

The situation of non-resident fathers in Norway

Frode Thuen

University of Bergen

A survey among some 1800 non-resident parents

- A representative sample from the the National Insurance Administration's electronic database/register of child support (N=658), response rate: 44%
- All members of an organization for non-residents parents (N=1165), response rate: 75%

NAI-sample

- 92% male
- Age: 39 years
- Higher education: 25%
- Been married: 47%
- Been cohabitants: 43%
- Never lived with the other parent: 10%
- Length of time since the breakup: 6 years

Stability of residence status

Have previously been resident parent for the child/children:

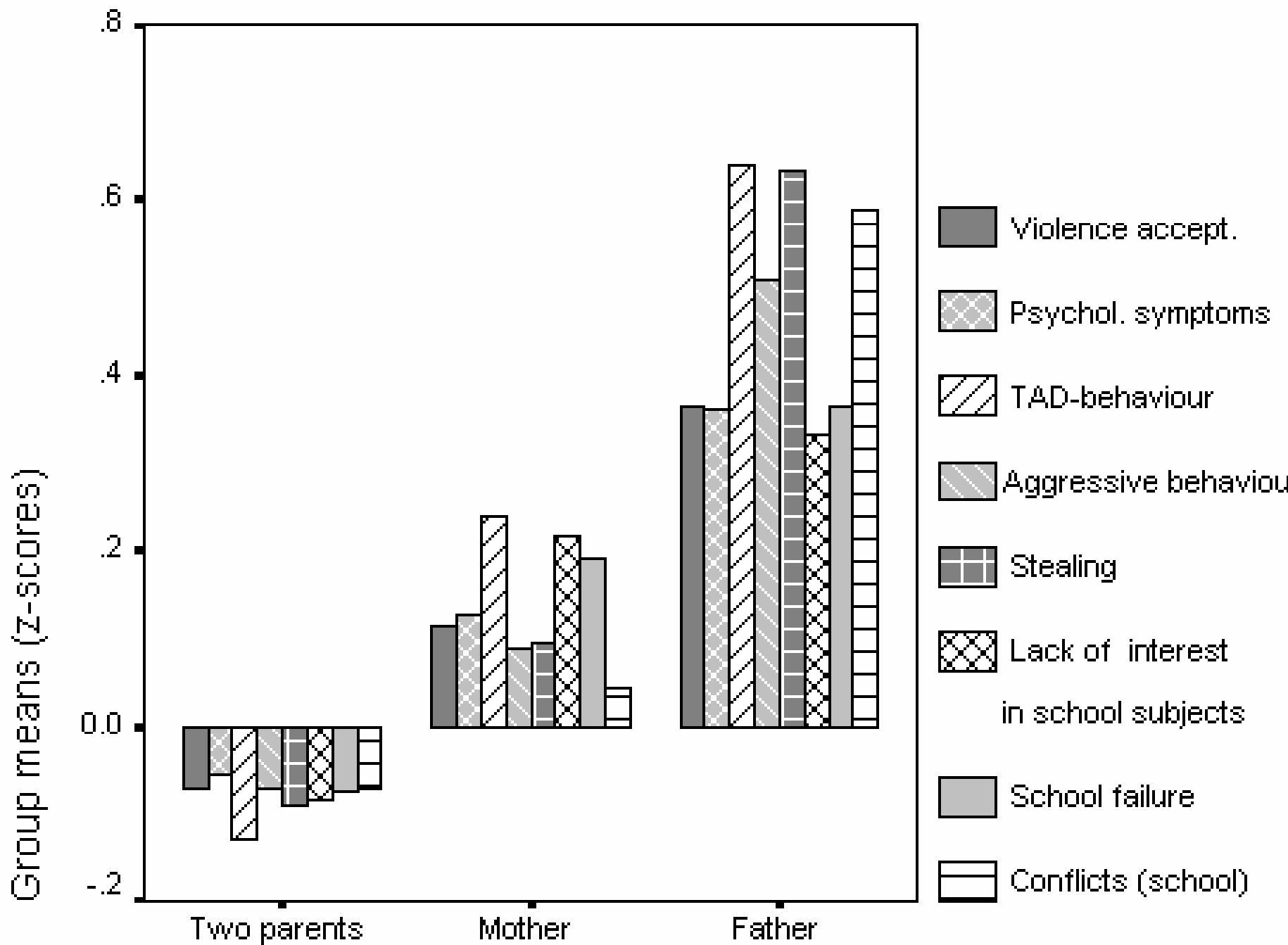
- Male: 6%
- Female: 56%

Highly significant

Age of the (youngest) child

- If non-resident parent is a male: mean = 8.6 yrs
- If non-resident parent is a female: mean = 11.7 yrs

Highly significant



Conflicts about custody issues

56% have had serious conflicts with the other parent after the breakup. No gender difference.

Current conflicts:

	Male	Female
■ Very much	9%	11%
■ Much	5%	6%
■ To some extent:	18%	29%

No significant difference

Consultation with lawyer about custody issues

	Male	Female
■ Never	64%	38%
■ A couple of times	21%	33%
■ Several times	14%	29%

Highly significant

Amount of time with children on a regular basis

	Male	Female
■ Extended	21%	37%
■ Normal	43%	31%
■ Limited	20%	16%
■ Amount of time varies	15%	16%

No significant difference

Amount of time with children during vacations

	Male	Female
■ 5 weeks or more	14%	46%
■ 3-4 weeks	41%	42%
■ About 2 weeks	26%	4%
■ About 1 week	5%	2%
■ Less than 1 week	4%	2%
■ No vacation time	10%	4%

Highly significant

Satisfaction with the amount of time with children

	Male	Female
■ Very much	31%	23%
■ Much	19%	24%
■ To some extent	25%	26%
■ Little	6%	9%
■ Very little	19%	18%

No significant difference

Missing children when not together

	Male	Female
■ Very much	53%	71%
■ Much	28%	19%
■ To som extent	17%	10%
■ Little/very little	2%	

No significant difference

Worrying about children when not together

	Male	Female
■ Very much	31%	40%
■ Much	25%	23%
■ To som extent	28%	17%
■ Little	11%	11%
■ Very little	6%	8%

No significant difference

Visitation and new partner/child

- No relationship between any new partner and visitation
- Decreasing visitation on regular basis, but not during vacations, if any new children/stepchildren
- No gender difference
- Extended visitation: 27% vs. 18%

Psychological problems (Hopkins Symptom Check List-25)

- Male: 28%
(general male population: about 10%)
- Female: 48%
(general female population: about 20%)

Highly significant

Factors associated with psychological problems

- Conflicts
- Limited visitation
- Dissatisfaction with visitation practice
- Longing for the children
- Worries about the children
- Lack of a new partner

Absence from job due to problems related to custody issues

	Male	Female
■ Never	80%	69%
■ Less than 1 week	7%	4%
■ 1 - 4 weeks	6%	8%
■ More than 4 weeks	7%	19%

No significant difference

Absence from job among high-conflict parents

	Male	Female
■ Never	16%	8%
■ Less than 1 week	43%	50%
■ 1 - 4 weeks	15%	13%
■ More than 4 weeks	25%	29%

No significant difference