third row shows the proportion reporting at least one category of kin to whom they acknowledge

an obligation, but on whom they did not mention being able to make a claim. The analysis here takes into account all 23 categories of kin and non-kin that interviewees might mention. It is important to note that the kin are considered according to category, not on an individual basis. It is possible that an interviewee might feel obliged to one brother (or uncle, cousin etc) but report being able to make a claim on a different brother (or uncle, cousin, etc). If so, the figures for reciprocity with respect to categories of kin exaggerate the true extent of reciprocity between individuals.

Table 3: Reciprocity of Claims and Obligations

	Black	Coloured	White	Total
At least 1 reciprocated relationship reported	60%	37%	21%	47%
At least 1 reported category of claim without responsibility	16%	29%	59%	25%
At least 1 reported category of responsibility without claim	44%	10%	4%	25%

Notes: Figures ignore density of reciprocated claims by limiting analysis to reports of “at least 1” type of relationship. A small minority of young adults report more than 1 of each type of relationship, therefore the pattern is adequately captured via this method of presentation. Columns do not sum to 100% because respondents can fall into more than 1 category.

The ratio of each figure in the first row to the corresponding figure in the third row indicates the extent to which relationships of prospective responsibility or obligation also entail prospective claims. Across all racial groups the figures in the first row exceed the figures in the third row. Most of the kin or non-kin to whom people feel some responsibility are also possible sources of assistance, i.e. are people on whom claims could be made. There is thus some reciprocity between the claims that people expect to be able to make and the obligations they anticipate. At the same time, there are clear differences between young black and white people. Patterns of kinship for white young adults are centred around prospective claims (predominantly on biological parents), with few obligations, whereas black young adults report more relationships of obligation, and few engage in relationships in which they could claim without reciprocating (16%, compared to 59% of white young adults). Note that feelings of financial responsibility could be in reciprocation for practical help received so results may be biased in favour of finding unreciprocated relationships. This issue is controlled for in multivariate analysis below.

Correlation coefficients were noted for the hypothetical variables, with respect to each of 7 categories of kin. The 23 categories are simplified into 7 broad groups: biological parents; siblings; maternal grandparents; other maternal kin; paternal kin; other relatives and finally; unrelated persons. The correlation

matrices provide a measure of the symmetry between the kin on whom respondents reported they could make hypothetical claims and who would in turn make claims on the respondent. The highest correlation coefficient (0.7) related to maternal grandparents. In other words, there was a high degree of symmetry or reciprocity between obligations to and claims on maternal grandparents. The composite category of ‘other maternal kin’ has the second highest coefficient (0.5), followed by father’s kin (0.4). The coefficients for parents and siblings were lower⁵, suggesting that claims on nuclear family are less conditional than claims on more distant kin. The prevalence of reciprocity does not vary according to gender within racial groups.

6: Multivariate analysis: Introduction

Multivariate analysis allows us to examine whether ‘racial’ differences identified above are masks for other identifiable differences. We ran a series of probit regressions repeating the same basic model for a series of dependent variables. The dependent variables are binary, indicating whether or not a young adult reports (1) being able to make claims on, (2) having obligations to, (3) having received in the past financial assistance from, and (4) having received in the past practical assistance from, each of the specified categories of kin or non-kin. The 23 categories of relationship were grouped into the same 7 broader categories as in the previous section: biological parents, siblings, maternal grandparents, other maternal kin, paternal kin, other relatives, and non-kin. (Separate regressions could not be run for each of the 23 original categories because the numbers of reported relationships were too small). The ‘historical claims’ data combines paternal with maternal kin, so even fewer broad categories are used in these regressions. Regressions applying to relationships with biological parents are limited to young adults who have at least one parent alive. The rationale behind this is explained in section 10. In total, regressions were run for more than twenty dependent variables for different combinations of (a) hypothetical or historical relationship and (b) category of kin.

These dependent variables were regressed on a standard set of explanatory variables. These explanatory variables measured economic and educational situation, family composition, the quality of the relationship between the respondent and the relevant kin (or non-kin), and certain attributes of the relevant kin (or non-kin). Cultural variables have not been measured and

⁵ It seemed plausible that the coefficients for parents were brought down by the white young adults in the sample, who feel that they can make claims on their parents but have no obligations to them. Disaggregating by race, however, yields very similar results.

therefore become a residual category, most likely being captured by the ‘racial’ variables. The explanatory variables are listed in Table 4.

‘Racial’ differences in post-apartheid Cape Town often correlate with other social and economic differences. Black men and women have, on average, less education and significantly lower earnings than their coloured peers, who in turn have lower earnings and less education than their white peers. Unemployment rates are highest in the neighbourhoods where black respondents live, and lowest in the neighbourhoods where white respondents live. One half (51%) of black respondents considered at least one of their kin to be poor, compared with only 3% of coloured respondents and a negligible 1% of white respondents.

Black young adults also come from larger families: they have an average of 2.7 siblings, whilst the average for coloured respondents is 2 siblings and for white respondents 1.3. Matrifocal family structures predominate among black and coloured young adults. Twice as many black young adults reside with their mother than with their father (56% compared with only 28%). The corresponding statistics for coloured young adults are 76% and 48%. White young adults, in contrast, tend to reside with both parents.

A similar pattern marks the quality of relationships between young people and their parents. White young adults appear to have slightly higher levels of communication with their parents, whilst black young adults have higher levels of communication with other categories of kin. Across all racial groups unrelated persons are overwhelmingly the category most called upon for discussions about job searches. Control variables inform us that virtually all young adults report being in good health: 97% of white and coloured and 93% of black. A significant minority (two in five young women and one in five young men) have children, but very few are married.

The relative importance of the sets of explanatory variables will be investigated in terms of how they govern patterns of financial and practical claims and obligations. This helps to reveal which of the differences between racial groups are important in explaining patterns of claim and obligation between kin. Results show that the modest inter-racial differences in patterns of financial claims are explicable in terms of the measurable variables, that is, the race variables play a minor role in explaining the patterns. The racial variables play a more important role in terms of reported obligations toward close kin on the part of black respondents. In other words, young adults say that they can make claims on kin under identifiable circumstances that do not require specifying race, but that race appears to be a robust proxy for some cultural factor when it comes to acknowledging obligations.

Table 4: Explanatory Variables

Variable	Description
	Data are from CAPS wave 4 (2006) unless otherwise stated
Racial group	A dummy variable for each of 3 categories: Black, Coloured and White.
Gender	Dummy variable: Female=1 and Male=0.
Age and age squared	Age squared is included to capture the potentially concave relationship between age and supportive relationships.
Structural Variables	
Household per capita income	Data from wave 1 of CAPS (2002), at the household level. Variable takes 5 values to measure which quintile the per capita income falls into.
Neighbourhood unemployment level	Numerical variable listing percentage of heads of households who were unemployed in the 'sub-place' (i.e. neighbourhood) where the young adult lived in 2002. Data from the 2001 Population Census. Note that most young adults lived at the same address in 2006 as in 2002.
Earnings	Dummy variable measuring whether the young adult was receiving earnings from work or running a business.
Public grant	Dummy variable measuring whether the young adult was receiving any form of public grant, including a disability grant or child support grant.
Education	Numerical variable from 0 to 12 measuring the highest grade the young adult completed in school.
Higher education	Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the young adult was enrolled in post-matric education.
Health	Dummy variable measuring whether the young adult reported suffering from health problems or disabilities.
Kin and household composition	
Siblings	Number of full brothers and sisters (CAPS wave 1, 2002).
Co-resident mother / father	Dummy variables taking the value 1 if the relevant parent was co-resident.
Married	Dummy variable for marital status.
Children	Number of children. (In all cases the children were still living with the young adults at time of interview.)
Grandparents alive	Dummy variable measuring whether maternal grandparents were alive in 2002 (CAPS wave 1). This variable was therefore only included in regressions relating to maternal grandparents.
Grandparents' pensions	Dummy variables measuring whether grandparents on both the maternal and paternal sides of the family received pensions in 2002 (CAPS wave 1).
Kin and non-kin's financial situation	Dummy variable measuring whether the relevant kin or non-kin (for each of the 7 categories) is considered to be poor, in the young adult's opinion. The data allowed for separate variables for the mother and the father. The dummies take the value 1 if the kin are perceived by the young adult to be "poor" or "very poor" as opposed to "getting by", "comfortable" or "very comfortable".
Relationship Quality	
Quality time with mother / father	Dummy variables taking the value 1 if the young adult reported spending time alone with their mother / father at least once a month (CAPS wave 1, 2002). This was only included in regressions on relationships with parents.
Communication	Dummy variables measuring whether the young adult spoke to the relevant kin or non-kin during the previous month about getting a job. This variable was constructed using the following CAPS wave 4 question: "Sometimes people's friends and relatives try to help them to get a job either by letting them know about available jobs or recommending them to an employer. In the past month have you spoken to any friends, relatives or anyone else about getting you a job?" If yes, asked to identify categories these kin and non-kin fall into.

7. Historical Claims

Before considering hypothetical claims (and obligations), we examine the role of economic and educational factors in shaping actual claims in the past. Interviewees were asked from whom they had received financial and practical support in the year prior to the interview. Responses were recorded in pre-coded categories that did not distinguish between maternal and paternal kin, so these were combined under the heading “other kin”. Results reported in Appendix 1 shows that young adults from wealthier backgrounds, who are enrolled in post-matric education and reside with their parents, have a higher propensity to have claimed financially on parents. Separate regressions show that this applies to all racial groups. All factors being equal, coloured young adults are the least likely to have claimed on their parents. Those who do not claim on parents fall into two categories. Some young adults are not claiming on parents because they have no need, typically because they are married, are not trying to pay education fees, and are themselves earning. The second group are not claiming on parents either because they do not live or communicate with their parents, or because they are from less wealthy backgrounds. People in the first of these two groups are unlikely then to make claims on other kin, but people in the second group are more likely to do so. Economic and educational factors matter in explaining historical financial claims, as do family structure and relationships.

Household composition plays the leading role in predicting patterns of practical help⁶ (see Appendix 2). The quality of the relationship is important with respect to both close kin and unrelated persons. Racial differences also play a role in predicting practical assistance; most notably white respondents are 22% more likely than black respondents to have claimed practical assistance from unrelated persons, *ceteris paribus*, suggesting that friendship is relatively more important than kinship among white young people. Unsurprisingly, economic standing is largely irrelevant.

A notable difference between the determinants of financial assistance relative to practical assistance is the effect that having claimed on one category of kin has on the likelihood of claiming on others. If a young adult claimed financially on their parents in the last year they were significantly less likely to have claimed on other kin. By contrast, if a young adult received practical help from parents they were significantly more likely to have received help from siblings, other

⁶ Residing with one’s mother is associated with a 37% increase in the likelihood the young adult received practical help from parents; a decrease in the likelihood of receiving from siblings of 9%; and a decrease in the likelihood of receiving from other kin of 19%. Whether the young adult lives with their father and whether they are married are also influential variables in the category of household composition.

kin and unrelated persons. Running regressions separately on racial groups reveals that this pattern is more pronounced among black young adults, in particular: having claimed financially on parents has a strong negative influence on black young adults' propensity to claim on any other kin or non-kin, whereas it does not affect coloured or white young adults. This result is probably driven by cultural factors for which race is a proxy, and does not apply to practical help which, when required, will be accepted from a variety of sources.

8. Hypothetical claims

We would expect that a background of financial assistance (or what we call historical claims), feelings of obligation and the strength of relationships would be important influences on who young adults believe they can rely on in times of economic hardship. We find that this is indeed the case, through multivariate analysis that includes historical claims and hypothetical obligations among the explanatory variables and hypothetical claims as the dependent variable. People feel they can claim on people who have helped them before, and who could in turn make claims on them. These results are intuitive and the variables are important control variables, but what drives supportive relationships with particular kin over other kin has yet to be explored. This section will review the power of each set of explanatory variables in contributing to our understanding of precisely *who* young adults identify as prospective sources of financial support if they were in need. We also thought it necessary to run the probit regressions without historical claims or obligations featuring as explanatory variables, because historical and reciprocal relationships may themselves be driven by the remaining explanatory variables and hence their inclusion may conceal useful patterns. Results from this exercise are reported in this section.

Racial differences in hypothetical claims are much less pronounced than for hypothetical obligations. Appendix 3 displays the probit regression results and shows there is little evidence that the pattern of hypothetical claims on kin or non-kin is racialised, with the exception of claims on parents and paternal kin (black young adults are the most likely to claim on parents and the least likely to claim on paternal kin). These marginal effects are larger if historical claims and obligations are omitted and this omission yields the result that black respondents are 12% more likely to make hypothetical claims on siblings than other respondents.

Variables measuring household income and unemployment are not powerful in explaining patterns in claim-making (with the notable exception that parents living in areas of low unemployment are more likely to offer assistance). This is

presumably because the hypothetical claims question asked all young adults to *imagine* that they were in financial need. The variable measuring whether the young adult is earning is excluded from these regressions for this reason. Counter-intuitively, maternal grandparents are 8% more likely to be considered as potential providers if they are poor (and 24% more likely when the obligation variable is omitted as an explanatory variable). The reciprocal relationship of claim on and obligation to maternal grandparents is clearly *not* conditional on the grandparent being comfortable financially: young adults would make claims on poor maternal grandparents as well as help them if they necessary. The same appears to be true of other maternal and paternal kin because poor kin in these categories are perfect predictors of hypothetical claims, though the numbers of these kin reported to be poor are very low.

The quality of relationships is influential in explaining the likelihood of feeling one can claim on kin and non-kin for financial assistance. Quality time spent with one's mother is associated with a 7% increase in ability to claim on parents. Recent communication with other maternal kin, other kin and non-kin all play a significant positive role.⁷ Omitting historical claims and obligations variables as explanatory variables affords more power to the variables measuring relationship strength. Specifically, communication with parents is associated with a 13% significant increase in the likelihood the young adult can make hypothetical claims on them and the same percentage applies to the relationship between communicating with siblings and feeling able to rely on them. The marginal effects of recent communication with other maternal kin, other kin and non-kin are all boosted by several percent. Kin and household composition variables play a negligible role in governing whether young adults feel able to make claims on kin and non-kin.

In summary, the data on hypothetical claim-making suggest that relationships with kin are largely conditional; young adults report being able to make claims on those kin with whom they have historical relationships of one or other kind, or who they can imagine making claims on them. Relationship strength is particularly important in governing on whom young adults feel able to rely. Relationships with maternal grandparents are less conditional on the grandparental income, and that strong relationships between themselves and the young adult are especially likely to result in the young adult feeling able to

⁷ Recent communication with the maternal grandparents raises the likelihood the young adult could claim on them by 44%. But there were only 2 young adults in the sample who had recently spoken to maternal grandparents; a larger sample size would be needed to verify the importance of this relationship. The other significant relationships among relationship variables are all based on positive responses numbering between 73 and 679.

claim on them, even if they are perceived to be poor. Results also suggest that cultural factors associated with being black affect the young adults' likelihood of feeling able to claim on close kin.

9. Hypothetical Obligations

The descriptive statistics presented above showed that young black men and women reported obligations to a significantly wider range of kin than did either young white or coloured people. Multivariate analysis suggests that this extended financial responsibility is due to economic circumstances, cultural factors and, to a lesser extent, household composition.

The hypothetical obligations regressions include, as explanatory variables, the hypothetical claims reported by the young person, as well as the financial and non-financial historical claims made by the young person. This captures the effect that reciprocity has on the propensity to feel obligation toward particular kin (and non-kin). Sahlins (1972), Putnam (2000) and Sarkisian and Gerstel (2004) make the distinction between balanced and generalized reciprocity. Balanced reciprocity refers to returning the same type of resource to kin as was received from them. Generalized reciprocity involves the return of any kind of resource. For close kin, the historical practical claims variables prove to be more significant and have a greater marginal impact on the probability of feeling financial obligation than do the historical financial claims variables. This suggests that among close kin in Cape Town generalised reciprocity is widespread. The data were not available to construct variables for historical claims on maternal and paternal kin. Inclusion of claims variables has no impact on the coefficients on race, implying this pattern of reciprocity applies to all racial groups and assuring us that the presence of claims variables as explanatory variables is not distorting racial patterns. Acknowledgment of responsibility towards nuclear family appears less conditional than those for other kin for the following reason. Inclusion of hypothetical claims variables dramatically raises the explanatory power of the maternal and paternal kin regressions. Inclusion of both hypothetical and historical claims variables has a substantial positive effect on the power of all remaining regressions, except the regressions explaining feelings of obligation towards parents and siblings. Thinking that kin can be called upon is the strongest correlate of responsibility toward all categories of kin except for parents and siblings.⁸ As we found in

⁸ For example, results suggest that the security that maternal grandparents can be relied on boosts feelings of obligation by 27%.

section 5, responsibility towards parents and siblings is less reciprocal or conditional.

We saw above (in Table 1) that race made little difference to the number of categories of kin on whom young adults said that they could make claims. Given this, the expectation of reciprocity cannot be a factor explaining the different levels of acknowledged responsibilities, with black young adults reporting obligations to more categories of kin. The following discussion investigates the apparent racial basis for acknowledging responsibilities.

Racial variables play a particularly strong role in explaining responsibility toward close kin. In the regression predicting probability of obligation to parents black respondents are 30% more likely than white respondents and 17% more likely than coloured respondents to acknowledge financial responsibility, *ceteris paribus*. Race plays a role in explaining responsibility toward all other kin, apart from maternal grandparents. Black respondents are the most likely to feel responsibility, though the extent to which race can explain differences between black and coloured respondents in their propensity to acknowledge obligation to more distant kin is limited. No white young adults reported obligations to more distant kin⁹; being white cannot be included in these regressions because it predicts perfectly a negative value for acknowledgement of obligation. It is likely that this reflects both material reality (in that most white parents and kin are independently wealthy), norms (in that young white South Africans see parents as supporting children, not visa-versa), and household composition (as we shall see below). This pattern becomes more pronounced when claims variables are omitted.

Unlike the patterns in financial claims, there is no evidence that *higher* economic standing gives rise to relationships characterised by acknowledging responsibilities to parents. Relationships with parents among the more wealthy respondents therefore appear largely unidirectional: parents help children, not visa-versa. Variables measuring the economic situation of various kin play a greater role than household composition or relationship strength in explaining feelings of obligation. Appendix 4 shows that young adults with a poor close kin or maternal kin (including grandparents) will be more likely to assist them financially, should they have the means to do so. Note that when the various claims variables are removed from the regressions this effect becomes stronger; having poor grandparents, for example, is associated with a 19% increase in the likelihood the young adult would support their maternal grandparents. Descriptive statistics showed that black young adults are significantly poorer

⁹ Apart from maternal grandparents; 1 white young adult reported feeling of obligation in this category.

than either their coloured or white peers. Multivariate analysis confirms that poverty correlates with feelings of obligation. This leads to the conclusion that black young adults' higher levels of obligation arise from, among other things, the general conditions of poverty within which many of them and their kin live.

Kin and household composition variables have little explanatory power in the hypothetical obligations regressions. In terms of explaining financial assistance that respondents would dispense for close kin, being unmarried means the respondent is 24% more likely to assist parents and 4% more likely to assist siblings. Young adults who reside with their mothers are 18% more likely to feel responsibility towards their parents. The presence of more siblings and fewer children encourage financial assistance towards parents but not to other kin. Black young adults have more siblings, on average, and are more likely to be unmarried than other racial groups. However, they are least likely to have co-resident mothers and are not the most likely racial group to have children. The high number of black respondents acknowledging responsibilities towards parents is only in part explained by their household composition. The data do not reveal a relationship between quality of relationships and young adults acknowledging responsibility, even when the various claims variables are omitted from the regressions.

In conclusion, relationships make little difference to the claims that young people anticipate being made on them, even though they shaped the claims that young people could imagine making on others. The important factors shaping obligations are desert, in the form of expectation of reciprocity, poverty, cultural factors proxied by being black and, to a lesser extent, household composition¹⁰. The high level of black young adults' obligation relative to other racial groups is explained by the economic difficulties of many kin of black young adults, as well as perhaps a persistent ideology of extended obligations (one *should* support one's kin, including more distant kin) despite the reality of restricted claims (in practice, one can only make claims on immediate kin). This would also shed light on why the quality of relationships is more influential in affecting the likelihood of being able to claim rather than acknowledging obligation.

The mystery of why black young adults do not feel able to rely on all of those whom they would feel responsibility towards may also be explained by drawing on the result from section 7; black young adults report a willingness to accept practical assistance from a range of kin and are less likely to accept financial assistance from more than one category of kin. This phenomenon largely applies to black respondents rather than other racial groups. Black young adults'

¹⁰ These patterns become more pronounced when the various claims variables are omitted as explanatory variables.

reluctance to claim financial help, even from those to whom they would offer help, might be rooted in pride and feelings of anxiety surrounding receiving money from more kin than necessary. This anxiety does not extend beyond money; when practical help is required they are willing to accept it from a variety of sources.

10. Data limitations and identification strategy

The regressions have modest explanatory power. The pseudo R-squared values reach 0.3 in the set of historical financial assistance regressions, 0.2 in the practical assistance regressions, 0.4 in the hypothetical claims regressions and 0.5 in the obligations regressions. The explanatory power of the multivariate analysis would probably be improved if we were able to include more data on the characteristics of the kin (for example, relatives' employment status, health, financial situation and residency). The data presently cannot fully explain what would prompt the young adult to claim on one category of kin over another.

One problem is the way that the 4th wave of CAPS collected data on the financial and practical assistance received by interviewees in the past year. Interviewees were asked if they had received practical or financial assistance from up to eight named individuals, comprising selected members of the household in which the interviewee had lived in 2002, i.e. four years previously. Interviewees were then asked if they had received assistance from general categories of kin. This combination of named individuals and general categories complicates analysis of the data. There is, for example, data from 2002 on the characteristics (including financial situation) of the named individuals, but not of the people in the various general categories of kin (or non-kin). Variables measuring the financial situation of kin and non-kin have been constructed using this data and used in the regressions above in the absence of a more accurate measure. This dataset is incomplete, particularly for more distant kin of which few would have been resident with the young adults in 2002. Note also that the variable measuring whether mother's parents are poor includes some data from father's parents because the coding included "grandfather" and "grandmother" alongside "mother's parents" and "father's parents".

Probit regressions explaining historical patterns of kinship between the young adults and mother's and father's kin could not be run due to the design of the questionnaire. Specifically, "grandparent" and "Aunt/Uncle" were included alongside "mother's parent", "mother's sibling" and the equivalent options for father's kin.

Separating the effects of economic situation and culture can be more difficult than implied in section 6 above, because both can influence kin and household composition. As the descriptive statistics inform us, there are plenty of differences in household composition between racial groups. These differences might arise due to cultural norms or economic conditions but this effect is unmeasured.

Reverse causality is unlikely to create significant bias in the analysis. Race, gender and age are exogenous and cannot be influenced by the propensity to claim on others. Household income per capita and neighbourhood unemployment were chosen because they are measures of the young adult's economic situation that are not influenced by transfers from kin. The perceived financial situation of the kin (and non-kin) could be impacted by the dependent variables, but only if financial transfers between respondents and kin are large enough. Household composition and relationships may be subject to a degree of simultaneity bias because flows of financial and practical assistance can strengthen relationships and may therefore affect residency patterns. However, it is most likely that relationships are established prior to exchanges of resources. The historical assistance regressions all include claims made on parents as explanatory variables. Having turned to other kin could make one less likely to turn to parents, rather than vice versa, introducing bias arising from reverse causality. Given the prevalence of reliance on parents, in most cases this will not be the direction of causality. Historical claims included in the hypothetical claims regressions cannot be subject to reverse causality because present belief cannot impact past claims. However, the hypothetical variables measuring claims that are included as explanatory variables in the hypothetical obligations regressions, might be subject to bias arising from reverse causality. This is because generosity of kin might be partly a response to their knowledge that the young adult would support them if he or she had the means to do so. The same is true for the hypothetical obligations variables included in the hypothetical claims regressions. The circular nature of these flows renders this bias impossible to control for.

Multicollinearity will feature in the regressions due to the correlation between explanatory variables within each of the three sets. This may impact on the marginal effects of the individual variables within each set, for example it may be difficult to detect whether spending quality time with one's mother, or communicating with her, is the more important variable. However, the marginal effects of the individual variables are not the focus of this paper. The overall importance of each set of explanatory variables relative to one another remains unaffected by the presence of this multicollinearity, hence the main patterns and conclusions in this paper are unaffected.

An additional issue stems from the way the answers to the questions on claims and obligations were coded. There is no “missing” code that young adults to whom the question did not apply could have been assigned. This means that a failure in the dependent variable could imply the absence of claims in the last year or that the question was not applicable because relatives are deceased. Data on whether kin were alive or not were only available for parents. To prevent bias, the sample was manually divided into those with at least one parent who is alive and those without. The regressions for claims on and obligations to parents were run using data from the former sub-sample¹¹.

Conclusion

The vast majority of young adults report that they can and have made claims on a limited range of kin. Most often these kin are parents, and to a lesser extent siblings. A minority of coloured and black young adults report that they could claim on other kin, primarily maternal kin. Relationships are the major determinant for hypothetical claims, household composition matters most in receiving practical help and both these factors along with the young adults’ economic situation explain historical financial claims.

The expectation of reciprocity is important. Confidence in being able to make claims on kin is the most powerful determinant of responsibility. The data suggest, however, that hypothetical financial support between young adults and their parents and siblings, running in both directions, is less conditional than support between young adults and all other categories of kin (and non-kin). The binding and inescapable kinship that Fortes described appears largely absent in South Africa, perhaps applying in some form where relationships with biological parents and siblings are concerned and the culture in black African society of acknowledging responsibilities toward one’s kin. The majority of relationships identified in this paper more closely resemble the relationships with non-kin that Fortes describes as built on calculations of reciprocity.

Overall, the data provide mixed evidence on the extent to which young men and women in urban areas live in ‘extended’ families in terms of the obligations of kinship. Among white young adults, there is very little evidence of claims on or

¹¹ Selection on the basis of whether parents are deceased has occurred; this causes bias in the point estimates if unobserved factors affecting whether the parents are deceased also affect the propensity to claim on them, because the random sampling assumption necessary for unbiased results has been violated. It is reasonable to assume that, whether parents are deceased is based on observables such as health, age and household income, which have been controlled for and therefore do not sit in the error term of the regressions, potentially leading to bias.

obligations to more distant kin. Among coloured and black young adults, a significant minority do report ties with non-nuclear kin. For coloured young adults these ties are predominantly claims whereas for black young adults they more often take the form of obligations. The significantly higher level of obligation reported by black young adults is rooted in economic circumstances, cultural factors and (to a lesser extent) household composition. The unmeasured cultural factors might reflect a persistent ideology of extended obligations (one *should* support one's kin, including more distant kin), but a reality of restricted claims (in practice, one can only make claims on immediate kin).

Further research could add data on practical obligations and an emotional claims and obligations dimension in order to more fully explore the concept of kin support in South Africa. Exploiting the panel dimension of the CAPS survey using wave 5 data will allow analysis of changes in supportive ties over time. Linking data on kin support with young adults' HIV status and unemployment status could be an interesting extension in order to determine whether those experiencing illness or unemployment have denser networks, mitigating the effects of adversity.

<i>Appendix 1: Historical Financial Claims on Selected Kin</i>				
	Claims on parents	Claims on siblings	Claims on other kin	Claims on Non-kin
Historical financial claim made on parents		-0.017*	-0.026**	-0.006
Historical financial claim made on siblings			-0.021	-0.008
Age	-0.223 **	0.009	-0.012	0.009
Age-squared	0.005 *	-0.0002	0.0001	-0.0002
Gender	0.036	-0.008	0.004	0.007**
Black	0.146		0.036	
Coloured	-0.132 **	-0.022*	0.020	0.012*
White		-0.041**		0.031*
Household income per capita	0.037 **	0.003	-0.003	-0.001
Neighbourhood Unemployment	-0.143	0.106**	-0.056	0.015
Mother is poor	-0.140 **			
Father is poor	-0.005			
At least 1 sibling is poor		-0.002		
At least 1 kin is poor			0.065***	
At least 1 non-kin is poor				0.101*
Earnings	-0.403 ***	-0.027**	-0.059***	-0.004
Receives public grant	0.007	0.023	0.001	0.0005
Highest school grade completed	-0.015	-0.0001	0.004	0.001
Enrolled in post-matric studies	0.277 ***	0.019	-0.004	0.031***
Number of siblings	-0.006	0.013***	-0.009***	0.0008
Mother is co-resident	0.399 ***	-0.03**	-0.102***	-0.012**
Father is co-resident	0.110 ***	-0.03***	-0.062***	-0.013**
Married	-0.284 ***	-0.042**	-0.043***	-0.001
Number of children	-0.020	-0.027***	-0.024**	-0.005
In good health	0.021	-0.003	-0.003	-0.023*
Spoke to parents recently	0.212 ***			
Spoke to at least 1 sibling recently		0.120***		
Spoke to at least 1 kin recently			0.024	
Spoke to at least 1 non-kin recently				0.022***
Spent quality time with mother	0.052			
Spent quality time with father	0.009			
Pseudo r-squared	0.337	0.179	0.210	0.146
n	2084	3364	3366	3364
Data shown are marginal effects from probit regressions (dF/dx). Significance: *0.1, **0.05, ***0.01				

<i>Appendix 2: Historical Practical Claims on Selected Kin</i>				
	Claims on parents	Claims on siblings	Claims on other kin	Claims on Non-kin
Historical practical claim made on parents		0.237***	0.118***	0.023**
Historical practical claim made on siblings			0.043**	0.033**
Age	-0.037	-0.060*	-0.047	0.036
Age-squared	0.0008	0.002*	0.001	-0.001
Gender	-0.020	0.013	-0.0007	-0.0005
Black				
Coloured	0.065	-0.086***	-0.004	0.032**
White	0.121*	-0.078**	-0.044*	0.216***
Household income per capita	-0.004	-0.013**	-0.010**	0.004
Neighbourhood Unemployment	0.160	-0.166	-0.138*	-0.013
Highest school grade completed	0.019**	0.0007	0.008**	-0.0003
Enrolled in post-matric studies	0.003	0.010	-0.016	0.008
Number of siblings	0.002	0.022***	-0.014***	-0.004
Mother is co-resident	0.370***	-0.088***	-0.186***	-0.011
Father is co-resident	0.042	0.026*	-0.082***	0.006
Married	-0.118**	-0.082***	-0.054***	-0.006
Number of children	-0.008	-0.003	0.003	0.005
In good health	-0.080	-0.025	-0.052**	-0.021
Spoke to parents recently	0.128**			
Spoke to at least 1 sibling recently		0.095**		
Spoke to at least 1 kin recently			0.016	
Spoke to at least 1 non-kin recently				0.022**
Spent quality time with mother	0.043*			
Spent quality time with father	0.006			
Pseudo r-squared	0.123	0.177	0.163	0.151
n	3259	3385	3385	3385
Data shown are marginal effects from probit regressions (dF/dx). Significance: *0.1, **0.05, ***0.01				

<i>Appendix 3: Hypothetical Financial Claims on Selected Kin</i>							
	Claims on parents	Claims on siblings	Claims on maternal grandparents	Claims on other maternal kin	Claims on paternal kin	Claims on other kin	Claims on non-kin
Historical financial claim made on relevant kin*	0.356***	0.402***				0.105***	0.147***
Historical practical claim made on relevant kin*	0.210***	0.073***				0.005	0.069
Feelings of obligation towards relevant kin*	0.224***	0.106***	0.505***	0.400***	0.560***	0.177***	0.240***
Age	0.080	-0.010	-0.006	-0.018*	-0.020*	-0.010	-0.015
Age-squared	-0.002	0.0003	0.0002	0.0005*	0.0005*	0.0003	0.0004
Gender	0.031	-0.011	-0.0006	-0.002	-0.010**	-0.001	0.007
Black		0.043	-0.007				0.005
Coloured	-0.195***	0.013	0.003	0.006	0.015**	0.018**	0.019*
White	-0.159*			-0.007	0.054**	0.020	
Household income per capita	0.023*	0.004	-0.0004	-0.001	-0.002	0.002	-0.0007
Neighbourhood Unemployment	-0.704**	-0.0005	0.024	0.027	0.034	0.031	0.006
Mother is poor	-0.136**						
Father is poor	0.009						
At least 1 sibling is poor		-0.035***					
At least 1 grandparent is poor			0.075***				
Maternal grandmother received pension (in 2002)			-0.001				
Maternal grandfather received pension (in 2002)			0.001				
At least 1 other maternal kin is poor				PP1 n=8	PP1 n=8		
At least 1 paternal kin is poor				PP1 n=6	PP1 n=6		
At least 1 kin is poor						-0.008	
At least 1 non-kin is poor							0.026
Receives public grant	-0.013	-0.007	-0.006**	-0.002	-0.001	0.013	0.006
Highest school grade completed	-0.004	0.008**	0.002**	0.003*	0.003*	-0.0004	0.001
Enrolled in post-matric studies	0.030	0.035**	-0.001	0.005	0.005	0.010	0.018*
Number of siblings	-0.006	0.009***	-0.00006	-0.004***	-0.003**	0.0003	-0.002
Mother is co-resident	0.006	-0.005	-0.013***	-0.014**	-0.013**	-0.006	-0.009

<i>Appendix 3: Hypothetical Financial Claims on Selected Kin continued</i>							
	Claims on parents	Claims on siblings	Claims on maternal grandparents	Claims on other maternal kin	Claims on paternal kin	Claims on other kin	Claims on non-kin
Father is co-resident	0.053	-0.022**	-0.0002	-0.010**	0.002	-0.0005	0.001
Maternal grandmother alive (in 2002)			0.014**				
Maternal grandfather alive (in 2002)			-0.002				
Married	0.008	-0.013	-0.006*	-0.008	PP1 n=238	-0.002	0.012
Number of children	0.007	-0.014	0.002	-0.007	0.0007	-0.004	0.003
In good health	-0.0001	-0.002	-0.004	-0.004	PP0 n=150	-0.015*	0.008
Spoke to parents recently	0.085						
Spoke to at least 1 sibling recently		0.050					
Spoke to at least 1 maternal grandparent recently			0.444**				
Spoke to at least 1 “other maternal kin” recently				0.040**			
Spoke to at least 1 paternal kin recently					0.006		
Spoke to at least 1 kin recently						0.054***	
Spoke to at least 1 non-kin recently							0.023**
Spent quality time with mother	0.065**						
Spent quality time with father	-0.031						
Pseudo r-squared	0.282	0.324	0.389	0.235	0.212	0.280	0.141
n	2097	3256	2886	3242	2854	3258	3256
<p>Data shown are marginal effects from probit regressions (dF/dx). Significance: *0.1, **0.05, ***0.01</p> <p>*“relevant” kin refers to the category of kin specified in the dependent variable</p> <p>+PP1 = the variable taking a value of 1 is a perfect predictor of failure in the dependent variable. n=number of observations taking this value and therefore dropped.</p> <p>+PP0 = the variable taking a value of 0 is a perfect predictor of failure in the dependent variable. n=number of observations taking this value and therefore dropped.</p>							

<i>Appendix 4: Historical Financial Obligations to Selected Kin</i>							
	Obligation to parents	Obligation to siblings	Obligation to maternal grandparents	Obligation to other maternal kin	Obligation to paternal kin	Obligation to other kin	Obligation to non-kin
Historical financial claim made on relevant kin*	-0.035	0.028**				0.0100**	0.010
Historical practical claim made on relevant kin*	0.114***	0.041***				0.0102**	0.002
Financial claim could be made on relevant kin*	0.270***	0.128***	0.271***	0.144***	0.224***	0.185***	0.067***
Age	-0.119	-0.028	-0.001	0.002	0.006**	0.009	0.013**
Age-squared	0.003	0.0008	0.00002	-0.00006	-0.002**	-0.0003*	-0.0003**
Gender	0.013	-0.003	0.0004	-0.0003	-0.001	-0.001	-0.006**
Black		0.275***		0.010***	0.001	0.051***	-0.007
Coloured	-0.172**	0.013	-0.005*				-0.008
White	-0.301***		-0.002	PP1 n=247	PP1 n=247	PP1 n=247	
Household income per capita	-0.044***	-0.006**	-0.002**	0.0005	-0.0005	-0.002**	0.0005
Neighbourhood Unemployment	0.342	0.045	-0.007	-0.007	0.0002	0.012	0.028**
Mother is poor	0.186**						
Father is poor	-0.045						
At least 1 sibling is poor		0.062***					
At least 1 grandparent is poor			0.044***				
Maternal grandmother received pension (in 2002)			-0.0002				
Maternal grandfather received pension (in 2002)			0.002				
At least 1 other maternal kin is poor				0.024**	PP1 n=11		
At least 1 paternal kin is poor				PP1 n=6	PP1 n=6		
At least 1 kin is poor						-0.001	
At least 1 non-kin is poor							PP1 n=12
Receives public grant	0.064	0.005	0.002	0.003	-0.0008	0.008*	-0.0004
Highest school grade completed	-0.006	-0.0002	-0.0001	-0.0006**	-0.000004	-0.0006	-0.0001
Number of siblings	0.036***	0.003	-0.0003	-0.0005**	-0.00004	-0.002**	0.0002
Mother is co-resident	0.175***	-0.009	-0.003**	-0.007***	-0.004***	0.001	-0.003

<i>Appendix 4: Historical Financial Obligations to Selected Kin continued</i>							
	Obligation to parents	Obligation to siblings	Obligation to maternal grandparents	Obligation to other maternal kin	Obligation to paternal kin	Obligation to other kin	Obligation to non-kin
Father is co-resident	-0.058	-0.024**	-0.004**	-0.003**	-0.0004	-0.004	-0.0006
Maternal grandmother alive (in 2002)			0.001				
Maternal grandfather alive (in 2002)			0.0002				
Married	-0.242***	-0.036***	-0.0006	-0.002	0.00006	0.009*	-0.001
Number of children	-0.076**	-0.009	-0.001	-0.0005	-0.001	-0.002	0.003*
In good health	0.084	-0.012	-0.004*	0.0004	PP0 n=145	0.003	0.004
Spoke to parents recently	-0.069						
Spoke to at least 1 sibling recently		-0.031**					
Spoke to at least 1 maternal grandparent recently			PP1 n=2				
Spoke to at least 1 “other maternal kin” recently				0.002			
Spoke to at least 1 paternal kin recently					0.040**		
Spoke to at least 1 kin recently						-0.005**	
Spoke to at least 1 non-kin recently							0.003
Spent quality time with mother	0.006						
Spent quality time with father	0.044						
Pseudo r-squared	0.193	0.406	0.482	0.452	0.442	0.309	0.183
n	2097	3382	2974	3129	2973	3137	3370
Data shown are marginal effects from probit regressions (dF/dx). Significance: *0.1, **0.05, ***0.01 **“relevant” kin refers to the category of kin specified in the dependent variable +PP1 = the variable taking a value of 1 is a perfect predictor of failure in the dependent variable. n=number of observations taking this value and therefore dropped. +PP0 = the variable taking a value of 0 is a perfect predictor of failure in the dependent variable. n=number of observations taking this value and therefore dropped. The variable measuring enrolment in post-matric studies is not included in these regressions because the question asked respondents to imagine they were in a full time job.							

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