# **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. Dunition, R.; Kalili, A.; Bajracharya, A. (2005): Maternal working and the activity of the label of the state of the state of the state.

Dunifon, R.; Kalil, A.; Bajracharya, A. (2005): Maternal working conditions and child well-being in welfare-leaving families. Developmental Psychology 41, 6: 851-859.

# Data and Method

#### Sample

- German Family Panel (pairfam)
- o 2012/13
- Employed parent with child aged 8-15
- o N = 895

#### Variables

- Child's hyperactivity
- Parental weekly commute hours
- Parent-child relationship
  - Intimacy
  - · Conflict

#### Method

Structural equation modelling

Results **Parent-child relationship** Hypothesis 2: The parent-child relationship Intimacy works as a mediator. Conflict n.s \_ \*\*\* [expected:expected:-] + n.s + \*\*\* [expected:+] [expected: +]  $\mathbf{N}$ Child Parent Figure 1: Results and assumed Hyperactivity **Commuting time** relations (in grey) \_ n.s. (\*≤0.05; \*\*≤0.01; \*\*\*≤0.001; n.s.= not significant) [expected: +]

Hypothesis 1: Longer commuting times are linked to more hyperactivity.

#### **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.
  Commuting of
- 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).

We find differences in the

hyperactivity.

		Parent	Mother	Father
Hyper- activity rated by	Parent	<u> </u>	<b>∔</b> n.s.	_ *
	Child	+ *	<b>∔</b> 10%	<b>+</b> 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:  More detailed analyses will be performed to disentangle the relationship of parental commuting and children's well-being for further well-being aspects.

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gender of the commuter and whether

the child or the parent rated the child's





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