



INVEST CONFERENCE 2026

BUILDING EQUAL SOCIETIES:
FROM SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS
TO SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION



Abstract Book

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Thursday 7 May

Parallel sessions at 12.30-14.00

Professionals and the system

Essi Ahlroth (Presenting Author)

NEET youth through the eyes of service professionals: Does the clinical gaze shape the interventions, and the data we use?

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Abstract

The clinical gaze refers to the process by which a worker translates a client's complex reality into a problem they can act upon. In NEET youth service system, the gaze works as a filter through which youth is assigned to different measures. These interpretations act as gatekeepers of the welfare state, but not just that. The administrative register data is in essence, information on individuals, filtered through this gaze. The gaze forms through professional socialization and institutional logics, but can also be impacted by local structural limitations and characteristics. The interventions and resource allocation are based on subjective professional interpretations. Professionals also have the power to label, which can either empower the youth or further stigmatize them.

We aim to describe how professionals perceive the problems of NEET youth and to examine how perceptions vary across municipal contexts and professional positions. The focus is on mapping patterns of interpretation and identifying forms of heterogeneity in the clinical gaze. We explore whether certain problem framings are more common in specific municipal settings or among particular professional groups, and how these patterns may reflect institutional roles, local service structures, and contextual constraints.

The study uses qualitative data from 74 semi-structured interviews with professionals working with NEET youth, collected in 2024 across 20 Finnish municipalities. Professionals are categorized by sector, occupation, and length of career in the field. Municipalities are categorized by NEET rate (high/low) and degree of urbanity (rural–urban). Perceived youth problems are coded into thematic categories. The analysis combines qualitative thematic interpretation with descriptive statistics to examine how problem framings are distributed across municipal and professional categories. The study provides an empirically grounded basis for subsequent register-based analyses.

Keywords: NEET; youth; service system; mixed methods

Sonja Tuomisto (Presenting Author)

Rehabilitation of Sámi-speaking clients organised by the Social Insurance Institution of Finland – research to support the development work

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Abstract

According to the cooperation agreement between the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) and the Sámi Parliament (2021), Kela aims to promote the implementation of the objectives of the Sámi Language Act, equality, and the development of Sámi-language services, taking into account the special linguistic and cultural needs of the Sámi people.

Kela has launched a development project called Rehabilitation for Sámi-speaking people (2024-2027), in which a new rehabilitation service for Sámi-speaking clients will be developed. The development project is based on a report on the current status of Kela's rehabilitation services for Sámi-speaking clients. The report found that the availability of services varies and that there is dissatisfaction with how services are implemented; the special characteristics of Sámi culture are not taken into account sufficiently in the services. There are shortcomings and development needs in identifying the need for rehabilitation and in rehabilitation-related communication. For the clients, community spirit and the ability to use one's own language are important factors: therefore, services should better support these needs.

The rehabilitation service to be developed is Sámi-language mental health rehabilitation. It is aimed at working-age clients (18–67 years old) who need services in the Sámi language and in accordance with Sámi culture. An evaluation study has been launched alongside the development project, the purpose of which is to produce information to support the development work and to assess the implementation of the development project's goals. In the study, data will be collected from rehabilitation clients, Kela's customer service advisors and benefit administrators, professionals in the new service's multidisciplinary working group, and healthcare professionals. Particular attention will be paid to the implementation of special linguistic and cultural needs and a culturally sensitive approach.

Keywords: Rehabilitation, Sámi language, mental health, cultural sensitivity

Ella Näsi (Presenting Author)

The Finnish social benefit system through the light of complexity theory – Experiences of families facing childhood cancer

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Abstract

Background: When a child is diagnosed with a serious illness such as cancer, the whole family's life is thrown into turmoil. Typically, one parent refrains from work to take care of the child. Consequently, the family loses part of its regular income. To alleviate financial hardship, Finland, being a Nordic welfare state, provides various social benefits. However, accessing benefits is often claimed to be complicated. Therefore, we set out to explore the lived experiences of parents who apply for social benefits in Finland and utilized the complexity theory as our analytical lens.

Methods: We interviewed 24 parents (mostly mothers) from 19 families in which a child had been diagnosed with cancer in Finland. Thereafter, we performed an abductive thematic analysis informed by complexity theory. The interviews provided insights into parents' experiences of applying for social benefits from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) and Wellbeing Services Counties.

Results: Parents found social benefits arduous and complex to access. Parents had to file recurring applications and adhere to various requirements set by Kela and Wellbeing Services Counties. Benefit payments were intermittent and subject to means-testing and discretion. While parents assessed that financial support was sufficient overall, they reported delays and unpredictability in the benefit decisions.

Conclusions: According to the experiences of parents of children with cancer, the notion of complexity is apt for describing the Finnish social benefit system. Social benefits are implemented through varying institutional processes, which are disconnected, discontinuous and subject to discretionary decision-making. These characteristics of the Finnish social benefit system resonate with the complexity theory positing that complex systems are composed of somewhat uncoordinated sub-systems with nonlinear and unpredictable outcomes. Understanding system complexity supports efforts to streamline the system.

Keywords: family, social benefits, cancer, complexity theory, interviews

Saana Sourander (Presenting Author)

Professionals' Experiences of Implementing an Internet-Based Parent Training Program in Family Counseling Centers During COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions on face-to-face services created an urgent need for digital, evidence-based interventions for families with young children with disruptive behavior problems. In Helsinki, Finland, the Strongest Families Smart Website (SFSW), an internet-based parent training program with telephone coaching previously shown effective in primary care, was rapidly implemented in family counseling services. Previous 6- and 24-month follow-up studies in family counseling services demonstrated sustained improvements in child psychopathology and parenting skills, high parental satisfaction, and low dropout. This study focuses on professionals' experiences of implementation in a new service context.

This mixed-method pilot study explored feasibility and acceptability of SFSW from the perspective of professionals in family counseling centers. Quantitative data were collected via an online survey prior to implementation (n=37), and qualitative data through three post-intervention focus group interviews with professionals (n=8) from eight family counseling centers. Survey data were analyzed descriptively, and qualitative data using inductive content analysis.

Before implementation, professionals preferred traditional group-based parent training, but post-intervention findings showed more positive evaluations of the digitally assisted format. The program was perceived as feasible and easy to integrate into existing service structures. Professionals reported successful identification of suitable families and reduced workload. Challenges included the need for clearer orientation and improved multilingual access.

The findings suggest that an evidence-based digital parent training program can be successfully transferred from primary health care to social services, even under crisis conditions. Professional engagement, adequate training, and contextual adaptation appear critical for successful implementation when scaling interventions across service sectors

Keywords: Digital intervention, Parent training, Professionals' experiences, Social care, Adaptation, Implementation

Sanna Herkama (Presenting Author)

Parenthood under pressure: Professionals' perspectives on young children's psychosocial challenges

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Abstract

Young children's psycho-social problems have been rising markedly, while parents are navigating increasingly complex demands. Professionals working with child and family wellbeing also report growing pressure to meet these needs, yet the phenomenon remains understudied. This study examines how early childhood staff, child and family health clinic professionals, as well as specialists and leaders in wellbeing services counties describe young children's psychosocial challenges and the underlying root causes behind them.

The study draws on a broad and rich qualitative dataset. The data were collected in daycare centers (n=13, 42 participants), child health clinics (n=4, 13 participants), and family health clinics (n=3, 11 participants) through focus groups. In addition, individual interviews were conducted with specialists and leaders working in wellbeing services counties (n=30). Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Analysis followed an inductive reflexive thematic analysis.

Professionals described a wide spectrum of concerns, ranging from extremely aggressive behavior in young children to major societal shifts, with many pointing to the growing need of basic parenting capacities as a key contributing factor. They emphasized that young children's psycho-social challenges cannot be understood as stemming solely from the child (e.g., hyperactivity, difficulties in emotion regulation, conduct problems), but are also closely connected to the pressures faced by parents (e.g., poverty, unemployment, lack of social support networks, adverse life events, health and mental health problems) and to broader societal developments (e.g. polarization, individualism). Participants also noted that some parents increasingly expect quick solutions, including medication or a clear-cut fix to the problem.

These findings underscore the importance of strengthening services targeted at parents of young children and providing sustained support for everyday parenting.

Keywords: parenting, psycho-social problems, small children

Digital environment

Sanju Silwal, Terja Ristkari, and Tarja Korpilahti-Leino (Presenting Author)

Digital intervention for strengthening parenting skills of Ukrainian caregivers

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Abstract

Background: War has profound effects on the mental health and well-being of individual, families and communities. The ongoing war in Ukraine, which began in February 2022, has caused deaths and displacement of millions. Parents play a significant role in buffering the impact of war on mental health of children. Although digital parenting interventions have shown to reduce children's emotional and behavioral problems in non-war settings, their feasibility and efficacy in war contexts remain largely unexplored. The aim of the study is to assess feasibility and acceptability of an unguided, digitally delivered universal program for Ukrainian caregivers and to examine changes in parenting skills, and parental and child distress and anxiety.

Methods: The 'Let's Cope Together- Program for Ukrainian Caregivers' was developed in collaboration with Ukrainian psychiatrist, psychologists and team of University of Turku. The program is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy elements, such as psychoeducation and skills training, and positive parenting to support children in dealing with emotions during distressing situations. The study is mixed-method in design including pre-post surveys and qualitative interviews. Participants were recruited through parent-teacher chat groups. Parenting skills were assessed using Me as a Parents (Maaps), parental mental health by Depression, Anxiety and Stress (DASS-21) and children's mental health by parent-Screen for Child Anxiety Related Disorders (SCARED).

Results: The study is currently ongoing. Sixteen participants completed pre-post surveys and five were interviewed. Participants reported contents were easy, useful, relevant and they learnt skills to manage their own and children's emotions.

Conclusion: Digital intervention may improve access to psychosocial support during war, when face-to-face services are often unavailable. Future studies need to examine the efficacy of digital parenting interventions in war-affected contexts.

Keywords: digital intervention, mental health, anxiety, children, caregiver, parenting, war

Seyma Celik (Presenting Author)

Adolescent Daily Victimization and Mood: The Role of Problem-talk Strategies in Online vs. In-person Settings

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Abstract

Peer victimization is a salient stressor in adolescence linked to mental health difficulties (McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015). Although social support from friends is considered protective against the consequences of victimisation, it can also exacerbate their effects (Schacter et al., 2021). However, it remains unclear under which circumstances support from friends may help or hurt. By using a daily diary approach, this study will examine: (1) How are daily victimizing experiences associated with different problem-talk strategies with friends?; (2) How does each form of problem-talk strategy (distraction, co-rumination, problem-solving, re-appraisal) mediate the link between experienced stress of the victimization and the daily mood of adolescents on days they were victimized?; (3) Does the mode of problem-talk (online vs in-person) moderate the impact of the problem-talk strategies on daily mood? (4) Does overall mental health moderate the links between victimization, problem-talk strategies and daily mood?. Approximately 2000 Finnish adolescents aged 13-to-16 were recruited from a larger project sample (n = 4718; Mage: 13.84; 48.6% girls) to complete daily questionnaires for 15 consecutive school days. The measures include daily victimization experiences, types of problem-talk strategies, and positive and negative affect. The analysis strategy consists of a multilevel path analysis model using Mplus. All four types of problem-talk strategies will be explored as separate paths between victimization intensity and mood outcomes. We will also explore the interactions of the types and modes of problem-talk strategies. Finally, we will use the global mental health status of the participants to assess whether any of the paths differ for adolescents with lower vs. average mental health. Overall, this study will investigate the daily impacts of victimization on well-being and help explain when and how different problem-talk strategies are beneficial or harmful.

Keywords: victimization; problem-talk; co-rumination; mental health; daily diary study

Katja Toivonen and Laura Kortesoja (Presenting Author)

Digitally-assisted intervention with online coaching for the Early Childhood Educator teams: A Cluster Randomized Trial

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Abstract

Emotional and behavioural difficulties often emerge during early childhood and may have an effect on children's later mental health, academic achievement and social functioning. Early childhood education (ECE) professionals play a central role in supporting children's socio-emotional development. Increasing group sizes, inclusive practices and behavioural challenges place high demands on educators' pedagogical competence and well-being. Team-level, low-threshold interventions that strengthen shared positive guidance practices are needed. Power of Growth is a digitally assisted, team-based intervention with online coaching for ECE professionals. The intervention consists of digital self-learning material with 360-videos and online team coaching. Participants systematically practice positive guidance and interaction skills with their child group. The intervention lasts approximately 12 weeks. A Cluster Randomized Trial (CRT) of Power of Growth intervention investigates: 1) changes in early childhood educators' (ECEs) self-assessed self-efficacy in the intervention group compared to the control group; 2) changes in behavioral challenges of the children in the ECEs' groups, as assessed by parents, in the intervention group compared to the control group; and 3) changes in ECEs' guidance methods in the intervention group compared to the control group. Additionally, we investigate changes in ECEs' well-being and teamwork in both groups. The usability and feasibility of implementing the intervention was examined using qualitative research methods. ECE units from 19 different municipalities participated to the CRT during the year 2025. Eligible teams were randomly assigned to either the Power of Growth intervention group (n=22) or the control group (n=21). The control group did not receive any intervention during the research phase. This study provides insights into the efficacy and usability of the Power of Growth intervention.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, intervention, behaviour challenges

Daniel Graf (Presenting Author)

Beyond Proactive Aggression: Examining Thrill-Seeking Motives and Injunctive Normative Beliefs in Offline and Cyberbullying

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Abstract

Bullying research has predominantly focused on controlled appetitive aggression (i.e., proactive aggression aimed at gaining social dominance), often overlooking impulsive appetitive perpetration such as thrill-seeking or “fun-driven” bullying behavior. To address this gap, the current study aims to determine whether thrill-based aggression extends beyond proactive aggression in explaining both offline and cyberbullying. Additionally, we examine whether injunctive normative beliefs (i.e., perceived approval or disapproval of bullying) moderate the relationship between these two forms of appetitive aggression and bullying across offline and online communication.

Cross-sectional data from 1,064 students ($M_{age} = 14.07$, $SD = 2.15$; 58% female) from 16 schools will be analyzed. Participants completed questionnaires during regular school hours assessing offline and online impulsive-appetitive aggression, offline and online controlled-appetitive aggression, and self-reported offline and cyberbullying. Injunctive normative beliefs were measured separately for offline and online contexts. Gender and age will be included as covariates. Multiple regression and moderation analyses will be conducted to investigate whether both types of appetitive aggression differentially predict offline and cyberbullying and whether injunctive normative beliefs differentially moderate these associations.

This research will provide insight into whether thrill-seeking (impulsive-appetitive) aggression contributes uniquely to both offline and cyberbullying beyond proactive, controlled-appetitive aggression. Moreover, it will clarify how injunctive normative beliefs might moderate these relationships across different communication modes. By examining distinct aggression types and the influence of normative beliefs, this study aims to inform targeted intervention and prevention efforts in bullying contexts.

Keywords: Aggression, bullying, cyberbullying, injunctive normative beliefs

Physical health

Ayushma Bhandari, Sonja Gilbert, and Anne Abio (Presenting Author)

Changes in Pain Symptoms and Sleep Problems Among 8-year-old Children: A thirty-six-year time-trend study

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Abstract

Background: Recurrent pain symptoms and sleep problems are common in children and are associated with concurrent and later psychiatric problems. Previous studies in Finland have shown a significant increase in the prevalence of pain and sleep problems among children from 1989 to 2005. However, trends after 2013 have not been reported despite societal changes and the COVID-19 pandemic, which limits a long-term perspective. This study addresses the gap by measuring changes in the prevalence of self-reported pain and sleep problems among 8-year-old children in Southwest Finland from 1989 to 2025, and their associations with psychiatric symptoms.

Methods: Repeated cross-sectional population-based surveys of children aged 8 were conducted at schools in the Turku Metropolitan area in 1989, 1999, 2005, 2013, 2019, 2021, and 2025. Children were asked about the frequency of sleep problems and pain symptoms. Parents and teachers completed Rutter questionnaires about the child's psychiatric symptoms. Data collection methods have remained identical over the study years, with participation varying from 891 (93%) to 986 (95%).

Results: The cumulative odds ratio (95% confidence intervals) for headache and sleep problems increased among both genders in 2025 compared to 1989, with 1.5 (1.2-1.9) for headache and 1.4 (1.1-1.8) for sleep problems. There was a rise in abdominal pain in both genders after 2021. The prevalence of regular abdominal pain among girls increased from 0.5% in 2021 to 3% in 2025, and 1.9% to 4% among boys.

Conclusion: This is the first study to examine changes in childhood pain and sleep problems over a three-decade period. The results can help identify the secular trends and the comorbidities with psychiatric symptoms. Spanning the pre- and post-COVID-19 periods, these findings advance understanding of child mental health during global crises.

Keywords: Childhood pain, sleep problems, psychiatric symptoms, time-trend

Heidi Kesanto-Jokipolvi (Presenting Author)

Self-Rated Health and Health Complaints in Adolescence as Predictors of Future Health - A Longitudinal Study

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Abstract

Background

Increasing mental health symptoms and low self-reported wellbeing among adolescents raise concerns about their long-term consequences in terms of public health. It is well known that self-rated health (SRH) and health complaints are associated with health behaviour and school achievements in adolescence, and some studies have also indicated that they predict health care attendance, medication use and future health. Here we study the association between SRH and health complaints in adolescence and a later psychiatric diagnosis.

Methods

The data consists of Adolescent Health and Lifestyle Survey cohorts (12-, 14-, 16-, -18-year-olds) from 1981 to 1997 (n=8 546), whose survey responses have been linked to registry data up to 2018, when the participants were aged 33 to 57 years. Gender-stratified Cox proportional hazards models were used to examine the association between SRH and daily health complaints and psychiatric diagnosis (yes/no) during the follow-up. Family socioeconomic, health behaviour and educational track chosen in adolescence were controlled as confounders.

Results

The preliminary findings indicate that the associations between SRH and daily health complaints and later psychiatric disorders were partly dependent on health behaviours and educational track chosen in adolescence. However, average or poor SRH compared to excellent SRH predicted the occurrence of a psychiatric disorder among girls (HR 1.66) and boys (HR 1.33) after controlling for the confounders. Correspondingly, even one daily health complaint per week increased the likelihood for a psychiatric disorder in the adjusted models (HR 1.48 among girls and HR 1.49 among boys).

Conclusion

SRH and health complaints in adolescence may provide a prognostic effect for later psychiatric morbidity. Given that the associations between health behaviour, education track and self-reported wellbeing seems to be intertwined during adolescence, it is important to monitor these factors together.

Keywords: self-rated health, health complaints, psychiatric morbidity, adolescents, longitudinal study

Yeabsira Bedada (Presenting Author)

Genitourinary Infections Exposure During Pregnancy and Risk of Mental Disorders in Offspring: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Background: While genitourinary infections (GUI) are the most common infections during pregnancy, the evidence surrounding their association with mental disorders in offspring is inconsistent and limited. We aimed to systematically assess the results of previous studies that examined the associations between GUI exposure during pregnancy and risk of mental disorders in the offspring.

Method: We conducted a systematic review following PRISMA and MOOSE guidelines for studies published by September 2025. The review included longitudinal observational studies published in English in peer-reviewed journals, with documented maternal GUI during pregnancy as exposure and mental disorders with standard diagnosis as an outcome. A comprehensive literature search was conducted in five electronic databases, followed by a two-step screening process performed by two independent reviewers. Data was extracted using an Excel sheet and summarized as a narrative of grouped studies.

Results: Of the 5662 studies from the literature search, 31 were included in the review. The studies had 11 types of infections and 8 different mental disorders. The findings showed a significant association between GUI exposure during pregnancy and disorders such as ASD, ADHD or ID. The majority of the studies reported a lack of significant association with schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. Evidence for BPD, depression and eating disorders were inconclusive, as each disorder was examined in only a single study. Findings regarding the effects of infection type and timing remain inconsistent.

Conclusion: The results support existing evidence on the impact of prenatal infections on mental disorders, especially ASD, ADHD and ID. The review highlights the importance of routine screening, prevention and early treatment of GUI during pregnancy. Future studies should focus on identifying the relation with other mental disorders and the impact of the type and timing of infection.

Keywords: prenatal infection, Genitourinary infection, offspring, mental disorder

Subina Upadhyaya (Presenting Author)

Maternal hypertension and offspring depression

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Abstract

Background: Limited studies have examined the association between maternal hypertension and offspring depression and are based on small sample size. We aim to examine the association between maternal hypertension during pregnancy and offspring depression. We hypothesize that maternal hypertension during pregnancy increases the risk for offspring depression.

Methods: This nationwide register-based study was based on a nested case-control study design. It utilized several Finnish national registers to collect the information on the cases, the controls, and their parents. This study included 37,677 cases of depression and 145,068 controls, identified from Finnish national registers. Conditional logistic regression models were used to examine the association between maternal hypertension and depression, adjusting for several potential covariates. The potential covariates were tested using the Pearson's chi-square test for categorical covariates and t test for continuous covariates for the association with exposures among controls. The association between maternal hypertension and offspring depression were also studied by stratifying by biological sex.

Results: In the adjusted model maternal gestational hypertension was associated with offspring depression (aOR 1.24, 95% CI 1.11-1.39). When the association was stratified by biological sex, associations were found for gestational hypertension and offspring depression only among girls (aOR 1.27, 95% CI 1.10-1.46).

Conclusion: Gestational hypertension was associated with offspring depression. Especially girls were more likely to get depression when exposed to gestational hypertension. Early screening for depression in offspring of women with gestational hypertension and screening for hypertension early in pregnancy may be important in reducing offspring risk for depression.

Keywords: maternal hypertension, depression, offspring, register-based, epidemiology

Migration I

Sharon Shikanga (Presenting Author)

Who Gets In? Migrant-Generation Patterns in Field-of-Study Choices and Admission Outcomes in Finnish Higher Education

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Abstract

Concentration of mental health risks in specific schools can have detrimental effects on both the pupils at risk and their fellow students. Increasing school segregation can lead to situations where pupils are negatively affected by the growing problems creating a negative circle of accumulating problems. Often public actors provide support for these problems, but their identification can be difficult due to different diagnosis practices and variety in children's tendency and ability to seek help. In this study we analyze how the school segregation of mental health risks has been increasing in the context of growing residential and school segregation in Finland (Turku and Helsinki regions) during the last decades. We use polygenic scores linked with rich register data to identify concentration of mental health risks in schools. This measure is independent of different diagnosis practices and measures the accumulation of risks directly that has not been possible in the previous studies on the topic. Our study contributes to important discussions on supporting schools in the times of increasing socioeconomic segregation as well as highlighting the advantages of using polygenic scores in measuring mental health risks.

Keywords: Migrant generation, 1st generation, 2nd generation, 2.5 generation, field of study, higher education, Effectively Maintained Inequality (EMI), Finland

Ivelina Hristova (Presenting Author)

Testing Berry's Acculturation Model in the United Kingdom: Comparing Descriptive Classification and Latent Variable Models

Authors in order: Ivelina Hristova, Department of Social Policy, The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom

Abstract

Concerns about migrant national and ethnic identification have given rise to far-right populism in Europe, with long-lasting consequences for societies. A widely used paradigm for understanding such an identification has built from Berry's acculturation framework. Berry theorises that migrant acculturation manifests in four discrete patterns. Scholars have increasingly questioned the number and meaning of these categories theoretically and empirically. However, recent influential studies in Europe still follow Berry's framework prescriptively, inadvertently shaping analytical outcomes. Focusing on the UK, I argue that we need to re-examine how we conceptualise and measure acculturation to be able to provide refined substantive understanding. I examine the validity and meaning of Berry's typology. I compare a widely used methodology, descriptive classification, to two exploratory latent variable models that allow the identity patterns to emerge from the data. I use Understanding Society, a rich nationally representative survey. I show that the descriptive classification leads to sizeable and statistically significant differences in classification. In contrast, the latent variable models provide mixed support for Berry's typology. Not all acculturation categories emerge from the data simultaneously. These patterns are less differentiated than theorised and might be better measured on a continuum. A high-status 'marginalised' category seems to contradict Berry's theory. Contrary to the far-right narrative, the co-existence of national and ethnic identity seems prevalent, and hospitable environment increases identification with Britain. I emphasise the importance of data-driven analytical approaches to refine theory, mitigate the risks of researcher-influenced results, and refine our substantive understanding of national and ethnic identification.

Keywords: national identity, ethnic identity, acculturation, incorrect classification, latent variable models

Emilia Häkkinen (Presenting Author)

Civic engagement among older migrants – Understanding contributions and challenges through life transitions

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Abstract

Background and aim:

Civic engagement plays a crucial role in well-being and social inclusion, yet older migrants' engagement remains overlooked. Given the diversity in migration motives and trajectories, understanding civic engagement among older migrants benefits from a life course focus. This study examines the lifelong civic engagement of 15 older migrants living in Finland, exploring how key life transitions have shaped their engagement over time and into old age. The following research questions are addressed: (1) which life-course transitions do the interviewed older migrants describe as relevant to their civic engagement? and (2) how do these life transitions inform their current civic engagement?

Methods:

As a part of the European research project CIVEX (2021-2024), this qualitative study draws on 15 semi-structured life-course interviews with migrants aged 60+, living in Finland.

Key findings:

The findings highlight how key transitions in the life course may (re)shape both past and present engagement in civic activities. Participants discussed life transitions in terms of migration, family life, work and retirement, and health. Transitions in these areas of life could either facilitate or constrain civic engagement, with temporary or long-term influences. In some cases, a life transition, such as migrating to a new country, could facilitate one form of civic engagement while simultaneously reducing another, highlighting the multidimensionality of civic engagement. Moreover, consecutive life transitions could accumulate over time, amplifying patterns of engagement or non-engagement.

Societal implications:

By focusing on older migrants' life histories, this study advances our understanding of how civic engagement is shaped across the life course. By recognizing past and present contributions, the findings can inform policies and initiatives aimed at fostering inclusive civic activities, ensuring that older migrants' participatory efforts are acknowledged and valued.

Keywords: Civic engagement, older adults, migrant background, life course

Daniela Foresta (Presenting Author)

Multimorbidity Profiles and Mortality Inequalities Among Migrant-Origin Populations in Sweden: A Latent Class Analysis

Authors in order: Daniela Foresta¹, Courtney Franklin¹, and Matthew Wallace¹

¹ University of Salford, Manchester, United Kingdom

Abstract

Background

Multimorbidity, defined as the coexistence of multiple long-term conditions, is increasingly common and unevenly distributed across populations. It is also a predictor of mortality. Migrants in high-income countries often exhibit distinct disease patterns shaped by selection before migration, exposure during migration, and lived conditions after arrival. Health inequalities among migrant populations are not solely the result of individual behaviours or biological risk factors but are produced through broader structural contexts that shape how diseases cluster within individuals. Despite extensive register-based research in Sweden, most studies overlook how conditions cluster within individuals in ways that reflect shared social and structural exposures. Latent class analysis (LCA) provides a data-driven approach to identify unobserved subgroups with shared morbidity profiles, allowing comparison of disease clustering between migrant and Swedish-born populations.

Methods

We used nationwide Swedish register data to derive multimorbidity profiles among adults resident in Sweden at a single index date (2022). Chronic conditions were identified from inpatient and specialist outpatient care records prior to the index date. Latent class analysis (LCA) was used to identify multimorbidity profiles and we assessed measurement invariance by nativity group-specific LCAs. Finally, class membership was linked to all-cause mortality using survival analysis.

Conclusions

Characterising these patterns provides insight into how social position and migration-related processes become embodied in health and offers an empirical foundation for targeted prevention and healthcare planning."

Keywords: Sweden, migrants, morbidity, LCA

Socioeconomic inequalities in health and well-being

Arja Rimpelä and Leena Koivusilta (Presenting Author)

Socioeconomic circumstances during adolescence and psychiatric morbidity – a longitudinal study

Authors in order: Leena Koivusilta¹, Riittakerttu Kaltiala², Pauly Acacio-Claro³, Ville Mattila⁴, and Arja Rimpelä⁵

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Abstract

Background. Childhood socioeconomic circumstances influence mental health outcomes in adulthood, however, there is limited evidence regarding how the interplay of socioeconomic circumstances with academic achievement in adolescence and attained level of education in adulthood affects psychiatric morbidity.

Aim. Our longitudinal study aims to address this gap including the impact of grandparents' circumstances.

Methods. Biennial surveys to nationally representative samples of 12–18-year-old Finns between 1981 and 1997 (N = 56432) were linked with socioeconomic data at age of 15 years, and psychiatric diagnoses data in specialized psychiatric care, extracted from national registries. The follow-up time until the first diagnoses was 22–39 years. Gender-stratified Cox regression models were fitted.

Key results. The odds for the psychiatric diagnosis were higher for adolescents who had not lived with both parents (males OR=1.35, 95% CI 1.20-1.51; females OR=1.32, 95% CI 1.18-1.48). Most other indicators of low socioeconomic circumstances, except grandparents' circumstances, were associated with psychiatric diagnoses, but there were variations. Poor school performance in adolescence and low education in adulthood predicted the diagnoses, but the first one lost its significance in adjusted models. An interaction between father's/mother's and the respondent's education indicated that if the respondent had attained high education, the risk was independent of father's/mother's education.

Conclusions. There was a general pattern indicating that lower socioeconomic circumstances during adolescence predicts psychiatric morbidity but not as systematically as expected. Attaining high education in adulthood protects from psychiatric disorders even when adolescent circumstances are weak. Children from families with lower education who end up with low education in adulthood are at the highest risk.

Keywords: psychiatric morbidity, socioeconomic circumstances, adolescence, longitudinal

Osita Ifezue (Presenting Author)

Socioeconomic Inequalities and Subjective Well-being among First- and Second-Generation African Immigrants: A Capability-Based Comparative Study with Other Migrant Groups and the Native Population

Authors in order: Osita Ifezue, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Finland ranks as a high-functioning welfare state and has a high level of subjective well-being among the native population. Nevertheless, research shows that compared to the native population, immigrants experience low socioeconomic status and low subjective well-being. Other research finds that higher psychological distress, limited access to healthcare, social immobility, and structural discrimination impact the demographic (EU-MIDIS II, 2016; FinMonik, 2019). This research fills a gap by conducting further analysis into the association between socioeconomic inequalities and subjective well-being between first- and second-generation African immigrants in Finland.

Building on Amartya Sen's Capability Approach as the main theoretical framework and Erik Allardt's welfare (satisfaction) theory as the operational structure that conceptualizes subjective well-being in a multidimensional pattern modelled by agency, real opportunities, labour market integration, functional capabilities, material resources, and social inclusion. This framework will help measure the correlation between socioeconomic inequalities and subjective well-being, and other limiting factors of individual capability.

The study will employ a mixed-method approach by combining quantitative datasets from the Survey on Well-being among Foreign-Born Population (FinMonik; n=12,877, 2019), the National Survey on Health, Well-being and Service Use among Foreign-Born Population (MoniSuomi; n=18,600, 2022), Healthy Finland Survey (Terve Suomi; n=61,600, 2022), the Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II; n=21,550, 2016), and the European Social Survey (ESS 7, 2014; 11, 2023). Multivariate regression analysis will help to explore and identify key SES predictors of SWB, and possible relationships between low SES and perceived subjective well-being, compared to the native population and other migrant groups.

Keywords: African immigrants, Capability Approach, Socioeconomic inequalities, subjective well-being

Sarah Åkerman (Presenting Author)

Socioeconomic position and health-promoting lifestyle in old age – a study of variation in associations in six Nordic regions

Authors in order: Sarah Åkerman¹, Dorly J.H. Deeg², Erika Boman^{3,4}, Birgitta Olofsson³, Yngve Gustafson⁶, Johan Niklasson⁷, and Fredrica Nyqvist⁸

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⁸ Department of Natural and Health Sciences, Åbo Akademi University, Vasa, Finland

Abstract

Background

Recent evidence attests to a persistent gap in health-promoting lifestyle behavior between higher and lower socio-economic positions (SEP), although findings indicate context-specific variation. Given this inequality, and the role that community conditions may play in mitigating such gaps, the aim of this study was to investigate the association between SEP and health-promoting lifestyles among older adults in six distinct Nordic regions – and potential regional variation in the associations.

Methods

Data from the GERDA survey 2021/2022 (N=11,984) was used. Regions included in Finland were Åland, South Ostrobothnia, Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia, and Finnish-speaking Ostrobothnia, and in Sweden, rural Västerbotten and the city of Umeå. SEP was assessed as educational level. Multiple logistic regression analyses were used to analyse the association between SEP and lifestyle, and regional variation in the associations (SEP x region).

Results

A high SEP was associated with higher likelihood of physical exercise, weekly contact with friends and neighbors, meaningfulness, and a perceived positive attitude towards older adults in the neighborhood. Simultaneously, a high SEP was associated with lower likelihood of belief in a higher power and lower likelihood of weekly contact with family members and relatives, and a higher likelihood of risk-drinking. No significant association was found between SEP and healthy BMI, sleep quality, and attractive landscape nearby. The interaction analyses showed a stronger gradient of SEP for sleep quality in the city of Umeå, and a stronger inverse relationship between SEP and belief in a higher power in Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia and Åland.

Conclusions

SEP remains an important predictor of lifestyle among older adults in Nordic regions, but associations vary by type of behaviour and region. Future research on equalising community measures could be used to not only advance comparative research but provide tailored policies.

Keywords: lifestyle, healthy ageing, socioeconomic position, region, educational level

Matti Rajala (Presenting Author)

Socioeconomic Inequalities and Moral Hazard in Access to Biological Medicines in Finland

Authors in order: Matti Rajala, University of Turku, INVEST Research Flagship Centre, Finland

Abstract

Background: Biological medicines are currently used to treat a wide range of chronic conditions, such as arthritis, psoriasis and diabetes, but are often associated with high cost. In Finland, not all biological medicines are fully reimbursed, which can result in substantial out-of-pocket costs for the patient. Although the annual out-of-pocket maximum limit sharply reduces prices after the limit is reached to a small copayment, the high upfront out-of-pocket costs may act as a barrier to treatment initially.

Objectives: This study examines how changes in out-of-pocket prices affect demand for biological medicines. Additionally, this study provides descriptive evidence on how observable patient characteristics are associated with biological medicine use over time.

Methods: Using rich Finnish register data between 2016 and 2024, this study utilizes a regression discontinuity (RD) design around the annual out-of-pocket maximum limit, comparing individuals just above and just below the cutoff who face different out-of-pocket prices. The use of comprehensive register data allows for heterogeneity analyses, with a particular focus on differences by socioeconomic status.

Expected findings: This study will quantify price sensitivity of biological medicine users and examine whether cost sharing contributes to differences in access to biological medicines in Finland, offering important insights into the equity and efficiency of the reimbursement system.

Keywords: Biological medicines; medicine demand; out-of-pocket costs; regression discontinuity design

Fertility and mortality I

Alyona Artamonova (Presenting Author)

Ageing alone? Older adults without a partner and adult children among Swedish- and Finnish-speaking Finns

Authors in order: Alyona Artamonova¹ and Mirkka Danielsbacka²

¹PRI at Family Federation of Finland, Finland

²INVEST Research Flagship Centre, Finland

Abstract

For most of human history, older adults have been part of dense family groups. However, demographers project that the number of living kin for individuals will decline dramatically worldwide. As the projected number of older adults with smaller and older family networks increases, there are also more older adults without core family members, i.e., a partner and children. In general, older adults face a higher risk of being socially excluded due to age-related changes and older adults from minority groups are particularly vulnerable. Unlike most minorities in the world, Swedish-speaking Finns are fully integrated and appear to live in more cohesive communities with a larger social capital compared to Finnish-speaking communities. Additionally, Swedish speakers in Finland have lower divorce and separation rates, and, since the 1980s, more children than Finnish-speakers. This difference between two linguistic groups makes Finland an interesting testbed for research on childless older adults without a partner. This study investigates the population of such older adults in Finland, comparing Swedish and Finnish speakers, and addresses several objectives: estimating the prevalence of these older adults among two linguistic groups; clarifying their socio-demographic characteristics; mapping their geographic distribution over the country. We use parent-child and partnership links as well as location and the background information about older individuals (aged 65+) registered as Swedish- and Finnish-speakers. We use descriptive statistics and logistic regression models.

Keywords: kinless, later life, minority groups

Lydia Palumbo (Presenting Author)

From Adverse Childhood Experiences to Fertility Intentions: The Mediating Roles of Mental Health and Partnership Status

Authors in order: Lydia Palumbo¹, Marika Jalovaara¹, and Christina Salmivalli¹

¹University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are strongly associated with adult outcomes across multiple life domains, yet the processes through which childhood adversity relates to partnership dynamics and fertility intentions remain underexplored. Exposure to family instability and problematic peer relations, including bullying, can have lasting repercussions on mental well-being, which may then influence partnership dynamics and childbearing intentions. However, the pathways linking ACEs to fertility intentions through these intermediate processes have not been systematically examined.

The KiVa RCT data, linked with register data, provide a unique opportunity to study these processes. Using the 2021–2022 survey wave and registers, we examine how ACEs before age 18, including family adversities (trauma and abuse at home) and school peer relationship challenges (peer rejection, bullying, and loneliness), are linked to mental health problems in adulthood (ages 20-30), which in turn may hinder partnership formation and maintenance, ultimately affecting childbearing intentions.

We propose and test a sequential mediation model in which ACEs first affect mental health (depression, anxiety, aggression), which then influences partnership history (i.e., the ability to form and maintain partnerships), which in turn shapes childbearing intentions. Using path analysis, we estimate (1) direct effects of ACEs on each outcome, (2) specific indirect effects through mental health alone or partnership status (or dynamics) alone, and (3) the serial indirect effect through both mediators in sequence (ACEs → mental health → partnership status → childbearing intentions).

We expect childbearing intentions and partnership formation experiences to vary by ACEs. We anticipate that mental health will explain a substantial portion of these differences by influencing individuals' ability to form and maintain stable partnerships, which consequently is associated with their intentions to have children.

Keywords: Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), Mental health, Partnership dynamics, Childbearing intentions, Mediation model

Simon Chapman (Presenting Author)

Parents' and siblings' influence on inter-birth intervals in Finland

Authors in order: Simon N. Chapman¹, Mirikka Danielsbacka^{1,2}, Antti O. Tanskanen^{1,2}, and Venla Berg²

¹ University of Turku, Finland

² Population Research Institute (Väestöliitto), Finland

Abstract

Cooperation has been crucial in both the biological and cultural evolution of humans. Evidence points to a strong role for kin help in increasing evolutionary fitness, with maternal grandmothers especially linked to positive child survival and fertility outcomes. Kin help can affect birth spacing, enabling more births within a reproductive lifespan. Paternal kin are less associated with survival benefits, but may accelerate fertility, even risking maternal health.

Investigating kin influences on birth spacing is important not only from evolutionary and public health perspectives, however, but also demographically. In Finland, the declining fertility rate is at a record low. Women are often older at first birth than in the past, so have less time to reach desired family sizes. If kin support does indeed reduce interbirth intervals in contemporary industrialised society, it may help in the realisation of fertility intentions.

Here, we use Finnish register data and discrete time-event analyses to assess whether kin influence birth intervals. Following evolutionary theories on kin help, we focus on close genetic relatives. Geographic proximity is used as an investment proxy: nearby kin have greater opportunities for in-person contacts compared to those far away. Our sample covers women who had their first child in Finland 1987-2012, had complete information in relevant control variables, and were in a relationship at the time of birth (n≈450,000).

We expect to find that:

- 1) Geographically distant kin will not associate with shorter birth intervals, as they are assumed unable to provide the required support.
- 2) Closer-living grandmothers will associate with shorter birth intervals, and they will be particularly short if only the paternal grandmother lives nearby.
- 3) Siblings will positively influence interbirth intervals when grandmothers are absent, and may extend them if competing for grandmaternal investment.
- 4) Grandfathers will not have an effect net of grandmothers.

Keywords: fertility, kin, cooperation, interbirth intervals

Julia Karhunen (Presenting Author)

Religious affiliation and mortality among Finnish- and Swedish speaking Finns

Authors in order: Julia Karhunen¹, Martin Kolk², and Jan Saarela¹

¹ Åbo Akademi University, Finland

² Stockholm University, Sweden

Abstract

Religion and religiosity are known as important determinants of health and mortality. We have previously found differences in life expectancy of up to six years between Finns belonging to different religious affiliations. This study additionally takes ethnolinguistic affiliation into account, i.e. distinguishes between Finns who have Finnish and Swedish as their mother tongue. Swedish speakers have a higher life expectancy than Finnish speakers, a higher percentage of membership with the Lutheran Church and a lower percentage of not belonging to any religious association. The areas in which Swedish speakers live are among those with the highest life expectancy, also for those with Finnish as their mother tongue.

Using register data for the entire country of Finland for the years 1972–2020, we calculate life tables for ten-year intervals for the three biggest groups of religious affiliation (Lutheran Church, no affiliation, other affiliation), by sex, mother tongue and additionally region. We focus on comparing differences in mortality between Finnish and Swedish speakers who have the same religious affiliation and live in the same region.

The overall difference in life expectancy between Finnish- and Swedish-speaking Finns is three years for men and one year for women. This pattern can be retrieved among members of the Lutheran Church. Among the non-affiliated and those with other affiliations, the advantage among Swedish speakers decreases from five years in the 1970s to two years in the 2010s. However, there is substantial variation across the regions in which Swedish speakers live.

Religious affiliation as measured by population register data is an important determinant of life expectancy, even in a secular country like Finland. This is the first study of this kind conducted in a context with two distinct ethnolinguistic groups, and in which the minority group is not in a marginalized position.

Keywords: Mortality, life expectancy, register data, ethnolinguistic differences, Finlandswedes

Parallel sessions at 14.30-16.00

Youth wellbeing

Yujing, Li (Presenting Author)

Predictors and Moderators of a Digital Parent Training Intervention on Child Disruptive Behavior: a Randomized Controlled Trial in Finland

Authors in order: Yujing Li¹, Amit Baumel², Susanna Hinkka-Yli-Salomäki¹, Malin Kinnunen¹, Terja Ristkari¹, Minja Westerlund¹, and Andre Sourander^{1,3}

¹ Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, University of Turku, Finland

² University of Haifa, Israel

³ Turku University Hospital, Finland

Abstract

Digital parent training interventions provide a feasible and cost-effective approach for scalable prevention and early intervention for child disruptive behavior. However, the effectiveness often varies across families. To develop personalized interventions and enhance the reach, it is critical to examine for whom and under what conditions the interventions work. This study aims to identify individual-level predictors and moderators of the effectiveness of the Finnish Strongest Families Parenting (FSFP) intervention.

The 11-week FSFP intervention is an internet-based and telephone-assisted parent training program. A randomized controlled trial (RCT) was conducted between October 2011 and November 2013. 464 families with 4-year-old children who screened positive for disruptive behaviors in Southwest Finland were randomized to either the intervention (n = 232) or an educational control group (n = 232). Potential predictors and moderators included parental age and education, family structure, parenting skills, parental mental health, severity and duration of the problems, and comorbidities. The outcome was the Child Behavior Checklist 1.5-5 externalizing score, collected at baseline and at 6-, 12-, and 24-month follow-ups. Hierarchical mixed effects models were used to examine the predictive or moderating effects.

Building on evidence from previous RCT and large-scale implementation showing the effectiveness of the FSFP intervention, this study is expected to show how individual parental and child factors predict or moderate intervention outcomes. Preliminary findings indicate that parenting skills, parental mental health, symptom severity, and comorbidities predicted the intervention effectiveness, whereas parental mental health did not moderate the intervention effectiveness. Analyses for the remaining variables will be completed by March 2026.

Keywords: child disruptive behavior, digital interventions, moderators

Smaranda Gutu (Presenting Author)

Resilient Roots – Cultivating Relational Wellbeing in Romanian Youth

Authors in order: Smaranda Guțu¹, Cătălina Popoviciu^{1,2}, Cezar Giosan¹, Florinda Golu¹

¹ Department of Psychology and Cognitive Sciences, University of Bucharest, Romania

² Let's CEE

Abstract

Youth mental health is a critical issue, particularly in societies undergoing rapid socio-economic and cultural transitions. In Romania, post-communist changes have reshaped traditional support networks, leaving young people (15-24 years) vulnerable to mental health challenges, stigma, and limited service accessibility. Despite growing awareness, few culturally tailored, community-based interventions exist. Resilient Roots is a three-year, participatory research project funded by the National Research Foundation, Fondation Botnar, and the Human Sciences Research Council. It aims to explore how Relational Wellbeing (RWB, the interconnectedness of individual, social, and cultural factors) can foster youth resilience and improve mental health outcomes. The project will co-develop scalable prevention strategies in collaboration with young people, ensuring interventions are responsive to their lived experiences. The study employs a mixed-methods, participatory approach involving qualitative research (focus groups, interviews, and participatory video diaries with young people, mental health professionals, and policymakers). The project anticipates the development and validation of the RWB scale, empirical insights into the social and cultural determinants of youth mental health, a better understanding of youth perspectives on mental health services, including accessibility barriers and preferred support models, the co-creation of community-based interventions designed by and for young people to promote mental health and resilience and policy recommendations. By integrating participatory methods and relational wellbeing frameworks, Resilient Roots seeks to shift youth mental health approaches from individualized clinical models to community-driven, culturally embedded solutions. The project will provide empirical insights into resilience-building mechanisms, emphasizing the role of peer networks, family dynamics, and societal structures in shaping mental health outcomes.

Keywords: wellbeing; youth mental health; resilience; Eastern Europe; youth engagement

Mattias Kloo (Presenting Author)

Prerequisite for problem talk and co-rumination among adolescents

Authors in order: Mattias Kloo¹ and Sarah Malamut¹

¹ University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

As youth enter adolescence, they face many changes and challenges as they have to deal with a body that is changing, intense emotions, an increasingly intricate social environment, and growing academic demands. As youth approach adolescence, many rely on trusted friends with whom they can discuss their problems and seek out for support. However, adolescents may be more likely to utilize some friends as problem-talk partners over others, and some forms of problem-talk, such as co-rumination, which has previously been linked to elevated internalizing problems, may be detrimental to their mental well-being. Despite the importance of peer support, it is not well known what the prerequisites are for adolescents' friendships involving problem-talk or what predicts the emergence of co-rumination. This study aimed to provide a more nuanced understanding of when adolescent friendships may involve problem talk and in what relational contexts their discussions risk devolving into co-rumination. To this end, the study examined the friendship nominations of 521 Finnish (pre-)adolescents using multilevel modelling. Friendships were more likely to involve problem talk when the nominator was female, experienced high friendship quality, and believed that their friend was satisfied with their mutual friendship. Similarly, co-rumination was more pervasive in problem-talk relationships when the nominator was female, experienced high friendship quality and, contrary to expectations, when it was used in conjunction with other strategies meant to address their problems. Together these results highlight the relational considerations youth make for engaging in problem talk, and the fact that co-rumination tends to be utilized alongside other problem-talk strategies. Building on these findings, future studies could investigate the extent to which psychological outcomes may differ between adolescence who utilize multiple problem-talk strategies and those who rely primarily on co-rumination.

Keywords: Adolescent mental well-being, Friend support, Co-rumination

Osmo Heiniö, Nils Sandman, and Christina Salmivalli (Presenting Author)

Mobile Phone Bans in Finnish Schools: Effects on Psychosocial Well-Being, Learning Environment, and Mobile Phone Use Outside of School Hours

Authors in order: Osmo Heiniö¹, Nils Sandman¹, and Christina Salmivalli¹

¹ University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

In August 2025, new legislation came into force enabling schools to restrict students' use of mobile devices during the school day. Schools implemented these restrictions to varying degrees, ranging from limited bans during instructional time to a complete prohibition of mobile phone use throughout the entire school day, including recess.

The present study draws on annually collected data from the KiVa survey to examine the effects of these restrictions on students' psychosocial well-being, specifically loneliness, bullying, and school well-being. In addition, we examine students' perceptions of the effects of the restrictions on classroom calm, concentration, and learning, as well as on mobile device use outside of school hours. Finally, we investigate whether these effects vary by school level (primary vs. lower secondary), student gender, and the strictness of the restrictions.

Keywords: Digitalization; Mobile phone bans; Student Well-being; Learning environment; Bullying

Education

Kim Karppinen (Presenting Author)

Education and Late-Life Cognitive Health: Causal Evidence from Compulsory Schooling Reforms

Authors in order: Kim Karppinen¹, Mika Kortelainen^{1,2,3}, Henri Salokangas^{1,2,3,4}, and Ismo Linnosmaa⁵

¹ Department of Economics, University of Turku, Finland

² INVEST Research Flagship Centre, Finland

³ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland

⁴ Statistics Finland, Finland

⁵ University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Abstract

Dementia is a major and growing challenge for ageing societies. Although higher education is associated with better cognitive outcomes, evidence on whether marginal increases in schooling causally reduce dementia risk in later life remains limited. This study estimates the causal effect of marginal increases in compulsory schooling on late-life cognitive status, focusing on clinically meaningful transitions across cognitive states.

We combine data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) with the Harmonized Cognitive Assessment Protocol of SHARE, which provides diagnostically validated and harmonized cognitive classifications. Cognitive status is defined following Manly et al. (2022) and distinguishes between normal cognition, mild cognitive impairment (MCI), and dementia. Following Hurd et al. (2016), these classifications are extrapolated to the full SHARE sample using an ordered probit prediction model. Causal effects are identified using a fuzzy regression discontinuity design around birth cohort cutoffs from compulsory schooling reforms in Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal.

The reforms generate a modest first stage, increasing completion of the minimum schooling requirement by about six percentage points, primarily among individuals with low predicted educational propensity. Despite a strong association between higher education and lower risks of MCI and dementia, quasi-experimental estimates reveal no detectable causal effect of reform-induced schooling, with small effects across samples. These findings caution against interpreting education gradients in cognitive health as evidence that marginal extensions of compulsory schooling are an effective dementia-prevention tool. Education remains central to equity and understanding cognitive health disparities, but reducing the population burden of cognitive impairment likely requires focusing on other modifiable risk factors across the life course.

Keywords: Cognitive health; Compulsory schooling reforms; Dementia; Education; Social inequality

Laura Kortesoja, Päivi Lindberg, and Johanna Kivistö (Presenting Author)

The Incredible Years TCM in Finnish Early Education and Elementary Schools: A National Implementation Study

Authors in order: Laura Kortesoja¹, Päivi Lindberg¹, Johanna Kivistö¹, Elisa Heikkilä¹, and Andre Sourander¹

¹ Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Early childhood is a key period for developing emotion regulation, social skills, and self-regulation. An increasing number of children in early education struggle with managing emotions and behavior, which is linked to later mental health difficulties, weaker academic outcomes, and challenges in peer relationships (Rivenbark et al., 2018; Tremblay et al., 1992; Sourander et al., 2006). These problems often occur together with attentional and self-regulation difficulties (Sentse et al., 2017; Barker & Oliver, 2010), and without early support they tend to persist (Moffitt et al., 2011).

The Incredible Years (IY) program provides research-based tools for supporting children's socioemotional development. In Finland, the Teacher Classroom Management (TCM) training has been used for two decades to equip early childhood and primary educators with structured strategies that promote positive behavior, strengthen teacher-child relationships, and improve classroom climate (Webster-Stratton, 2012). Core components include proactive behavior support and practices that enhance children's emotion regulation.

Previous research shows that IY reduces disruptive behavior, improves social skills, and increases teacher self-efficacy (Nye et al., 2018; Aasheim et al., 2020). Nordic results also highlight benefits at classroom and organizational levels. Finnish preliminary findings indicate that most participating professionals report effective new strategies, increased confidence, and reduced stress.

This national study, conducted at the University of Turku's Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, examines the implementation and impact of IY TCM in Finland from 2021 to 2025. Surveys at baseline, post-training, and follow-up assess educators' classroom management competence, wellbeing, burnout, and perceptions of classroom climate. This is the first Finnish study to offer national-level evidence on the impact of TCM in early education and primary school settings.

Keywords: socioemotional development, evidence-based, intervention

Terézia Tomášchová (Presenting Author)

From School Choice to Classroom Segregation: Dividing Lines in Slovak Primary Schools

Authors in order: Terézia Tomášchová, Institute for Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia

Abstract

In Slovakia, both external and internal forms of educational segregation are well documented, particularly in regions with marginalized Roma communities. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu, this study conceptualizes segregation as a struggle within the educational field, where actors mobilize unequal volumes of economic, social, and cultural capital. Shaped by parental school choice, per capita funding, limited public resources, fee-charging private and church schools, declining national achievement, and school rankings based on absolute results, the Slovak system operates as a competitive quasi-market. Parents with greater capital are better positioned to navigate this field, making strategic school and class choices that contribute to white flight and social closure.

Under competitive conditions, schools respond by creating internally segregated or differentiated classes from the first years of compulsory education (ages 6–10). Often labelled “advanced” or specialized in mathematics, foreign languages, or sport, these classes function as institutionalized forms of distinction. While they may ease external segregation pressures, they simultaneously reproduce inequalities within schools. For students from socially vulnerable backgrounds, such arrangements are associated with lower achievement, weaker motivation, and reduced aspirations.

Using Slovak TIMSS and PIRLS data, the study applies the dissimilarity index (D) and logistic regression to identify (1) key drivers of internal segregation and (2) shared characteristics of schools with segregated classes. The findings show that parental education, occupational status, and aspirations for university education—rather than students’ academic performance—constitute the main dividing lines structuring class placement.

These results inform desegregation debates in Slovakia and highlight how quasi-market settings may unintentionally intensify within-school stratification, with implications for educational equity and social cohesion.

Keywords: segregation in education, primary schools, Roma, TIMSS & PIRLS

Ryan Alberto Gibbons (Presenting Author)

Extension of compulsory education in Finland from 16 to 18 years of age, 2021

Authors in order: Ryan Alberto Gibbons¹, Elina Kilpi-Jakonen¹, and Jani Erola¹

¹ INVEST Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Despite consistently high aggregate levels of upper secondary educational attainment, a small share of students in Finland have historically exited education prior to attaining an upper secondary qualification. To combat the strong association between early school-leaving and deleterious outcomes such as transitioning into Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), Finland extended compulsory education in 2021 from age 16 to 18. Beyond the legal obligation to continue education until age 18 or completion of upper secondary education (whichever came first), the reform also introduced financial and institutional supports to facilitate prolonged education.

Initial short-term evaluations indicate modest average effects, but substantial improvements in upper secondary completion rates among students at the greatest risk of early exit. However, less is known as to how the reform's effectiveness interacted with factors such as geographic access to upper secondary schools, and whether the reform has altered education trajectories across socioeconomic backgrounds. Using full-population register data covering cohorts before and after the reform, in this study we propose using a Differences-in-Discontinuities approach to exploit the cohort-based reform cut-off. We will estimate the reform's effect on upper secondary completion by socioeconomic background, and whether upper secondary school distances moderate these effects.

Keywords: Compulsory schooling; School extension; Educational attainment

Crises and disasters

Jouni Helske (Presenting Author)

Effects of Russian Invasion of Ukraine on Immigrant Mental Health in Finland

Authors in order: Thang Dang¹, Jouni Helske¹, and Henri Salokangas^{1,2}

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²Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland

Abstract

We investigate the mental health consequences of Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine for immigrant groups in Finland. Even in the absence of direct exposure to violence, wars can affect immigrants through transnational emotional, social, and familial ties. We focus on immigrants who entered Finland between 1983 and 2016 and remained continuously resident and alive throughout 2016–2021. Leveraging comprehensive Finnish administrative register data covering the immigrant population in Finland, we track quarterly use of prescribed psychotropic medications from 2016 to 2024 among immigrant populations of different origins.

To identify causal effects in a setting with a single treated group and heterogeneous comparison populations, we develop and employ the Bayesian Synthetic Control Model (BSCM) as a model-based alternative to the canonical Synthetic Control Method (SCM). The main advantages of BSCM over SCM are transparent counterfactual construction, proper uncertainty quantification, and a range of diagnostics enabled by the Bayesian framework.

Our results show a sharp increase in psychotropic medication use among Ukrainian immigrants following the invasion. The immediate increase of 2.8 percentage points (95% posterior interval: 2.2 to 3.4 percentage points) in the first 90 days after the start of the invasion corresponds to a 48% increase in psychotropic medication use. While the effects decline somewhat in subsequent quarters, usage remains elevated relative to pre-invasion levels throughout the post-invasion period. The effects of the Russian invasion to be highly gendered: we estimate large and immediate increases among women but observe negligible changes in psychotropic medication use among men. These findings highlight the substantial transnational mental health costs of war and the importance of accounting for gender differences when assessing the broader societal consequences of geopolitical conflict.

Keywords: War; Immigrants; Mental health; Bayesian inference; Synthetic Control Model

Satchit Ghimire and Suman Giri (Presenting Author)

Substance Use Among Young People Exposed to Armed Conflicts: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Authors in order: Satchit Ghimire^{1*}, Suman Giri^{1*}, Kaisa Mishina¹, and Sanju Silwal¹

¹ Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, INVEST Flagship, University of Turku, Turku

* These authors contributed equally

Abstract

Young people aged 10-24 are vulnerable to different risk-taking behaviors, including substance use, as full cognitive and emotional maturity has yet to be achieved. The risk is amplified by exposure to armed conflict since young people tend to consume psychoactive substances to cope with these stressful situations. The overall prevalence of substance use among young people aged 10-24 exposed to armed conflict is unavailable, with limited information on risk and protective factors. To fulfill that gap, a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies published in English from January 1, 1980, to October 30, 2025, was conducted, following PRISMA guidelines. The search was conducted across three databases: PubMed, PsycINFO, and Web of Science, as well as the reference lists of included articles, resulting in 2,178 unique studies. 33 studies were selected based on the inclusion criteria. Data were analyzed using a random-effects meta-analysis model and narrative synthesis. The last 30 days prevalence of tobacco and alcohol use was found to be 17% (95% CI [14%, 19%]) and 17% (95% CI [8%, 27%]), respectively. Similarly, narrative synthesis revealed that the prevalence of illicit drug use ranged from 1.5 to 27 percent. Pre-existing mental health conditions, loss of family members, exposure to violence, availability of substances, family member or friends using substances, and living in cities and camps were identified as risk factors, whereas perceived social support, advertisement against substance use, and religion were identified as protective factors. By synthesizing the available evidence, this study estimated the prevalence of substance use among young people exposed to armed conflict. However, comparison across different groups is limited due to high heterogeneity. The findings of this study could be crucial in formulating prevention and interventional strategies for young people exposed to conflicts.

Keywords: Alcohol, Armed conflict, Illicit Drugs, Substance use, Tobacco, Young people

Juuso Repo (Presenting Author)

Adolescent Wellbeing After Volcanic Eruption and Forced Evacuation in Iceland

Authors in order: Repo Juuso^{1,2}, Elina Kilpi-Jakonen¹, Kolbrún Þ. Pálsdóttir³, and David Reimer^{2,4}

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Abstract

In November 2023, volcanic activity threatened the Icelandic town of Grindavík, prompting the evacuation of all school-aged children and their dispersal across 70 receiving schools throughout the country. This large-scale and sudden relocation provides a rare opportunity to examine how disaster-driven displacement interacts with educational systems and shapes adolescent wellbeing within school contexts.

Our first study examines how disaster-driven evacuation was associated with adolescent wellbeing 16 months later using the 2025 Icelandic Youth Study. We compared evacuated students (N = 235), students who had moved from Grindavík prior to the eruption (N = 148), and a national reference group (N = 17,315). Regression models adjusting for subjective SES, grade, gender, and non-Icelandic background show that evacuees reported significantly lower school belonging and higher psychosomatic symptoms than the national reference group. Direct comparisons with prior movers indicate that these disadvantages are specific to forced evacuation rather than relocation more generally. Notably, these wellbeing gaps were broadly consistent across socioeconomic groups and age cohorts.

The follow-up study uses repeated cross-sectional data from 2025 and 2026 to examine whether these gaps persist and whether they vary across receiving-school contexts. Leveraging the wide dispersion of evacuees, we assess whether school-level relational climates are associated with more favourable wellbeing trajectories and the extent to which schools function as institutional buffers supporting recovery following crisis.

Taken together, the studies trace the consequences of forced displacement from socio-emotional disruption to institutional recovery processes. By linking disaster exposure to school contexts, they show how educational systems can buffer inequalities in adolescent wellbeing following crisis.

Keywords: Natural disasters, Displacement, Adolescent well-being, Schooling

Sanju Silwal (Presenting Author)

Mental health of Ukrainian children and youth during the Russian-Ukrainian war: A scoping review

Authors in order: Sanju Silwal^{1,2*}, Minja Westerlund^{1,2*}, Olga Osokina^{1,3}, Borys Ivnyev⁴, Kaisa Ahramo^{1,2}, Ana Ortin-Peralta^{5,6}, and Andre Sourander^{1,2,7}

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* SS and MW are joint first authors.

Abstract

Introduction: On 24 February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, escalating the conflict that began in April 2014 with the invasion and occupation of parts of Eastern Ukraine and Crimea by Russian forces. We conducted a scoping review of studies examining mental health problems of children and youth from the beginning of the war in 2014 until 2024. Additionally, we examined traumatic events, resilience, risk and protective factors of mental health.

Methods: We searched PubMed and PsycINFO for articles published in English and Open Ukrainian Citation Index and Ukrainian Scientific Periodical for articles published in Ukrainian. We reviewed quantitative and qualitative articles, focusing on children and adolescents aged 0–19 years. The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) and the protocol was registered with the Open Science Framework.

Results: Thirty-seven articles (20 English, 17 Ukrainian) met the inclusion criteria. Most studies were cross-sectional in design or quantitative and focused on children and youth residing in Ukraine. The mental health outcomes were diverse, with prevalence rates varying across studies. Among the included studies on mental health, few studies assessed resilience among war-exposed adolescents. Forced displacement, exposure to war-related events and separation from parents were associated with mental health problems. Protective factors included perceived social support, living in a familiar environment, and problem-focused coping skills.

Conclusion: Methodologically comparable studies, including prospective and mixed-methods studies are needed to further advance our understanding of the long-term psychological effects of war and explore their perceptions and experiences of wartime adversities.

Keywords: children, adolescents, mental health, war, Ukraine, scoping review

Migration II

Thomas Lyons (Presenting Author)

The prevalence, correlates, and barriers to receiving support for intimate partner violence among migrants in Europe: A multi-methods systematic review and meta-analysis

Authors in order: Thomas Lyons¹, Sarah Mustafa², Omid Dadras³, Yuko Mori¹, Anne Abio¹, and Andre Sourander¹

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² Nord Anglia, United Kingdom

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Abstract

Introduction: Intimate partner violence (IPV) presents a significant harm to survivors and their children, with migrant women being at particular risk due to an intersection of legal, cultural, and psychological factors. The irregular implementation of the Istanbul Convention across Europe and the EU calls for an up-to-date understanding of IPV among this group.

Aims: To determine, among immigrant populations in Europe: i) Estimated prevalence of IPV occurrence, ii) Demographic factors associated with IPV victimisation, iii) Barriers to and facilitators for receiving support.

Methods: A search for relevant articles was conducted in five databases: PubMed, PsycINFO, Scopus, Embase, and Web of Science. The JBI Checklist for Prevalence Studies and Hoy et al. (2012) tools were used to assess quality and risk of bias. A meta-analysis, narrative synthesis, and thematic synthesis were conducted.

Results: The search yielded 48 articles; 21 qualitative, 25 quantitative, 2 mixed-methods. Preliminary descriptive themes involve initial barriers to help-seeking and experiences with formal and informal supports, along with how demographic factors (migration, culture, and children) affect each and intersect with one another. Final analytical themes are predicted to provide further insight on migration-related barriers specifically and how difficulties integrating socially and receiving support for IPV contribute to one another. Quantitative analysis is still going.

Keywords: Intimate partner violence, migration, Europe, domestic violence, social services

Zaheer Abbas (Presenting Author)

In Search of Good Life: Nexus of Irregular Migrants' Families in Pakistan

Authors in order: Zaheer Abbas, Assistant Professor Sociology, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Pakistan

Abstract

Irregular migration is a worldwide issue that is not unique for the regions of Asia and Africa. This problem is becoming an alarming issue all over the world specifically in Pakistan day by day causing numerous casualties and other issues every year. Illegal migration is considered as a high risk of life among unsafe migrants. The uncontrolled illegal migration is one of the threats for the Pakistani community and international border security as well. There are several groups involved in human trafficking to generate profit from the people by illegally border crossing. The reasons behind the illegal migration can vary nation to nation. In Pakistan, it may be for seeking the better economic opportunity, unemployment and illiteracy etc. However, it is important to recognize that this issue can have very serious consequences for individuals and left behind families as well. A qualitative study was conducted through in-depth interviews and case studies in district Gujrat and Gujranwala of Punjab province in Pakistan. The data were collected from the seventeen family members' illegal migrants. Thematic analysis was used to draw the results and conclusion from the collected data. It was found that illegal migrants faced unsafe living conditions and exploitation all the way during their irregular migration. They faced troubles and inhuman behavior while traveling. The respondents further reported that they were experiencing differential treatment both by the agents and journey fellows. The study concludes that illegal migration raises great concerns regarding public safety and nation's security. However, results highlighted that there is a need to prioritize human rights and dignity. The study suggests that government should start economic development programs to combat poverty and inequalities which are the leading push factors for illegal migration.

Keywords: Irregular, Migration, Asia, Trafficking, Human

Linda Banti Hamoonga (Presenting Author)

Integrating Indigenous and Policy Process Theories in the Study of Early Literacy policies in Zambia

Authors in order: Linda Banti Hamoonga, Department of Education, University of Turku, Turku. Finland

Abstract

Research background: Educational policy research in predominantly Indigenous countries such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa frequently relies on Euro-American theoretical frameworks to analyse the policy process. While analytically useful, these frameworks often assume epistemic neutrality and risk reproducing hierarchies when applied in Indigenous contexts. This tension is evident in Zambia's early literacy reforms, which are strongly influenced by bilateral and international organisations such as the World Bank, yet implemented within communities grounded in Indigenous Knowledge.

Objectives: This study examines how early literacy policy processes in Indigenous communities can be analysed without reproducing dominant epistemic hierarchies. It seeks to develop a theoretically integrated framework that accounts for both institutional dynamics and knowledge positioning.

Methods: The study integrates Martin Nakata's Cultural Interface with John Kingdon's Multiple Streams Approach (MSA). A qualitative case study design was employed, drawing on eight interviews with policy actors, sharing circles with parents and teachers, and document analysis of literacy policies and legal frameworks. Thematic analysis was conducted in two phases: institutional coding informed by MSA and epistemic coding informed by the Cultural Interface.

Key findings: Literacy problems were largely framed through externally derived, technocratic models. Indigenous Knowledge was marginalised in formal policy texts, although it remained present in the policy formulation process. The relational integration of the two frameworks enabled simultaneous analysis of institutional processes and epistemic hierarchies.

The study contributes a transferable methodological model for analysing policy processes in Indigenous contexts, with potential to promote genuine collaboration that dismantles hierarchies between international organisations and Indigenous actors, and the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in policy.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Indigenous theory, policy process

Khanh Duong (Presenting Author)

The strength of meritocratic norms: cognitive differentiation and cross-national variation in Europe

Authors in order: Khanh Duong, INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Meritocracy is widely endorsed as a fairness norm, yet its cognitive clarity may vary across cultural contexts. Using Round 9 of the European Social Survey, we examine how people in 29 European countries structure perceptions of recruitment fairness (skills, experience, networks, gender, and immigrant background) and distributive justice principles (equity, need, equality, and seniority). We introduce a novel index of fairness norm strength, τ_p , estimated via hierarchical multidimensional scaling of country-specific perceptual distances. Higher τ_p indicates sharper differentiation between merit-based and non-merit considerations, whereas lower τ_p indicates greater conceptual overlap. The results reveal substantial cross-national variation, with Nordic countries exhibiting stronger, more clearly differentiated meritocratic norms and several post-communist countries showing weaker differentiation. Finally, we show that τ_p is only weakly related to broad measures of cultural tightness--looseness, highlighting the domain-specificity of norm strength.

Keywords: cultural tightness--looseness; fairness; meritocracy; recruitment; cross-cultural comparison

Income and labour market

Elina Tuominen (Presenting Author)

Income dynamics around the transition to old-age retirement

Authors in order: Juha Rantala¹, Marja Riihelä², and Elina Tuominen³

¹ Finnish Centre for Pensions, Finland

² VATT Institute for Economic Research, Finland

³ Tampere University, Finland

Abstract

Retirement can be seen as a life phase influenced by diverse individual, economic, and social factors. For example, some individuals have been working before retirement, whereas others have not; for some, retirement is a sudden event, while for others the transition is gradual, often including part-time work. In addition, the timing of retirement varies. However, we still lack knowledge about income dynamics across the heterogeneous pathways into retirement.

In Finland, as in many other developed countries, understanding the income dynamics associated with retirement is becoming increasingly important as the population ages. Notably, the pension reforms implemented in 2005 and 2017 have expanded individuals' freedom to choose the timing of retirement. By retiring earlier or postponing retirement, individuals can influence the level of their future pensions. However, these choices remain more limited for some groups, such as individuals who have been unemployed.

We study how individuals' relative income positions and absolute incomes change due to retirement. We follow the evolution of incomes over nine years (2014–2022) for the cohort born in 1954. At the beginning of the observation period, these individuals were 60 years old and typically not yet retired. By the end of the period, they were 68 years old and generally fully retired.

We use Statistics Finland's Income Distribution Statistics, which cover the entire Finnish population, and augment these with additional register-based data from the Finnish Centre for Pensions and Statistics Finland. We measure income as individuals' disposable (i.e., net) income. Our later aim is to extend the study to include additional birth cohorts and to examine results when income is measured as household disposable equivalized income.

Keywords: income dynamics, retirement, register data

Emily Vuorenlinna (Presenting Author)

In-work poverty, agency, and coping strategies among single adults in Finland

Authors in order: Emily Vuorenlinna, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Abstract

This study investigates the coping strategies and sense of agency among single-adult households experiencing in-work poverty in Finland. In-work poverty entails struggles of having low income despite working, as well as a potential risk of being caught in welfare-state structures that prevent people from moving up the socioeconomic ladder. These situations create the need for unique strategies in order to navigate and manage challenges, and may set limitations on the power of the individual to live as they wish. This study uses open-ended survey data sampled in 2017, 2021, and 2025 to elucidate the strategies that the working poor use to handle their situations, and how these strategies affect their wellbeing and experiences of having control over their circumstances. The findings show that single adults in in-work poverty, in addition to common poverty strategies, adopt some uniquely to their situation such as postponing, or even excluding, building relationships and families. Despite much personal effort, such as taking on additional work and further education, single adults still struggle with in-work poverty due to low-paid work, precarious work situations, and high costs of living, causing a sense of hopelessness and lack of agency. However, some showed signs of inner resilience and positive outlook on life, which strengthened their sense of agency. The study contributes to the knowledge of how individuals handle material deprivation within the welfare state. By understanding these coping strategies, and the level of agency that people experience, this study aims to display potential weaknesses in the social system that need to be addressed to limit poverty traps within the welfare state. The research also aligns with interests of the Finnish Government and the action plan to reduce poverty and social exclusion by 2030 (Finnish Government, 2022).

Keywords: in-work poverty, single adults, coping, agency

Alisa Jashari (Presenting Author)

To care or not to care? Effect of transitions in informal caregiving on employment

Authors in order: Alisa Jashari¹ and Waseem Haider¹

¹ INVEST Research Flagship, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

A rapidly ageing population reinstates the role of the family as an informal care provider. Informal caregiving, especially at high intensity, has significant implications for labour market participation. Studies have found that informal caregivers are more likely to spend time away from work and retire early. However, caregiving tends to be an episodic and infrequent event, meaning that its effects on labour market participation may change according to transitions into and out of caregiving. We employ an asymmetric panel fixed effects model to test the associations between starting and stopping caregiving and hours worked and earnings. We find that both men and women reduce working hours when they start caregiving, but the reduction is steeper for women. When stopping caregiving, women recuperate working hours while men don't.

Keywords: in-work poverty, single adults, coping, agency

Ilari Ilmakunnas (Presenting Author)

The impact of financial satisfaction on life satisfaction among old-age pensioners in Finland

Authors in order: Ilari Ilmakunnas¹ and Liisa-Maria Palomäki¹

¹ Finnish Centre for Pensions, Finland

Abstract

As populations age, understanding the factors that shape life satisfaction among older adults becomes increasingly important. It is often considered that financial security is one of the major life domains contributing to life satisfaction. However, important gaps remain in the empirical research literature. There is little research on this topic focusing on older adults. Additionally, most studies have examined cross-sectional associations rather than using research designs that allow for evaluating potential causal effects.

This study addresses existing research gaps by using longitudinal survey data of Finnish old-age pensioners aged 65 or older. Fixed effects linear regression models are used to help us to isolate the effect of financial satisfaction by means of removing time-invariant confounders. A sensitivity analysis is conducted to analyze whether unobserved confounders could explain the effect of financial satisfaction on life satisfaction. In addition, to contextualize the observed effect of financial satisfaction, we compare it with the effects of changes in major life course events.

The study finds that financial satisfaction has a considerable effect on life satisfaction. Changes in financial satisfaction have greater relevance for life satisfaction than changes in self-rated health or changes in partnership status. According to the sensitivity analysis, the effect of financial satisfaction is unlikely to be explained by unobserved confounders, indicating that a causal relationship is likely.

Overall, the study shows that changes in financial well-being have an effect on life satisfaction among old-age pensioners. This implies that strengthening financial security in retirement can be used for influencing subjective well-being among aging populations.

Keywords: Life satisfaction, financial satisfaction, financial security, retirement, older adults

Fertility and mortality II

Alice Yolann Rees (Presenting Author)

Do Incomes Matter? Life-Course Trajectories of Partnership, Income, Residential Independence and Childlessness in Finland and Belgium

Authors in order: Rees Alice Yolann¹ and Jalovaara Marika²

¹ Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium

² UTU, Finland

Abstract

Socioeconomic characteristics are central to life-course research on childlessness, yet most studies focus on education or employment and rarely consider income. This study investigates how joint life-course pathways of partnership, residential independence and individual income are associated with childlessness in two contrasting welfare regimes: Finland and Belgium. Using total-population register data and multichannel sequence and cluster analysis, we identify configurations of early-to-mid-adulthood life courses and, drawing on regression models of continuous representativeness scores, analyse how childlessness is distributed across trajectories. In both countries, trajectories marked by delayed or (near) absent partnership formation combined with postponed residential independence show the strongest associations with childlessness for both men and women. By contrast, income trajectories display no linear or uniform association with childlessness, and childlessness is observed across a range of income configurations, which occurs across a wide range of income configurations, including those characterised by middle or relatively high income levels. The cross national comparison shows that institutional arrangements shape residential pathways into adulthood, with earlier and more stable residential independence in Finland and longer or more reversible spells of parental co residence in Belgium, reflecting differences in housing regimes and welfare support that structure the timing and sequencing of transitions relevant to childlessness. Overall, the findings suggest that childlessness is less associated with individual income alone than with the joint sequencing of partnership and residential transitions, highlighting the value of a multidimensional life-course perspective in comparative family research.

Keywords: Childlessness, life-course perspective, income, partnership pathways, residential independence, comparative analysis

Erik Carlsson (Presenting Author)

How personality relates to desired and actual fertility among Finnish men and women

Authors in order: Erik Carlsson¹ and Marika Jalovaara¹

¹ University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

During the recent Finnish fertility decline, actual childlessness and, to a lesser extent, preferences for childlessness have become increasingly prevalent, while second- and third-birth rates have remained stable. As reproductive decisions become more heterogeneous, stable psychological characteristics, such as personality traits, may play an increasingly important role in shaping fertility preferences. Yet this relationship remains underexplored.

This study uses Finnish survey data collected in 2019-2022 to examine how personality traits are associated with the desired number of children and desired childlessness among men and women aged 20–35, and with the actual number of children and actual childlessness among men and women aged 40 and above. Personality is measured using the HEXACO model, which distinguishes six dimensions of personality: honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, each made up of four facets (i.e., subdimensions).

Results show that among women, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are negatively associated with desired childlessness whereas honesty-humility and openness to experience show positive associations. Among men, extraversion is negatively associated and honesty-humility positively associated with desired childlessness. Results for the desired number of children are similar but in the opposite direction. Associations between personality and actual number of children and actual childlessness mirror those for desired fertility but are generally weaker. Further analyses at the facet level show substantial heterogeneity in how specific facets relate to desired and actual fertility, highlighting the value of moving beyond broad personality dimensions.

This study shows considerable differences in desired and actual fertility by personality, underscoring the importance of incorporating personality traits into explanations of contemporary low fertility.

Keywords: fertility, childlessness, personality

Jessica Nisén (Presenting Author)

Income developments and the first-birth decline in the Nordic countries

Authors in order: Sofi Ohlsson-Wijk¹, Lars Dommermuth², Peter Fallesen³, and Jessica Nisén⁴

¹ Stockholm University, Sweden

² Statistics Norway, Norway

³ Rockwool Foundation, Denmark

⁴ University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

The puzzling fertility declines in the Nordic countries since 2010 are driven largely by fewer first births. Although the strength of the declines has varied across the countries, all have reached record lows. Despite macroeconomic recovery after the Great Recession, there are indications that the relative economic position of young adults may have stagnated in at least some of the Nordic countries. We examine how the decline in first births is connected to the recent economic developments among young men and women in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. Our analyses are based on individual-level register data, covering income and birth histories in 2000-2022. In the first step, we map in detail the trends in both absolute and relative levels of disposable income for men and women of childbearing ages in these four Nordic societies. In the second step, we investigate the associations between these two income measures and first-birth risks over time and assess differences between countries regarding these linkages. By using this approach, we aim to disentangle whether the fertility declines in the Nordic countries are linked to changing income levels among young adults, an increasing importance of high income as a prerequisite for childbearing, or whether neither or both of these explanations apply. While the first mechanism suggests a compositional shift, the second points to a potential behavioral change. We will specifically pay attention to variation across the Nordic contexts and by gender. One expectation is that income prerequisites for childbearing have increased (van Wijk & Billari 2024), and that the role of income for fertility for women has become increasingly similar to that for men. Another expectation is that income developments have been less favorable in Finland and Denmark than in Norway and Sweden, thus potentially affecting fertility levels differently. At the INVEST conference, we will present first results of this project for Finland.

Keywords: fertility, first birth, transition to parenthood, income, socio-economic, Nordic countries

Katrin Schwanitz (Presenting Author)

Dually Polarised Family Life Courses? Evidence from Contemporary Finland

Authors in order: Katrin Schwanitz¹ and Marika Jalovaara¹

¹ INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

The Nordic countries have shifted from gendered socioeconomic fertility differentials to largely gender-convergent ones. While lifetime childlessness used to be more common among lower-educated men and highly educated women, in recent cohorts, the levels are highest for the low-educated of both genders. At the same time, lower-educated individuals experience greater family instability, e.g., family formation at a young age, high rates of separation, and multi-partnered fertility. Patterns consistent with dual polarisation have been documented in cohort fertility – also showing that in Finland, the polarised patterns have become common not just among the lowest but also among secondary educated individuals. How the dual polarisation in family formation and stability manifests among contemporary young adults remains unexplored.

Using Finnish register data for the 1979 and 1980 birth cohorts and sequence analysis (SA), this study maps and compares the partnership and fertility trajectories of men and women across educational groups. A computationally efficient random subsample (n=20,000) is drawn. Traditional SA often relies on the (potentially) flawed assumption of fixed cluster membership. To address this, we use similarity-based approaches such as representativeness, which empirical studies suggest yield more accurate results.

We anticipate that the family life course trajectories among the higher-educated will reflect a more standardised and orderly pattern, characterised by a higher prevalence of marriage, sustained partnerships, and the birth of two or three children. Conversely, we expect the lower-educated group to exhibit significant life-course fragmentation. This includes a higher prevalence of non-occurrence (remaining never-partnered and/or childless); and on the other, increased volatility through partnership instability and early-onset separation. We also consider associations with other covariates, such as urban-rural residence or family background.

Keywords: family life course; education differentials; gender convergence; Finland

Parallel sessions at 16.15-17.45

Education, mental health and vulnerability

Elina Kilpi-Jakonen (Presenting Author)

Intergenerational Mental Health and Immigrant–Majority Gaps in Upper Secondary Completion: A Longitudinal Register-Based Study from Finland

Authors in order: Elina Kilpi-Jakonen¹, Ryan Gibbons¹, Juuso Repo^{1,2}, and David Reimer²

¹ University of Turku, Finland

² University of Iceland, Iceland

Abstract

Educational achievement gaps between children of immigrants and their majority peers are widespread in European countries and particularly acute in Finland. Children of immigrants also tend to have poorer mental health outcomes – although some studies also support the immigrant health paradox hypothesis and find the contrary. Mental health challenges are a strong predictor of premature departure from educational programs. The first aim of this study is to examine whether differences in diagnosed conditions help account for the immigrant–majority gap in upper secondary completion. Both educational attainment and mental health have intergenerational roots. The second aim of this study is to examine how parental resources – in particular attachment to the labour market and income – and their mental health influence the main associations of interest.

We use register-based data from Finland spanning the last few decades. Our focus is on the cohort born between (approximately) 1995–2002 and mental health and educational trajectories until age 22. We estimate differences in non-completion using longitudinal models and decompose the contribution of adolescent and parental mental health to these gaps. We pay attention to both generational differences and region-of-origin differences among children of immigrants.

The research contributes to migration and educational stratification studies by identifying how adolescent and parental mental health processes interact with socioeconomic resources to shape educational inequalities among children of immigrants. The findings also have strong societal implications in terms of helping to better identify which groups of young people are at a higher risk of mental health challenges and early school leaving – both together and separately.

Keywords: children of immigrants, educational attainment, mental health

Tiina-Reetta Lauren-Knuutila (Presenting Author)

Guardians' Perspectives on School Attendance Problems: Youth Vulnerabilities, Support Systems, and Pathways Back to School

Authors in order: Tiina Laurén-Knuutila¹, Jaanet Salminen², Niina Junttila², and Katarina Alanko^{1,2}

¹ Åbo Akademi University, Finland

² University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

School attendance problems (SAPs) have increased in Finland and internationally, posing a major challenge to young people's well-being, educational equality, and social inclusion. Prolonged absence is associated with poorer academic outcomes, mental health problems, social isolation, and risks of early school leaving and marginalisation. SAPs also affect families' everyday lives and parents' participation in paid work.

Despite growing research, qualitative studies grounded in young people's and families' lived experiences remain limited. Prior research has focused largely on individual-level explanations and interventions, with less attention to relational, institutional, and systemic factors shaping absence and to parents' roles within educational and welfare systems. From a youth and inequality perspective, this gap limits understanding of SAPs as socially embedded phenomena.

This study explores background factors of SAPs and conditions supporting return to school from guardians' perspectives. The data consist of thematic interviews with 16 guardians describing 21 adolescents (13–18 years). Using thematic analysis and Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model, the study examines interactions between individual, relational, institutional, and societal processes.

Guardians associated SAPs with anxiety, bullying, loneliness, and exclusion, alongside schools' limited capacity for early, flexible responses. Support was often delayed and fragmented, leaving families feeling unheard. Return was supported by strengthened individual resources, trusting adult relationships, flexible educational arrangements, and interprofessional collaboration.

The findings challenge deficit-based individual explanations and highlight SAPs as outcomes of intersecting vulnerabilities and institutional practices. They underscore the need for more inclusive educational and welfare policies, coordinated services, and systemic approaches to reduce social inequalities and prevent youth marginalisation.

Keywords: school attendance problems, bioecological model, guardians' perspective

Outi Sirniö (Presenting Author)

Diverging Destinies? Childhood mental health disorders and their impact on educational attainment and early adulthood earnings

Authors in order: Outi Sirniö¹, Maria Vaalavuo¹, and Chase Friel²

¹ THL, Finland

² University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, United States

Abstract

Mental health disorders (MHD) are becoming more prevalent around the world. In the adolescent population, one in seven individuals aged 10-19 experience MHD. While MHD are becoming more prevalent, the disorders themselves and their consequences are distributed and experienced unevenly within populations. There is a strong social gradient in mental health already in childhood. Many studies have assessed the relationship between childhood MHD and education and other life course outcomes both in the Finnish context and abroad, with many using longitudinal data. However, these studies often only focus on one indicator of educational attainment over time and are sometimes limited in the variables that are considered. To contribute to this literature, our approach is more comprehensive. Our principal research question is: How are childhood MHD associated with educational attainment across the educational path and early adulthood socioeconomic outcomes? Instead of looking at a single educational outcome or transition, we track individuals from young adolescence until the age of 30. This enables us to investigate the association between childhood MHD, measured at age 11-15, and grade point average in the 9th grade, attainment of secondary education degree by age 22, attainment of tertiary education degree by age 30, and earnings at age 30. This evidence helps to illustrate whether disadvantages accumulate for those with childhood MHD as they move across the life course. Our study utilizes Finnish full-population register data and sibling fixed effects models. We show that at each of the educational transition points, having a childhood MHD was negatively associated with the outcome: those with childhood MHD had lower GPAs, lower probability of completing secondary education, lower probability of completing tertiary education, and lower earnings at the age of 30.

Keywords: accumulation of disadvantage; earnings; education; mental health; sibling fixed effects

Sonja Gilbert (Presenting Author)

Navigating multiple domains: Qualitative insights on balancing education, social connections, digital environments and leisure for adolescent mental health

Authors in order: Sonja Gilbert¹, Sanna Herkama¹, Laura Kortesoja¹, Mari Lahti², Kaisa Mishina¹, and Andre Sourander¹

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Abstract

Current societal megatrends, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, growing economic inequality, and digitalization, coincide with a rise in adolescent mental health problems. Mental health has become increasingly uneven, with difficulties concentrated among socioeconomically disadvantaged youth. Building on this, we use a qualitative approach to examine how adolescents balance school-related expectations, social relations, digital environments, and leisure activities to support their mental health.

Using a participatory approach, we organized three workshops (17 participants) to co-develop the interview guide. Next, we conducted seven online focus groups (31 adolescents, aged 12 to 15 years, 14 of whom had an immigrant background). Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Analysis followed an inductive reflexive thematic analysis.

Preliminary analysis shows that adolescents navigate varying school expectations, complex peer dynamics, and engagement in digital environments, often struggling to maintain balance. Leisure supported mental health, though some lacked hobbies. Participants with an immigrant background in particular described bullying and overt racism, which often went unnoticed by school staff. All these complexities shaped adolescents' mental health, with family support varying widely.

Results underscore the need to create a supportive developmental environment and responsive school practices that help adolescents maintain balance amid the complexities of everyday life and promote their mental health.

Keywords: Megatrends, adolescent psychosocial wellbeing, participatory approach, interviews, school

Research related to COVID-19

Luiz Alonso de Andrade, Johanna Liljeroos-Cork, and Samuli Taira (Presenting Author)

Welfare State Foundations of Psychological Resilience in Finland: Insights from the COVID-19 and Ukraine Crisis

Authors in order: Luiz Alonso de Andrade¹, Johanna Liljeroos-Cork¹, Samuli Taira¹, Emmi Siirtola¹, Marjukka Mikkonen¹, João Paulo dos Santos da Silva² and Elias Pekkola¹

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Abstract

Citizens' psychological resilience is central to The Finnish Security Strategy for Society (Valtioneuvosto, 2025), linking welfare institutions to defence readiness. This linkage follows three steps. First, stronger psychological resilience enhances citizens' ability to withstand crisis-induced mental pressures, improving their defence will (maanpuolustustahto). Second, national spiritual crisis tolerance (henkinen kriisinsietokyky) relies not on nationalist propaganda but on interpersonal and institutional trust, socioeconomic protection, and equality (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021; Larson & Rhinard, 2021; Rainio-Niemi, 2014). Third, this model is maintained through structural welfare arrangements aligned with the Nordic folkhemmet tradition, featuring universal policies in health, social security, and education (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Korpi, 1980; de Andrade et al., 2021).

Recent global crises, including COVID-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, have exerted critical mental pressure on Finnish citizens. However, the extent to which Finland's psychological resilience model mitigates such pressures remains unclear. This study examines whether and how welfare model-related factors contribute to psychological resilience.

Empirically, it utilizes longitudinal data from four editions of the Finnish Citizens' Pulse survey (Tietoarkisto, 2024). We employ multi-level regressions to measure the relationship between citizens' resilience to hysteresis-induced stress (Bourdieu, 2001) and trust in welfare institutions, controlling for regional differences.

Findings identify key welfare-related factors influencing psychological resilience, clarifying how welfare policies contribute to spiritual crisis tolerance and defence readiness. Insights could guide welfare reforms to enhance national cohesion and security. Future research may assess whether these linkages hold across different reforms and national contexts.

Keywords: psychological resilience, welfare state, hysteresis, defence, trust

Olli Kiviruusu (Presenting Author)

Mental health before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic up to 2025 among Finnish boys, girls, and gender diverse youth

Authors in order: Olli Kiviruusu¹, Sebastian Therman¹, Jukka Lehtonen², and Jaana Suvisaari¹

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Abstract

Background

Finnish youth reported heightened levels of mental health problems during the pandemic. Recovery after the pandemic had been slow by 2023, while developments among those belonging to gender minority groups appeared more positive.

Objectives

We report the most recent post-pandemic developments of mental health among Finnish youth from 2019 up to 2025. Using large nationwide samples, we report estimates for cisgender and gender diverse youth including transgender and other/non-binary gender identities.

Methods

We used data from the Finnish School Health Promotion survey from the years 2019, 2021, 2023, and 2025 (628,058 respondents, age 12–20 yrs). Self-reports covered official gender, gender identity, depressive (Patient Health Questionnaire-2 \geq 3) and anxiety (Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale-7 \geq 10) symptoms. Five gender categories were formed: cisgender girl (officially girl; gender identity girl; N = 307,048), transgender boy (officially girl; gender identity boy; N = 3,905), cisgender boy (officially boy; gender identity boy; N = 292,686), transgender girl (officially boy; gender identity girl; N = 1,395), and other/non-binary (gender identity both, neither, or it varies; N = 20,060).

Results

During the pandemic (2021) all groups reported significantly higher levels of depressive and anxiety symptoms than before the pandemic. After the pandemic cisgender groups did not show any substantial improvements up to 2025. Among transgender boys, depressive symptoms were at lower levels in 2025 than in 2021. The most significant improvements were observed in other/non-binary youth, among whom depressive symptoms were closer to pre-pandemic than pandemic levels.

Conclusions

In Spring 2025, we found continuously high and even increasing levels of mental health problems among cisgender youth. Among non-binary youth, the post-pandemic developments were more positive. It is important that population-based surveys develop their reporting to reflect gender diversity.

Keywords: mental health, depression, anxiety, post-COVID-19, gender diversity

Anne Abio (Presenting Author)

Increase of Fatigue in Female Adolescents: A Pre- vs Post-COVID Cross-sectional Survey Comparison

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Abstract

Background: Fatigue is a common complaint reported by adolescents and adults; and one of the persistent symptoms of long COVID-19. The aim of this study was to assess the prevalence and self-reported fatigue among adolescents in Finland, pre- (2018) and post-COVID (2023).

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among adolescents in two cities, Rovaniemi and Salo, Finland, in 2018 and 2023. The Checklist Individual Strength (CIS) questionnaire was used to determine the severity of fatigue among adolescents. A total of 5583 adolescents aged 13 to 17 years (n=2774, in 2018) and (n=2809, in 2023) were included in the analysis. Linear regression analysis was used to determine the association between fatigue, survey year and explanatory variables.

Results: The prevalence of severe fatigue increased among girls, rising from 16.2% in 2018 to 24.3% in 2023 ($p<0.001$), while it remained consistent among boys 6.7% vs 5.6% ($p=0.239$) respectively. The mean fatigue score among girls increased from 29.1 in 2018 to 32.2 in 2023 ($p<0.001$), while the change among boys was not significant, from 24.6 to 25.2 ($p=0.081$). Higher scores in internalizing problems at $\beta=5.00$ (95% CI 4.69, 5.32) for girls and $\beta = 3.74$ (95% CI 3.42, 4.06) for boys were associated with higher fatigue scores. Congruently, externalizing problems at $\beta=2.87$ (95% CI 2.54, 3.19) for girls and $\beta=2.19$ (95% CI 1.88, 2.49) for boys were associated with higher fatigue scores.

Conclusion: The notable increase in fatigue, among girls, post-COVID highlights the need for sustained attention to adolescent mental health and physical health, especially in relation to internalizing and externalizing problems.

Keywords: Adolescents, Mental Health, Psychopathology, Time-trend study, Finland

Raimo K. R. Salokangas (Presenting Author)

Non-binary gender identity and adverse childhood experiences associate with decreased functioning during an exceptional societal stress. A university community study during COVID-19 pandemic

Authors in order: Raimo K. R. Salokangas¹, Tiina From¹, and Jarmo Hietala¹

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Abstract

Background and Aim: The COVID-19 pandemic represented an exceptional form of societal stress presenting mental health challenges in the young population and probably even more so for vulnerable groups including individuals with non-binary gender (NBG) identity and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). We investigated whether NBG and ACEs associated with functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Method: University students and personnel (n=1998) responded to an online survey in May 2021, when the measures for preventing COVID-19 infections had sustained about a year and a half. Based on the gender option responses, groups of NBG and binary gender (male or female; BG) identity were formed. Current functioning (FUNCT), and subjective assessment of the effect of COVID-19 on functioning (COFUNCT) were recorded.

Results: The NBG group represented 3,6 %, Males 23.8% and Females 72.7% of respondents. Compared to BG, NBG participants exhibited poorer socioeconomic living situation and less favourable previous psychosocial development including higher number of ACEs, and lower FUNCT and more negative COFUNCT. Both ACEs and NBG associated independently and significantly ($p < 0.001$) with lower FUNCT and negative COFUNCT.

In NBG participants, multiple ACEs and loneliness were associated indirectly, via depressive symptoms, with lower FUNCT, and loneliness indirectly, via depression, with low COFUNCT. In BG participants, good socio-economic resources and resilience associated with good FUNCT and good COFUNCT.

Conclusions: Individuals with non-binary gender identity and high number of adverse childhood experiences are more vulnerable for functional deficits in a period of serious societal stress such as COVID-19 pandemic. Active interventions for reducing depression and loneliness and consequently improving resilience may prevent the most vulnerable individuals from severe deficits of functioning during an exceptional societal stress.

Keywords: Functioning, Non-Binary Gender Identity, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Societal stress, University Community, COVID-19 Pandemic

Yuko Mori (Presenting Author)

Adolescent help-seeking behavior for mental health before and after the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-national time-trend study in eight countries

Authors in order: Yuko Mori^{1,2} and Andre Sourander^{1,2,3}

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Abstract

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage when mental disorders most often emerge, yet many young people face barriers to accessing appropriate mental health support. Both formal (professional) and informal (family and peer) help-seeking are key to early intervention, but global evidence indicates persistent unmet needs. The COVID-19 pandemic further disrupted mental health service provision, initially reducing service use before a sustained rise in adolescent mental health problems was observed. Shifts toward digital help-seeking, such as increased webchat use, have also been noted. This study addresses a major research gap: while several national time-trend studies exist, no cross-national comparison has examined how the pandemic affected adolescents' help-seeking behaviors and unmet mental health needs. Using repeated cross-sectional data collected before (2011–2017) and after (2022–2024) the pandemic, the study analyzes changes in formal and informal help-seeking behaviors among adolescents across eight countries (Norway, Finland, Greece, Israel, Japan, India, Vietnam, and China). Additionally, it explores whether these patterns differ by country or sex, and whether adolescents with elevated Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire scores show greater shifts in formal help-seeking post-pandemic. Data were drawn from the Eurasian Child Mental Health Study (EACMHS) and its follow-up, the Global Child and Adolescent Mental Health Study (GCAMHS). This study provides the first cross-national evidence on pandemic-related changes in adolescent mental health help-seeking and unmet care needs.

Keywords: Help-seeking, Mental health, Adolescent, Cross-national, Time-trend

Migration and mental health

Sanni Aalto (Presenting Author)

Latent Profiles of Cognitive, Social, and Mental Health Functioning Among School-Aged Children: Domain-Specific Patterns and the Role of Immigration Background

Authors in order: Sanni Aalto, INVEST, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Background: Children's cognitive, social, and mental health functioning show considerable heterogeneity, yet it remains unclear whether these patterns differ across immigration backgrounds. This study used latent profile analyses (LPA) to examine multidimensional functioning among school-aged children and to assess whether profile membership varies by immigration status.

Methods: Data were collected from Finnish primary schools at two time points, with sample sizes across domain-specific analyses ranging from 114 to 181. Cognitive functioning was assessed through matrix reasoning, working memory, inhibition, and risk-taking tasks; social functioning through altruism, perceived social support, emotion recognition, and theory of mind; and mental health through trauma symptoms, depressive symptoms, and resilience. Separate LPAs were estimated for each domain, followed by a cross-domain model combining six indicators. Associations between profile membership and immigration status (native-born, immigrant, refugee) were examined using chi-square tests and multinomial logistic regression.

Results:

The cognitive domain yielded four profiles representing different overall performance levels across reasoning, working memory, and risk-taking tasks. Most children belonged to an average-performing group, while smaller groups showed either particularly low Corsi block performance or consistently high cognitive functioning. No significant differences in cognitive profile membership were found across immigration groups.

In the social domain, a two-profile solution emerged. One profile represented children with lower emotion recognition, theory of mind, altruism, and perceived social support, whereas the other represented a large majority with higher social functioning. Immigration status was not reliably associated with social-profile membership.

The mental health analyses identified four profiles reflecting gradients of trauma symptoms, depressive symptoms, and resilience. Two large profiles reflected low symptoms with high resilience or near-average functioning, while two smaller profiles captured groups with elevated symptoms—one with average resilience and one with notably low resilience. Immigration status did not significantly predict membership in any mental health profile.

The cross-domain analysis resulted in two profiles primarily differentiated by mental health and social support rather than cognitive performance. The larger group showed lower trauma symptoms, higher resilience, and greater social support, whereas the smaller group exhibited elevated trauma symptoms, reduced resilience, and lower social support. As in the domain-specific models, immigration status was not a significant predictor of profile membership.

Across all analyses and sensitivity checks, there was no strong or consistent evidence that immigration background influenced latent profile membership. Although more flexible variance-covariance specifications sometimes reduced the number of identifiable profiles, the overall conclusion—minimal differences between immigration groups—remained robust.

Conclusions: Children's cognitive, social, and mental health functioning profiles did not systematically differ by immigration background. The findings underscore that support needs in schools are not well explained by immigration status, and they highlight the importance of universal, non-stigmatizing approaches to promoting well-being and learning for all students.

Keywords:

Bingkun Zhang, Claire F Garandau, and Lydia Laninga-Wijnen (Presenting Author)

Predictors of Parental Psychological Flexibility Among Chinese Mothers Living in China and Abroad

Authors in order: Bingkun Zhang¹, Claire F Garandau¹, and Lydia Laninga-Wijnen¹

¹ INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

Abstract

Objective: Parenting during the preschool years is highly demanding, and mothers' ability to respond flexibly under stress depends on their parental psychological flexibility (PPF). Although PPF has been linked to child outcomes, its antecedents remain insufficiently examined. This study examined the effect of multiple family stressors on PPF among Chinese mothers across different residential contexts. **Methods:** This study surveyed Chinese mothers of preschool children via an anonymous online questionnaire between April 2024 and January 2025. The final sample included 456 mothers (311 residing in China; 145 residing abroad). Mothers provided data on their own childhood trauma, the number and age of their children, their own and their spouse's education level, their own employment status, and PPF. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) tested the structure of PPF. Path models were estimated in Mplus, with multi-group analyses comparing mothers living in China and abroad. **Results:** The three-factor model of PPF (defusion, acceptance, and committed action) fitted the data better than a one-factor model. Childhood trauma was the strongest and most consistent negative predictor of PPF components, predicting lower cognitive defusion and acceptance across groups and lower committed action among mothers living abroad. Maternal education positively predicted acceptance in the China group. Other variables showed no stable independent effects. No significant group differences emerged between mothers residing in China and mothers residing abroad. **Conclusions:** Childhood trauma is a key risk factor for reduced PPF among Chinese mothers across residential contexts. Educational resources selectively support acceptance, whereas family structure and employment status show limited associations once other stressors are taken into account. **Implications:** Interventions aiming to enhance maternal PPF should prioritize trauma-informed and ACT-based core skills.

Keywords: parental psychological flexibility; childhood trauma; family stressors; cross-context; multi-group path analysis

Zahra Kafami Khorasani (Presenting Author)

Migration and risk of Autism Spectrum Disorders and Intellectual Disability: a nationwide Case_ control study

Authors in order: Zahra Kafami Khorasani^{1,2}, Subina Upadhyaya^{1,2}, Prakash Khanal^{1,2}, Tiia Ståhlberg^{1,3}, Auli Suominen^{1,2}, and Andre Sourander^{1,2,3}

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Abstract

Background: Despite the global rise in immigration and expanding body of research on immigrant health outcomes, findings on the associations between parental immigration background and Autism Spectrum Status (ASD) by intellectual disability (ID) in offspring remain inconsistent.

Objective: To investigate whether parental immigration background is associated with ASD by ID.

Methods: We conducted a population-based nested case-control study including children born in Finland between 1998 – 2015, using three Finnish registries. We included all cases (n=9700), who had received an ASD diagnosis and categorized them into two subgroups, ASD with and without ID, based on co-occurrence with a diagnosis of ID. In this study, each case matched with four controls by gender, date, and place of birth. We used conditional logistic regression to examine the association, controlling for parental age, parity, parental psychopathology, maternal socioeconomic status, marital status, preterm birth and low birth weight.

Preliminary Results: Of the individuals diagnosed with ASD, 10.3% were from migrant families. compared with children with Finnish parents, the unadjusted odds of ASD were higher among children with an immigrant father (OR 1.24, 95% CI 1.08 – 1.41), an immigrant mother (OR 1.40, 95% CI 1.21 – 1.61), and two immigrant parents (OR 1.64, 95% CI 1.47 – 1.84). All associations were statistically significant (p< .01).

Keywords: Immigration status, ASD, register-based study

Prakash Khanal (Presenting Author)

Parental immigration status and offspring mental health service use for anxiety and depression: A Finnish nationwide register study

Authors in order: Prakash Khanal¹, Subina Upadhyaya¹, Tiia Ståhlberg¹, Emmi Heinonen¹, Terhi Luntamo¹ and Andre Sourander¹

¹Research Center for Child Psychiatry, University of Turku, Finland & INVEST Research Flagship Center, Turku, Finland

Abstract

Background

Anxiety and depressive disorders are leading causes of disability among youth globally, affecting 6.5% and 2.6% of children and adolescents, respectively, and around one in five experiences either condition by age 18. Immigration is a critical social determinant of mental health: immigrant families face acculturative stress, socioeconomic disadvantage, discrimination, and systemic barriers to care. Children of immigrants are particularly vulnerable due to intergenerational trauma and cultural conflict. Despite increasing needs, immigrant populations underutilize mental health services. No previous nationwide studies have examined service utilization for anxiety and depression specifically among second-generation immigrants.

Objective

To examine associations between parental immigration status and offspring mental health service utilization for anxiety, depression, and comorbid anxiety-depression.

Methodology

A nationwide case-control study was conducted using national registers covering the 1992–2006 birth cohort (followed until 2015). Cases ($n = 33,137$) included anxiety (14,014), depression (10,003), and comorbid anxiety-depression (9,120); controls were 138,957 age- and sex-matched. Diagnoses were drawn from the CRHC and linked with demographic data from the FMBR and FPIS. Parental countries of origin were categorized by HDI and region of origin. Multinomial logistic regression models adjusted for key sociodemographic covariates.

Key Findings

Offspring with two immigrant parents had lower service utilization (aORs = 0.4–0.8). Having a Finnish mother and immigrant father was associated with higher use (aORs = 1.4–1.6). Parents from low-HDI countries showed the lowest utilization (aORs = 0.1–0.4), especially mothers from Sub-Saharan Africa (aORs = 0.1–0.6). Higher utilization was observed for fathers from Central/South America and high-HDI countries.

Keywords: parental immigration; second-generation immigrants; anxiety and depression; service use; register study

Sociogenomics

Marie-Pier Larose (Presenting Author)

Integrating Polygenic Scores and Network Modeling to Understand Academic Difficulties and Bullying

Authors in order: Marie-Pier Larose¹, Tiina Turunen¹, Omid V. Ebrahimi², Barker E.D., and Lucy Bowes²

¹University of Turku (INVEST), Finland

²University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Abstract

Bullying involvement is a heritable and complex phenomenon which unfolds through a complex system of relationships between risk and protective factors. We used network analysis to understand the pattern of associations between genetic predispositions for psychopathologies and educational attainment and bullying involvement via children's early academic skills, as well as social communication difficulties and psychopathological symptoms in middle childhood. Our networks were adjusted for family socio-economic status, sex and children's genetic principal components. We also performed a stratified network analysis by sex. Using the Fruchterman–Reingold algorithm, we identified a network model where children's conduct, hyperactivity, and social communication and speech difficulties acted as bridge symptoms between the genetic predispositions, bullying involvement and academic skills' clusters. We did not find direct association between genetic predispositions and bullying involvement, emphasizing that bullying involvement is enacted via intermediary traits which are negatively perceived by peers. This new conceptualization of how genetic predispositions associate with specific traits and symptoms opens new possibility to design preventive interventions which have the potential to have a rippling effect on children's peer as well as academic adjustment.

Keywords:

Hannu Lehti (Presenting Author)

Biological and social pathways in intergenerational accumulation of social disadvantages – Evidence from twin data

Authors in order: Hannu Lehti¹, Niko Eskelinen¹, and Simo Arhippainen¹

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Abstract

Not only social conditions but also genetic predispositions are linked to many psychological and health outcomes, such as cognitive skills, behavioral, and psychiatric disorders that can further influence disadvantageous life course outcomes like poverty, unemployment, and low educational attainment. However, it remains unclear what mechanism drives the accumulation of socioeconomic disadvantages because previous studies have not been able to distinguish environmental influences from genetics.

There can be various reasons why individuals face socioeconomic disadvantages. In this study, we hypothesize that disadvantaged socioeconomic outcomes in young adulthood may emerge from four factors: 1. socio-cultural conditions, 2. family resources, 3. genetic predispositions, and 4. stochastic events encountered during the life course. We study how these factors interact in the accumulation of disadvantage.

Using Finnish twin register data and ACE models, we disentangle genetic, shared, and non-shared environmental influences on three outcomes: unemployment, school dropout, and low income (poverty). Further, we examine how childhood families' socioeconomic resources moderate genetic and environmental pathways leading to disadvantage.

Preliminary results suggest that, on average, the shared environment among twins plays a limited role in explaining the accumulation of disadvantageous life outcomes. Therefore, sociocultural explanations alone are insufficient to account for disadvantaged outcomes. However, observed outcomes appear to reflect a complex interplay of genetic influences and stochastic life events. A substantial share of socioeconomic disadvantages is associated with random events that individuals happen to encounter by chance.

Keywords: sociogenetics, socioeconomic, disadvantage, genes, environment

Aleksi Karhula (Presenting Author)

Increasing Polarization of Schools in Mental Health Risks

Authors in order: Nayara Machado¹, Henrik Dobewall², and Timo Kauppinen²

¹ University of Turku, Finland

² Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland

Abstract

Concentration of mental health risks in specific schools can have detrimental effects on both the pupils at risk and their fellow students. Increasing school segregation can lead to situations where pupils are negatively affected by the growing problems creating a negative circle of accumulating problems. Often public actors provide support for these problems, but their identification can be difficult due to different diagnosis practices and variety in children's tendency and ability to seek help. In this study we analyze how the school segregation of mental health risks has been increasing in the context of growing residential and school segregation in Finland (Turku and Helsinki regions) during the last decades. We use polygenic scores linked with rich register data to identify concentration of mental health risks in schools. This measure is independent of different diagnosis practices and measures the accumulation of risks directly that has not been possible in the previous studies on the topic. Our study contributes to important discussions on supporting schools in the times of increasing socioeconomic segregation as well as highlighting the advantages of using polygenic scores in measuring mental health risks.

Keywords: School segregation, mental health, polygenic scores

Henrik Dobewall, Timo Kauppinen, and Aleksi Karhula (Presenting Author)

Genetic correlates of residential mobility in Finland: Social stratification, mental health, and the life course

Authors in order: Henrik Dobewall¹, Timo Kauppinen¹, Maria Vaalavuo¹, Nayara Machado², Charles Ng'iendo², Aleksi Karhula², and Abdel Abdellaoui³

¹ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland

² University of Turku, Finland

³ Amsterdam UMC, Netherlands

Abstract

Previous research has found intriguing genetic correlates of social stratification in a number of European countries using the polygenic score (PGS) for educational attainment, which we aim to extend to mental health outcomes. Recently, genetic associations of residential mobility were confirmed in within-family analyses that account for unobserved environmental confounding. Building on this work, we study genetic associations of residential mobility in Finland using a life-course perspective. To go beyond place of birth versus current residence, we reconstruct residential histories and model all residential moves since age 16.

We investigate multiple mobility outcomes: (1) move incidence and timing, (2) move frequency, (3) intramunicipality versus intermunicipality moves, (4) rural–urban transitions, (5) emigration/immigration, and (6) moving towards/dodging risk, including whether some individuals systematically move towards (or away from) regional-level indicators of social stratification and mental-health prevalence.

Methodologically, alongside descriptive statistics and spatial mapping, we apply event-history models for recurrent events with frailty random effects to estimate how stable individual factors—parental socioeconomic status and PGSs for educational attainment and mental health—relate to the hazard of repeated moves across the life course. For stronger causal inference, we implement sibling fixed effects using the Phenotype Differences Model, reducing bias from shared family background.

Keywords: Polygenic scores, residential mobility, mental health, social stratification

Friday 8 May

Parallel sessions at 11.00-12.30

Parental influence

Dilukshi Soysa (Presenting Author)

Associations of Participant Engagement Predictors with Child Disruptive Behaviours in the Finnish Strongest Families Digital Parenting Intervention

Authors in order: Dilukshi Nawodani Soysa¹, Minja Westerlund^{1,2}, Yujing Li^{1,2}, Andre Sourander^{1,2}

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Abstract

Child Disruptive Behavior (CDB) is a common mental health problem among preschool-age children. It leads to lasting negative consequences for children's mental health, family functioning, and societal wellbeing. Parent training has been identified as the most effective approach to reducing CDB. Digital parent training programs offer scalable, cost-effective, and accessible solutions that overcome barriers such as stigma, cost, and time. The Finnish Strongest Families Parenting (FSFP) intervention has shown effective results in reducing CDBs. This study examined how participant engagement metrics in the nationwide implementation of the FSFP intervention changed CDBs over 24 months among 2,900 Finnish families whose children met screening criteria at the 4-year health check-up.

The program combined 11 weeks of website-based parenting training with weekly telephone coaching. Child disruptive behaviours were measured using the CBCL 1.5–5 externalizing score. Potential engagement predictors were the number of themes completed, access minutes per theme, total calls, and minutes per call. Data were collected at baseline, 6, 12, and 24 months. Linear mixed-effects models were used to assess associations between engagement metrics and CDBs over time.

Externalizing behaviours decreased significantly over time in all models (overall $p = .001$). Among engagement metrics, higher minutes per call were consistently associated with lower externalizing behaviour scores ($\beta=0.052-0.059$, $p \leq .002$). Other metrics were not significantly associated with externalizing behaviours, except for a small positive association of access minutes per theme at 12 months ($p = .032$). These results indicated that time spent on calls was the strongest participant engagement predictor of reductions in CDBs in the FSFP intervention. Integrating follow-up telephone coaching and monitoring participant engagement in digital parenting interventions may enhance effectiveness in large-scale implementations.

Keywords: Child Disruptive Behavior, Digital Parenting Intervention, Participant Engagement, Predictors

Ebru Ozbek, Simona C. S. Caravita, and Christina Salmivalli (Presenting Author)

Can the consequences of cyberbullying victimization differ based on general parenting behaviors? A cross-lagged panel model longitudinal study

Authors in order: Ebru Ozbek¹, Simona C. S. Caravita², and Christina Salmivalli³

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² Department of Human and Social Sciences, Universitas Mercatorum, Rome, Italy

³ INVEST Flagship, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

Abstract

The role of parenting behaviors in the development of internalizing and externalizing problems (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005) and the adverse effects of cyberbullying victimization on the psychological adjustment of children and adolescents have been widely studied (Barlett et al., 2024; Gini et al., 2018). However, how parental behaviors moderate the association of cyberbullying victimization with psychological adjustment has not been thoroughly examined and needs further studies (Barlett et al., 2024). In this study, we investigated the role of parental affection, behavioral control, psychological control, and monitoring in predicting psychological adjustment following cyberbullying victimization. From fall 2020 to spring 2021, 3,639 Finnish students ($M = 12.98$, $SD = 1.70$; 48.2% girls) and their parents (1,625; 87.4% mothers) participated in this study. Students completed self-report measures of offline bullying and cyberbullying victimization, depression, anxiety, and self-esteem at three time points. Parents completed measures of parenting behaviors at time 1. We estimated separate cross-lagged models to investigate the associations of cyberbullying victimization with students' psychological adjustments. The moderating effects of the four parenting behaviors were examined separately for each model. The main effect models showed that only the cross-lagged paths from cyberbullying victimization to anxiety were significant, controlling for offline bullying victimization, gender, and grade. As expected, behavioral control buffered the effect of cyberbullying victimization on anxiety at time 2 (interaction term $\beta = -.30$, $p = 0.018$) and on depression at time 3 (interaction term $\beta = -.06$, $p = 0.032$). Parental monitoring buffered the effect of cyberbullying victimization on anxiety at time 2 (interaction term $\beta = -.06$, $p = 0.019$). The findings will be discussed in line with the theoretical standpoints and for future practice and research.

Keywords: parenting behaviors, cyberbullying victimization, longitudinal study, psychological adjustment

Tarja Korpilahti-Leino, Iida Kankaaranta, and Tiia Ståhlberg (Presenting Author)

The Videotape Assessment of Early Interaction and Infant Temperament: The Stronger Together Study

Authors in order: Korpilahti-Leino, T.¹, Ristkari, T.¹, Ståhlberg, T., Sourander, S., Kankaaranta, I.¹, Mäntylä, H., Vuorinen, T., Berglund, M., and Sourander, A.¹

¹ University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Background:

Research evidence demonstrates that untreated antenatal depression may have long lasting implications for children's developmental trajectories and psychosocial wellbeing. The Stronger Together study is a randomized controlled trial currently underway, designed to evaluate the efficacy of an iCBT intervention for antenatal depression (iCBT versus educational control). As part of an open follow up to the RCT, we assess early mother-child interaction and infant temperament using two validated observational instruments: the Coding Interactive Behavior (CIB) system and the Laboratory Temperament Assessment Battery (Lab TAB).

Methods:

The study sample comprises three groups: mothers with antenatal depressive symptoms who received either iCBT or educational control, and a comparison group of mothers without depressive symptoms. When infants are 3 and 7 months old, mother-infant dyads are videotaped remotely via Zoom. The assessment tools include (1) the CIB, an observational measure designed to evaluate parent-child relationships from infancy through adolescence, and (2) Lab TAB, a standardized instrument for assessing temperament. Coding for both instruments follow a highly structured protocol and requires specialized training.

Results:

Video data collection is ongoing. Our research team has completed the qualification for CIB coding, and the inter rater reliability procedures are currently in progress. The Lab TAB rating has commenced alongside the established quality assurance protocols. To date, more than 260 videos have been collected at 3 months and nearly 200 at 7 months.

Conclusions:

This study seeks to determine whether antenatal depression and its treatment with iCBT affect early mother-child interaction and infant self regulation. The findings will enhance understanding of the developmental implications of maternal mental health and the potential of digital interventions to support early relational and emotional outcomes in children.

Keywords: Antenatal depression, interaction, infant temperament

Teea Vuorinen (Presenting Author)

Parents' Perceptions of Strongest Families -Program Acceptability and Implementation as Part of Finnish Maternity and Child Health Clinic Services

Authors in order: Teea Vuorinen¹, Pia Rantala¹, Sanna Herkama¹, Minja Westerlund¹, Malin Kinnunen¹, Terja Ristikari¹, and Andre Sourander¹

¹ Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Behavioral problems are the most common mental health issues among children under six. Many families lack adequate support due to limited screening and delayed recognition of need. (Ferguson et al., 2005; Vasileva et al., 2021). The Strongest Families Smart Website (SFSW) is a low-threshold, evidence-based, digitally delivered parent training program integrated into Finnish primary healthcare.

This qualitative study examines the integration of SFSW into the service system, its acceptability from the parents' perspective, and its influence on parenting practices as well as its impact on the family's everyday life. Parents (n = 35) from five wellbeing services counties were interviewed by phone in Finnish between March and May 2025. All participants had completed the program between January 2023 and October 2024. The interviews (15–51 minutes) were transcribed verbatim (568 pages, Times New Roman, 12 pt) and analyzed using abductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) with NVivo 15.

Acceptability of the intervention was rated high among the interviewees. Nearly all participants felt that the screening and referral to the program were smooth and well-integrated into the primary healthcare system at the four-year child health clinic visit. A majority viewed the referral positively and as a relief, although commitment and time management raised some concerns. The materials were perceived as clear and logical, and the weekly phone calls with the coach supported progressing through the program. Most of the participants described the program as having a positive and sustained impact on family life.

The study underscores the importance of accessible, evidence-based, low-threshold interventions in primary care and highlights that families—especially those with mild concerns or limited knowledge of how to seek help—need support in recognizing psychosocial challenges. SFSW appears well incorporated into the child health clinic system and widely acceptable among parents.

Keywords: Acceptability, Implementation, Intervention, Parent training, Preschool child

Anastasiia Petrova (Presenting Author)

Connecting Home and School: Parents' Advice on Bullying Victimization and Their Perception of School Environment

Authors in order: Anastasiia Petrova¹, Marie-Pier Larose¹, Claire F. Garandea¹, and Christina Salmivalli¹

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Abstract

Parental advice can play an important role in shaping how children respond to bullying situations. However, little is known about the factors that influence the type of advice parents provide. In particular, parents' perceptions of whether the school is doing enough, not enough, or too much to address bullying may shape how they guide their child when bullying occurs. In this study, we examined the association between parents' perceptions of the school environment and the advice they give to their child about bullying. We used survey data from 3,798 Finnish parents of school-aged children. An Exploratory Factor Analysis of 21 items identified three types of parental school perceptions: positive (the school does enough to address bullying), negative (the school does not do enough), and minimising (the school's anti-bullying efforts are unnecessary). Parents with a more positive perception were less likely to encourage their child to get back at the bullies. Parents with more negative perceptions were more likely to suggest retaliation and more likely to promise that they will take care of it to ensure that bullying stops. Parents who tended to minimise bullying were also more likely to recommend retaliation and to downplay the seriousness of the situation (for example, by suggesting that it is not worth worrying about or saying that bullying is a part of growing up). At the same time, they were less likely to encourage help-seeking, to promise they would intervene, and to work together with their child to address the issue. Understanding how schools' anti-bullying efforts - or their perception - can affect parental advice is important to improve both school and family attempts to reduce bullying.

Keywords: bullying victimisation, parental advice, school climate

KiVa Antibullying program

Christina Salmivalli (Presenting Author)

Effects of the KiVa anti-bullying program: Evidence from multiple trials across countries and years

Authors in order: Christina Salmivalli, INVEST, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

The efficacy of the KiVa anti-bullying program was first evaluated in a large-scale randomized controlled trial conducted across all five provinces of mainland Finland, involving more than 200 schools and a sample of over 25,000 students. This initial trial took place between 2007 and 2009. Since then, several randomized controlled trials have been carried out in diverse national contexts, including Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Chile, and Estonia, allowing for a systematic examination of the program's effectiveness across countries and educational systems.

The presentation will summarize key findings from these trials, focusing on changes in the prevalence of bullying and victimization, as well as a range of secondary outcomes such as empathy, bystander behavior, peer norms, and students' school well-being. In addition, evidence will be presented on the psychological and social mechanisms through which the KiVa program exerts its effects, shedding light on how changes in individual attitudes, peer processes, and teacher perceptions contribute to reductions in bullying.

Keywords: KiVa, Bullying, Victimization, Effects, Intervention

Claire Garandeau (Presenting Author)

Why Are Students Higher in Callous-Unemotional Traits More Resistant to Targeted Anti-Bullying Interventions by Teachers? The Role of Biased Perceptions

Authors in order: Claire F. Garandeau¹, Eerika Johander¹, Tiina Turunen¹, and Christina Salmivalli¹

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Abstract

Background: Targeted anti-bullying interventions tend to be less effective among children high in callous-unemotional (CU) traits. However, the reasons for this lower responsiveness remain unclear.

Objectives: The present study sought to understand why children high in CU traits are more resistant to attempts at reducing their bullying behavior by testing 1) the effect of CU traits on intention to stop bullying after a teacher-led anti-bullying intervention and 2) whether this effect was explained by participants' perceptions of the teacher's messages.

Methods: A sample of 843 students in Grade 4 and 7 (49.8% boys, Mage = 11.56) was asked to imagine having bullied a peer and being invited to a meeting with a teacher. They were then shown a video depicting what the teacher would tell them in the meeting. They were randomly assigned to three conditions with different teacher messages (bullying-condemning, empathy-raising or a combination of both) and asked to rate the extent to which they perceived the teacher had condemned the bullying, tried to raise their empathy for the victim, and blamed them as a person.

Key findings: Analyses conducted separately for the whole sample and a subsample of bullying perpetrators revealed that higher levels of CU traits were associated with lower intention to stop bullying and with perceiving more blaming, less bullying-condemning and less empathy-raising from the teacher. These perceptions predicted lower intention to stop and partially mediated the effects of CU traits on intention to stop in the whole sample. In the subsample of perpetrators, only the indirect effect via perceived empathy-raising was statistically significant. One reason why youth high in CU traits are more resistant to anti-bullying intervention may be their biased perceptions of the content of anti-bullying messages.

Keywords: Bullying, anti-bullying intervention, CU-traits

Eerika Johander (Presenting Author)

How Adherence to an Evidence-Based Targeted Intervention Procedure is Related to Intervention Effectiveness?

Authors in order: Eerika Johander¹, Lydia Laninga-Wijnen¹, Daniel Graf¹, Daniela V. Chávez¹, and Christina Salmivalli¹

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Abstract

Research suggests that although teachers' targeted interventions can stop bullying, they still fail in about one-fourth of cases. Yet, most studies to date have not considered how targeted interventions were implemented, leaving open the possibility that improper implementation contributed to these failures. To address this gap, we examined the extent to which school personnel implementing the KiVa® antibullying program in Finland adhered to the program-recommended targeted intervention procedure when addressing bullying cases, and whether modifications to the procedure, influenced intervention effectiveness. We further tested the specific effects of two types of modifications – adaptations and omissions – on effectiveness. Data were collected using ecological momentary assessment, with school personnel documenting in a mobile application the steps they took when addressing bullying cases. The sample included 341 cases involving 396 victimized students (53% female, $M_{age} = 12.39$ $SD = 2.08$) and 733 bullying students (13% female, $M_{age} = 12.52$ $SD = 1.96$) from 22 primary and secondary schools. The results indicated that adherence to procedure varied considerably across intervention steps, and adherence to the full procedure was low. Interventions were, however, more effective when school personnel adhered to the procedure than when they made modifications. Moreover, interventions were least effective, when steps were omitted, whereas adaptations did not significantly reduce effectiveness compared to full adherence, though the trend was in the same direction as with omissions. These findings suggest that closer adherence to evidence-based procedures tends to lead to better outcomes in targeted bullying interventions.

Keywords: targeted interventions; victimization; bullying; implementation fidelity

Ana Costa-Ramon (Presenting Author)

Long-Run Returns from an Anti-Bullying Program

Authors in order: Tabea Braun¹, Ana Costa-Ramón¹, Ana Rodríguez-González², Ursina Schaeде³, Christina Salmivalli⁴

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² University of Barcelona, Spain

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Abstract

We study the long-run impacts of a randomized anti-bullying intervention, the KiVa program, in Finnish schools. We link the RCT survey data for 15,000 pupils attending grades 7-9 to comprehensive administrative records on educational and labor market outcomes in adulthood. Treated students experience gains in human capital attainment and labor market outcomes: they are more likely to enroll in academic high school, obtain a university degree, and earn higher wages by ages 27-29. We find that these gains accrue to all groups of pupils, irrespective of gender or social role in the classroom. Evidence suggests that reductions in bullying, particularly among boys, leading to a more positive learning environment for all groups of pupils are the main driver behind these effects.

Keywords: bullying, education, long-run

Urban studies and regional mobility

Ákos Gosztonyi (Presenting Author)

The Price of Changing Urban Landscapes: The impact of the urban environment on housing sales prices in Helsinki and Paris

Authors in order: Ákos Gosztonyi¹ and Sanna Ala-Mantila¹

¹ University of Helsinki, Finland

Abstract

The effects of proximity to green and blue spaces and of transport infrastructure development and management on housing prices and socioeconomic change in urban areas have long been studied. Regarding blue and green coverage, recent literature emphasizes that the type and quality of such spaces determine whether environmental features are capitalized as amenities or disamenities in the housing market (McCord, 2024). Transport infrastructure developments have also been argued to affect housing prices and potentially induce gentrification (e.g., Meriläinen et al., 2024). Transport management policies, such as low-emission zones, have also been argued to reshape spatial inequalities (Liotta, 2025). Evidence suggests that proximity to public transport hubs within low-emission zones can generate heterogeneous price effects (Aydin and Kürschner Rauck, 2023), while residing within such zones may reduce life satisfaction (Sarmiento et al., 2023), implying that regulatory interventions may create perceived disamenities alongside air quality benefits.

However, comparative evidence on how environmental features, transport infrastructure, and regulatory policies jointly shape housing prices over time remains limited. This study uses high-resolution spatial longitudinal data from the Grand Paris region and the Helsinki Metropolitan Area to estimate the effects of green and blue coverage, public transport proximity, major transport infrastructure developments, and policy interventions on housing sales prices. Our analysis combines CORINE land cover data with DVF+ transaction-level data for Paris and detailed housing sales data from the Finnish Real Estate Brokers Association (KVKL) for Helsinki. Comparing these areas allows us to assess whether capitalization patterns are context-dependent given differences in urban density and planning frameworks, contributing to debates on sustainable urban development and the distributional consequences of environmental transformation.

Keywords: housing prices, urban development, environmental gentrification

Laura A. Tufa (Presenting Author)

Designing out loneliness. Spatial environments, transport and loneliness in the city

Authors in order: Laura A. Tufa, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

Abstract

Loneliness emerges as a pervasive social challenge, with recent empirical studies attributing it to structural constraints on social participation opportunities. Beyond these factors, supportive urban infrastructure, encompassing physical environments, thoughtful area planning, and robust mobility networks, can either bolster social connections or exacerbate isolation. This study examines the interplay between architectural and urban and transport design policies and broader public policies in mitigating loneliness, with a focused lens on Romanian localities and particularly Bucharest. Adopting a mixed-methods framework, we conduct systematic policy analysis, in-depth case studies of implemented designs aimed at countering loneliness, semi-structured interviews with architects, urban planners, social scientists, beneficiaries, and key stakeholders, and assessments of design impacts. Findings reveal policy inconsistencies, uneven implementation of scalable interventions, and a notable oversight in designing for lifelong connectivity across diverse social demographics and life stages. These gaps hinder equitable outcomes. Therefore, recommendations advocate for participatory co-design processes involving end-users and advocate integrating preventive design principles into policy frameworks.

Keywords: loneliness, urban design, mobility

Julia Hellstrand (Presenting Author)

Immigrant mobility and labor-market outcomes across Finland's rural, urban, and Swedish-speaking regions

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Abstract

Understanding how immigrants integrate depending on their initial settlement location is crucial for both integration policy and regional development. In Finland, international immigration is concentrated in larger cities and the capital region, both as initial destinations and as subsequent destinations for those who first settle elsewhere. A notable portion of immigrants initially settling in rural areas do so within Swedish-speaking regions. Using longitudinal population register data, this study examines how initial settlement in urban, rural, and Swedish-speaking areas shapes immigrants' mobility patterns and labor market outcomes over time. We find that immigrants in Swedish-speaking rural areas exhibit lower subsequent mobility toward cities and the capital region compared to those in Finnish-speaking rural areas, while simultaneously achieving relatively favorable employment outcomes.

Keywords: Immigrant integration, rural–urban mobility, labor market outcomes, Swedish-speaking regions

Patricia McMullin (Presenting Author)

Staying Afloat: Does Moving Closer to Grandma Support Mothers Earnings After Separation

Authors in order: Patricia McMullin¹, Simon Chapman^{1,2}, Clara H. Mulder³, Roselinde Van der Wiel³

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² NetResilience, Finland

³ Population Research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Netherlands

Abstract

Although recent research has increasingly focused on how extended family networks influence decisions about moving or staying, fewer studies have explored how geographical closeness to family serves as a vital support system in challenging times. Separated mothers, having linked lives with their own mothers, may benefit from their practical and emotional support (Das et al. 2017). This study's objective is to gain more insight into mobility decisions of separated mothers, focusing on proximity to the location of their own mother (the maternal grandmother) and the consequences this may have for women's economic prospects.

We use full population longitudinal Finnish register data including all divorced and formerly cohabiting mothers aged 25-55 who separated from the other parent of their first child between 2005 and 2012 and who have at least one child living with them. Our explanatory variables are proximity to mother at t+1 categorised as <5km, <50km, and <=50km. We examined the association between distance category (x) and earnings, calculated as the change in earnings between t+1 and t-1. We adjust for educational attainment, child age, distance to father, and both maternal and (grand)maternal age, as well as urban-rural residence. The results are based on linear models estimated using a Bayesian approach.

Earnings increased for divorced mothers living more than 50 km away from their (grand)mother compared to those residing within 0-5 km. This is mostly but not entirely explained by education level and other covariates. For those with older children, the effect of distance becomes more negative indicating that as children get older, mothers may be more constrained. Social Implications: Overall it appears that in the Finnish welfare state, kin proximity appears neither to restrict nor promote mothers' post-separation labor market participation.

Keywords:

Novel data and methods I

Henri Salokangas (Presenting Author)

Plausibly exogenous? Causal informativeness of adverse health events

Authors in order: Martin Halla¹, Henri Salokangas², and Ossi Tahvonen³

¹ WU Wien, Austria

² THL, Finland

³ University of Helsinki, Finland

Abstract

Adverse health events are widely used in social science research as quasi-experimental changes in health. Yet what counts as a “health shock” varies across studies, and many conditions may be preceded by gradual deterioration or other dynamics that weaken common before–after comparison designs. We develop a data-driven framework to assess how informative different health events are for causal inference, using nationwide Finnish administrative registers covering 1993–2022.

We estimate more than 1,000 before–after comparisons with control groups across roughly 170 diagnosis blocks in 15 ICD chapters, defining each health shock as an individual’s first hospitalization for a condition in the chapter. For each event, we measure (i) pre-diagnosis differences between treated and comparison groups and (ii) pre-diagnosis trends in outcomes such as earnings and health-related behaviors. We find substantial heterogeneity: many cancers and acute somatic hospitalizations show little evidence of divergence before diagnosis, while mental and behavioral disorders display large pre-existing differences and pronounced pre-diagnosis declines.

To evaluate credibility, we conduct a formal sensitivity analysis that quantifies how strongly unobserved confounding would need to change after diagnosis—relative to what is observed before diagnosis—to overturn the estimated effects. This yields a transparent ranking of health events, from shock-like conditions with robust impacts to events where estimates are highly sensitive to plausible violations of key assumptions.

By systematically mapping pre-event dynamics and robustness across diagnoses, the paper provides practical guidance for selecting credible health shocks and strengthens causal inference in research on health, work, and family outcomes.

Keywords: Health shocks, earnings, causal inference, administrative register data

Ville-Juhani, Ilmarinen (Presenting Author)

Rethinking gender gaps with cross-cultural and cross-temporal models that analyze men and women separately to avoid misleading inferences

Authors in order: Ville-Juhani Ilmarinen, University of Helsinki, Faculty of Education, Finland

Abstract

Recent work claims that gender equal societies show larger gender differences in characteristics such as STEM attitudes, economic preferences, personality, values, and moral judgments. A related claim, often based on data journalism, suggests that men and women especially among younger cohorts are drifting apart, with men becoming more conservative and women more liberal. I assess whether these claims reflect genuine patterns or artifacts of measurement and modeling. I present reanalyses and new cross-cultural studies using a deconstructed approach. Instead of collapsing information into gender gap difference scores, I model men and women separately but simultaneously across countries and time, and examine full covariance structures to recover underlying association patterns.

The results reveal that using difference scores as variables in multivariate analyses discards information and distorts associations with gender equality and temporal change. When modeled without difference score aggregation, the gender equality paradox and widening worldview gaps largely vanish. Apparent effects are often misinterpretations, oversimplifications, or inflated estimates that stem from difference score variables.

The findings challenge popular stories that increased gender equality inevitably magnifies gender differences or that policy efforts toward equality are futile. Claims that young women and men have recently drifted apart are not found for any of the 33 European countries examined for personal values. Altogether, these results suggest that public policy should not be guided by misleading gap association metrics. Instead, policies should be informed by models that respect data structure, differentiate within and between genders and societies, and evaluate change without collapsing distributions. This supports sustained investment in gender equality initiatives and encourages more transparent data journalistic media reporting.

Keywords: Gender equality, Statistical methods, Cross-cultural research, European Social Survey

Hanna Rekola and Tiina Ahonen (Presenting Author)

Measuring Capability Inequality in Finland: A Cross-Sectional Study of Individual Deficits and Societal Losses Using the CALY measure

Authors in order: Hanna Rekola^{1,2}, Tiina Ahonen¹, Annika Frahsa³, Kaspar Walter Meili⁴, Tomi Mäki-Opas^{1,2}

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³ Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern, Switzerland

⁴ Department of Epidemiology and Global Health, Umeå University, Sweden

Abstract

Research background: Quality of life is often assessed using health-based utility indicators that focus on functional status and health-related outcomes. To address the limited scope of such measures, capability-based approaches have been proposed to capture people's real opportunities to lead valued lives; however, empirical evidence on population-level capability inequalities remains scarce.

Objectives: We examine how disadvantaged positions contribute to capability deficits and societal capability losses in Finland. We compare these associations with health utility-based QALY estimates to evaluate the added value of a capability-oriented approach for policy.

Methods: We used data from a 2024 cross-sectional survey of Finnish adults. Capabilities were assessed with a Finnish translation of the CALY-SWE measure developed in Sweden, health utility with EQ-5D, and various sociodemographic variables were used as determinants. We assessed capability deficits in different sociodemographic groups as the group difference to the total sample mean and estimated group differences with ANOVA. Marginal effects on capability and health utility were assessed with a two-part model consisting of logistic and gamma regression. Annual CALY (capability-adjusted life years) and QALY losses were estimated with the weighted population prevalence of each group.

Key findings: Capability inequalities were observed across sociodemographic groups. Poor health, income difficulties, and mental disorders accounted for the largest differences in individual level capability deficits as well as greatest overall societal burden in terms of lost capabilities. Comparison with QALY showed that capability and health utility-based measures identify overlapping but not identical patterns of inequality. Promoting equality of opportunity requires more targeted efforts and suitable metrics, such as capability-based measures, which could play a crucial role in guiding Finnish social and health policies.

Keywords: capability, inequality, quality of life, societal development

Oskari Lahtinen (Presenting Author)

4 waves of "woke" study, a retrospective

Authors in order: Oskari Lahtinen, INVEST / UTU, Finland

Abstract

I collected 4 datasets on critical social justice attitudes and 2 sets on critical right attitudes. CSJA were associated with increased political violence justification, $r = -.27-.28$. Believing in a planned "great replacement" was relatively common on the critical right. Nuanced results are discussed in the presentation.

Keywords: critical social justice, critical right, woke, woke right

Parental leaves and household decision making I

Giovanni Amerigo Giuliani (Presenting Author)

DO FATHERS SUPPORT SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE? INSTITUTIONAL, CULTURAL, AND CLASS DETERMINANTS ACROSS 26 COUNTRIES

Authors in order: Lorenzo Cattani¹ and Roberto Rizza¹

¹ University of Bologna, Italy

Abstract

Debates on work–family policies increasingly highlight fathers’ involvement in childcare and parental leave designs that promote a more equal division of care. Many countries have expanded father-specific entitlements, reflecting broader efforts to advance gender equality (Pasanen et al., 2025). Yet many fathers still take little or no leave, and parenting practices remain strongly gendered even in supportive welfare states (Eydal & Rostgaard, 2023).

Alongside these institutional changes, research has examined public attitudes toward parental leave (Knoester, Li & Petts, 2021; Kaufman et al., 2021), underscoring their social and political relevance. However, we still know little about fathers’ support for fully shared parental leave models and the factors shaping these preferences different contexts.

This paper addresses this gap by focusing on fathers’ attitudes toward an equal division of parental leave. Our research question is:

RQ: What drives fathers’ support for a fully shared parental leave model? Do institutions, cultural orientations, or class-based constraints matter more – and how do these dimensions interact?

To answer this, we integrate three strands of literature. First, policy-feedback theory (Svallfors, 2010) suggests that parental leave designs shape norms and expectations around fathers’ caregiving roles. Second, modernization theory highlights how cultural value orientations – especially gender-role attitudes – influence views on work–family arrangements (Inglehart, 2018). Third, research on social class shows how occupational position and sectoral constraints affect the perceived feasibility and desirability of an equal division of leave (André et al., 2025).

Empirically, we estimate multilevel logit models using the 2022 ISSP Family and Changing Gender Roles dataset for fathers in 26 OECD countries, combining individual-level measures with country-level indicators of parental leave design, with a focus on father-specific entitlements.

Keywords: Shared Parental leave; Fathers; Gender (In)Equality; Public attitudes; Social Policy

Mari Haapanen and Aki Koivula (Presenting Author)

Preferences and Practices in Couples' Financial Decision-Making and Resource Sharing: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment

Authors in order: Mari Haapanen¹, Aki Koivula¹, Héctor Bahamonde¹, and Anna Hägglund¹

¹ INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Understanding how couples organize financial decision-making and share resources is central to explaining intra-household inequality. These processes are difficult to capture due to social desirability bias and the intertwining of financial arrangements with other forms of household labor. Individualized financial arrangements, such as keeping part of one's income separate, have become increasingly common, especially in gender equal societies. Yet such arrangements may result in unequal living standards. This study examines how couples prefer to divide financial authority and resources, and how these preferences align with their actual arrangements.

We use data from a mixed-design survey-conjoint experiment conducted among 2,000 Finnish-speaking adults living with a partner. Respondents evaluated profiles of couples' financial and domestic arrangements, which were defined by seven attributes varying randomly at three levels. The levels indicated whether decisions or responsibilities were assigned to the respondent, their partner, or both, while the attributes covered domestic labour, financial decision-making authority, income pooling versus individual arrangements, contributions to shared expenses and personal spending practices. Respondents also reported whether the selected profile matched their real preferences. The results reveal systematic patterns in how couples weigh financial and domestic attributes according to gender, education, income, perceived resource disparities, and ideological pairing. The study advances understanding of how financial organization emerges within contemporary couples.

Keywords: financial decision-making; resource sharing; conjoint experiment; couples; intra-household inequality

Miia, Saarikallio (Presenting Author)

Leave-sharing among parents living apart

Authors in order: Miia Saarikallio¹, Satu Helske¹, and Simon Chapman¹

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Abstract

Fathers' parental leave use has increased markedly in Finland and elsewhere, especially following the introduction of father-specific, non-transferable leave entitlements. Alongside policy changes, a gradual shift has reshaped societal norms towards more engaged and nurturing fatherhood. These expectations also shape families in which parents have separated or live apart: fathers' early involvement has been shown to benefit children's development and strengthen the father-child relationship later in life as well.

In Finland, about a quarter of underage children live with only one parent and parental separation is common as around 35 % of children experience parental separation before the age of 16. Although children most often reside primarily with their mothers after parental separation, post-separation living arrangements have diversified, and shared residence – promoting both parents' active involvement – has become more common.

Based on full-population administrative registers, this study examines the division of childcare in families where parents live apart or have separated with a particular focus on parental leave use. While Finnish parental leave policy has long aimed at promoting gender equality by encouraging fathers' leave-taking, family diversity was more explicitly addressed in 2017 when non-resident fathers became eligible for paternity allowance. However, there is only limited research on how separated parents divide childcare and share parental leaves. Evidence from Sweden show that separated parents use less leave than cohabiting parents, and suggest that the economic constraints after separation may reduce leave use and, in turn, limit children's access to both parents.

By addressing this understudied area, this study increases understanding on how parental leave policies function in increasingly diverse family forms and how children's access to care from both parents is shaped in post-separation contexts.

Keywords: parental leave, childcare, father involvement, divorce

Merita Mesiäislehto (Presenting Author)

Does policy matter? Attitudes towards sharing parental leaves in Europe

Authors in order: Merita Mesiäislehto¹, Satu Helske², Johanna Lammi-Taskula¹, Johanna Närvi¹, and Milla Salin²

¹ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland

² University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Across Europe, parental leave policies have become a key instrument for promoting gender equality and work–family reconciliation. Over the past decade, many countries have reformed their parental leave systems by extending entitlements and strengthening incentives for fathers' leave-taking, often through non-transferable quotas. Despite these developments, parental leave use remains highly gendered, with mothers continuing to take most of the leave. This gap highlights the importance of examining how societal attitudes towards caregiving relate to evolving parental leave policies.

This paper examines how public attitudes towards the division of parental leave between parents have changed between 2012 and 2022 in European countries, and how these changes align with developments in the gender-equality orientation of parental leave policies. The analysis covers 21 European countries and draws on data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) Family and Changing Gender Roles modules from 2012 and 2022, combined with data from the European Parenting Leave Policies Dataset.

The analysis is primarily descriptive and comparative. At the country level, we analyse changes in support for equal sharing of parental leave between 2012 and 2022 and relate these to changes in the gender-equality orientation of parental leave policies. In addition, we examine how changes in attitudes differ across sociodemographic groups (gender, parenthood, education). Combining these dimensions, we identify patterns of alignment and misalignment between public attitudes and policy design across countries, distinguishing contexts where attitudes and policies are mutually supportive from those where attitudes appear to lag behind or run ahead of policy developments. We further use data-driven methods to identify empirical groupings of countries and assess how well these correspond to the proposed typology.

Keywords: Parental leave, family policies, comparative research, gender equality

Evidence from reforms and policies

Thang Dang (Presenting Author)

External Safety Enforcement

Authors in order: Thang Dang, INVEST Centre, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Exploiting Norway's 2011 Regional Safety Representative scheme reform, I investigate the direct and spillover health consequences of external safety enforcement. My findings highlight significant effect heterogeneity across pre-reform risk profiles and socioeconomic groups. The reform reduces worker injuries by 3.4% and spousal mental health disorders by 3.5% in the high-risk catering industry, with no significant effects in the low-risk accommodation industry. Injury reductions are concentrated among male, native, low-educated, and young workers, while spousal mental health benefits are most pronounced among female spouses. Improved workplace safety is identified as the key potential mechanism behind these health benefits.

Keywords: Occupational safety and health enforcement; Regional safety representatives; Worker injury; Spousal mental health; Family spillovers

Jukka Laaksonen (Presenting Author)

Effectiveness of Influenza Vaccination in Children and Older Populations: Evidence from Quasi-Experimental Designs

Authors in order: Jukka Laaksonen, THL, Finland

Abstract

Annual influenza epidemics are a major cause of illness, healthcare costs, and mortality worldwide. In Finland, free-of-charge influenza vaccination is provided for risk groups, such as older population above age 65 and children below age seven.

I investigate the effectiveness of influenza vaccination in Finland among children aged two to five, exploiting the quasi-random variation in the timing of birth and the following well-child visits. In Finland, children aged 2–6 typically have annual well-child visits around their birth months. Using Finnish register data, I show that children who have the well-child visit during the annual influenza vaccination season are significantly more likely to take a vaccination compared with those whose visit occurs at other time of the year. Comparable to RCTs, this variation enables exploiting instrumental variable (IV) approach by comparison between otherwise similar individuals who quasi-randomly face different vaccination probabilities based on their birth month, under certain identification assumptions.

Furthermore, I exploit two alternative natural experiments based on discontinuities in vaccination probability at ages 65 and seven. Influenza vaccination becomes free of charge at age 65, whereas the eligibility for free vaccination ends at age 7. Using regression discontinuity (RD) design, I show that these age thresholds create remarkable discontinuities in vaccination probability between those who are, by their birth month, aged just above and below 65 or 7 during the annual influenza vaccination season.

Using these quasi experiments, I investigate how influenza vaccination affects outpatient and emergency department visits, hospitalizations and mortality. Regarding children's vaccination, I will also explore the spillover effects on parental health outcomes. These results inform Finnish policy making on how increasing access to and convenience of vaccination may affect vaccination rates and subsequent health outcomes.

Keywords: Influenza, vaccination, quasi-experimental design

Maarit Olkkola (Presenting Author)

Universal Child Health Services and Human Capital in Adulthood

Authors in order: Maarit Olkkola, VATT Institute for Economic Research, Finland

Abstract

I examine the human capital effects of the introduction of universal primary health care services for children. In the 1940s, these services were rolled out to all children below school age in rural Finland, where nearly one-third of municipalities lacked any physicians and ten percent of children died before age five. Using a staggered difference in differences design, I find that children who gained access to universal child health services were two percentage points more likely to complete either academic secondary school or a tertiary education degree and earned two percent more income in adulthood. These benefits were the largest for children who gained access prior to birth, but benefits also accrued to children who gained access at ages up to three years old. These benefits may also be an underestimate due to survival selection.

Keywords: Health care, children, educational attainment

Katri Aaltonen (Presenting Author)

When Delegation Meets Framing: Experimental Evidence on Mass Preferences over Healthcare Spending

Authors in order: Hector Bahamonde¹, Mikko Niemelä¹, and Katri Aaltonen¹

¹ University of Turku, INVEST, Finland

Abstract

Background: Public funding decisions for novel and costly medicines involve significant moral and ethical dilemmas, as well as competing societal values and interests. These decisions are often delegated away from electoral politics and justified through clinical and technical criteria, a process that is assumed to depoliticise them. However, when the criteria require specialised expertise to interpret, the way information is communicated to citizens may become more important for legitimacy than the underlying evidence itself.

Aim: Drawing on prospect theory, we argue that citizens respond differently when funding decisions are framed as avoiding salient losses versus preserving existing gains.

Methods: We use ordinal logistic regression and data from a cross-sectional population survey of citizens aged 18–79 years in 2021 (N = 2,081). The effect of framing was examined by a module with a clinical vignette describing a new cancer medication characterized by high cost and uncertain clinical benefit, based on which respondents were asked which decision regarding the medicine's public funding they find acceptable. The framing manipulation consisted of information reflected contrasting societal values (health maximisation, "rule of rescue") presented between the vignette and the decision task.

Results: Holding clinical evidence, costs, and uncertainty constant, we find substantial and systematic framing effects on mass preferences over public funding. Support for funding increases when decisions are framed as loss avoidance ("rule of rescue") and decreases when framed as gain preservation (health maximisation).

Conclusions: Institutional insulation from politics does not seem to neutralise framing effects on mass preferences. Instead, decisions justified through clinical and technical criteria remain politically consequential because public communication and interpretive frames shape how citizens evaluate distributive choices."

Keywords: framing effects; healthcare rationing; mass preferences; political economy

Parallel sessions at 13.30-15.00

School bullying

Julia Nuckols (Presenting Author)

Bidirectional Associations of Popularity and Self-Reported Victimization

Authors in order: Julia Nuckols¹, Claire Garandeau¹, Daniel Graf¹, Sarah Malamut¹, and Lydia Laninga-Wijnen¹

¹ University of Turku, INVEST Research Flagship Centre, Finland

Abstract

Peer victimization and peer popularity are assumed to be negatively linked during adolescence. However, a) longitudinal evidence examining their bidirectional associations remains limited, b) some popular youth also report being targeted by peers, c) extant studies on these links seldom control for adolescents' likability. As a result, it is uncertain whether popularity and victimization are prospectively linked and how.

Using three waves of data collected from a sample of Finnish adolescents (N = 4013), this study examined bidirectional associations between peer-reported popularity and self-reported victimization using cross-lagged panel models (CLPM), first without controlling for likeability and second, including likability as a covariate. In the initial model, significant bidirectional cross-lagged associations emerged, with higher popularity predicting increases in subsequent victimization, and higher victimization predicting increases in subsequent popularity. Popularity and victimization were also positively correlated within each wave.

However, when peer-reported likability was included as a covariate, all cross-lagged associations became non-significant. Likability was strongly associated with popularity and weakly related to victimization. Concurrent associations between popularity and victimization became negative at T1 and T2 and non-significant at T3. These preliminary findings suggest that longitudinal links between popularity and self-reported victimization may largely reflect shared variance of popularity with likability rather than unique prospective effects. Future analyses using random-intercept cross-lagged panel models will further clarify whether popularity and victimization are linked over time at the within-person level.

Keywords: Peer popularity, victimization, adolescence, likability, CLPM

İlayda Tuter (Presenting Author)

Architects of Societal Transformation: A Pilot Study Assessing the Effectiveness of a Peer Bullying Awareness Program on Teachers' Attitudes Towards School Bullying

Authors in order: İlayda Tüter¹ and Sırrı Akbaba¹

¹ Uskudar University, Türkiye

Abstract

This study highlights the persistent and troubling public health issue of peer bullying in educational settings, emphasizing its detrimental effects not only on students' emotional and psychological well-being but also on their academic success and overall school experience. Recognizing the critical need for an effective intervention, the research evaluated the impact of a targeted 7-week teacher awareness program designed to enhance middle school teachers' attitudes and awareness towards bullying. Utilizing a quasi-experimental design, the study involved 16 teachers, split equally between an intervention group and a control group, with assessments conducted before and after the program using a validated and reliable attitude scale. Results indicated that teachers who participated in the training showed notable improvements in their perceptions and understanding of bullying, with an effect size of Cohen's $d = 0.58$, reflecting a moderate impact. The analysis also revealed a partial eta squared of 0.0152, suggesting a small but meaningful practical effect. These findings suggest that even brief, focused training sessions can lead to positive changes in teacher attitudes and awareness, which are crucial for creating safer and more inclusive school environments. The study encourages further research involving larger and more diverse samples to validate and expand upon these preliminary results, ultimately supporting the design of effective implementation strategies to combat peer bullying.

Keywords: Bullying, Education, School, Teacher

Esa Karonen (Presenting Author)

Adolescent bullying perpetrators with varying peer status: Criminal convictions of as young adults

Authors in order: Esa Karonen¹ and Tiina Turunen¹

¹ INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

(a) Background

Bullying perpetration has previously been linked to adverse long-term outcomes, including internalizing problems, antisocial behavior, lower educational attainment, substance use, and offending. However, school-age bullies differ significantly in key ways—some are popular leaders among peers, while others are highly rejected and victimized. It is likely that perpetrators with differing peer status also differ in the onset and risk of later offending, as well as the types of crime committed in young adulthood. However, previous research has largely ignored this heterogeneity and relied exclusively on self-reports of bullying perpetration.

(b) Methods

This study utilizes a large-scale longitudinal dataset combining survey answers from 2008–2009 (n=17,444 children and adolescents, age 11–15) with Finnish register data up to 2023 (age 26–30). We apply latent profile analysis with a three-step BCH method. First, we identified bully subtypes using latent profile analysis based on school-age peer status variables (popularity, likeability, rejection, victimization; Step 1) and generated BCH weights for subgroup comparisons (Step 2). Step 3 will measure differences between subtypes and non-bullies in criminal record outcomes (e.g., age of first offense, total offenses, crime types).

(c) Findings

In school age, 22.9% (3986 participants) scored above the classroom mean by 0.5 SD in peer-reported bullying. Four distinct subgroups emerged: Average bullies (25.8% of perpetrators), who were close to their classroom average; Popular-liked bullies (32.4%), high in popularity and likeability, low in rejection/victimization; Popular-rejected bullies (24.3%), high in popularity but high in rejection and victimization; and Bully-victims (17.4%), low in popularity/likeability but high in rejection/victimization. We will present results on how these subtypes differ from non-bullies in criminal outcomes (onset and number of criminal convictions in young adulthood, as well as types of crime committed, e.g., violent vs. non-violent offending) through preregistered analyses to minimize selection bias and ensure methodological transparency.

(d) Conclusions

This study provides the first evidence-based identification of bullying subtypes with differential criminal risk trajectories, which could be critical for developing targeted prevention strategies for youth at the highest risk of offending in early adulthood.

Keywords: Bullying perpetration, Peer status, Criminality, Longitudinal, Register-based research

Daniela V. Chavez (Presenting Author)

The Dual Faces of Popularity: Psychological Antecedents of Bullies and Non-Bullies among High-Status Adolescents

Authors in order: Daniela V. Chávez¹, Tiina Turunen¹, Daniel Graf¹, Takuya Yanagida², and Christina Salmivalli¹

¹ INVEST Research Flagship Center/Psychology, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

² Department of Developmental and Educational Psychology, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria

Abstract

Popularity and likeability play distinct roles in adolescents' social functioning—popularity is often associated with dominance and aggression, whereas likeability relates to warmth and prosociality. These two forms of status partially overlap; there are popular-liked youths in whom they co-occur. Interestingly, some of them are bullies and some are not (Turunen et al., 2024). The goal of the current study was to examine the psychological antecedents of the coexistence of popularity and likeability among adolescent bullies versus non-bullies. Building upon Turunen et al. (2024), we identified subgroups of popular-liked bullies and popular-liked non-bullies, and examined what distinguished them. Using two waves of longitudinal data collected six months apart from approximately 1,500 Finnish adolescents (48% boys), we first replicated Turunen et al.'s (2024) subtypes based on peer-reported bullying, victimization, popularity, likeability, and rejection (dislike) through latent profile analysis. Next, we examined concurrent differences between the two high-status profiles using BCH 3-step approach, and used logistic regression analyses to predict class membership at T2 from psychological traits at T1, including callous-unemotional (CU) traits, sensitivity, affective and cognitive empathy, moral disengagement, self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. Preliminary findings indicated that, concurrently at T2, popular-liked bullies scored lower on anxiety, cognitive empathy, and sensitivity, and higher on moral disengagement (victim blaming) than high-status non-bullies. Longitudinally, high popularity, dislike, self-esteem, moral disengagement, and depressive symptoms at T1 predicted membership in the popular-liked bully group at T2, whereas higher likeability and anxiety predicted membership in the popular-liked non-bully group. These results contribute to understanding why some high-status adolescents engage in bullying, highlighting their distinctive psychological traits.

Keywords: high status, popularity, likeability, latent profile analysis, psychological traits

Care and intergenerational support

Johanna Pajula (Presenting Author)

Parents perceptions of their subjective long-term physical and mental health in the context of caring for a child with special healthcare needs in a Nordic welfare state

Authors in order: Johanna Pajula¹, Ella Näsi¹, Lauri Kokkinen¹, and Salla Atkins^{1,2}

¹ Tampere University, Finland

² Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

Abstract

Background and objective

Parents of children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) face persistent emotional, practical and social challenges. Supporting a child with long-term illness or disability strain families, and the care burden influences parents' mental and physical well-being in the short term. However, less is known of parents' outcomes in the long-term. We address this by exploring parents' perceptions of their subjective long-term physical and mental health in Finland.

Methods

We used data from 19 interviews conducted in 2025 with parents of CYSHCN. Six of these were with a couple, 12 with mothers and one with a father. Their children had had cancer, developmental disabilities or diabetes, and were born between 1982 and 1993. We analysed data using thematic framework analysis (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994).

Key Findings

The duration of the significant care burden spanned from years to decades, often needing constant alertness that could lead to stress, exhaustion, and burnout. Sometimes the burnout would come later, during another crisis. Some parents linked their musculoskeletal disorders, high blood pressure and mental health problems to the care burden. Some had been on work disability pension close to retirement age due to issues they thought connected to the care burden, such as back problems or mental illnesses.

Some parents saw that the insufficiency of support and care they and their child received had affected their physical and mental health. Furthermore, some directly linked experiences of mistreatment or having to fight for their child's rights to mental health problems. Many wished for more practical support in caring for their child.

Societal Implications

A substantial care burden can have long-term impacts on parents' mental and physical health, which can appear even decades after the acute situation. This should be considered in health and social care, and parents of CYSHCN should be offered timely support tailored to them.

Keywords: Family, parents, care burden, health, mental health

Hasan Sohail, Johanna Pajula, and Salla Atkins (Presenting Author)

Income inequalities among parents of children with special health care needs: Evidence from the 1987 FinRegistry-based birth cohort

Authors in order: Hasan Sohail¹, Johanna Pajula¹, Manela Karunadasa-Visama¹, Lauri Kokkinen¹, and Salla Atkins^{1, 2}

¹ Health Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere University, Tampere, FI-330 14, Finland

² Department of Global Public Health, Karolinska Institutet, SE-171 77 Stockholm, Sweden

Abstract

Background:

Parents of children with special health care needs require ongoing caregiving which may limit their ability to participate in labour market, potentially leading to economic difficulties. This study investigated income disparities among parents of children with and without special healthcare needs, stratified by sex.

Methods

We constructed a retrospective nationwide cohort of children born in 1987 using the FinRegistry dataset, which links electronic health records, demographic and family data across Finland. The study included 103,329 parents, of whom 2,023 were parents of children with special needs. Income inequalities were investigated using inflation adjusted annual gross income data. We conducted a descriptive analysis of parental income trajectories from 2005-2018. Income data prior to 2005 were not available.

Results

Preliminary results showed that parents of children with special needs had lower mean annual income compared to their counterparts. Among fathers, mean income was €25,679 per annum versus €29,232 per annum for fathers of children without special needs (12% lower). Likewise, among mothers, the mean income was €15,548 per annum compared to €18,612 (16% lower). We also found differences in sex by both groups. In families of children with special needs, mothers earned 39% less than fathers, while in the comparison group sex gap was approximately 36%. Income transfer data was not available, therefore, this analysis used gross earned income data.

Conclusion: Parents of children with special health needs experience income inequalities with pronounced effects on mothers. These findings help to understand income inequalities linked with caregiving responsibilities among parents of children with special health care needs.

Keywords: caregiving, children with special needs, parental caregiving, Finregistry

Veronika Sofia Corradi-Eiger (Presenting Author)

Unequal Access to Family Safety Nets: Adult Children's Partnership Status and Parental Support in Europe

Authors in order: Veronika Sofia Corradi-Eiger, Masaryk University, Czechia

Abstract

Research on intergenerational support typically treats unpartnered adults as a homogeneous group. Yet partnership history may shape who receives parental support. This research identifies 2 mechanisms that produce unequal access to family safety nets among never-married adults.

First, visibility of need: parents respond to observable life transitions (divorce, widowhood) that signal acute need. Never-married adults face similar pressures, but their need remains invisible, absent a triggering event. Second, partner as gatekeeper: partners facilitate integration into family networks through shared activities and in-law relationships. Without a partner, these access points are missing regardless of partnership history.

These mechanisms generate distinct predictions. Visibility of need predicts that ever-married unpartnered adults receive more financial support than never-married adults. Partner gatekeeping predicts that both unpartnered groups experience reduced emotional closeness with parents.

I test these arguments using SHARE Wave 9 data (N=14,377 parent-child dyads across 16 European countries), employing multilevel logistic regression models. Results support both mechanisms. For financial transfers, ever-married adults receive significantly more support, consistent with visibility of need. For emotional closeness, both unpartnered groups report weaker ties, consistent with partner gatekeeping.

Descriptive analyses reveal transfer regime variation: Nordic regimes compensate both unpartnered groups financially, while Continental regimes compensate only ever-married individuals. Formal tests require larger samples.

These findings demonstrate that private safety nets contain systematic blind spots. Partnership trajectories structure access to both material support and emotional integration, an underexplored dimension of social stratification with implications for family policy and equal opportunity frameworks.

Keywords: Intergenerational Support, Partnership Status, Social Stratification, Transfer Regimes, Life Course

Alisa Jashari (Presenting Author)

Linked lives: Mapping work and family trajectories of intergenerational donors

Authors in order: Alisa Jashari¹, Mirkka Danielsbacka¹, and Elisa Tambellini²

¹ INVEST Research Flagship, University of Turku, Finland

² Population Research Institute, Finland

Abstract

European societies are undergoing significant demographic shifts, characterized by more coexisting generations but fewer members within each. Within this "beanpole family" structure, the family has become a critical source of support. This study investigates how the long-term employment and family formation trajectories of older Europeans shape their patterns of intergenerational transfers of money and time. This study adopts a life-course perspective, utilizing sequence analysis to treat an individual's entire life history as a coherent unit of analysis.

Using longitudinal data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE 2004-2022), the study identifies distinct life-course typologies for over 10,000 individuals to determine which trajectories predict becoming a "frequent donor" in old age. A central focus is placed on the gendered dimension of these patterns, examining whether mothers and fathers follow distinct trajectories and how these paths influence their transfer behavior differently. Furthermore, the article explores cross-country differences in how these life-course patterns manifest across 27 European societies. By linking historical social and occupational status to later-life support, the findings reveal how social stratification in resource transfers is created and reproduced throughout the life course.

Keywords: intergenerational transfers, sequence analysis, employment trajectories, life trajectories, ageing

Novel data and methods II

Rida Zahra (Presenting Author)

Secular changes in screen habits: a 20-year time trend study among Finnish children aged 8

Authors in order: Rida Zahra^{1,2}, Sonja Gilbert^{1,2}, Anne Abio^{1,2}, Terhi Luntamo^{1,2}, Andre Sourander^{1,2,3}

¹ Research Centre for Child Psychiatry, University of Turku, Finland

² INVEST Research Flagship, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

³ University Hospital, Turku, Finland

Abstract

Technology has become a crucial aspect of life in the 21st century. Previous studies have consistently found an increase in children's use of games and computers, and a decrease in their TV usage. However, the measures have differed, with some studies using self-reports obtained from the children, whereas others have used parents' responses. To get a holistic understanding of a child's screen use, it is important to consider both the parent and child's perspective. The current study explores the changes in children's screen time as reported by the child and parent, and the influence of screen time on parent-child interaction.

Using 5 repeated cross-sectional surveys, the prevalence of daily screen time over a period of 20 years (2005-2025) is examined. A sample of 4640 participants aged 8 were obtained from schools in the Turku metropolitan area. The surveys were conducted in the same schools, using the same methods and protocols for each study year. Analysis was done using the weekly frequency of passive (watching) and active (gaming) screen time with similar statements for parents and children. The changes were analyzed using chi-square and cross tabulations with gender, family composition, and parental education as covariates.

Preliminary analysis showed that the daily use of electronic games increased from 19.5% in 2005 to 50.4% in 2025 as reported by the parents and 20.7% in 2005 to 33.9% in 2025 as reported by the children. The frequency for TV usage reported by both parents and children does not vary significantly. Gender differences for electronic games were 54.8% for boys vs. 36.9% for girls according to parents, and 41.5% for boys vs. 24.2% for girls according to the children.

These findings suggest that screen time has become more prevalent and that there is a discrepancy between the parent child reports. As screen habits among children increase, stronger guidelines and emphasis on responsible use are needed.

Keywords: screen time, time trends, children, parental agreement

Anna Zadkova and Tarja Korpilahti-Leino (Presenting Author)

Human component and therapeutic alliance in the Stronger together iCBT intervention

Authors in order: Anna Zadkova¹, Nina Penttinen¹, Helena Kara-Katunpää¹, Johanna Lindholm¹, Tarja Korpilahti-Leino¹, Terja Ristkari¹, Tarja Koffert¹, and Tiia Ståhlberg¹

¹ Research Centre for Child Psychiatry

Abstract

Background: Antenatal depression is a common mental health problem associated with adverse maternal and child outcomes. However, access to evidence-based treatment during pregnancy is limited. Digital mental health interventions offer scalable solutions. Guided digital mental health interventions have shown to be more effective than unguided, and having a human component is associated with lower attrition rates. However, there are concerns regarding the development of therapeutic alliance in technology-based care. Therapeutic alliance, defined as agreement on goals and tasks and the affective bond, strongly predicts treatment outcomes. Phone-assisted personal support may strengthen alliance in digital interventions through empathic and individualized interaction.

Method: Stronger Together is a 7 week iCBT intervention supported by scheduled phone coaching. The human contact reinforces engagement and supports adherence. The Working Alliance Inventory (WAI) is a validated measure for assessing therapeutic alliance in remote and digital treatment settings. Studies indicate that human-supported digital interventions are effective in reducing depressive symptoms during pregnancy. The interactions provided via phone appears to enhance the sense of collaboration and emotional bond, which might be important for pregnant women experiencing emotional vulnerability. In this study we use WAI to assess therapeutic alliance, allowing for systematic examination of how relational factors contribute to treatment effectiveness.

Conclusion: The human component appears to be a significant factor in digital mental health interventions. Pregnant women represent a vulnerable group experiencing substantial changes in body, mind and life in general. Human support is therefore hypothesized to be particularly crucial in this population. The coaches are central to maintaining participant retention and program fidelity, highlighting their importance in successful treatment.

Keywords: digital intervention, iCBT, therapeutic alliance, antenatal depression

Eija Savolainen (Presenting Author)

Economic evaluation of Groups 4 Health intervention for university students' loneliness and depression

Authors in order: Eija Savolainen¹, Elisa Rissanen¹, Silja Martikainen², Jari Lahti^{3,4}, and Johanna Lammintakanen¹

¹ University of Eastern Finland, Department of Health and Social Management, Finland

² University of Helsinki, Department of Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Finland

³ University of Helsinki, Clinical Psychology & Mental Health Intervention Research Group, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Medicine, Finland

⁴ Folkhälsan Research Center, Helsinki, Finland

Abstract

Background: The high prevalence of mental health problems among university students highlights the need for accessible and cost-effective support. Groups 4 Health (G4H) is a social-identity-based group intervention comprising five sessions delivered over a 7-week period. The aim is to enhance students' wellbeing, for example by addressing loneliness.

Objectives: The aim is to examine whether the G4H intervention is cost-effective, from a societal perspective, compared to two active comparator or control group in post-intervention and at 3-month follow-up.

Methods: We conducted a quasi-experimental four parallel-arm non-randomized controlled trial (ClinicalTrials.gov, ID NCT06542029). Participants consisted of students enrolled in G4H (N=81), a group intervention delivered by study psychologists (N=34), or an online course enhancing wellbeing and study skills

(N=112). Students in the control group (N=186) received standard university

well-being support and health services as usual. Firstly, we will conduct a cost-utility analysis using quality-adjusted life-years (QALY) derived from the EuroQol Five-Dimension Five-Level scale (EQ-5D-5L) as the effectiveness outcome.

Secondly, two cost-effectiveness analyses will use the 8-item University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale (ULS-8) and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) as outcome measures. Intervention and service use cost data were collected via questionnaires.

Key findings: Incremental net health benefits with 95% confidence intervals will be reported at the at the May 2026 conference.

Societal implications: The findings will inform decision-making on scalable, cost-effective mental health support in higher education.

The study is funded by Strategic Research Council established within the Research Council of Finland (grant numbers 372317; 372321).

Keywords: Health economics, mental health, psychosocial interventions

Francesco Pompemma (Presenting Author)

A comparison of standard and knowledge-enhanced AI systems in the evaluation of firearm examiner testimony

Authors in order: Francesco Pompemma¹, Pekka Santtila^{2,3}, Eleonora Di Maso⁴, Thomas J. Nyman⁵, Yongjie Sun^{2,6}, Angelo Zappala⁷

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⁶ School of Psychology and Cognitive Science, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

⁷ Psychology, IUSTO - Salesian University Institute Torino Rebaudengo (CRIMELAB), Torino, Italy

Abstract

This study evaluated the decision-making of Large Language Models (LLMs) in interpreting firearm examiner testimony by comparing a standard LLM to one enhanced with forensic science knowledge. We assessed whether LLMs mirrored human decision patterns and if specialised knowledge led to more critical evaluations of forensic claims. We employed a $2 \times 2 \times 7$ between-subjects design with three independent variables: LLM configuration (standard vs. knowledge-enhanced), cross-examination presence (yes vs. no), and conclusion language (seven variations). Each model condition performed 200 repetitions per scenario. This yielded a total of 5,600 measures of binary verdicts, guilt probability ratings, and credibility assessments. LLMs showed low conviction rates (9.4%) across conditions, with logical variations as a function of the way in which the firearm expert's conclusion was formulated. Cross-examination produced lower guilt assessments and scientific credibility ratings. Importantly, knowledge enhanced LLMs demonstrated significantly more conservative evaluations of firearm evidence across all match conditions compared to standard LLMs. We also compared LLMs to human jurors in a previously published study (Garrett et al. 2020).

Keywords: AI, legal decision making, Knowledge-enhanced AI

Parental leaves and household decision making II

Allegra Midgette (Presenting Author)

Task specialization as a driver of household inequality: an experimental investigation

Authors in order: Ning Li¹, Ava Roderick¹, and Allegra J. Midgette¹

¹ Texas A&M University, United States

Abstract

One of the primary forms of social inequality is the gendered division of labor, with women taking the majority of family responsibilities (Jansen et al., 2016; OECD, 2019). However, previous research on this invisible form of inequality primarily relies on self-report measures, leaving the role of real-time mechanisms and negotiations in predicting inequality underexplored. In the present study, a total of 51 young adult male-female stranger- and dating-dyads ($N = 102$, 8 dating dyads, $M_{age} = 19.41$, $SD = 1.74$) were invited to a lab and asked to complete four childcare tasks and three sink-based housework tasks, free to decide how they wanted to divide the tasks. These interactions were video recorded. Two independent coders recorded the time each partner spent per task, as well as their procedural characteristics. The focal procedural characteristics were (1) task choice specialization, defined as whether each partner chose to complete first a childcare or sink task (Coltrane, 2000); and (2) open consultation, defined as asking open-ended questions to provide the partner freedom of choice for task allocation (Riedijk et al., 2023). We found that in 84% of dyads, women chose to do the baby-related task first. Thus, as expected, women were more likely to take initiative to complete one of the baby-related tasks as their first task ($p < .001$, $OR = 28.89$), and spent significantly longer time engaging in childcare tasks than men ($d = 1.34$, $p < .001$). Moreover, partners who began with a childcare task ultimately devoted more total time working than their partners ($d = 0.50$, $p = .003$). Unexpectedly, whether the dyadic partners used an open consultation strategy, or whether they were dating, did not significantly influence their proportional time spent working. Our findings highlight the need to unpack task specialization as a potential mechanism through which task allocation shapes inequality in household labor divisions.

Keywords: housework; childcare; gender; social inequality

Sumia Akter (Presenting Author)

Immigrant Fathers' Parental Leave Uptake in Finland: Responses to Policy Reforms (2003–2013)

Authors in order: Sumia Akter¹, Satu Helske¹, Katrin Schwanitz¹, and Milla Salin^{1,2}

¹ INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, Finland

² Department of Social Research, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

This study examines the evolution of immigrant fathers' parental leave uptake in Finland across multiple parental leave reforms, with a particular focus on the fathers' and their partners' country of origin. The Finnish parental leave system has undergone legislative reforms in 2003, 2007, 2010 and 2013 aiming to promote gender equality and encourage father's involvement in childcare. While these reforms have been studied in relation to native-born fathers, it remains unclear whether they have been equally effective for migrant fathers from couples' perspective. This study utilizes Finnish register data from the year 2003 to 2024, applying descriptive statistics, graphs and random effects panel regression to examine patterns of parental leave usage among immigrant fathers. By distinguishing fathers based on their and their partners' country of origin, we will explore whether cultural background and family composition play a role in shaping their leave-taking behavior. The study will provide insights into whether reforms that promote fathers' participation in childcare are equally effective for all population groups, or whether disparities persist among immigrant fathers. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of immigrant fathers' integration with Finnish family policies. Results will highlight whether these policy changes have successfully encouraged migrant fathers to take parental leave or limit their participation. Understanding how different migrant groups respond to policy changes will help tailor measures that better support fathers' involvement in childcare, ultimately fostering more equitable parental leave practices in Finland.

Keywords: Finnish leave reforms, Immigrants, Country of Origin, Father's leave uptake, Integration

Sanni Kotimäki (Presenting Author)

Parenting leaves of entrepreneur fathers

Authors in order: Sanni Kotimäki¹, Simon N. Chapman¹, Milla Salin¹, and Satu Helske¹

¹ INVEST, University of Turku, Finland

Abstract

Research literature on fathers' parenting leaves has largely overlooked entrepreneurs, despite differences in their employment situations compared to salaried fathers that may lead to differences in leave uptake. Understanding the characteristics of users and non-users of shorter and longer parenting leaves is essential for policy development, and this is particularly the case for groups typically underrepresented in research settings. We use extensive administrative register data from Finland to redress this shortcoming, focusing on entrepreneurial fathers whose first child was born 2009–2017 ($n = 7747$). We first describe the change in the use of parenting leave by entrepreneurial fathers through the 2010s and how it compares to salaried fathers. Following this, we use ordinal regression within a Bayesian framework to examine how factors related to employment and family socioeconomic status explain entrepreneurial fathers' use of leave. We found lower leave uptake for entrepreneurial than salaried fathers across time, but after the 2013 reform, there was a clear increase, probably explained by the reform-related increased flexibility. Entrepreneurial fathers also took shorter leaves than salaried fathers, which may, in part, relate to lower parental allowances. In particular, higher educated fathers and fathers with higher educated or entrepreneur partners had higher probabilities of taking longer leaves. Interestingly, leave-taking amongst entrepreneurial fathers was explained by largely similar factors as to salaried fathers, despite their different nature of work. Underinsuring seems to hamper entrepreneurial fathers' leave uptake, as it negatively affects income replacement level and thus potentially parenting leave decisions.

Keywords: family and work; parental leave; entrepreneurs; fathers

Satu Helske (Presenting Author)

Workplace adaptation to fathers' parental leave: Two-way interactions between fathers and their workplaces

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Abstract

Active father involvement strengthens father-child relationships, improves children's educational attainment, promotes gender equality, and enhances family resilience – contributing, in turn, to broader societal sustainability. Well-designed parental leave policies can support greater father involvement, yet the pace of change toward shared caregiving differs considerably within and between countries. Especially families with fewer economic, cultural, or social resources underutilise paternal entitlements. If mainly high-resource families share care, gender equality may improve on average, but socio-economic inequalities between households may widen. This highlights the importance of analysing changes in gendered caregiving across time and in diverse contexts.

Workplace contexts can constrain or incentivise leave-taking through normative pressures, workplace policies, and concerns over job security or career development. Our study examines reciprocal influences: not only how workplace contexts shape fathers' choices, but also how fathers' leave-taking behaviour can reshape workplace norms. For example, when high-skilled fathers leverage their bargaining power to take leave, their actions may normalise such behaviour among peers and potentially triggering broader organisational change. The aim is to identify local tipping points where shifts in group behaviour and norms occur.

Applying Finnish full-population administrative register data with employer-employee linkages and the feedback-augmented non-homogeneous hidden Markov model, we are able to quantify how previous fathers' leave choices reshape workplace contexts for subsequent fathers. In doing so, we map a dynamic, two-way process of adaptation between fathers and their workplaces.

Keywords: Parental leave, workplace norms, fathers, work and family