

# Parents' work schedule and children's educational achievement

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## Research question

- How does parents' labor market participation affect children's educational achievement?
- More specifically, what is the effect of parents' working schedule, i.e. working non-standard (NST) hours on children's educational achievement?

## NST schedules

- NST working days and hours: working early morning, evenings, nights, weekends, i.e. outside 'standard' working time;

In this paper:

- NST schedule: majority of the working hours in majority of the working days are worked during evening (16:00 – 0:00) or night (0:00 – 08:00) hours

## Why study this topic?

- In post-industrial 24/7 service economies, many jobs are performed in services that require presence outside 'standard working hours', which may lead to the de-synchronisation of time with other family members;
- The burden appears to fall disproportionately on women, including working mothers. This means restrictions in time mothers can spend with their children outside the normal school hours;

## Resources versus time (Korupp, 2000)

Mother's/father's labor market participation:

- increases family's financial and social **resources**, and may thus be beneficial in children's achievement in school (Kalmijn, 1994; Dronkers, 1995);
- Reduces the **time budget** available to assist the education of the children, and may have negative effect on final achievement (Milne et al, 1986; Desai et al, 1989)

## Data and variables

- Data:** Netherlands Kinship Panel Survey 2002-2004;
- Sample:** Children aged 15-25 with at least one working parent;
- Method:** linear regression models;
- Dependent variable:** Child's educational achievement in terms of highest education completed with diploma or still being pursued;

## Data and variables (2)

### Independent variables:

- **Mother's/father's working schedule:**
  - Not working, i.e. not having paid job;
  - Working regular hours;
  - Working NST schedules;
- Child's age; Child's current enrollment in education system;
- Parents' education; Parent(s)' occupation (ISEI); Number of working hours

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## Results (1)

- When both parents are present, father's NST working schedule has statistically significant negative effect on child's educational achievement, whereas mother's working schedule has no effect;
- Effect of the schedule is significant even when controlling for parents' occupations;

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## Results (2)

The effect of parent's working schedule on child's educational achievement becomes more clear when looking at mother's and father's working schedules separately.

### Effect of mother's schedule:

- When fathers are working standard hours, mother's work has a positive effect on child's educational achievement. However, this is only true if mothers work standard hours;
- When fathers are working NST hours, mother's work has a negative effect on child's educational achievement;

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## Results (3)

- When father is not working at all, mother's NST schedule has a strong and significant negative effect on child's educational achievement. So does the number of hours, i.e. the more hours mother works, the worse the education outcomes for the child;

### Effect of father's schedule:

- When mother is working standard hours, father's working has a positive effect on child's educational achievement. However, father's working hours are better to fall into standard hours;

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## Results (4)

- When mother is working NST hours, father's working has a positive effect on child's educational achievement. However, the hours should fall into regular working hours;
- When mother is not working, father's working has a positive effect on child's educational achievement. However, again the working hours should fall into regular working hours

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## Conclusions (1)

- Parent's working schedule has an effect on child's educational achievement. The effect tends to be clearer and stronger for father's schedule, especially when it comes to NST schedules;
- In general, parent's non-working tends to have a negative effect on child's educational achievement;
- When controlling for specific schedule types (e.g. NST) and also for the status of the other parent (e.g. not working), the effect of non-work can become positive;

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## Conclusions (2)

- NST schedule work tends to have a negative effect on child's educational achievement. Although there seems to be no general effect for mother's schedule, the effect is particularly clear for mothers who are single earners in the family;
- Resources versus time?

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## Limitations of the analysis

- There is no information on parent's working history, meaning we do not know how long they have been working in current occupation/working schedules → causal order problem.
- However, we find some significant (negative) association between NST and child's education. Interpreting this as a causal effect of NST is theoretically more plausible than the other way around.

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Thank you for your attention!

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