

Parental Commuting and Children's Hyperactivity

Findings from the German Family Panel

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Research Topic and Research Questions

Employment patterns have become ever more specialized and are changing in western societies. Among these changes is the rapidly rising extent of **commuting times**: People bridge greater distances to get to their workplace, thus commuting many hours to get to work.

We already know that long-distance commuting can affect the commuter (e.g., their well-being) and the relationship to their partner. Thus, the question arises whether the **well-being of commuters' children** can be affected, too.

Research Questions

Whether and how is parental long-distance commuting associated with a child's hyperactivity?

Whether and how is this association mediated by the parent-child relationship?

Expanding Prior Research

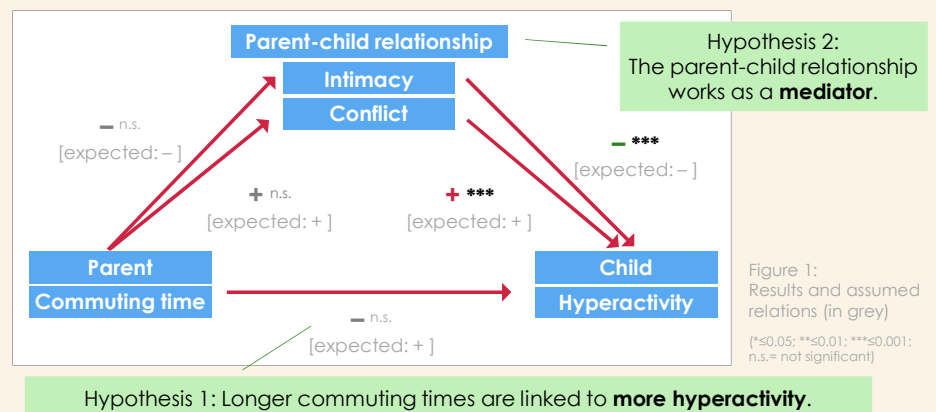
Prior research indicates an association of parental long-distance commuting and children's well-being: Parental commuting can decrease children's well-being.

Nevertheless, research is still scarce and findings are not clear.

Therefore, **this research** investigates an analysis using a different data set and aims to overcome restrictions other studies had to face due to limited data sets.

Li, J.; Pollmann-Schult, M. (2015): Fathers' commuting to work and children's social and emotional well-being. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues* 1-14.
Dunifon, R.; Kalil, A.; Bojarcharya, A. (2005): Maternal working conditions and child well-being in welfare-leaving families. *Developmental Psychology* 41, 6: 851-859.

Results



Rejecting the Hypotheses

- **H1**: Apparently, longer commuting times lead to **less hyperactivity**, though **not significantly**.
- **H2**: The **parent-child relationship** is **not** confirmed as a **mediator**, as commuting time is not influencing the parent-child relationship significantly.

What Matters Is...

- **Whether the child's hyperactivity was rated by the parent or the child**. Contrary to the findings above, parental commuting is accompanied by children rating themselves as **more hyperactive**.
- **Commuters' gender (parent-rated hyperactivity)**. Performing the model according to the commuters' gender, **fathers'** commuting is associated with significantly **less hyperactivity**.
- **Commuters' gender (child-rated hyperactivity)**. The positive link of long commuting times and **more hyperactivity** seems to apply in particular to **mothers** ($p=0.074$).

		Commuting of		
		Parent	Mother	Father
Hyper-activity rated by	Parent	— n.s.	+ n.s.	— *
	Child	+ *	+ 10%	+ n.s.

Table 1: Parental commuting time and hyperactivity

Discussion

- Apparently, the association of parental commuting and children's hyperactivity **depends on whom you ask and who commutes**:

We find differences in the
• **gender of the commuter** and whether
• **the child or the parent rated** the child's hyperactivity.

- More detailed analyses will be performed to disentangle the relationship of parental commuting and children's well-being for **further well-being aspects**.