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World FAMILY Map Project

PROTOTYPE REPORT





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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, global indices of democratization, gender equality, economic freedom, and environmental quality have been developed to track important trends in these domains, to focus global attention on these goals, and to encourage policy makers and civil society to take action to advance these goals. Yet virtually no major effort has been launched to track the well-being of families around the world.[1]

Accordingly, in 2010, the *World Family Map Project* seeks to launch a research initiative that will track central indicators of family strength around the globe. The *World Family Map Project (WFMP)* would partner with Child Trends, a nonpartisan research organization in Washington, D.C., the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada, and research organizations and universities around the world on this initiative.

The central goal of the *World Family Map Project* is to develop a map of international family indicators that track four important domains of family strength: family structure, family culture, family process, and family economic well-being. Specifically, the *World Family Map* © will track approximately 20 indicators of family strength such as those reported here in these four domains—from national marriage rates to family satisfaction levels to domestic violence to poverty—in countries around the globe.

In addition, the *WFMP* would also focus on two important, related aims. First, the project would determine how family strengths are related to important social, health, and educational outcomes—especially outcomes related to the well-being of children—in nations around the world. Second, the project seeks to explore how cultural, economic, and political forces influence the nature, quality, and stability of family life throughout the globe.

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RATIONALE

In tracking family strengths around the world, and in analyzing their consequences and causes, the *World Family Map Project* will provide important information and analyses to policy makers, scholars, journalists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on family-related matters around the world. The global scope of the information and analysis provided by the *WFMP* promises to be particularly important because there have been essentially no efforts to develop a comprehensive, comparative portrait of family trends in the developing world. In a bi-annual conference held in a different global city every two years, the *World Family Map Project* will also bring together scholars, NGO leaders, journalists, and policy makers to discuss the health of the family, and the cultural, economic, and political forces affecting family life throughout the world. By shining a spotlight on the health and functioning of family life, the *WFMP* should generate discussion and foster public and private efforts to strengthen the welfare of families around the globe.

PROTOTYPE REPORT

This prototype report is designed to offer scholars, policy makers, and potential funders a sense of what the *World Family Map Project* will accomplish. In this report, the project tracks three family indicators related to family structure, family culture, and family process in 21 countries in seven regions of the world:

- Asia
- Europe
- Middle East
- North America
- Oceania
- Latin America
- Sub-Saharan Africa

Specifically, this report focuses on:

- the percentage of children living with two biological parents as an indicator of family structure
- popular support for marriage as an indicator of family culture
- children's exposure to domestic violence in the home as an indicator of family process.

This prototype report also explores how an important family indicator is related to a key dimension of child well-being. In this case, the *WFMP* report focuses on the association between family structure and secondary school-age children's enrollment in school in six countries: Colombia, Egypt, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru.

KEY FINDINGS

- The percentage of children living with both of their probable biological parents ranges widely across 16 countries in varied geographic regions. Children in Asia, the Middle East, and Southern Europe are particularly likely to be living with both their mother and father. By contrast, children living in the Americas, Australia, Northern Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa are less likely to be living with both biological parents.
- A clear majority of the adults in 20 countries around the world believe that the institution of marriage is still relevant today. In virtually every country profiled in this World Family Map Project report, at least three-quarters or more of adults disagree with the idea that "marriage is an outdated institution."
- Data from children in more than 50 countries indicate that between one-tenth and one-third of school-aged children in East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America are exposed to domestic violence in the home. Domestic violence appears to be particularly common in the East Asian and Pacific and the South American countries polled. By contrast, domestic violence is less common in the Central American and European countries polled.
- In an analysis of six countries in the developing world, this report suggests that secondary school-age children living with one biological parent are about as likely to be enrolled in school as children living with two biological parents. However, this report finds that children in developing countries who do not live with their biological parents (i.e., orphans or fostered children) are significantly less likely to be enrolled in school.

METHODOLOGY, DATA SOURCES, AND POLICY

The *World Family Map Project* staff conducted a thorough review of the research and international sources of data on family structure, culture, process, and economics. Staff developed a conceptual framework synthesizing research on

each region of the world, and generated desired indicators for each area of family strength. In making international comparisons, comparability across countries is a top priority, and this was accomplished using surveys with the same questions and methodology across countries or by harmonization of data where possible. Data sources were reviewed and selected to measure the indicators based upon their quality and international comparability, and countries were chosen on the basis of regional representativeness as well as data quality and availability.

The indicator of family structure—the percentage of children living with two probable biological parents—was constructed from two main sources of data, the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series International (IPUMS), complemented by survey and administrative data for individual countries where necessary. While a biological relationship is positively identified in the DHS, it is not always the case in other data sources, which vary in their capacity to separate out step-parent relationships.

The source of data for the family culture indicator on perception of marriage was the World Values Survey. The data source for the family process indicator on children's exposure to domestic violence was a UNICEF poll of children. The analysis of family structure and enrollment in school was conducted using the DHS for six countries, selected on the basis of regional representativeness and on having the necessary variables to conduct the analysis. Logistic regressions produced odds ratios for the likelihood of attending school among children of secondary school age, as defined by each country, for children with two, one, and no biological parent. The analyses controlled for background characteristics including educational level of the household head, household wealth, urbanicity, and child's gender and age. Most of the data for all analyses were collected circa 2000, although some exceptions were unavoidable because data were unavailable.

The limitations of this prototype reflect the limitations of the available data. Such limitations are noted in each table. The reader is asked to take into account differences in definitions, age of respondents, sample sizes, year of data collection, and question wording across countries which affect comparability. For example, in the education analysis, some desirable control variables to further specify the model were not available. However, the estimates presented are consistent with other data sources and research, and thus provide a reasonable assessment of family strengths across the globe.

Despite unavoidable limitations, this World Family Map Project prototype report provides important information and insights into the health of the family in 21 countries around the globe, as well as the links between family structure and children's educational enrollment in the developing world. The information and insights offered in this report should be of particular value to scholars, policy makers, journalists, and leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on family-related matters. Finally, this World Family Map Project prototype report should provide potential funders with some sense of what a comprehensive research initiative tracking and analyzing family life around the globe in 2010 could offer to public and private organizations who wish to help families around the world thrive.

All Over the Map: Between Four and Nine out of Ten Children Live with Both Biological Parents

KEY FINDING: The percentage of children living with both of their biological parents varies widely by geographic region. Children in Asia, the Middle East, and Southern Europe are particularly likely to be living with both their mother and father. By contrast, children living in the Americas, Australia, Northern Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa are less likely to be living with both biological parents.

A large body of evidence from the developed world, especially the United States, indicates that children fare best when they are reared in a two-parent family headed by their married, biological or adoptive parents, especially if that marriage is low in conflict. This is not to say that children in other types of families cannot thrive; indeed, most do thrive. Nevertheless, on average, research conducted in a range of Western countries indicates that children do better when they are raised in an intact family with both of their biological or adoptive parents.

Specifically, studies from Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Sweden, and the United States typically find that children who are raised outside of an intact, two-parent family are approximately two times more likely to experience serious negative life outcomes—from depression to delinquency to drug use to a teenage pregnancy.[2] Collectively, these studies suggest that two parents devote more time and money to children than do one parent; they also indicate that biological parents are more likely to invest emotionally and financially in their children than are step-parents, to refrain from abusing them, and to enjoy higher quality relationships with their children.[3] Moreover, children raised by their biological parents tend to enjoy more emotional and physical stability in their lives, compared to children in single-parent families, step-families, and other households.[4] While research suggests that self-selection of parents plays a role in accounting for these findings, with more advantaged couples being more likely to delay parenthood until marriage, to marry, and to stay married, it also appears that marriage plays a role over and above the effects of self-selection.[5] For these reasons, among others, research suggests that children in the West enjoy higher levels of economic, social, and emotional well-being when they are raised in an intact family by their two biological parents.

Less is known about the value of the intact, married family for children in other parts of the world. Given the relatively small size of nuclear families, and the individualistic ethos found in much of the developed world, children may be particularly dependent on the emotional, financial, and social resources of their two biological parents

in the developed world. By contrast, the strength of extended family and kinship ties, and the familistic ethos, found in much of the developing world and Southern Europe may protect children from suffering ill effects if they live apart from one or both of their parents.[6] It is also possible that children could doubly benefit from being in a household that contains both their biological parents and members of their extended family. In addition, marriage as an institution differs across nations, which may affect the implications of marriage for children. Accordingly, one of the central aims of the *World Family Map Project* will be to determine how family structure—including the biological presence of parents, the marital status of parents, and the presence of extended family members—matters for the economic, social, and emotional well-being of children in different regions of the world.

To date, the more embryonic social science on family structure in the developing world suggests that the presence of two biological parents is about as important to child outcomes in Latin America as it is in the West, whereas the presence of two biological parents appears to be less important in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.[7] But this literature has focused on a limited set of outcomes, and a more comprehensive portrait of the role that family structure plays in the lives of children around the globe is yet to be painted. To help paint that portrait, one of the indicators that the *World Family Map Project* tracks is the percentage of children living with their two biological parents.

Moreover, there are also cultural, religious, and normative reasons to explore this indicator. For instance, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* holds that a child shall have "as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents."[8] The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,* among other sources of moral authority, suggests that children should ideally be raised by their biological parents; thus, for some, this family indicator is of intrinsic interest as a marker for the welfare of children.

Accordingly, Figure 1 displays the percentage of children who live with their two probable biological parents. The term "probable" is used to clarify that data vary across countries in the degree to which biological and step-parents are identified with certainty. For eleven countries, the data source positively identifies biological parents, but for five countries for which census data are relied upon, step-parents are underestimated and therefore the estimates shown in the table for biological parents will include some step-parents who are not identified. We rely on data that were collected as close as possible to the year 2000 (but note that our data for China come from 1990 since access to the 2000 data is restricted). Because of data limitations, we were only able to find data for 16 of the 21 countries we are tracking for this *World Family Map Project* prototype. In the coming years, the *WFMP* hopes to find data on children's family structure in these five countries, and others.

Figure 1 suggests that children living in the relatively less-developed and/or more familistic-oriented societies of Asia, the Middle East, and Southern Europe are more likely to live with their two biological parents, whereas children living in the relatively more-developed and/or individualistic societies of Oceania, North America, and Northern Europe are more likely to live apart from one or both of their two biological parents.[9] Specifically, in the less developed and/or familistic-oriented regions we analyzed, 80 percent or more of the children in Asia (China [87 percent], India [80 percent], Indonesia [88 percent], Malaysia [87 percent]), the Middle East (Egypt [91 percent]), and Southern Europe (Spain [84 percent]) appear to be living with their biological parents. By contrast, in the more-developed and/or more individualistic regions, less than 80 percent of the children lived with their biological parents in Oceania (Australia [71 percent]), North America (Canada [78 percent], United States [65 percent]) and Northern Europe (Great Britain [75 percent], Sweden [74 percent]).

When it comes to living with both of one's biological parents, the patterns are more varied in two regions that tend to be less developed and

Figure 1. Percentage of children living with two probable biological parents, circa 2000

Legend

Below 70	(Ranges from 36 in South Africa to 69 in U.S.)
70 to 84	(Ranges from 71 in Australia to 84 in Spain)
85 or higher	(Ranges from 87 in Malaysia & China to 91 in Egypt)

Sources–
Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS):
IPUMS International;
Australian Bureau of Statistics Monthly Population Survey;
National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth-Canada;
General Household Survey-United Kingdom;
Population Register data-Sweden.

Notes-
China's estimate is from 1990
India's estimate is from 2005-06

Asia	%	Europe	%	Latin America	%	Middle East	%	North America	%	Oceania	%	Sub-Saharan Africa	%
China	87	Great Britain	75	Colombia	61	Egypt	91	Canada	74	Australia	71	Nigeria	79
India	80	Spain	84	Mexico	77			United States	65			South Africa	36
Indonesia	88	Sweden	74	Peru	75								
Malaysia	87												

more familistic in their orientation: Latin America (Colombia [61 percent], Mexico [77 percent], Peru [75 percent]) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Nigeria [79 percent]), South Africa [36 percent]). This suggests, not surprisingly, that a straightforward connection between family structure and economic development, as well as a society's culture, will not always be found. At times, unique economic or cultural patterns confound such straightforward connections. For instance, patterns of paternal labor migration in Africa and Latin America may explain why children in these two regions are less likely to live with both of their parents, compared to children in other regions.

Overall, Figure 1 suggests a striking degree of variation in family structure around the globe. For instance, less than two-thirds of children live with their biological parents in the nations of Colombia, South Africa, and the United States. By contrast, more than 85 percent of children live with both biological parents in the nations of China, Egypt, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The issue focus section of this prototype examines how these variations in family structure are linked with children's school enrollment in six countries in the developing world. In the future, the *World Family Map Project* seeks to explore how these national variations in family structure influence the welfare of children around the globe across a range of social, emotional, and physical domains.

Over Three-Quarters of Adults Around the World Believe that Marriage is Still Relevant

KEY FINDING: A clear majority of the adults in 20 countries around the world believe that the institution of marriage is still relevant today. In virtually every country profiled in the *World Family Map Project,* three-quarters of adults disagree with the idea that "marriage is an outdated institution." Nevertheless, there are regional variations in marriage attitudes. Adults in Asia, the Middle East, and Oceania are particularly likely to believe that marriage is still relevant. By contrast, support for marriage is less consistent in the Americas, Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

The nature, function, and lived experience of marriage varies around the world. For example, marriage looks and feels different in Sweden compared with Saudi Arabia, in China compared with Canada, and in Argentina compared with Angola. Nevertheless, across time and space, in most societies and cultures, marriage has anchored the adult life course and the organization of kinship. Specifically, for much of world history, the institution of marriage has shaped or governed sexual intercourse, childbearing and childrearing, adult intimacy, and kinship obligations and resource pooling between men, women, and children.[10]

But the institution of marriage's hold over the adult life course and human kinship has weakened in recent years around much of the globe, especially in the developed world. Dramatic increases in cohabitation, divorce, and nonmarital childbearing in the Americas, Europe, and Oceania over the last four decades provide demographic signs that the institution of marriage has weakened in some parts of the world.[11] As importantly, the meaning of marriage is shifting in much of the world. Around much of the globe, marriage is emerging as more optional for adults, rather than a necessity for the survival of adults and children. In addition, the focus of marriage is less on a range of kin-related goods—from childbearing to mutual aid in old age—and more on emotional intimacy between adults. When the focus of marriage is narrowed in this way, men and women tend to marry later, divorce more often, and move in and out of a range of intimate relationships, in part because emotions are a comparatively fragile basis for a stable marriage.[12]

Given the changing place of marriage in many contemporary societies, the *World Family Map Project* seeks to understand how adults around the world look at marriage. Our goals are two-fold. First, marriage has historically played a central role in the organization of human intimacy and kinship and, as such, is of intrinsic interest to any effort to understand global family trends.

Figure 2. Percentage who disagree that "marriage is and outdated institution," circa 2000

Legend

Below 80	(Ranges from 67 in South Africa to 79 in New Zealand)
80 to 89	(Ranges from 80 in several countries to 86 in China)
90 or higher	(Ranges from 90 in U.S. to 97 in Indonesia)

Source–
World Values Survey (WVS)

Notes-
Australia's estimate is from 2005
Estimates reported are for respondents age 19 and over.

Asia	%	Europe	%	Latin America	%	Middle East	%	North America	%	Oceania	%	Sub-Saharan Africa	%
China	86	Great Britain	74	Argentina	81	Egypt	96	Canada	78	Australia	82	Nigeria	84
India	80	Spain	76	Colombia	75	Saudi Arabia	84	United States	90	New Zealand	84	South Africa	67
Indonesia	97	Sweden	80	Mexico	79								
S. Korea	84			Peru	80								
Singapore	80												

Second, in many societies, marriage has played a key role in providing a stable context for the bearing and rearing of children, and for the integration of fathers into the life of their children.[13] Thus, the health of marriage may have important implications for the welfare of children.

Figure 2 provides information compiled from surveys conducted around the world in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Data indicate that popular support for marriage is generally high but tends to be higher in Asia, the Middle East, and Oceania. Support for marriage is less consistent in the Americas, Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

We rely on data collected in 20 countries between 1998 and 2005 to determine whether men and women around the world still believe that marriage is a relevant institution. Specifically, the World Values Survey asked men and women around the globe if they agree or disagree that "marriage is an outdated institution."As Figure 2 shows, 80 percent or more of the respondents in Asia (China [86 percent], India [80 percent], Indonesia [97 percent], South Korea [84 percent], and Singapore [80 percent]) and Oceania (Australia [82 percent] and New Zealand [84 percent]) disagree with the idea that marriage is outdated. In the Middle East, support for marriage is even higher, with 96 percent of Egyptians and 84 percent of Saudi Arabians believing that marriage is still relevant.

By contrast, support for marriage is less consistent in the Americas, Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa. In North America, 90 percent of U.S. adults, 78 percent of Canadians, and 79 percent of Mexicans disagree marriage is

outdated. In South America, support for marriage ranges from 75 percent in Colombia to 80 percent in Peru to 81 percent in Argentina. In Europe, the popular belief that marriage is not outdated varies from a low of 74 percent in Great Britain and 76 percent in Spain to a surprising high of 80 percent in Sweden, despite the prevalence of cohabitation there. In Sub-Saharan Africa, support ranges from a low of 67 percent in South Africa to a high of 84 percent in Nigeria.

One thing that is worth noting about these trends in popular views regarding marriage is that three-quarters or more of men and women in virtually every country of the *World Family Map Project* analyzed for this indicator reject the idea that "marriage is an outdated institution." In other words, Figure 2 suggests that popular support for marriage as a relevant institution remains high in most countries around the globe. And even in Great Britain and South Africa, which register the lowest levels of popular support for marriage, a clear majority of their populations think that marriage is not outdated. Clearly, although the institution of marriage may have changed and weakened in recent years, it still holds a powerful place in the popular imagination in countries around the world.

Nevertheless, there are also obvious variations in popular support for marriage. How does one make sense of the variation in these trends? Religion is likely one source of variation in these trends. In countries like Egypt, Indonesia, and the United States, which register high levels of popular support for marriage, the population tends to be more religious, compared with countries with equivalent levels of development.[14] Likewise, Western countries like Canada and Great Britain are probably less supportive of marriage because they are more developed economically and more likely to embrace an individualistic ethos, both of which make marriage less of an economic and cultural necessity.[15] Finally, longstanding cultural and demographic trends—such as the high prevalence of cohabitation in parts of Latin America and the matrifocal character of family life in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa—may account for lower levels of support for marriage in some African and Latin American countries.

Still, Figure 2 presents some surprises. In particular, popular support for marriage seems to be as high in Sweden (80 percent) as it is in India (80 percent). Given that Sweden is a highly developed and secular society, and that India is a developing and highly religious society,[16] it is surprising that adults register the same level of support for marriage in these two countries. One possible explanation for this finding is that marriage means something rather different to adults in these two countries. Marriage may be viewed as primarily an emotional (or soulmate) relationship between two adults in Sweden, and as primarily a kin-focused institution in India. Thus, similar responses to this question on the World Values Survey may not be completely comparable.

In sum, Figure 2 indicates that popular support for marriage remains high across much of the globe. But our results also indicate that that popular support for marriage varies from country to country, perhaps because popular understandings of marriage vary from one society to the next. One of the central aims of the *World Family Map Project* in the coming years will be to determine what and how varied social and cultural factors account for variation in popular support for marriage around the globe and how these differences are related to the development and well-being of children.

At Least One out of Ten Children are Exposed to Domestic Violence in Three Regions of the World

KEY FINDING: Between one-tenth and one-third of school-aged children in East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Central and South America are exposed to domestic violence in the home. According to reports from children ages 9-18 by UNICEF, 14 percent or more of these children living in these regions encounter hitting and shouting in their families. Domestic violence appears to be particularly common in the East Asian and Pacific and the South American countries polled. By contrast, domestic violence is less common in the Central American and European countries polled.

The global prevalence of domestic violence in the lives of children is an understudied phenomenon. Little is known about the odds that children will be exposed to physical violence in their homes from one region to the next. Accordingly, relying upon a survey of children ages 9-18 conducted by UNICEF in 1999-2001 in East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America, the *World Family Map Project* focuses its attention on the likelihood that children are exposed to domestic violence in their families in four regions around the world.

Research conducted largely in the United States indicates that domestic violence is important for a number of reasons. Witnessing or experiencing physical violence in the home is associated with a range of social and psychological problems among children. Psychologically, children are more likely to suffer from depression, low self-esteem, excessive aggression, and substance abuse. Socially, they are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviors, juvenile delinquency, and adult criminal behavior if they are exposed to domestic violence. Cognitively, they are more likely to have lower IQ scores when exposed to domestic violence. Children who are exposed to physical violence in the home are also more likely to resort themselves to domestic violence once they become adults.[17] The social scientific record is less clear on the effects of exposure to yelling or verbal conflict in the home; nevertheless, children also appear more likely to suffer from higher rates of psychopathology, low self-esteem, and antisocial behavior when their homes are characterized by frequent yelling or verbal conflict.[18] It should be noted that many of these studies have been conducted with non-representative samples and many fail to control fully for confounding factors such as social and economic disadvantage. Nevertheless, negative outcomes are quite consistently identified.

The effect of hitting and yelling on children may also vary by cultural context. For instance, research in the U.S. suggests that the effect of corporal punishment on children may depend on

whether or not corporal punishment is seen by children as morally legitimate in their community or culture.[19] Accordingly, in investigating the prevalence of domestic violence and verbal conflict in the home, researchers have to be careful not to assume that hitting and yelling are consistently associated with negative outcomes for children in every cultural context. Nevertheless, given the largely consistent character of the research in the U.S., the *WFMP's* working hypothesis is that both violence and verbal conflict are associated with negative outcomes for children around the globe.

Moreover, the international community is largely united in its moral opposition to domestic violence in the home. In 2008, for instance, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the "UNite to End Violence against Women" campaign, which is a multi-year effort designed to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls around the globe. In his words, "there is one universal truth, applicable to all countries, cultures and communities: violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, [and] never tolerable."[20]

Accordingly, relying on a UNICEF survey of children in four regions of the world, the *World Family Map Project* presents Figure 3, which maps out the prevalence of domestic violence in the homes of children ages 9-18 in East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America. Unfortunately, UNICEF was not able to study domestic violence in other parts of the world. Note also that there are some limitations associated with the data.

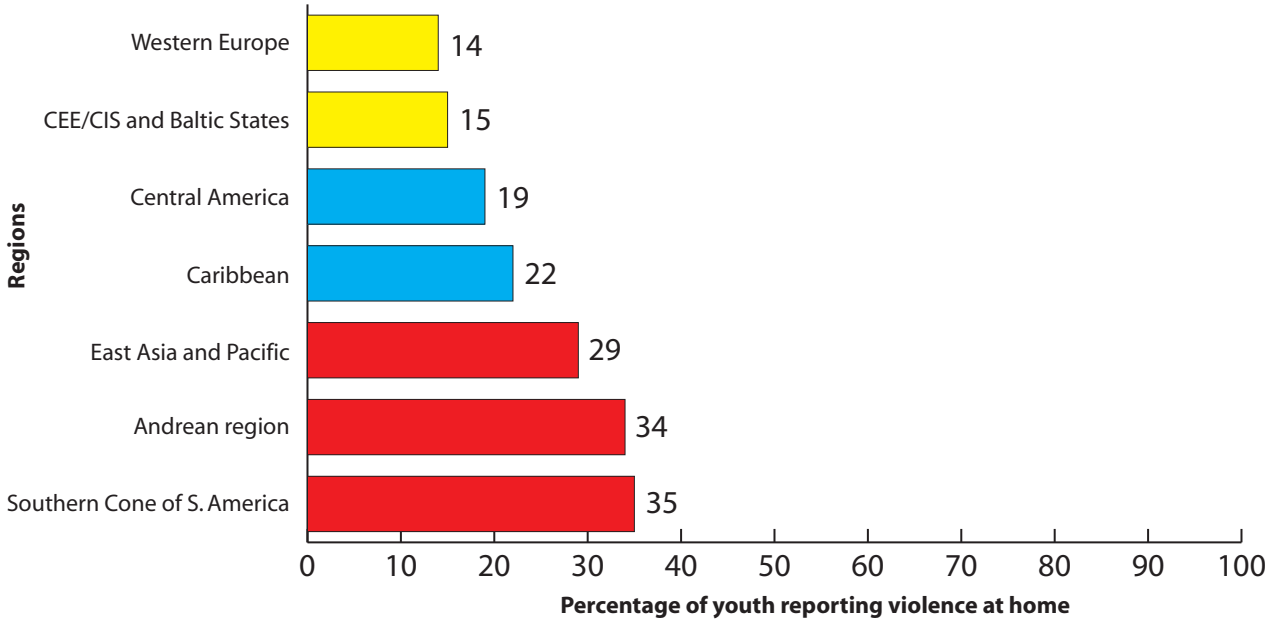
Comparisons across regions of the world must be made with caution since differences in questions across countries limit the comparability of the data. While all regions include hitting or beating, shouting is not included in the data presented for East Asia and the Pacific. In addition, regional data rather than country data are presented because of the reticence of some countries to report their data. One of the implications is that Figure 3 probably underreports the prevalence of yelling and hitting in East Asia and the Pacific, compared to other regions studied for this indicator.

Figure 3 suggests that domestic violence is most prevalent in East Asia and the Pacific, where 29 percent of children report witnessing people hit one another in the home, and in South America, where approximately 34 percent of children report witnessing "shoutings and beatings" in their homes. About one out of five children report domestic violence in the regions of the Caribbean (22 percent) and Central America (19 percent). Finally, Figure 3 suggests that domestic violence is less common in Europe, where 15 percent of children in CEE/CIS (Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States) and Baltic states and 14 percent of children in Western Europe report witnessing shouting and hitting in their homes.

In trying to understand the sources of variation in regional patterns of violence, three factors likely help to explain why domestic violence is higher in some countries and lower in other countries. First, less developed countries seem to have higher rates of domestic violence, perhaps in part because families in those countries are more likely to suffer from economic strain, which is associated with domestic violence.[21] Second, cultural traditions of machismo and patriarchal authority in, respectively, Latin America and East Asia and the Pacific may help to account for higher levels of domestic violence in these regions.[22] Third, many European countries have passed laws banning corporal punishment; these laws, and the social marketing campaigns associated with them, appear to have reduced the corporal punishment of young children. They may also have helped to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence in the European countries that have adopted these laws.[23]

Future research is needed to determine the social and cultural sources of domestic violence in different regions of the world, and the prevalence of domestic violence in Africa, the Middle East, and North America. More importantly, the *World*

Figure 3. Domestic Violence reported by youth in each region polled, 1999-2001



Regions	Countries included
Western Europe	9 countries, which chose not to be identified
CEE/CIS and Baltic States	26 countries, which chose not to be identified, and Kosovo were polled
Central America	El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama
Caribbean	Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica
East Asia and Pacific	Australia, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Macao, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam
Andean region	Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela
Southern Cone of S. America	Argentina, Chile, Uruguay

Source: UNICEF children's opinion polls, 1999-2001.
NOTES:
**Age of respondents: 9 to 17, except 9 to 18 in Latin America (Central America, Carribean, Andean, Southern Cone)
**Sample sizes were modest (about 400 - 500 in most countries), but were larger in some of the larger countries (e.g. 1900 in China; 1,000 in Indonesia; 800 in Russia)
**Question wording: Varied across countries and included verbal as well as physical abuse, except while all regions include hitting or beating, shouting is not included in the data presented for East Asia and the Pacific.

The question wordings are:
"In my house there are shoutings and beatings…" (yes/no) -- Latin America
"In your home, do people hit each other?" (yes/no) -- East Asia and the Pacific
"Shouting and hitting" at home -- Europe (precise question wording not available)

Family Map Project aims to investigate the consequences of such violence for children around the globe.

Given the research to date, it is likely that witnessing or experiencing domestic violence in the home is associated with a range of social and emotional problems for children. This is particularly disturbing because Figure 3 indicates that between about one-tenth and one-third of children in varied regions the *World Family Map Project* studied for this indicator are being exposed to hitting, beating, and/or yelling in the home.

Issue Focus
Zero, One, or Two: Is the Number of Biological Parents Related to School Attendance?

OVERVIEW: There is wide consensus in the international community that universal education benefits children, their family members, and the society at large. Nevertheless, there is considerable variation in rates of enrollment in school for children across the developing world. Family structure may be one factor influencing the likelihood that secondary school-age children are enrolled in school. We present three hypotheses about how family structure may be related to school enrollment. One hypothesis is that two biological parents may be more likely to have the financial, social, and emotional resources required to get or keep their children in school. On the other hand, if mothers are significantly more likely to invest in their children than are fathers, children may benefit—in terms of schooling—from being raised in a household headed by a single mother. Alternatively, the meaning of being in a two-parent or one-parent household may vary substantially across developing nations, allowing no overall conclusions.

In an effort to determine whether and how family structure is linked to children's enrollment in secondary education in the developing world, this *World Family Map Project Issue Focus* explores the association between family structure and the enrollment of children aged 11-14 in six developing countries: Colombia, Egypt, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru. After controlling for a number of sociodemographic factors, this report finds that only in Colombia are secondary school-age children living with two biological parents more likely to attend school, compared with children living only with one biological parent. In the other countries, children living with one biological parent are as likely to attend school as children living with two biological parents.

However, in five out of the six countries studied in this analysis, after controls, children living with their two biological parents are more likely to be enrolled in school than are children living in a home without either of their biological parents (i.e., orphans or children being fostered). Therefore, this issue focus suggests that children in the Latin American, African, Asian, and Middle Eastern countries studied for this report typically have an educational advantage when they live with both of their biological parents, compared with children who live with neither parent.

BACKGROUND

Universal primary education of children in the developing world is one of eight goals selected by world leaders in 2000 under the aegis of the United Nations Millennium Development Initiative.[24] The focus on education embodied in the second Millennium Development Goal is but one sign that the international community now recognizes the importance of education for the economic, social, and physical well-being of children, their family members, and society at large.[25] The international community has made important strides in meeting this development goal, with primary school enrollment in the developing world up from 83 percent in 2000 to 88 percent in 2006.[26]

Nevertheless, the percentage of children who are enrolled in secondary school is markedly lower. For instance, the UN recently estimated that less than 55 percent of secondary school-age children are enrolled in a secondary school.[27] This means that the important global strides that have been made in recent years to ensure that children in the developing world get the primary education they need have not been matched by a similarly successful effort to furnish them with a secondary education.

One factor that could account for the considerable degree of variation in secondary school-age children's enrollment in school may be family structure. Indeed, recent research suggests that family structure varies widely across the developing world. For instance, only about 36 percent of children in South Africa live with both of their biological parents, whereas an estimated 91 percent of children in Egypt live with both of their biological parents.[28] These variations in family form may have important implications for the odds that children will be able to enroll and persist in school, if biological parents play a particularly important role in devoting financial, cultural, and social resources to their children. Accordingly, this *World Family Map Project* Issue Focus seeks to determine what role, if any, family structure plays in the odds that secondary school-age children in the developing world are enrolled in school.

This study presents findings from a *WFMP* study of Demographic Health Survey data taken from 86,727 children of secondary school age[29] in six countries: Colombia, Egypt, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru. We focus on the link between family structure—children living with both biological parents, with one biological parent, and with no biological parent—and secondary school-age children's enrollment in school.[30] This study also examines the association between family structure and children's schooling after controlling for five sociodemographic factors: the head of the household's education, the household's wealth, region (urban or rural), the child's sex, and the child's age. These controls allow the *World Family Map Project* to determine if any associations between family structure and children's schooling are robust even after controlling for sociodemographic factors that could confound or distort any links between family structure and education. Unfortunately, we do not have data on whether single parent families have experienced separation, divorce, or death—a distinction that might affect the association between family structure and secondary education.

THE FAMILY'S ROLE IN CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING

In his seminal work on education, the late James Coleman detailed the ways, in general, that the economic, cultural, and social capital of the family plays a crucial role in shaping the arc of children's educational attainment in the United States.[31] Coleman's insights, which have been supported by research in much of the developed world, suggest that the economic, cultural, and social capital of the family is important in the following ways for children's educational achievement:

- Economic capital allows parents to buy books, school uniforms, hire tutors, pay school fees or tuition, and move to neighborhoods/regions with good schools
- Parents' cultural (or human) capital—that is, their skills, knowledge, and education—can be an important resource in guiding

their children's education, in inspiring their children to make the most of their education, and in providing their children with the basic knowledge and cultural literacy they need to do well in school.

- A family's social capital—social networks constituted by family members that foster mutual aid, share information, and reinforce norms—can be crucial in monitoring, motivating, and encouraging children to become educated; moreover, family social capital can also allow children to access economic and cultural resources in their kinship networks.[32]

Coleman also argued that the structure of the family influences the likelihood that a child will have access to the economic, cultural, and social capital that maximizes his or her odds of educational success.[33] In Coleman's words:

> The physical absence of adults may be described as a structural deficiency in family social capital. The most prominent element of structural deficiency in modern families is the single-parent family. However, the nuclear family itself… can be seen as structurally deficient, lacking the social capital that comes with the presence of… grandparents or aunts and uncles in or near the household.[34]

Coleman's basic point was this: Children may be most likely to succeed educationally when they have easy access to many family members who can invest in them, such as an extended family, and may be most likely to fail when they have access to only one or no parent, as is the case when children live in a single-parent family or in an orphanage.[35]

THE "TWO PARENTS ARE BETTER THAN ONE" HYPOTHESIS

The ideal way to test Coleman's theory would be to compare children living in intact, extended families with their two biological parents, as well as grandparents and/or other members of their kin, with children in other family arrangements. By Coleman's reckoning, children living with both of their biological parents in extended families would have the greatest access to the economic, cultural, and social resources of their kin. While some information on the presence of relatives of the household head is available from the DHS, a complete picture of the presence of extended family members for all family types is not available. In the future, the *WFMP* intends to investigate this question to the extent possible where data allow. The current analysis compares the school attendance rates of children living with both of their two biological parents, one of their biological parents, or neither of their biological parents.

Thus we focus in this section on the ways in which children living with two parents might be advantaged. The social scientific literature from the developed world, especially the United States, suggests that children are more likely to excel in the educational arena when they live with their two biological parents.[36]

In particular, the literature on families in the developed world suggests four important advantages that two biological parents hold over a single- or lone-parent family:

- Two-parent families typically have access to more employment, income, savings, and kin-related economic resources than do single parent families.
- On average, two parents are able to devote more time, affection, and monitoring to their children than are single parents.[37]
- Two parents can monitor one another's parenting, as well as relieve one another when they find that parenting is becoming difficult or wearisome. Consequently, the overall quality of parenting tends to be higher in two-parent families, compared with single-parent families.
- Two parents are typically more successful in involving both sets of a child's kin-based networks in providing social and emotional

support to a child, compared with single-parent families.[38]

But is biology important? Do children in a step-family with one biological parent and one step-parent do as well as children in an intact, biological family? On average, in the developed world, children in step-families with one biological parent do not do as well in the educational arena as do children living in intact families with both of their two biological parents.[39] There are at least three reasons this is the case:

- Step-parents typically invest less time and money in their children than do biological parents, in part because the step-parent (and the child and biological parent as well) are less likely to see step-children as their own, and in part because they generally have not had an ongoing relationship with a child since birth.
- On average, children are less likely to respond favorably to step-parents, compared to biological parents. Step-parents can be perceived by children as interlopers, who interfere with their ability to maintain a good relationship with one or both of their biological parents. Further more, step-parents often do not have as clear a role, and the requisite authority, in children's lives as do biological parents. Finally, children living in a step-family are more likely to perceive that their step-parent is less invested in their lives than children living with their two biological parents (see above).[40]
- Step-parents are significantly more likely to be abusive or neglectful towards their children, compared to biological parents. This distinctive pattern of abuse/neglect is probably related to the fact that step-parents are less likely to have a long-standing relationship with their step-children, to have a clearly defined role in the family, and to have a strong identity as a parent of their step-children.[41] (Some research suggests that step-parents are more likely to be reported to authorities for incidents of abuse, as well.)

Less is known about whether the intact, biological two-parent family also confers advantages to children in the developing world. But the literature suggests the following: :

- The biological two-parent family may be particularly important for children's educational success in societies where fathers are known to invest financially and practically in their children, and where the extended family is relatively less influential, such as Latin America and North America.[42]
- By contrast, the two-parent biological family may be less important in societies where mothers and/or extended family members take a leading role in a child's education, such as Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.[43]

In sum, if children in the developing world typically benefit from two biological parents in much the same way that children do in the developed world, the *WFMP* would predict that secondary school-age children in the developing world are more likely to be enrolled in school if they are living with both of their biological parents, compared to children living with one or neither of their biological parents.

THE "MOTHER KNOWS BEST" HYPOTHESIS

It is also possible that family structure does not affect children's educational enrollment in the developing world in the same way that it does in the developed world. One possibility in particular is that children reared in single-parent homes, usually by their mothers, actually do better than children reared in homes with both of their biological parents. This is because there is evidence to suggest that mothers are more likely to devote economic and social capital to their children than are fathers, and that single mothers are freer to focus on their children than are mothers in two-parent households.

For instance, a number of studies in Sub-Saharan Africa have found that children are more likely to succeed in the educational arena if they are raised in female-headed households, compared with children raised in homes with their two biological parents.[44] In reflecting on their findings regarding female-headed households and children's school enrollment in Sub-Saharan Africa, Cynthia Lloyd and Ann Blanc argue that in many African societies "female household heads are more likely to invest resources, including time, money, and emotional support, in facilitating the education of children living in their household" than are male household heads.[45] This could give children an educational advantage in female-headed households.

This growing body of research suggests that the *WFMP* might expect to find that secondary school-age children in the developing world are more likely to be enrolled in school if they are living with a single biological parent (usually their mother), compared with children living with two or neither of their biological parents. Moreover, given regional variations in paternal investments, this pattern may be particularly pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa.[46]

THE PARENTS DON'T MATTER HYPOTHESIS

Another possibility is that the presence of biological parents does not matter for children's educational enrollment in the developing world. Here, there are two different reasons why the presence of one or two biological parents may not be crucial for secondary school-age children's enrollment in school in the less-developed world. The first reason that the presence of biological parents may not matter much is that the family environment itself may be less consequential for children's education in the developing world than otherfactors in the social environment.

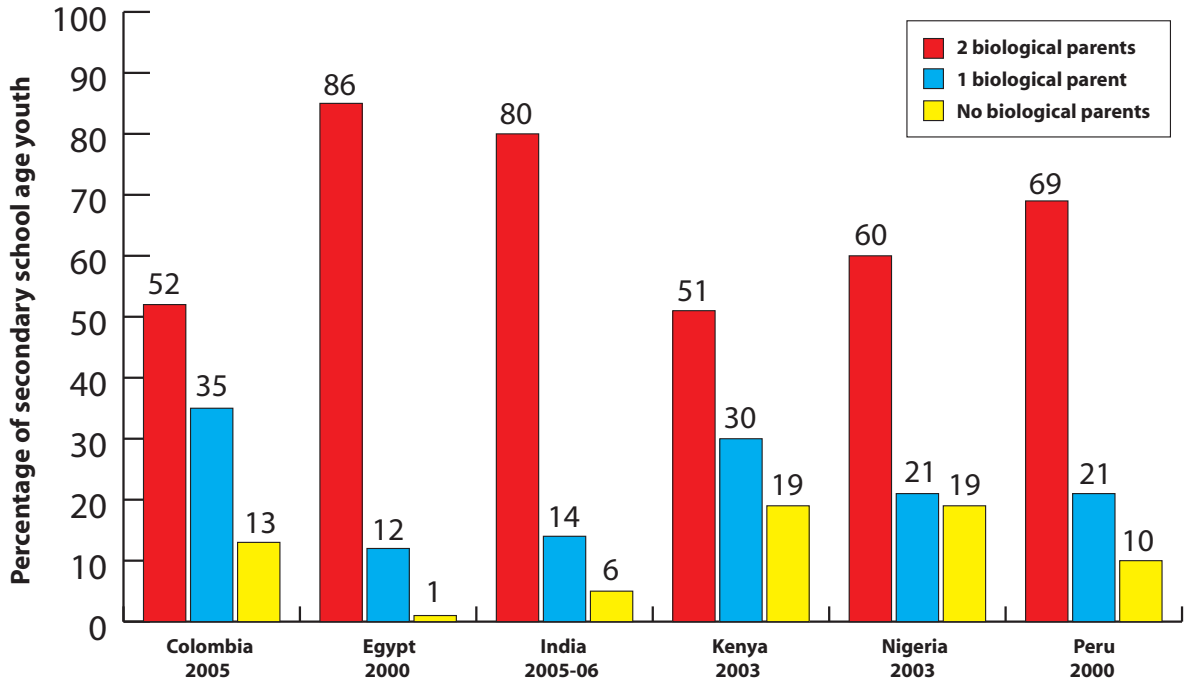
- Specifically, some research indicates that school quality is a much more important factor in predicting children's educational performance in the developing world than is family background. For instance, after studying this topic, Stephen Heyneman and William Loxley conclude that "school and teacher quality appear to be the predominant influence on student learning around the world; and the poorer the national setting in economic terms, the more powerful this school effect appears to be."[47]

A second reason that the presence of biological parents may not necessarily matter is that the extended family is so strong that kin networks—grandparents, aunts, uncles, and so forth—buffer against the disadvantages associated with single parenthood, orphanhood, poverty, or poor schools near one's biological parents.

- Specifically, research indicates that in some developing countries the extended family is so strong that it offers a "safety net" that buffers against any potential ill effects of single parenthood, orphanhood, and poverty when it comes to children's education.[48] A number of studies of Asian countries suggest that children in single-parent families do as well or better than children in two-parent families because extended family members tend to reach out to single mothers and provide them with extra financial and social resources to make up for the loss of a father due to divorce or death.[49] Likewise, a number of studies in Africa indicate that children who are fostered to kin—either because they are orphans, because their biological parents are too poor, or because their kin have access to better schools than their biological parents—can do as well or better in school as children who reared by their biological parents.[50]

Given the existing research, the null hypothesis would predict that the presence of one or two biological parents is not associated with the likelihood that secondary school-age children are enrolled in school. This hypothesis seems particularly possible for children in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where extended kinship networks are especially strong.

Figure 4. Percentage of secondary school-age youth living with two, one, or no biological parents



Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, MEASURE DHS+ and MEASURE DHS phases
Age groups: Colombia, Egypt and India: 11-14; Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru: 12-14

THE FAMILY CONTEXTS OF CHILDREN IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Figure 4 indicates that there is considerable variation in the percentage of secondary school-age children (aged 11-14 or 12-14, depending on the country) who are living with both biological parents—from a low of 51 percent in Kenya to a high of 87 percent in Egypt. Likewise, when it comes to single-parent families, the percentage of children living with just one parent ranges from a low of 12 percent in Egypt to a high of 35 percent in Colombia. Finally, children are most likely to live in a home without either of their biological parents—either due to orphanhood or fosterage—in Kenya and Nigeria (19 percent) and least likely to live apart from both of their biological parents in Egypt (2 percent).

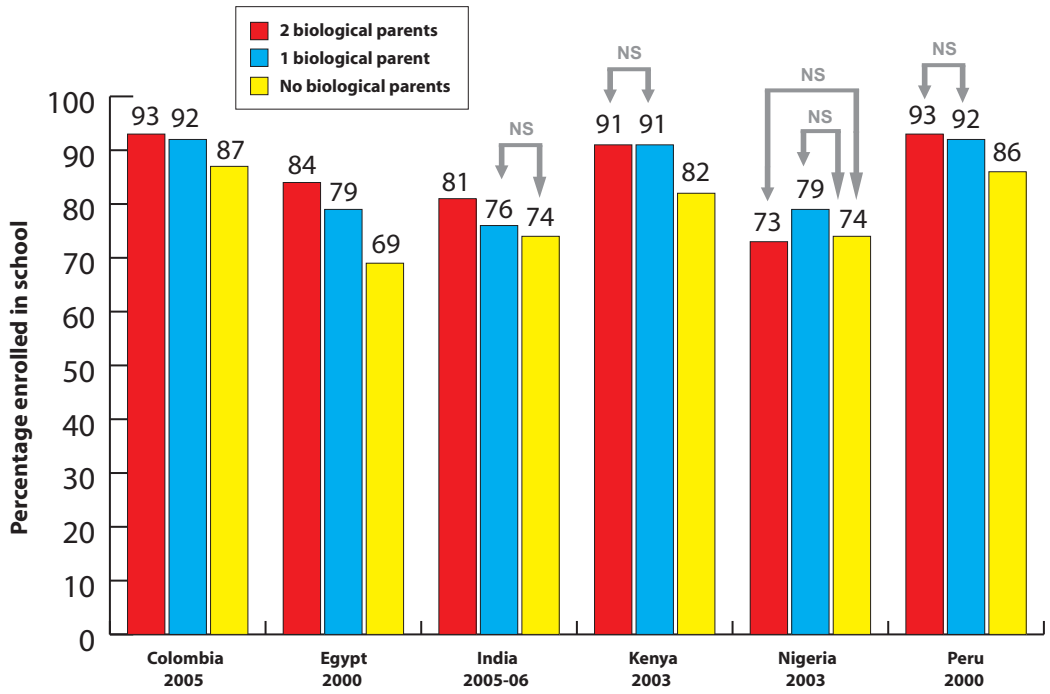
More generally, Figure 4 suggests that, among children in the developing world, children are most likely to live with both biological parents in the Middle East and Asia, and least likely to live with one or both biological parents in South America and Sub-Saharan Africa. This is consistent with what we find in the *World Family Map Project* indicator on children living with two biological parents.

THE PRESENCE OF PARENTS & SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING

Descriptive Data. How is family structure related to the enrollment of secondary school-age children in school? In our bivariate analyses, as Figure 5 shows, children in Colombia, Egypt, and India are significantly more likely to be enrolled in school if they live with both biological parents, compared to children living with one or no biological parents.

By contrast, children in the African countries of Kenya and Nigeria are not advantaged if they live with two biological parents, compared to children living in a single-parent home. In fact, children in Nigeria are more likely to be enrolled in school if they are living with a single parent.

Figure 5. Percentage of secondary school-age youth enrolled in school, by number of biological parents in the household



Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, MEASURE DHS+ and MEASURE DHS phases

Note: NS means the two estimates are not statistically significantly different at the .05 level.
Age groups: Colombia, Egypt and India: 11-14; Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru: 12-14

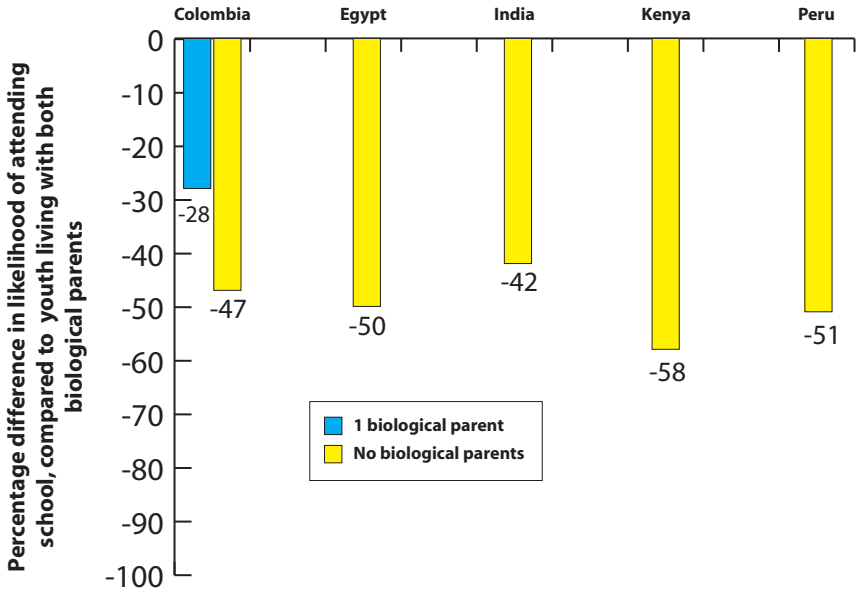
Moreover, children in Nigeria who live in a home without their biological parents are no different, statistically speaking, in their probability of school enrollment, compared with children living with one or both biological parents. However, children living with one or two biological parents in Kenya are more likely to be enrolled in school, compared to children living with no biological parents.

Finally, children in Peru living with one or two biological parents are equally advantaged, compared to children living in a home without their biological parents.

Controlling for Background Differences. These patterns change once we take account of (control for) the effects of five important sociodemographic factors—the education of the head of the household, the wealth of the household, region (urban or rural), the child's sex, and the child's age. As Figure 6 indicates, compared with children living in a household with one biological parent, children living with two biological parents are only advantaged in Colombia. Specifically, in Colombia, children living with one biological parent are 28 percent less likely to be enrolled in school, compared with children living with two biological parents. In the other five countries analyzed here by the *WFMP*, children living with two biological parents are not more likely to be enrolled in school compared with children in a home with one biological parent.

However, the picture changes when we turn our focus to children living in a home without any biological parents, due to orphanhood or foster-age, or other reasons. Here, Figure 6 shows that secondary school-age children are significantly less likely to be in school if they are living in a home without their biological parents, compared with children living in a home with both of their biological parents. After controlling for sociodemographic factors, Figure 6 indicates that children in Colombia, Egypt, India, Kenya, and Peru are about half as likely to be enrolled in school if they are living in a home without their biological parents. The

Figure 6. In five of the six countries*, youth of secondary school age living with neither biological parent are significantly less likely to attend school compared to those living with both parents



Notes:
*For Egypt, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru, enrollment of youth living with one biological parent was not statistically different from that of youth living with both parents; therefore, it is not shown.
*For Nigeria, enrollment of youth living with neither biological parent was not statistically different from that of youth living with both parents; therefore, it is not shown.
Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, MEASURE DHS+ and MEASURE DHS waves
Age groups: Colombia, Egypt and India: 11-14; Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru: 12-14
Years of data collection: Colombia 2005; Egypt 2000; India 2005-06; Kenya 2003; Nigeria 2003; Peru 2000
Significance level: p<.01.

only exception to this pattern is Nigeria, where family structure does not predict secondary school-age children's enrollment in school.

Overall, then, our results suggest that the presence of two biological parents is less important for children's educational participation in these developing countries than studies among children in the developed world suggest. However, our analyses suggest that children do benefit from living with at least one biological parent, as children who are orphaned or fostered are less likely to be enrolled in school in five out of the six countries the *WFMP* studied for this issue focus.

CONCLUSION

A great deal of scholarly attention has been focused on the link between family structure and children's educational success in the developed world, but less attention has been devoted to this subject in the developing world. Given important variations in children's school enrollment and in family structure in the developing world, this *World Family Map Project Issue Focus* has sought to address this gap in the literature by exploring how the presence of biological parents is related to school enrollment among secondary school-age (11-14) children in six countries: Colombia, Egypt, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru.

The *WFMP* finds some support for the theory that children in the developing world benefit in the educational arena from living in a home with two biological parents when looking at bivariate relationships in three countries. And there is also some support for the theory that children in single parent families fare better than those with no biological parent in the household in the bivariate relationships in five countries. But after taking into account background characteristics that are related to the likelihood of being enrolled in school, the advantage of living with two biological parents dis-

appears in all but one country—Colombia. In most countries in this analysis, children living with one of their biological parents (i.e., a single-parent family, step-family, or an extended family with one biological parent) are as likely to be enrolled in school as are children living with both of their biological parents in a nuclear or extended family. In Colombia, however, children are at an educational advantage if they are being reared by their two biological parents.

This study's findings suggest that single parents—and this seems particularly probable for single parents in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, where kin are especially likely to help with education[51]—may be enlisting the support of extended family to help make up for any deficits in economic, cultural, or social capital for children associated with living outside of a home with two biological parents. It may also be the case that biological fathers in some of the countries studied for this analysis are less involved or focused on their children's education than is typically the case in intact families in North America.[52] In the future, the WFMP intends to conduct additional analyses that would include extended family members living in the household to see whether the extended family provides a "safety net" that buffers against any challenges associated with living with only one biological parent (in most cases, a single mother). The project will also seek to determine if levels of paternal engagement in children's education vary by country or region.

On the other hand, this study does find that family structure matters in one important respect in five out of the six countries studied. Specifically, secondary school-age children living in a home without their biological parents—either due to orphanhood or fosterage—are significantly less likely to be enrolled in school than their peers who are living with both biological parents.

This analysis has several important limitations. First, because of the cross-sectional nature of our research design, the *WFMP* is not able to make causal claims about the links between family structure and education found in this study. Also, there is tremendous variation in the circumstances of children, families and schools across countries that are not captured by these data and which need to be explored in order to more fully understand these patterns in the data. Third, the complexity and incompleteness of the DHS family relationship data limited our ability to determine how the presence of kin or step-parents may moderate the association between family structure and education documented in this study. Future research will have to determine what, if any, effect the presence of step-parents and extended family members may have on secondary school-age children's educational enrollment in the developing world.

This *World Family Map Project Issue Focus* indicates that secondary school-age children in the developing world with two biological parents are about as likely to be enrolled in school as are children living with one biological parent, all things being equal. Nevertheless, children living in a home without either of their biological parents are significantly less likely to be enrolled in school. This suggests that, on average, biological parents in the developing countries studied are more likely to make educational investments in their children than are kin or social parents who are not the biological parents of their children.[53] This analysis demonstrates how family structure can shape the arc of children's educational attainment in the developing world. And as children worldwide increasingly live without one or both of their biological parents, the challenge of attaining universal education for all children may become more difficult.

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