Educational Expectations in South Africa: Comparisons Between Adolescents and Parents

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Abstract

We use data from the Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS) to examine the educational expectations of black, coloured, and white South African adolescents and their parents. Our results show that prior educational history, a subjective measure of academic ability, and objective literacy and numeracy scores all influence adolescents' educational expectations and parents' educational expectations for adolescents, though the findings show some differences in these factors among the three racial groups. Blacks enter school at a later age than coloureds or whites, and among blacks only, age at school entry plays an important role in producing educational expectations. The history of grade failure and repetition is important for coloureds and whites, but not blacks. Literacy and numeracy scores are important predictors of educational expectations for all three racial groups.

Introduction

In the United States, research has shown that educational expectations are an important component of the educational attainment process (e.g., Alexander and Eckland 1975; Kerckhoff 1976; Sewell, Haller, and Ohlendorf 1970). The well-known Wisconsin model of status attainment links an individual's socioeconomic background to educational and occupational attainment via a chain of intervening variables. Two important intervening variables in the chain are parent's educational expectations for their children and children's own educational expectations for themselves (see, for example, Sewell, Haller, and Ohlendorf 1970; Sewell, Haller, and Portes 1969).[1]

Relatively little research has examined parents' or adolescents' educational goals outside of the United States (for a recent example, see Buchman and Dalton 2002), and to date, virtually no large scale study has examined the educational goals of South African adolescents or their parents (for a study that examined the parental aspirations of Xhosa children in the Transkei, see Cherian 1994). Educational expectations formation among South Africans is of particular interest because these individuals have experienced significant social changes within their country, notably the end of apartheid. Furthermore, South Africa's current economic conditions, characterized by high rates of unemployment and wage inequality (Kingdon and Knight 2001; Lam 1999), create a complex environment for young people planning their educational and occupational futures. In this paper, we examine the determinants of adolescents' educational expectations for themselves and parents' educational expectations for adolescents. We specifically examine how the determinants of educational expectations vary across racial groups, using a representative sample of youth living in Cape Town, South Africa. The analysis will

extend our understanding of racial economic inequality in South Africa by examining a potentially important component of the production of educational inequality.

Education in South Africa

The legacy of apartheid ("separateness"), the official government policy of strict racial segregation from 1948 through 1990, has left a profound impact on education in South Africa. Under apartheid, the government recognized four racial categories: African (black), coloured, Indian (Asian), and white. School quality and public investment in schooling infrastructure varied tremendously by race during the apartheid era, with whites having the greatest access to resources and blacks the least. Black schools received far less money per pupil than white schools, and they continue to have fewer resources, higher student-teacher ratios, and lower test scores (Case and Deaton 1999; Crouch and Mabogoane 2001; Thomas 1996). As a result, large racial disparities in schooling outcomes developed; blacks born in the 1950s, for example, completed roughly seven fewer grades than whites in the same cohort (Anderson et al. 2001). More recently the schooling gap has decreased, though significant differences remain (of approximately three grades of completed schooling between blacks and whites) (Anderson et al. 2001). As a result, blacks have lower numeracy and literacy skills than the other racial groups (Moll 1998).

School enrollment in South Africa is fairly high relative to other African countries; unlike many of its neighbors, nearly all South Africans enroll in (and complete) primary school (Lloyd, Kaufman, and Hewett 2000). Although completed levels of schooling within South Africa vary greatly by race, enrollment is high for all population groups. In 1995, for example, over 95% of blacks ages 10-15 enrolled in school, compared with over 98% of whites (Anderson et al. 2001).

The fact that blacks and whites are enrolled at nearly equal rates, while blacks complete roughly three fewer grades of school by the end of adolescence, implies that blacks are failing and repeating grades at a higher rate than whites (Anderson 2003; Anderson and Lam 2003; Anderson et al. 2001). In other words, although nearly all South African children enroll in school, blacks (as well as coloureds) are more likely to fail and repeat grades than white children, and thus advance through school at a slower rate. Blacks also remain in school at much later ages; while most whites and coloureds have completed or dropped out of secondary school by age 19, a substantial fraction of blacks (one third or more) remain enrolled in secondary school through their mid-20s (Anderson et al. 2001).

Primary and secondary schooling in South Africa consists of twelve grades, which traditionally were called Sub A, Sub B, and Standard 1 through Standard 10, though they have recently been renamed grades one through twelve. The final year of secondary school, grade 12/standard 10, culminates in the matriculation examination ("matric"), a national examination that determines one's eligibility for tertiary education. In recent cohorts, average completed schooling for blacks and coloureds is about grade 9, while for whites it is grade 12. Relatively few individuals attend schooling beyond matric. The main options for tertiary education are technikons (typically trade- or technically-oriented institutions) and universities (offering three and four year bachelor degrees). Although completed schooling is often referred to as "years of education" in the literature on South African schooling, the high grade repetition rates of blacks and coloureds means that grades and years of schooling are not equivalent; for many non-whites, completing 12 grades often takes 15 years of enrollment (Anderson et al. 2001).

Methods

Data. To examine the educational expectations of South African youth and their parents, we use data from the Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS), a longitudinal study of youth and their families that is a collaborative project of the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the University of Michigan, along with other U.S.-based researchers. Wave I of the survey was fielded from August 2002 through March 2003, with most data collection occurring between August and November 2002. Wave II is scheduled for 2005, while intermediate tracking procedures and mini-interviews of subsamples are currently taking place in the field.

CAPS contains two major sources of data. First is the household questionnaire, which collects demographic data on the entire household. Second is the detailed youth questionnaire, which collects data on schooling, employment, and fertility of household members between the ages of 14 and 22. The youth questionnaire includes a life history calendar that provides retrospective information on schooling, living arrangements, employment, fertility, and sexual partnerships. A basic numeracy and literacy skills test is also administered to each youth respondent. The household and youth surveys both include questions on schooling attainment, as well as other schooling variables such as quality of schooling, the amount of school fees paid, and educational expectations. In addition, data on school quality from the Western Cape Department of Education's school surveys will be linked to each individual young adult using the names of the schools the young adult has attended. Information on school quality and objective measures of student numeracy and literacy, combined with demographic components of the survey, will allow the research team to conduct detailed analyses on the dynamics of educational outcomes and attainment that have heretofore been impossible in South Africa.

CAPS uses a two-stage probability sample of households. (For further detail on the methodology of CAPS and the sampling procedure, see Anderson and Lam 2003.) The first-stage sample of Census Enumeration Areas (EAs) was drawn using the 1996 Census as a sampling frame. The survey oversampled white and black EAs relative to coloured EAs, because whites and blacks make up minority populations in Cape Town. (EAs in South Africa are highly homogenous with respect to race.) The second sampling stage selected households within each sampled EA. Upon recruitment into the survey, the household demographic questionnaire was administered to the person most knowledgeable about the household; this usually was one of the parents of the youth within the household. Full-length youth questionnaires were given separately to up to three youth (ages 14 – 22) in the household. Up to five visits were made to each household to make these interviews. Interviews were performed by teams of interviewers from Markinor, a South African survey research firm, with coordination and training from the US/UCT team of researchers. The baseline wave of CAPS contains data on 5,078 households containing 21,674 residents (42.8% black, 41.6% coloured, 15.0% white, and 0.6% Indian/other/unknown). Detailed interviews were done with 4,726 youth (45.1% black, 41.9% coloured, 12.2% white, and 0.8% Indian/other/unknown).

We emphasize that the data presented in this paper are preliminary. Data cleaning is still ongoing; for the current analyses, ambiguous or out-of-bounds cases have been dropped from the sample. We expect the final sample size, after data clean-up is finished, will be larger than that used in the present analyses. Additionally, the data are not weighted. Sampling weights need to be calculated to adjust for oversampling of whites and blacks in the initial sampling framework, as well as to adjust for the higher nonparticipation rate seen among whites (a feature common to all recent survey work in South Africa). Because whites and blacks are overrepresented in our

sample, we will present all results separately by race, rather than pooled together. All analyses are done in Stata v. 7.0, using the appropriate "svy" procedures to control for the complex design of the survey sample.

Measures. CAPS contains detailed interviews of youth ages 14 through 22. Because we are interested in educational expectations, we have restricted the sample to those youth who have completed grades 7, 8, or 9. Some of these students are currently enrolled in school (e.g., in grades 8, 9 or 10), but none have completed any schooling beyond grade 9. (Because the majority of the youth respondents in our analyses are teenagers, we refer to our youth respondents as adolescents throughout the rest of the paper.) We will analyze two dependent variables: educational expectations reported by the adolescents, and the educational expectations of coresident adults (usually a parent) for the adolescents in the sample. Adolescents were asked, "As it stands now, how much education do you think you will complete?" while the respondent to the household interview was asked, with respect to specific youth, "What is the highest level of education (NAME) is likely to complete?" (For ease of discussion, we refer to the adult who completed the household questionnaire and answered this question as "parent" because this individual typically was one of the parents of the adolescent.) Responses to the educational expectations questions were coded as finely-graded levels of schooling (grades 1 through 12, various forms of diplomas/certificates/degrees, etc.) but many of the cells have very small sample sizes. For the current analysis we recoded educational expectations as an ordinal variable with five categories: less than grade 12/standard 10, grade 12/standard 10, some postsecondary schooling (diploma or certificate from institutions other than a technikon or university), a diploma or degree from a technikon or university, and a postgraduate diploma or degree.

Status attainment models have shown the important effects that parents' education has on children's educational expectations (for a review, see Spenner and Featherman 1978). Along these lines, we include a variable that measures the highest level of completed education (in terms of grades, with tertiary schooling counted as grade 13, 14, 15 or 16, depending on the degree or certificate completed) in the household. Highest household education also serves as a proxy for socioeconomic status of the household, since education and income are highly correlated in South Africa.[2]

Because there may be gender differences in educational expectations, our models control for gender (1=male, 0=female). Our models also include a set of variables that capture the adolescents' schooling history. These are the age at which the adolescent first attended school, the proportion of years enrolled in school that the adolescent failed, and whether the adolescent is currently enrolled in school. We include these variables because it seems likely that an individual's enrollment history and relative success or failure while enrolled in school will influence educational expectations. Children who start school at later ages or who are behind in school for their age due to failure are more likely to fail subsequent grades in South Africa (Anderson, Kaplan, and Lam 2003), while children who have dropped out of school may have lower educational expectations than students who have remained in school.

In addition to measures of school performance, we include subjective measures of academic ability. From the youth questionnaire, we use a question that asked, "Overall, during your primary schooling, what type of student do you think you are/were?" We recoded the five response categories into dummy variables: below average student, average student (which served as the omitted category), and above average student. These dummy variables were used in the models of adolescents' educational expectations. In the models of parents' educational

expectations, we use a question from the household questionnaire that asked the adult respondent, "In (adolescent's) current school, or the last time he/she was in school, what kind of student was he/she?" We recoded responses into the same set of dummy variables that were used in the models of adolescents' educational expectations.

Lastly, we include an objective measure of academic ability, namely literacy and numeracy evaluations (LNE) that were administered to all individuals who completed youth interviews. This was a pen and paper questionnaire given to youths, who completed it without assistance in the presence of the interviewer. Respondents were not allowed to use a calculator, and there was no time limit. (The median length of time to complete the evaluations was about 35 minutes.) The LNE contains 22 literacy questions (word problems, definitions, etc.) and 23 numeracy questions (mathematical problems). Literacy and numeracy scores were calculated by summing up the number of correct responses to each type of question. Race-specific z-scores were then created by subtracting the mean score for that racial group from the individual's score, and dividing by the standard deviation.

A major variable that is not included in the analyses is the adolescent's age. The youth interviews sampled household members ages 14 through 22. The sample for these analyses is restricted to those who have completed only grades 7 through 9. Because the sample includes high school drop-outs, and because blacks in particular remain enrolled in secondary school at high rates through their mid-20s (Anderson et al. 2001), the age range in the sample is quite large. The mean age is 16.9 for blacks (range: 14 – 22), 16.1 for coloured (range: 14 – 22), and 15.0 for whites (range: 14 – 18). Youth who are behind in school for their age (say, a 20 year old in the eighth grade) have fallen behind for three reasons: 1) they began school at a late age; 2) they did not enroll for one or more years after they first began school; and 3) failure and grade

repetition. (See Anderson et al. 2001 and Anderson et al. 2003 for evidence that grade repetition is the major component of age delay in South Africa.) The wide age distribution seen in our sample is largely a result of individual's age at first schooling and proportion of grades failed, two of the major independent variables in our analyses; therefore, we will not include age in our models.

Because the educational expectations formation process may vary by race, and because weights are not yet available for CAPS, we conducted our analyses separately for the three major racial groups in the study: blacks (Africans), coloureds, and whites. We will run two sets of multivariate models for each dependent variable, one using self-reported measures of schooling history and academic ability, and the second set using objective measures of skills from the LNE. The first model for adolescents and parents includes gender, household education, age at first schooling, prior school failure history, and subjective measures of academic ability to predict educational expectations. The second set of models for adolescents and parents includes gender, household education, and either literacy or numeracy z-scores or both literacy and numeracy z-scores. Ordinal logit regressions were performed using the "svyologit" command in Stata 7.0.

Results

Summary statistics for the independent and dependent variables used are shown by racial group (black, coloured, and white) in Table 1. Panel A in Table 1 shows the summary statistics for the variables used in the analysis of adolescents' educational expectations, and Panel B shows the summary statistics for the variables used in the analysis of parents' educational expectations. Looking first at Panel A, one sees that coloured adolescents have lower educational expectations on average than whites and blacks. Similarly, the summary statistics for parents'

educational expectations (Panel B) show that parents of coloured adolescents on average have lower educational expectations for their adolescents than do parents of black or white adolescents. White adolescents on average live in households with more highly educated adults than blacks and coloureds. Blacks on average started school almost a full year later than coloureds and whites. While all of the white adolescents in our sample were enrolled in school at the time of the survey, some of the blacks and coloureds were not. Black adolescents are more likely to rate themselves as average students than coloureds and whites, while whites are more likely to rate themselves as above average students than blacks and coloureds. Similarly, parents of black adolescents are more likely to rate the adolescent as an average student than parents of coloured or white adolescents, and parents of white adolescents are more likely to rate their adolescent as an above average student than parents of black or coloured adolescents (Panel B). Finally, raw literacy and numeracy scores for blacks are much lower than scores for coloureds and whites, while raw scores for coloureds are much lower than those for whites. This is consistent with previous research on literacy and numeracy using national data from 1993 (Moll 1998). Z-scores for numeracy and literacy are, by definition, equal to zero for all of the youth respondents in CAPS (including those who are not in the sample used in our analyses), but because we have sampled the lower end of the grade distribution, z-scores for each racial group are slightly negative, on average.

(Table 1 about here)

In Table 2, we compare adolescents' educational expectations and parents' educational expectations for adolescents for each racial group. The modal response for both adolescents and parents from every racial group is "university or technikon degree or diploma," with the exception of coloured parents, whose modal educational expectation is grade 12 (matric). As one

would expect, adolescents' and parents' educational expectations usually correspond—the largest number of cases (usually the majority) fall along the diagonal. For all racial groups, we see the least correspondence between adolescents' and parents' educational expectations when adults expect the adolescent to receive some postsecondary schooling but not a diploma or degree from a technikon or university. Among black adolescents who do not expect to receive some postsecondary schooling when a parent expects them to, half the adolescents expect to receive less schooling than this and the other half expect to receive more schooling than this. Among coloured adolescents who do not expect to receive some postsecondary schooling when a parent expects them to, more of the adolescents expect to receive less schooling than this (i.e., less than grade 12 or grade 12) rather than more schooling (i.e., a university or technikon degree or diploma or a postgraduate degree or diploma). In contrast, among white adolescents who do not expect to receive some postsecondary schooling when a parent expects them to, the majority of adolescents expect to receive a technikon/university diploma or degree or higher. Overall, the greatest discrepancies between the level of education adolescents expect to achieve and the level of education parents expect them to achieve is found for coloured adolescents. For example, only 36.2% of coloured adolescents and their parents agree that the adolescent will receive some postsecondary schooling (compared to 53.9% and 50.0% for black and white adolescents, respectively), and only 38.6% of coloured adolescents and their parents agree that the adolescent will receive a postgraduate diploma or degree (compared to 75.3% and 77.4% for black and white adolescents, respectively).

(Table 2 about here)

Ordinal logit models of the effects of school performance, self-assessment of academic ability, and the control variables on adolescents' educational expectations are shown in Table 3.

For blacks, age at first schooling is significantly and negatively associated with educational expectations while current enrollment in school is significantly and positively associated with educational expectations. Rating oneself as a below average student has a marginal negative effect on educational expectations for black adolescents. As with black adolescents, current enrollment in school has a significant and positive effect on the educational expectations of coloured adolescents. But in contrast to black adolescents, the educational level of the adult in the adolescent's household with the most education and rating oneself as an above average student have highly significant and positive effects on the educational expectations of coloured adolescents. Also in contrast to black adolescents, the proportion of years in school that were failed has significant negative effects on the educational expectations of coloured adolescents. Finally, the results for white adolescents are similar to those for coloured adolescents, although the effects of highest educational level in the household, proportion of school years failed, and self-assessment as an above average student have stronger effects on educational expectations for whites than for coloureds. Because all white adolescents were enrolled in school at the time of the survey (see Table 1), current school enrollment could not be included in the model for whites.

Comparing the three models, one sees that there are important differences across the racial groups in the determinants of adolescents' educational expectations. While gender is unimportant for all three groups, household educational level is significant for coloureds and whites only. The proportion of school years failed has important effects for coloureds and whites but not for blacks. Instead, a different aspect of schooling history, the age at first schooling, is important for blacks. Finally, rating oneself as an above average student has important effects on educational expectations for coloureds and whites but not for blacks, while rating oneself as a

below average student has a marginally significant effect on the educational expectations of black adolescents only.

(Table 3 about here)

Table 4 presents models of adolescents' educational expectations as predicted by objective measures of literacy and numeracy, gender, and highest educational level in the household. The results are quite similar across each racial group. Being male has a marginally negative effect on educational expectations for blacks, but no effect for coloureds and whites, while household educational level has a strong, positive effect for all groups. Literacy and numeracy z-scores have highly significant positive effects on educational expectations for all groups when entered separately (Panels A and B). When entered together (Panel C), neither is significant for blacks, although numeracy remains significant for coloureds and whites.

(Table 4 about here)

Models of parents' educational expectations for adolescents are shown in Table 5. For blacks, age at first schooling has a significant negative effect, and the adolescents' current enrollment in school has a significant positive effect, echoing the findings of the model of black adolescents' educational expectations. But in contrast to the model of educational expectations for black adolescents, the gender of the adolescent has a significant effect on parents' educational expectations, with adults having lower expectations for black males. In addition, parental assessment of the academic ability of the adolescent has no effect on educational expectations for the adolescent.

The predictors of the educational expectations that parents have for coloured adolescents in their households are the same as the predictors of coloured adolescents' educational expectations for themselves with one exception. Parental assessment of the adolescent as a below

average student has a significant negative effect on their educational expectations for the adolescent, but is not significant in the model of adolescent educational expectations. In other words, relative to those who rate their adolescent as an average student, adults who rate their adolescent as a below average student have lower educational expectations for the adolescent.

The predictors of parents' educational expectations for white adolescents and white adolescents' own educational expectations are the same with one exception. The proportion of school years failed has no significant effect on parents' educational expectations for adolescents, while it has a significant negative effect on adolescents' educational expectations.

A comparison of the three models of parents' educational expectations shows some of the same racial differences in factors predicting educational expectation formation as the comparison of adolescents' educational expectations did. As in the comparison of adolescents' educational expectations by race, highest educational level in the household is significant for coloureds and whites only. As in the models of adolescents' educational expectations, rating the adolescent as an above average student has important effects for parents of coloured and white adolescents but not for parents of black adolescents. Finally, assessments of how well a student has been doing in school seem to be an important influence on the formation of parents' educational expectations for coloured and white adolescents but not for blacks.

(Table 5 about here)

Lastly, Table 6 presents models of parents' educational expectations for adolescents as a function of literacy and numeracy z-scores, the adolescent's gender, and highest educational level in the household. In these models, adults have lower educational expectations for black and coloured male adolescents, though gender has no significant effect for whites. Household educational level has significantly positive effects for all three racial groups. Literacy and

numeracy z-scores are highly significant positive predictors of adult educational expectations when entered into the model separately. When entered together, neither is a significant predictor for blacks, both are significant for coloureds, and only numeracy z-scores retain significance for whites.

A comparison of Tables 4 and 6 indicates that for blacks, the adolescent's gender is a more important predictor of parents' educational expectations than adolescents' educational expectations. Gender is marginally significant in the models for black adolescents but is significant at $p < .03$ for parents. In addition, highest educational level in the household is a more important predictor of parents' educational expectations than adolescents' educational expectations. Among coloureds, gender is not a significant predictor of educational expectations for adolescents but it is for parents. Also, literacy scores are a more important predictor of parents' educational expectations than adolescents' educational expectations when literacy and numeracy scores are considered together. Among whites, predictors of educational expectations are the same for adolescents and parents.

(Table 6 about here)

Discussion and conclusions

Our results show that prior educational history, a subjective measure of academic ability, and objective literacy and numeracy ratings all influence adolescents' educational expectations and parents' educational expectations for adolescents, though the findings show some differences in these factors among the three racial groups. Blacks enter school at a later age than coloureds or whites, and among blacks only, age at school entry plays an important role in producing educational expectations. The history of grade failure and repetition is important for coloureds

and whites, but not blacks. School enrollment is very important for blacks and coloureds, but cannot be examined for whites, since 100% of whites who have completed grades 7 – 9 but not grade 10 are currently enrolled in school.

Household educational level, not surprisingly, is generally a significant predictor of educational expectations. Gender frequently is not significant, and when it is, the variable suggests lower educational expectations for males than females. This is consistent with research on educational expectations in the United States (e.g., Morgan 1996; Goyette 2003), and research on gender and schooling outcomes in South Africa, which generally show minimal gender biases, with a tendency towards a slight female advantage in schooling outcomes (e.g., Anderson 2003; Anderson and Lam 2003; Case and Deaton 1999; Lam 1999). Although many developing countries show a strong female disadvantage in educational outcomes, South Africa exhibits a large amount of gender equity and, for many measures, a female advantage (e.g., Anderson 2003; Anderson et al. 2001).

Our research examined the correlation between parental and adolescent educational expectations. This relationship is potentially important, since if a parent has lower expectations than the adolescent, this could lead to conflict between them (for example, over potential unwillingness on the part of parents to pay for schooling beyond what they think the child should obtain). Our results (Table 2) show that blacks and whites generally show strong agreement between the educational expectations of adults and adolescents. This has important implications for intergenerational transmission of inequality; black adolescents, at least, are not being "held back" by low expectations from their parents. Coloureds, however, show greater discrepancies in parent/child expectations. For coloured adolescents who expect to obtain some postsecondary schooling, only 36.2% of parents have the same expectations; more parents (39.3%) expect their

children to completed lower levels of schooling. Among coloured adolescents who expect to complete a postgraduate degree, only 38.6% of parents concur in that assessment; nearly as many (34.1%) expect their adolescents to complete grade 12 only.

Our finding that level of educational expectations (of both adolescents and parents) were essentially the same for blacks and whites and lowest for coloureds is somewhat surprising. Given the relative advantages and disadvantages that each of the racial groups has faced, we might have expected educational expectations to be highest among white adolescents and their parents and lowest among blacks adolescents and their parents, with coloured adolescents and their parents somewhere in the middle. The finding of relatively high educational expectations for South African black adolescents is similar in nature to the finding that the educational expectations of African American adolescents are higher than those of non-Hispanic American whites, even when socioeconomic background is controlled (e.g., Morgan 1996; Solorzano 1991; but for a recent study that failed to find racial differences in the educational expectations of American adolescents, see Schneider and Stevenson 1999). Given what we know about the trends in educational attainment by race, it is unlikely that the majority of black adolescents will fulfill their educational expectations. Future waves of data will allow us to examine how much of a mismatch there is between educational expectations and later attainment, and whether parents or adolescents are better predictors of actual educational attainment. We also will be able to examine whether black (and other) adolescents change their expectations as they age, lowering them perhaps to better fit the reality of their social and economic circumstances. However, it will be particularly interesting to examine those black adolescents who are able to more or less meet their educational expectations and to study what factors facilitate the matching of educational expectations and attainment in this highly disadvantaged group.

Waves II and III of CAPS will provide extensive data for future analyses, but there is a great deal of additional work to do with the data from Wave I. CAPS contains rich data on family structure and retrospective coresidence histories. Other research on educational outcomes shows that family structure has a reduced effect on schooling outcomes, relative to its effect in the United States (e.g., Anderson 2003; Anderson and Lam 2003). While preliminary analyses suggested family structure has a minimal impact on educational expectations, more refined analyses are planned. More in-depth examination of the relationship between socioeconomic variables and educational expectations is also planned.

Notes

1. Some research views parents' educational expectations as directly influencing attainment; see Marini (1978).

2. Preliminary analyses suggest household education is a much better predictor of educational expectations than other socioeconomic variables such as household income, number of household members who are employed, an index of household durable goods, or other measures such as whether the household has access to basic utilities or lives in a shack.

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Table 1: Summary statistics of variables used in the analysis

A. Adolescent expectations sample	**Black**		**Coloured**		**White**	
	Mean	Std. Error	Mean	Std. Error	Mean	Std. Error
Adolescent's educational expectations	3.61	0.04	2.98	0.07	3.63	0.12
Male	0.42	0.02	0.47	0.02	0.52	0.04
Highest educational level in household	10.68	0.09	10.74	0.10	13.35	0.20
Age at first schooling	6.86	0.05	5.97	0.03	5.95	0.05
Proportion of school years failed	0.07	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.02	0.00
Currently enrolled in school	0.84	0.01	0.78	0.02	1.00	0.00
Self-assessment: below average student	0.04	0.01	0.07	0.01	0.06	0.02
Self-assessment: average student	0.64	0.02	0.57	0.02	0.48	0.04
Self-assessment: above average student	0.32	0.02	0.36	0.02	0.46	0.04
Literacy (raw score)	15.28	0.16	17.87	0.13	20.37	0.14
Literacy (z-score)	-0.01	0.04	-0.03	0.04	-0.17	0.09
Numeracy (raw score)	6.74	0.18	9.04	0.23	16.79	0.39
Numeracy (z score)	-0.11	0.04	-0.19	0.04	-0.20	0.10
N	734		646		164	
B. Parent expectations sample	**Black**		**Coloured**		**White**	
	Mean	Std. Error	Mean	Std. Error	Mean	Std. Error
Parent's educational expectations	3.25	0.06	2.48	0.06	3.48	0.12
Male	0.42	0.02	0.48	0.02	0.53	0.04
Highest educational level in household	10.69	0.10	10.72	0.10	13.37	0.20
Age at first schooling	6.91	0.06	6.04	0.03	5.96	0.05
Proportion of school years failed	0.07	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.02	0.00
Currently enrolled in school	0.81	0.02	0.70	0.02	0.99	0.01
Parent assessment: below average student	0.07	0.01	0.11	0.01	0.05	0.02
Parent assessment: average student	0.73	0.02	0.64	0.02	0.50	0.04
Parent assessment: above average student	0.20	0.02	0.24	0.02	0.45	0.04
Literacy (raw score)	15.16	0.17	17.60	0.13	20.41	0.14
Literacy (z-score)	-0.04	0.04	-0.12	0.04	-0.14	0.09
Numeracy (raw score)	6.66	0.18	8.63	0.24	16.84	0.40
Numeracy (raw score)	-0.13	0.04	-0.26	0.05	-0.19	0.10
N	708		713		165	

Note: standard errors are adjusted to control for complex survey sample design.

Table 2: Cross-tabulations of educational expectations of adolescents and parents

	Parent educational expectations for adolescents					
Black adolescents	Less than grade 12	Grade 12	Some postsecondary	University degree	Postgraduate degree	N
Less than grade 12	**53.9%**	15.4%	23.1%	7.7%	0.0%	13
Grade 12 (matric)	11.4%	**68.6%**	3.8%	14.3%	1.9%	105
Some postsecondary schooling	17.3%	5.8%	**53.9%**	17.3%	5.8%	52
University or technikon diploma or degree	6.3%	11.6%	3.8%	**74.8%**	3.5%	396
Postgraduate degree or diploma	11.7%	7.8%	0.0%	5.2%	**75.3%**	77
N	62	129	50	325	77	643
Coloured adolescents	Less than grade 12	Grade 12	Some postsecondary	University degree	Postgraduate degree	N
Less than grade 12	**55.6%**	31.9%	4.2%	8.3%	0.0%	72
Grade 12 (matric)	13.4%	**75.4%**	4.5%	5.2%	1.5%	134
Some postsecondary schooling	13.8%	25.5%	**36.2%**	19.2%	5.3%	94
University or technikon diploma or degree	5.8%	29.8%	8.0%	**50.2%**	6.2%	225
Postgraduate degree or diploma	4.6%	34.1%	9.1%	13.6%	**38.6%**	44
N	86	230	65	150	38	569
White adolescents	Less than grade 12	Grade 12	Some postsecondary	University degree	Postgraduate degree	N
Less than grade 12	**66.7%**	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6
Grade 12 (matric)	8.3%	**79.2%**	4.2%	8.3%	0.0%	24
Some postsecondary schooling	0.0%	5.6%	**50.0%**	38.9%	5.6%	18
University or technikon diploma or degree	3.8%	15.0%	7.5%	**61.3%**	12.5%	80
Postgraduate degree or diploma	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	16.1%	**77.4%**	100
N	10	35	16	63	35	159

Note: percentages sum to 100% within each row

Table 3. Ordinal logit models of adolescent educational expectations, by past schooling performance and self-assessed academic ability

	Black			Coloured			White		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.22	0.14	0.115	0.11	0.15	0.471	0.13	0.32	0.689
Highest educational level in household	0.08	0.05	0.130	0.10	0.04	0.022	0.34	0.11	0.002
Age at first schooling	-0.23	0.06	0.000	0.01	0.12	0.936	-0.24	0.20	0.243
Proportion of school years failed	-0.24	0.77	0.759	-3.27	1.06	0.002	-6.45	2.25	0.005
Currently enrolled in school	0.76	0.23	0.001	1.16	0.20	0.000	—	—	—
Self-assessment: below average student	-0.77	0.46	0.093	-0.38	0.27	0.167	0.30	0.50	0.541
Self-assessment: above average student	0.11	0.17	0.508	0.60	0.17	0.001	1.15	0.31	0.000
N			734			646			164
F			6.02			12.12			9.03
p			0.000			0.000			0.000

Note: standard errors are adjusted to control for complex survey sample design.

Table 4. Ordinal logit models of adolescent educational expectations, by race-specific literacy and numeracy z-scores

A. Literacy	**Black**			**Coloured**			**White**		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.23	0.13	0.091	-0.02	0.14	0.897	-0.06	0.31	0.848
Highest educational level in household	0.10	0.05	0.048	0.17	0.04	0.000	0.37	0.09	0.000
Literacy z-score	0.28	0.10	0.007	0.35	0.07	0.000	0.51	0.19	0.008
N			734			646			164
F			4.98			13.97			8.78
p			0.003			0.000			0.000

B. Numeracy	**Black**			**Coloured**			**White**		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.23	0.13	0.084	-0.15	0.15	0.301	-0.07	0.31	0.821
Highest educational level in household	0.10	0.05	0.050	0.15	0.04	0.000	0.35	0.10	0.001
Numeracy z-score	0.26	0.09	0.005	0.48	0.08	0.000	0.60	0.14	0.000
N			734			646			164
F			5.24			19.87			10.99
p			0.002			0.000			0.000

C. Literacy and numeracy	**Black**			**Coloured**			**White**		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.23	0.13	0.091	-0.13	0.15	0.393	-0.10	0.32	0.756
Highest educational level in household	0.10	0.05	0.061	0.15	0.04	0.000	0.33	0.09	0.001
Literacy z-score	0.19	0.13	0.146	0.14	0.08	0.105	0.28	0.18	0.128
Numeracy z-score	0.14	0.11	0.212	0.42	0.08	0.000	0.49	0.16	0.003
N			734			646			164
F			4.18			14.80			9.08
p			0.003			0.000			0.000

Note: standard errors are adjusted to control for complex survey sample design.

Table 5. Ordinal logit models of parent educational expectations for adolescents, by past schooling performance and parent assessment of academic ability

	Black			Coloured			White		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.33	0.14	0.022	-0.11	0.15	0.490	0.22	0.32	0.491
Highest educational level in household	0.07	0.05	0.118	0.19	0.05	0.001	0.38	0.11	0.001
Age at first schooling	-0.14	0.06	0.010	-0.16	0.12	0.181	-0.22	0.27	0.406
Proportion of school years failed	-0.08	0.81	0.923	-1.70	0.88	0.054	-3.89	2.38	0.106
Currently enrolled in school	0.98	0.23	0.000	2.42	0.23	0.000	—	—	—
Self-assessment: below average student	-0.45	0.29	0.124	-0.88	0.27	0.001	0.04	0.60	0.948
Self-assessment: above average student	0.23	0.16	0.147	0.70	0.18	0.000	1.53	0.38	0.000
N			708			713			165
F			8.30			23.21			8.93
p			0.000			0.000			0.000

Note: standard errors are adjusted to control for complex survey sample design.

Table 6. Ordinal logit models of parent educational expectations for adolescents, by race-specific literacy and numeracy z-scores

A. Literacy	**Black**			**Coloured**			**White**		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.29	0.12	0.023	-0.27	0.14	0.051	0.06	0.31	0.835
Highest educational level in household	0.10	0.04	0.021	0.28	0.05	0.000	0.44	0.11	0.000
Literacy z-score	0.25	0.09	0.004	0.44	0.08	0.000	0.45	0.20	0.027
N			708			713			165
F			5.66			21.64			13.08
p			0.001			0.000			0.000

B. Numeracy	**Black**			**Coloured**			**White**		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.27	0.12	0.027	-0.49	0.13	0.000	0.05	0.31	0.870
Highest educational level in household	0.10	0.04	0.021	0.26	0.05	0.000	0.44	0.11	0.000
Numeracy z-score	0.24	0.09	0.006	0.64	0.08	0.000	0.48	0.17	0.006
N			708			713			165
F			6.69			33.97			12.20
p			0.000			0.00			0.000

C. Literacy and numeracy	**Black**			**Coloured**			**White**		
	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*	Coeff.	Std. error	*p*
Male	-0.28	0.12	0.027	-0.46	0.13	0.001	0.02	0.31	0.947
Highest educational level in household	0.10	0.04	0.027	0.26	0.05	0.000	0.41	0.11	0.000
Literacy z-score	0.18	0.11	0.121	0.19	0.09	0.038	0.28	0.19	0.150
Numeracy z-score	0.13	0.12	0.277	0.54	0.09	0.000	0.38	0.17	0.026
N			708			713			165
F			5.03			25.22			10.65
p			0.001			0.000			0.000

Note: standard errors are adjusted to control for complex survey sample design.