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**Intergenerational Support
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1. Introduction

The family provides important resources that sustain the well-being of all its members who are all at different stages of the life course, from the newborns to octogenarians or even nonagenarians. Providing and receiving support among family members is a life-time activity that has always been taken for granted until recent times. This life-time activity, however, is embedded in a larger social context. Recent changes in socio-political realities brought about by globalization and cultural changes have dramatically altered and reshaped family members' capacity to function as sources of support to each other. This paper has the objective of examining this specific topic, often called "intergenerational solidarity", in tune with the larger theme of relationships between family transformations and social cohesion.

There has been enough discourse on the demographic changes in fertility and mortality and their impact on the family of today. It is sufficient to note here that not only the structure of the family but also the duration of family roles and members' relationships to one another have changed dramatically. In a broader perspective, Blum and LeBras (1985) called it "verticalization" of the family as opposed to the "horizontal" relationships that existed in traditional societies. The horizontal family structure had two or utmost three generations, each with four or five siblings. It typically involved a relationship between members of the same generation, near and distant cousins. In contrast, the vertical family structure of today is typically multigenerational in the sense of having four or five generations, each with fewer siblings. And, the relationships between members run across generations. What would be the impact of all these changes on the family of tomorrow is difficult to guess, but different views, pessimistic and optimistic, have been proffered, and there may be no end to such opinions and conjectures.

In the context of demographic changes in fertility and marital behaviour, for example, Blossfeld et al. (1993) predicted that with all the family transformations taking place now, the potential for mobilizing the family as an interpersonal support system would decline sharply as today's young and adult generation enters old age. But this paper takes the view, based on analyzing available data on family and social support, that it is not likely to be so, either now or in the near

future. The point is that in spite of all the changes in the family structure, intergenerational kinship relationships do still constitute a viable resource for the majority of family members of whatever age or whatever stage of the life course. This is true for Canada, and cross-national comparisons may reveal whether the same situation obtains in other developed societies.

2. The Family of Today and of Tomorrow

Before examining the prevalence and complex nature of family or intergenerational support in Canada, it is worthwhile to recall to mind a few typical arguments that either favour or deplore all the changes that are taking place today. Not a few argue that the family of today has become ill-equipped to ensure the well being of its members. The main reason offered is the so-called "**family decline**" hypothesis and the blame is placed squarely on the sweeping trends of individualism and *laissez faire* attitudes. The "cancer of individualism" has eaten away the family fabric and has spread to such an extent that current social norms themselves are more and more legitimating the pursuit of individual goals to the neglect of family or societal goals. In sum, the family has been stripped to nothing but its nuclear functions of procreation and childrearing. New lifestyles and family breakdowns and reconstitutions through divorce and remarriage have blurred, if not weakened, the lines of responsibility of family members to each other. For example, it is unclear what should be the responsibility of a step-son or a step-daughter to a step-father or step-mother in a reconstituted or blended family.

The situation has been made worse by globalization and concomitant "commodification" of all our needs and resources. Commodification in particular has fatally weakened the nurturing role of the family by making available alternative social groups or social services that can satisfy our basic needs for which we were once dependent on family and kinship relationships.

Globalization has led to the decline in particular of intergenerational coresidence - children living far away from their parents or vice versa, which in turn inevitably leads to the decline in the strength and intensity of family relationships. Others would argue however that in spite of the long distances separating the parents from their adult children, there is still communication and support between them, and thanks to modern technology, cross-generational cohesion is maintained.

The gloomy outlook of family decline hypothesis is unfortunately the dominant one

encountered in literature as well as in discussions. People often see negative impact of all these changes, wondering what sort of relationships there will be between, say, parents and adult offspring. Some thinkers like Riley and Riley (1992) and Pahl and Spencer (1997) have countered such a negative outlook by an optimistic one. Riley and Riley envision more potential relationships awaiting for older people as a consequence of the present family transformations. They argue that changes in the very nature and meaning of the family are definitely going to replace the traditional forms by new forms of kinship bonds. These new forms will involve less ascribed and obligatory relationships but will yield more potential relationships especially for older people to choose from as needs arise. They call these new forms of relationships “**latent matrix type**” in that these relationships are not readily visible but still exist and can be called upon when needed. Cohabitation, surrogate kin, new biosocial relationships are all traces of this latent matrix structure that exists today and that will be very common tomorrow.

These new latent matrix type relationships are some way welcome because they are **no longer defined by generation or age or property** and material resources. Parents and offspring are now status equals because of the change in power balance that was dictated by property and material resources as the predominant base of most generational relations. Instead great emphasis is placed on social emotional ties, companionship, intimacy, and love. Because of these changes, people of any age or of any generation will opt to support, love and confide in one another. Contemporary families are increasingly heterogeneous in age, as divorce and remarriage produce a range of step-kin and in-laws. This heterogeneity in age will reduce the traditional age-graded “generation-gap” as a potential strain and conflict. Older generations in the near future, and future generations in general, will enjoy a safety net of significant connections to choose from in case of need. In sum, the future family will no longer be based on a simple parent-offspring relationship but on a wide choice of kinship bonds.

Pahl and Spencer (1997) have brought to our attention another dimension of potential relationships that will arise because of the changes taking place in the family relationships of today. They focus on the growth of friendship and **friend-like relationships** that are gradually replacing the traditional familial relationships. Friends are replacing family members in lending support of various kinds that were once done by very close family members or relatives. Friends are becoming

more important than relatives or neighbours in providing help with shopping, home maintenance, keeping an eye on the house and similar practical work on a day-to-day basis. They are also, crucially, confidants.

As the proportion of marriages that end in divorce increases, and as men and women move geographically and socially from their families of origin, friends are nowadays providing more continued support and security than the families. Parents die, children leave home, partners find new relationships, but some friends continue to supply support in different ways throughout people's lives. Pahl and Spencer cite the finding from the British Social Attitudes survey showing a general decline in the numbers who saw a relative or friend at least once a week between 1986 and 1995. The drop off in those who saw their friends was down from 65% to 59%, while those who saw their mothers dropped from 59% to 49%.

Pahl and Spencer use a phrase that can be extended further to encompass the more recent changes recognized in Canada. Demographers are familiar with the famous expression of "new families or no families" (Goldscheider and Waite, 1991). But something more than "new families" is evolving today. What we are seeing now is the evolution of "new families of choice". The term "family" itself is undergoing a change in its definition, and new types of families based on pure choice and sexual orientations are being recognized today. It is in this context that we see tremendous changes in the clusters of "significant others", the "others" including friends as well. Given this new reality in our midst, it will be worthwhile to examine this trend using the available data on social and family support.

3. Why and How the Support System Still Works

In spite of the dramatic changes taking place in the family of today and in spite of the gloomy forecasts of the future by some studies, we see that the support system is still working in our societies as it was in the past, although it has undergone a face lift. We wonder at times why this should be so.

The "attachment theory" argues that there is, and there will always be, a strong sense of responsibility and commitment that (adult) children have toward their (ageing) parents, and vice versa. And studies show that this is the case, despite earlier experiences of estrangement or even a

history of childhood abuse or neglect. Early patterns of family interaction and strong emotional attachments seem to persist over time. This theory is now more frequently expressed as “**warm-glow**” hypothesis (Andreoni, 1989) which states that parents and children give support to one another because of satisfaction from giving, nothing more.

The “support bank theory” introduced by Antonucci (1990) resounds the well-known insurance hypothesis that demographers have used for a long time to explain fertility trends. In sum, parents invest in their children, which investment is then available to be withdrawn late in life when parents become vulnerable. The same idea is expressed in economic terms in different ways especially in the context of debates on whether the state should maintain or abolish the welfare system. In examining the flow of support between generations, economic studies have focused on the impact of the existence of a mature welfare system on family solidarity and on the level and pattern of giving and receiving services between parents and their adult children. Quite divergent views and answers are given by these studies. The so-called “**crowding out**” hypothesis (first suggested by Abrams and Schmitz, 1984?) finds this relationship to be negative because of a shift in responsibility from the family to a public solidarity system. A strong welfare state reduces the willingness of children to provide financial support and services to their aged parents (implying less family solidarity). The state with its generous welfare system “crowds out” family obligations, thus eroding intergenerational and family solidarity.

On the contrary, the “**crowding in**” hypothesis (suggested by the World Bank, 1994) argues that the more resources the aged have beyond their minimum necessities for economic survival, the more scope they have for participating in reciprocal giving and receiving. Kunemund and Rein (1999) provide support for this hypothesis from sociological and economic perspectives. Sociological concepts like obligations, norms, reciprocity, intimacy and norms of responsibility come in handy to explain reciprocal giving and receiving. So too economic concepts like altruism and exchange and motivations. Their argument is that with the generous provision by the state, the opportunity for intimacy and closeness increases. There may be a negative relationship at the societal level between the welfare spending and family solidarity, but within the family there is a positive effect on intimacy and affection between generations.

From a broader economic tradition, there are two main theories of the motives of giving:

altruism and exchange. Becker (1974) posited that intergenerational transfers are based on **altruistic motives**, that is, children will transfer to parents in most need and vice versa, “need” being defined in terms of health or financial status. The altruist theory assumes a moral duty or obligation, and thus needs no further explanation. According to the **exchange theory**, one gives to others because one expects to receive in return. Parents therefore provide services to adult children, such as childcare, in return for financial support and coresidence. Children provide help to elderly parents to increase their chances of receiving an inheritance in the future. The anticipation of receiving an inheritance motivates adult children to care for the ageing parents. Studies show that inheritance does play some role, and that sons, not daughters, will provide more care, the stronger their expectations for an inheritance. Kotlikoff and Morris (1989) offer even more provocative extension of the logic of exchange theory: Transfers from parents to their children are not a debt or obligation but simply a bribe!

Norms about who is responsible to provide care may also shape the transaction between generations, According to Qureshi (1990), a western pattern takes the following hierarchy of caregivers: first partners, then daughters, daughters-in-law, then sons, sons-in-law, other relatives, and lastly, non-relatives. Cultures and new patterns of relationships (such as friendship) may define otherwise. Culturally, for example, though coresidence and support of the aged is the norm in the Asian countries, it is on the decline, even in Japan. Kunemund and Rein (1999) therefore suggest that the norms of responsibility are less stable and less important in the individual decision process than the norms of reciprocity.

Longitudinal data are ideal to show evidence of all the above hypotheses on intergenerational and family support. Unfortunately, such data do not exist. However, even with the currently available data, we can examine the validity of these hypotheses. The traditional economic distinction between altruism and exchange is extremely important in the discussion of the crowding out phenomenon. If crowding out works, the elderly who receive sufficient money from the welfare system will be less likely to cite their children as their main source of financial support. If altruism works, receiving financial support by the elderly from their children is more likely to be linked to socioeconomic characteristics of the elderly and their children. If the warm glow hypothesis holds, socioeconomic characteristics of parents and children will have little influence on parental reliance

on children as their main source of support. If the exchange motive is operating, parents who are well off with the public transfer *may* or *may not* be more likely to receive financial support from children; the latter, if funds are tied in property or investments and if children expect to inherit them. Most studies reveal that exchange is dominant and that growing public transfers may be accompanied by an increase in instrumental and emotional support. Thus, different types of help received by elderly have to be taken into account when interpreting the relationships of public transfers and family solidarity.

Before concluding this section, we need to mention also the somewhat recent recognition of the roles that older generations play in our societies. The elderly are not merely at the receiving end all the time as previous literature has assumed for long. They are also providers of support, including provision of financial assistance, housing, baby-sitting services, emotional support, and advice. This trend has grown in recent decades as older people have become more economically secure and their children less so. The "boomerang children" - adult children returning to their parental nest due to divorce/unemployment - is partially responsible for this trend. Also, older persons prefer to remain functionally autonomous for as long as possible before relying on children for support.

4. Aims of This Study and the Adopted Methodology

In the light of the above discussions, three important questions arise. First, how can we measure intergenerational support? How can we examine the validity of the various, often contradictory, hypotheses that have been posited by different views on the impact of the recent changes, either in individual behaviour or in social recognition of certain types of behaviour? Second, how can we connect intergenerational support and family cohesion? Is it possible to find a measure of family cohesion through the information we can possibly have on intergenerational support? And third, in the context of our project on Family Transformations and Social Cohesion, how can we connect them to the broader social cohesion? Blum and LeBras aptly gave the title "Solidarite familiale, solidarite sociale" to their 1985 paper. How close is that connection between family solidarity and social solidarity?

This study focuses only on the first two questions. The last one has to wait for further research to find the links between family transformations and social cohesion. Findings from this

study based on the first two questions however will surely point to possible approaches toward finding such a link.

In our attempt at measuring family cohesion, we take advantage of the cumulated experience of gerontological research and borrow some proven and relevant ideas from previous research. It is widely acknowledged that intergenerational support can be considered to be essentially of four basic types: a) Instrumental support that includes all tangible forms of help given and received by family members such as housework, transportation, shopping and personal care; b) Emotional support given and received by family members of different generations, such as confiding, comforting, reassuring, listening to problems, in essence "being there" to listen to the problems and anxieties of other family members; c) Informational support that includes giving and receiving advice when necessary, for example, in seeking medical treatment, referrals to agencies, and sharing family news; and, last but not least, 4) Financial/housing support.

These four types of support give rise to a three-dimensional measure of intergenerational relationships: a) **Affinity** that essentially comprises emotional closeness between generations; b) **Opportunity Structure** that refers to frequency of contact and residential proximity between generations; c) **Functional Exchange** that refers to flows of various kinds of help between generations, essentially comprising all tangible forms of help.

Making use of these three dimensions, we can categorize intergenerational relationships into eight ($=2^3$) different types, which in fact refer to the way family members exhibit their solidarity in one way or another, some to very high degree of solidarity, others to rather low solidarity. We call these eight types, therefore, types of family cohesion. Table 1 illustrates how these eight types are formed and the labels attached to them (some borrowed from the gerontological literature):

Table 1: Classification of family cohesion types based on three dimensions of support

Affinity	Opportunity Structure	Functional Exchange	Cohesion Type
0	0	0	= Detached
0	0	1	= Pure Functional
0	1	0	= Pure Proximity
1	0	0	= Pure Affinity
0	1	1	= Obligatory
1	0	1	= Empathic
1	1	0	= Sociable
1	1	1	= Tightknit

These eight categories form a “scale” or degree of family cohesion that we are interested in measuring. Those individuals who have no score on all the three dimensions are Detached while those who have scores on all represent the Tightknit family. In between these two extremes are six other types representing various degrees of family cohesion. A score of 1 can represent three types: Pure Functional, Pure Proximity and Pure Affinity, the term “pure” standing for “only”. Some readers may get the impression that these three are not “good enough” family cohesion. Without attaching any moral judgement on these types, one has to bear in mind that they can sometimes encompass a wide variety of help received and given, especially the Pure Functional type (see below). Similarly, a score of 2 represents a higher degree of family cohesion, the three types called Obligatory, Empathic and Sociable.

A few practical observations are in order. First, the above measures of degree of family cohesion are solely based on support services in a family. In other words, it is assumed that support services given and received among family members are good indicators of their family cohesion. One can think of including other indicators as well if relevant data are available (e.g. financial support).

Second, careful readers may perceive a methodological problem in the approach taken here. Information on support services is obviously obtained from individuals. But we are making inferences on family cohesion from individual information available, thus passing on from one level to another - the well-known individualistic or atomistic fallacy in research methods. Careful reflection however shows that there is no such fallacy here or even if such a fallacy exists it is not

serious. Because the information on support services obtained from individuals is actually information on family *relationships*, not just individual characteristics. Support services occur in the context of the family and essentially imply family solidarity, not the whims and fancies of individuals.

Third, in Canada, we have the much needed data on support services, thanks to the series of General Social Surveys (GSS), particularly that of Cycle 11 on Social and Community Support that was conducted in 1996. However, using secondary data has its own disadvantages. The focus of this survey was on Canadians who had temporary difficulties and who had long-term health or physical limitations. Although the basic information on services given and received was gathered from all the respondents of the survey (12756 in total), the information on the “care relationships”, that is to whom services were given or from whom services were obtained, was gathered only from those who had temporary difficulties and who had long-term health or physical limitations. This seriously undermines the objective of this study, but can be circumvented with the assumption that the pattern of care relationships as revealed for this subset also holds good for the entire sample. Table 2 presents the pattern of care relationships as found for those who had temporary difficulties and long-term health or physical limitations. The pattern suggests what we expect to find at the population level. The survey also collected data on instrumental and emotional support but not on financial support. It did gather some information on the frequency of contact and proximity of residence. Thus, we are obliged to make best use of what is available.

Fourth, for the indicators of affinity, opportunity structure and functional exchange described in Table 1, the following procedure was adopted. Individuals who gave emotional support to or received it from family members only (that is, excluding friends and NGO) were given a score of 1 for affinity. Individuals who reported that they had contact with the roster members daily or at least once a week (that is, excluding at least once a month or less than a month) and individuals who reported that they lived with the roster member in the same household or in surrounding area (that is, excluding less than half day’s journey or more half day’s journey) were given a score of 1 for opportunity structure. Individuals who reported giving *or* receiving services of *any* kind (that is, childcare, meal preparation and clean-up, house cleaning, laundry and sewing, house maintenance, shopping for groceries and other necessities, transportation, banking and bill paying, and personal

care such as assistance in bathing, toiletry, cutting finger nails, brushing teeth, shampooing, hair dressing) were given a score of 1.

Fifth, individual weights have been used for all subsequent analyses excepting that of multilevel logit analysis using the package MLWin.

5. Analysis and Results

a) Care Relationships

Table 2 presents the ordered set of roster members who provided help to respondents or to whom the respondent provided help. [The column title “Meal Prep.” includes meal preparation, clean-up, house cleaning, laundry and sewing or house maintenance and outside work. The title “Shopping” includes shopping for groceries, transportation, banking or bill paying. The title “Pers.care” includes assistance with bathing, toileting, care of toenails/fingernails, brushing teeth, shampooing and hair care.] The table classifies the respondents by sex to examine whether there are appreciable differences between men and women. Percentages in brackets are based on *N* involved in the specific type of help. Note that the *N* values are rather small for the category of meal preparation, shopping and personal care because these care relationships are gathered from only those who had temporary difficulties and long-term health and physical limitations.

Two important findings emerge from Table 2. First, caregivers and care receivers are mostly family members, among whom spouse, mother, father and daughter are the dominant figures in most cases. Government and non-government organizations do play some role, particularly for personal care.

Second, it is interesting to note that friendship is emerging as an important relationship in the configurations presented in Table 2. Among males, about 10% of care givers and care receivers are friends for the first three types of services. But this percentage jumps to 25 to 30% when it comes to giving or receiving emotional support. Among females, the percentage is even higher than among males. It would be interesting to continue monitoring this specific phenomenon over the following cycles to examine whether and how friends are replacing family members in the support system. As argued above, we can expect a significant increase over time, even in providing services like meal preparation or shopping or personal care.

For lack of space, we present only a few significant findings from univariate and bivariate analyses and then move on to focus on the measure of family cohesion and some multivariate analyses on those measures.

- Percentages of respondents who receive help in meal preparation and shopping are generally much higher than those who receive help for childcare or personal care. This is normal in the sense that childcare is limited to those of childbearing ages and personal care involves more intimacy and trust than other types of services.
- In contrast, percentages of respondents providing help are quite appreciable for childcare.
- Generally, men receive more help than women excepting personal care. And, women generally provide more help especially for personal care.

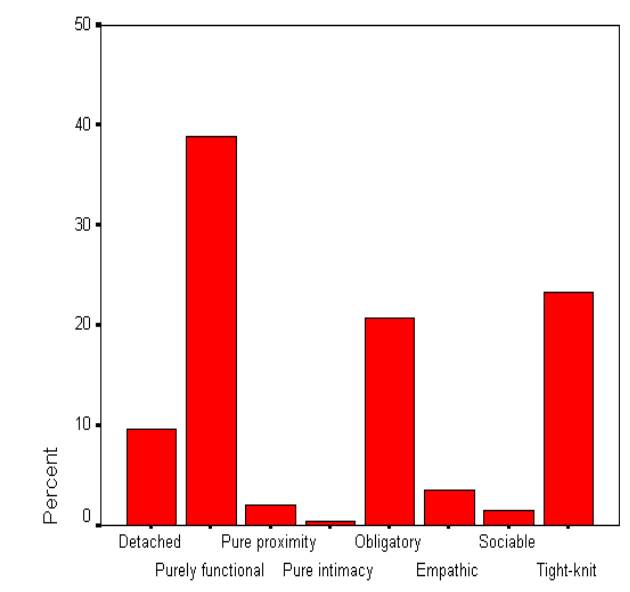
b) Types of Family Cohesion

As for the types of family cohesion, we get an interesting picture. Table 3 and Figure 1 show the percentage distribution of the eight categories of family cohesion for the entire sample. The distribution suggests that about 25% of Canadians live in Tightknit families, while 40% in Purely Functional families, and 20% in Obligatory types of families. About 10% of Canadians are

Table 3. Degrees of Family Cohesion - GSS 1996

Detached	9.6
Purely functional	38.9
Pure proximity	2.0
Pure intimacy	0.5
Obligatory	20.7
Empathic	3.5
Sociable	1.5
Tight-knit	23.4
Total <i>N</i>	12756

Figure 1. Degrees of Family Cohesion



Detached, not at all involved in the support system. These four types cover 95% of Canadians. The other four types, though interesting in themselves, can be ignored for further analysis.

An examination of these types of family cohesion by sex and 10-year birth cohorts (those born before 1916, 1917-26, 1927-36, 1937-46, 1947-56, 1957-66, 1967-76, and 1977-81) reveals that the same general *pattern* persists, with only slight variations in level. But, when examined for Living Arrangements, Marital Status, Ethnicity, and Urban/Rural residence, it is clear that some groups fall more into one specific type than into another. Thus, for example, 34% of men and 21% of women living alone fall into the Detached category. Couples with children fall more into Tightknit group than couples without children. In any case, Pure Functionality is the dominant category irrespective of classification criterion, followed by Tightknit, Obligatory and Detached types.

c) **Multivariate - Multilevel Analysis**

This prompts us to go for multivariate analysis, but in the context of multilevel hierarchy in which the support system operates. Multivariate analysis requires a wise selection of explanatory variables to explain the hitherto unanalyzed dependent variables, namely the four major types of family cohesion identified above (Detached, Tightknit, Pure Functional and Obligatory). Although the multiple response technique is the most useful for our purpose, the package we have used, namely MLWin, for the sake of multilevel analysis, has a few problems in dealing with it; so only a single response analysis (logit models) is done separately for the four dominant types.

In order to explain the degree of family cohesion, we fall back on where we started from, that is, family or intergenerational support and identify possible sources of diversity therein. Since the data used in this study are for individuals and their relationships with family members, one major source of diversity is gender. It is obvious that the majority of support is provided by women. Women are socialized early in life to adopt nurturing roles and their “care taking ideology” continues even late in life. It is also widely acknowledged that women are caught “in the middle”, bearing the burden of labour force participation, childcare as well as elder care. It does not mean that men are not involved in the support system, in fact they are more involved in things that do not involve “personal” care such as financial management, home, auto repair, arranging for and coordinating

formal services. There is greater gender equity in the division of care giving duties than reported, but the literature tends to focus primarily on personal and “hands-on” type of care. This can in a subtle way translate into the degree of family cohesion measured from the information on support services.

Other sources of variation can include well-known factors such as ethnicity, immigrant status, social class, historical trends in family transformation especially divorce, remarriage, step families, and lone parenthood, causing fractured and ambiguous role relations between the generations. As pointed out at the very beginning of this paper, members of a family are at different stages of the life course, and it is essential to consider this in any study of family support or family cohesion. For lack of this specific life course information in the survey data used here, marital and parental statuses have been included as proxies. They may or may not capture all the life course influence but can point to what else needs to be considered.

Marital status has four categories: Separated/Divorced, Widowed, Single and Married/Common-law union, the last serving as the reference category. We can expect married/common-law partnership leading to a tight-knit relationship than the other three categories. Information on parental status is indirectly captured from the information on living arrangements. With living alone as the reference, other available categories have been collapsed into “couples without children”, “couples with children”, “single parent with children”, and “other”.

Education has been included with three categories: “Above high school”, “high school” and “elementary”, the first as the reference. The immigrant status has been captured by the information on country of birth: “Born in Canada” and “Born out of Canada”, the former as the reference. And finally, cultural influence is captured by the information on first language spoken at home: “English only”, “French only”, “Other only”, “English and French”, and “Mixed” encompassing all other non-official languages, with “English only” as the reference.

Besides these individual characteristics, one can think of various levels of structural influence. Although neighbourhood, and neighbourhood characteristics, will be ideal for our purpose, it is not only difficult to pin down what a neighbourhood is but also impossible to obtain the relevant data. For lack of such information, we need to be satisfied with broader “levels” such as “Regions” or “Urban/Rural” character. We have used the information on Province and Urban/Rural/PEI residence as two possible multilevel variables.

Using weights in a multilevel analysis introduces problems not encountered in other types of analysis. Correct methods require using appropriate weights at each level included for analysis. But the data providers give us only the final weights, not the weights at provincial or urban/rural levels. The weights, therefore, have not been included in logit analyses.

Results from the quasi-likelihood procedures are given in Tables 4 through 7 for the four major types of family cohesion. The logit coefficients should be interpreted as follows. In general, a positive coefficient implies a higher likelihood of being classified under the given cohesion type, and a negative coefficient implies a lower likelihood, all in comparison to the reference category. These coefficients are the log-odds. One can also express them in terms of odds by exponentiating the coefficients. A coefficient of 0.33, as in Table 4 for the category “Separated/Divorced” under Marital Status for men, implies that the separated/divorced men have higher probability of falling under the Detached type than the men who are married or in common-law union. In other words, $\exp(.33) = 1.39$ implies that the separated/divorced men have about 40% higher probability of being classified under the Detached type than those men in some form of union. Similarly, a coefficient of -1.93 for men under the “couples with children” category shows that the probability of them being classified under the Detached type is only 14.5% [that is, $\exp(-1.93) = 0.145$] as large as the probability of a lone male being classified under the same.

Tables 4 through 7 confirm our expectations. All the selected explanatory variables excepting the immigrant status have appreciable and mostly significant effects on the probability of being classified under the four different types, that too in the expected direction. Looking at column titled “Model 3” which includes all the explanatory variables, it is clear that Parental Status (or living arrangements) has a very strong influence in all the four tables, negative in the case of Detached and positive in the cases of Tightknit, Functional and Obligatory types. Thus, presence or absence of children, couple or single status are important determinants of family cohesion in general, in comparison to the lone status. All but a few of the coefficients are highly significant.

To a less extent, Marital Status also is an important determinant of family cohesion. Its influence is strongly felt for the Tightknit type. Men and women in some form of union are more likely to fall under the Tightknit type, and the separated/divorced and single men and women are significantly less likely to fall under the same. It is interesting to see that, although the coefficients

are not significant, widowers are less likely to be classified under the Tightknit type, but not the widows! Gender differences do play a role here. A similar noteworthy difference is found between men and women falling under the Obligatory type as well. All the categories of not-in-union have significantly higher probabilities in the case of women falling under the Obligatory type.

The effects of birth cohorts reveal some interesting points. Looking at the coefficients for the Detached type, we can observe that the 1947 and 1957 birth cohorts of men (baby boomers) have somehow played a pivoting role in reducing the likelihood of being classified under the Detached type; but not women of the same birth cohorts (in fact, women in all birth cohorts excepting the youngest have higher probabilities of being classified under the Detached type). Although it is not clear why such a difference exists between men and women, a possible explanation would be that these coefficients capture other aspects of life course stages than what we assumed to have captured through the marital and parental status variables. It needs more exploration into the impact of multifaceted transformations that women have gone through during the latter half of the 20th century. For example, the influx of women into the labour force is probably exerting some influence here.

The effect of birth cohorts is more clearly brought out under the Tightknit type. The estimated coefficients for both men and women show a definite increase over cohorts, implying higher probabilities of being classified under the Tightknit type from cohort to cohort, *all other things being equal*. There is no better news than this! This is not only a good news but an unexpected news as well, with all the “sound and fury” around us about the family decline. It gives us all a hope that the support system with all its three dimensions examined here will continue in spite of the upheavals that are changing the nature and function of families. Younger men and women definitely show the trend in the other types of cohesion as well, that is, less and less likelihood of falling under the Purely Functional or Obligatory types.

Among the other three remaining variables, we see that education level, or first language or immigrant status have much less (and mostly non-significant in the case of immigrant status) role to play in the various types of family cohesion. This goes to show that as far as family cohesion is concerned, these individual characteristics are of little value. [Perhaps the same argument may hold good for social cohesion as well.]

As for the heterogeneity coming from provincial and urban/rural residence levels, our

analysis indicates that province has some influence on the various types of family cohesion. It can possibly refer to the differential structural systems and opportunities that exist in the provinces, the most likely ones being old age security, employment insurance and the welfare. It can also point to the “great divide” that exists in Canada between the east and the west. Further exploration is required in this regard, especially by including a few relevant community level characteristics.

6. Conclusions

Results presented in this study are truly encouraging. They generally confirm the theoretical stance described in the first two sections of this paper. They also throw light on the connections that can be established with the overall aim of the Social Cohesion Project, that is, to link Family Transformations with Family and Social Cohesion. Thus, for example, if parental and marital status are distinct and influential determinants of family cohesion, so too they will be for social cohesion at large. This is because social cohesion ultimately boils down to a system of mutual support of one another irrespective of the infinite variety of individual characteristics that we all possess and cherish.

The family may undergo tremendous changes, and one can possibly envision more changes in the days to come. But as long as the support system continues in some form or other, perhaps with new kinds of kinship forms as Riley and Riley speculate, there will surely be a lot to give and receive among family members as well as among societies in general. Some may see the Tightknit families as the ideal type and Purely Functional as something derogatory, but there is a lot of giving and receiving taking place even under the Purely Functional type. And, if at all the analysis presented in this paper points to anything toward prediction about the future of family support in Canada, we can confidently say that intergenerational support system still constitutes a viable resource for the majority of family members of whatever age or whatever stage of the life course or whatever form of kinship relations. The ideal type of family cohesion that closely corresponds to the concept of Tightknit relationship is only going to be felt stronger and stronger among the younger generations.

It may be possible to include other dimensions than the intergenerational or family support in measuring family cohesion, definitely a task for the future. But at the moment it is rather difficult

to find anything better than the support system. It is *the* best indicator of all. We are fortunate to have the relevant data at disposal, although data collection strategies need to get away from the narrow focus on people with short or long-term health or physical limitations. What would be more interesting is to do cross-national comparisons if similar data are available in other countries and see how well Canadian society fares in this regard in a global perspective.

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Table 2: Ordered set of roster members who provided help to respondents or to whom the respondent provided help
(Percentages in brackets are based on N involved in the specific type of help. The N values for meal prep, Shopping and Personal care are of those who had temporary difficulties and physical and health limitations. The N values for Checking up and Emotional Support are based on all respondents)

a) Males

	Meal Prep.	Type of help given to respondents for			Esupport
		Shopping	Pers.Care	Checking	
	Spouse (25) Daughter (14) Paid Emp. (10) Son (8) NGO (8) Friend (8) Mother (6)	Spouse (31) Daughter (15) Mother (10) Son (10) Friend (7) NGO (5) Govt. (4)	Spouse (43) NGO (21) Govt. (9) Father (7) Mother (7) Son (4) Daughter (3)	Friend (22) Mother (22) Father (10) Daughter (9) Sister (7) Son (6) Brother (6)	Spouse (29) Friend (22) Mother (15) Father (8) NGO (5) Daughter (4) Sister (4)
N	354	215	127	2320	2659

	Meal Prep.	Type of help given by respondents for			Esupport
		Shopping	Pers.Care	Checking	
	Mother (19) Father (13) Friend (11) Neighbour (11) Spouse (9) Mother-in-law(6) Father-in-law (5)	Mother (23) Friend (16) Father (14) Grandma (8) Mother-in-law (6) Neighbour (5) Spouse/NGO (4)	Spouse (17) Father (16) Mother (11) NGO (15) Friend (10) Father-in-law (6) Govt. (5)	Friend (25) Mother (22) Father (11) Sister (6) Grandma(6) Brother (5) Mother-in-law (4)	Friend (31) Spouse (21) Mother (10) Father (5) Daughter (4) Sister (4) Son (3)
N	427	426	184	3589	3104

b) Females

	Meal Prep.	Type of help given to respondents for			Esupport
		Shopping	Pers.Care	Checking	
	Paid Empl.(18) Daughter (15) Spouse (14) NGO (10) Govt (10) Son (8) Friend (5) Mother (5)	Daughter (30) Spouse (21) Son (12) Friend (8) NGO (4) Govt (4) Mother (4) Neighbour (3)	Daughter (24) Govt (24) NGO (22) Spouse (13) Paid Empl.(6) Friend (3)	Friend (25) Mother (22) Daughter (14) Sister (9) Son (7) Father (4)	Friend (29) Spouse (19) Mother (15) Daughter (7) Sister (7) Father (6) NGO (5)
N	499	316	178	3787	4385

	Meal Prep.	Type of help given by respondents for			Esupport
		Shopping	Pers.Care	Checking	
	Mother (32) Father (12) Friend (10) NGO (6) Grandma (6) Spouse (5) Mother-in-law (5)	Mother (30) Friend (14) Father (11) Mother-in-law (7) Neighbour (6) Grandma (5) Spouse (4)	Mother (23) NGO (17) Spouse (17) Govt (8) Father (7) Friend (7) Grandma (5)	Friend (29) Mother (22) Father (6) Sister (8) Grandma (6) Mother-in-law (5) Neighbour (4)	Friend (37) Mother (12) Spouse (9) Sister (9) Daughter (6) Son (4) Father (4)
N	623	649	480	5088	4839

Table 4: PQL Logit coefficients (standard errors in brackets) of Family Cohesion Types
A) Detached

	Male						Female					
Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Marital Status												
Married/CL (Ref.)												
Separated/Divorced	0.33	(.23)	0.55	(.25)	0.49	(.26)	0.10	(.25)	0.42	(.28)	0.46	(.29)
Widowed	-0.14	-0.24	0.2	(.27)	0.13	(.28)	-0.52	-0.23	-0.04	(.27)	-0.08	(.29)
Single	0.13	(.20)	0.60	(.24)	0.55	(.25)	-0.08	(.22)	0.36	(.27)	0.41	(.28)
Parental Status												
Alone (Ref.)												
Couples with Children	-1.93	-0.22	-1.65	-0.25	-1.88	-0.26	-1.33	-0.24	-0.99	-0.28	-1.14	-0.29
Couples without Children	-2.31	(.21)	-1.98	-0.24	-2.16	-0.25	-1.73	-0.22	-1.38	-0.27	-1.55	-0.29
Single with Children	-1.72	(.24)	-1.57	(.24)	-1.7	(.26)	-1.09	(.14)	-1.07	-0.15	-1.21	-0.16
Others	-1.25	(.20)	-1.11	(.20)	-1.14	-0.21	-1.05	(.23)	-0.98	-0.23	-1.02	(.24)
Birth Cohorts												
Before 1916 (Ref.)												
1917-26			0.32	(.20)	0.31	(.22)			0.45	(.15)	0.42	(.16)
1927-36			0.30	(.21)	0.26	(.23)			0.63	(.17)	0.56	(.18)
1937-46			0.41	(.25)	0.43	(.27)			0.47	(.21)	0.49	(.23)
1947-56			0.49	(.23)	0.54	(.25)			0.45	(.21)	0.50	(.22)
1957-66			0.18	(.23)	0.18	(.25)			0.67	(.20)	0.81	(.22)
1967-76			-0.26	(.26)	-0.21	(.28)			0.46	(.22)	0.58	(.24)
1977-81			-0.99	(.44)	-0.96	(.46)			-1.32	(.56)	-1.26	(.57)
Education												
Above High School (Ref.)												
High School					0.19	(.11)					0.41	(.10)
Elementary					0.38	(.16)					0.28	(.14)
First Language												
English only (Ref.)												
French Only					-0.51	(.23)					-0.29	(.19)
Other Only					0.57	(.24)					0.49	(.23)
English and French					0.11	(.36)					-0.09	(.39)
Mixed					-0.29	(.30)					0.33	(.22)
Immigration Status												
Born in Canada (Ref.)												
Born out of Canada					0.10	(.14)					0.23	(.12)
Constant (β_1)	-0.5	(.233)	1.06	(.31)	-1.18	(.33)	-0.98	-0.24	-1.83	-0.31	-2.16	(.33)
σ^2_{Region}	0.28	(.10)	0.28	(.11)	0.21	(.08)	0.19	(.07)	0.19	(.07)	0.15	(.06)
σ^2_{UR}	0.22	(.09)	0.23	(.09)	0.20	(.10)	0.03	(.06)	0.03	(.06)	0.01	(.06)

Table 5: PQL Logit coefficients (standard errors in brackets) of Family Cohesion Types

B) Functional

	Male						Female					
Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Marital Status												
Married/CL (Ref.)												
Separated/Divorced	0.06	(.16)	0.24	(.17)	0.26	(.18)	-0.19	-0.16	-0.17	-0.17	-0.22	(.17)
Widowed	0.1	-0.16	0.09	(.18)	0.04	(.19)	0.02	-0.14	-0.29	-0.16	-0.34	(.16)
Single	0.08	-0.11	0.42	(.14)	0.47	(.15)	-0.22	(.12)	-0.15	-0.15	-0.21	(.16)
Parental Status												
Alone (Ref.)												
Couples with Children	0.89	(.14)	1	(.16)	1.06	(.16)	0.29	(.15)	0.26	(.16)	0.25	(.16)
Couples without Children	0.79	(.12)	1.10	(.14)	1.15	(.15)	0.07	(.13)	0.24	(.15)	0.22	(.16)
Single with Children	0.52	(.14)	0.66	(.14)	0.73	(.15)	-0.02	(.02)	0.07	(.09)	0.11	(.09)
Others	0.70	(.14)	0.78	(.14)	0.81	(.15)	0.07	(.14)	0.13	(.13)	0.15	(.15)
Birth Cohorts												
Before 1916 (Ref.)												
1917-26			-0.15	-0.12	-0.15	(.13)			-0.32	(.09)	-0.28	-0.1
1927-36			-0.06	-0.13	-0.06	(.14)			-0.51	-0.1	-0.47	(.11)
1937-46			-0.35	-0.15	-0.34	(.16)			-0.66	-0.13	-0.62	(.14)
1947-56			-0.42	(.14)	-0.4	(.15)			-0.73	-0.12	-0.74	(.13)
1957-66			-0.47	(.14)	-0.44	(.15)			-0.78	-0.12	-0.77	(.13)
1967-76			-0.53	-0.15	-0.53	(.16)			-0.92	-0.14	-0.91	(.14)
1977-81			-0.95	-0.21	-0.99	(.22)			-0.66	-0.2	-0.53	(.21)
Education												
Above High School (Ref.)												
High School					0.08	(.07)					-0.10	(.06)
Elementary					0.04	(.10)					-0.07	(.09)
First Language												
English only (Ref.)												
French Only					-0.10	(.12)					-0.03	(.11)
Other Only					0.05	(.16)					0.02	(.16)
English and French					0.02	(.22)					-0.01	(.23)
Mixed					-0.06	(.17)					-0.04	(.15)
Immigration Status												
Born in Canada (Ref.)												
Born out of Canada					0.09	(.09)					0.23	(.08)
Constant (β_1)												
	-0.86	(.14)	-0.78	(.19)	-0.87	(.20)	-0.54	(.14)	0.02	-0.18	0.04	(.19)
σ^2_{Region}	0.05	(.02)	0.05	(.02)	0.05	(.02)	0.04	(.02)	0.05	(.02)	0.05	(.02)
σ^2_{UR}	0.01	(.03)	0.01	(.03)	0.02	(.03)	0.01	(.02)	0.01	(.02)	0.02	(.03)

Table 6: PQL Logit coefficients (standard errors in brackets) of Family Cohesion Types
C) Tightknit

	Male						Female					
Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Marital Status												
Married/CL (Ref.)												
Separated/Divorced	-0.71	(.28)	-1.14	(.29)	-1.09	(.29)	-0.14	-0.19	-0.41	-0.2	-0.44	(.21)
Widowed	-0.25	(.25)	-0.26	(.27)	-0.2	(.28)	-0.11	(.17)	0.03	(.20)	0.06	-0.2
Single	-0.29	(.13)	-1.37	(.19)	-1.36	(.20)	-0.07	-0.13	-0.62	-0.18	-0.64	(.18)
Parental Status												
Alone (Ref.)												
Couples with Children	1.56	(.22)	1.24	(.24)	1.25	(.24)	1.11	(.18)	0.95	(.20)	0.94	(.20)
Couples without Children	2.08	(.21)	1.34	(.22)	1.38	(.23)	1.59	(.16)	1.08	(.18)	1.09	(.19)
Single with Children	1.86	(.21)	1.51	(.22)	1.52	(.22)	1.17	(.11)	1.01	(.11)	1.03	(.11)
Others	0.99	(.25)	0.77	(.26)	0.76	(.26)	0.67	(.18)	0.54	(.18)	0.48	(.19)
Birth Cohorts												
Before 1916 (Ref.)												
1917-26			-0.14	(.18)	-0.11	(.19)			-0.01	(.14)	0.02	(.14)
1927-36			-0.12	(.18)	-0.1	(.19)			0.02	(.15)	0.08	-0.15
1937-46			0.15	(.21)	0.07	(.22)			0.49	(.17)	0.49	(.18)
1947-56			0.57	(.20)	0.44	(.21)			0.62	(.16)	0.59	(.17)
1957-66			0.79	(.19)	0.68	(.21)			0.71	(.16)	0.64	(.17)
1967-76			1.21	(.21)	1.09	(.22)			1.06	(.17)	0.98	(.18)
1977-81			2.06	(.28)	2.12	(.29)			1.33	(.24)	1.35	(.25)
Education												
Above High School (Ref.)												
High School					-0.39	(.09)					-0.32	(.07)
Elementary					-0.30	(.14)					-0.15	(.12)
First Language												
English only (Ref.)												
French Only					0.31	(.16)					0.53	(.13)
Other Only					-0.30	(.23)					0.08	(.21)
English and French					-0.05	(.30)					0.13	(.27)
Mixed					-0.03	(.23)					0.13	(.20)
Immigration Status												
Born in Canada (Ref.)												
Born out of Canada					-0.04	(.13)					-0.41	(.12)
Constant (β1)	-0.34	(.24)	-3.24	-0.3	-3.01	(.32)	-2.71	(.19)	-2.86	-0.25	-2.65	(.26)
σ ² Region	0.27	(.10)	0.27	(.10)	0.26	(.10)	0.21	(.08)	0.22	(.08)	0.19	(.07)
σ ² UR	0.11	(.06)	0.06	(.06)	0.03	(.06)	0.11	(.05)	0.10	(.05)	0.09	(.05)

Table 7: PQL Logit coefficients (standard errors in brackets) of Family Cohesion Types

D) Obligatory

	Male						Female					
Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Marital Status												
Married/CL (Ref.)												
Separated/Divorced	0.18	(.20)	0.19	(.21)	0.17	(.21)	0.38	(.17)	0.39	(.18)	0.44	(.18)
Widowed	0.53	(.19)	0.26	(.21)	0.24	(.21)	0.74	(.15)	0.56	(.17)	0.58	(.18)
Single	0.29	(.14)	0.39	(.17)	0.36	(.18)	0.48	(.13)	0.64	(.16)	0.71	(.17)
Parental Status												
Alone (Ref.)												
Couples with Children	0.51	(.17)	0.38	(.19)	0.36	(.19)	0.46	(.16)	0.42	(.18)	0.45	(.18)
Couples without Children	0.09	(.15)	0.22	(.17)	0.15	(.18)	0.34	(.14)	0.55	(.16)	0.58	(.17)
Single with Children	0.49	(.15)	0.56	(.16)	0.51	(.16)	0.20	(.09)	0.32	(.09)	0.28	(.09)
Others	0.53	(.16)	0.57	(.16)	0.53	(.17)	0.64	(.14)	0.70	(.14)	0.70	(.14)
Birth Cohorts												
Before 1916 (Ref.)												
1917-26			-0.06	-0.14	-0.08	-0.15			-0.06	-0.1	-0.11	-0.1
1927-36			-0.27	-0.15	-0.27	-0.15			-0.07	-0.11	-0.09	-0.11
1937-46			-0.22	-0.17	-0.16	-0.18			-0.17	-0.14	-0.19	-0.15
1947-56			-0.59	-0.17	-0.52	-0.19			-0.31	-0.13	-0.3	-0.14
1957-66			-0.66	-0.17	-0.6	-0.18			-0.64	-0.14	-0.62	-0.14
1967-76			-0.66	-0.18	-0.61	-0.19			-0.73	-0.15	-0.73	-0.16
1977-81			-0.46	-0.25	-0.47	-0.26			-0.47	-0.21	-0.61	-0.22
Education												
Above High School (Ref.)												
High School					0.17	(.08)					0.18	(.07)
Elementary					0.13	(.11)					0.14	(.09)
First Language												
English only (Ref.)												
French Only					-0.04	(.14)					-0.30	(.11)
Other Only					0.06	(.21)					-0.13	(.19)
English and French					-0.29	(.29)					-0.19	(.24)
Mixed					0.15	(.21)					-0.02	(.17)
Immigration Status												
Born in Canada (Ref.)												
Born out of Canada					-0.15	(.12)					-0.14	(.09)
Constant (β_1)	-1.95	-0.17	-1.59	-0.22	-1.59	-0.24	-1.75	-0.16	-1.53	-0.19	-1.56	-0.21
σ^2_{Region}	0.07	-0.04	0.07	(.03)	0.06	(.03)	0.04	(.02)	0.04	(.02)	0.05	(.02)
σ^2_{UR}	0.01	-0.04	0.02	(.05)	0.01	(.05)	0.03	(.03)	0.02	(.03)	0.03	-0.03

