Faculti Summary
https://faculti.net/mothers-working-during-preschool-years-and-child-skills/

This video video discusses a study investigating the effects of maternal working hours on children's outcomes in Norway. The research focuses on first-time mothers with preschool-age children and examines how increased working hours affect their children as they grow into mid-childhood and teenage years.

The study posits two primary channels:
1. **Time Investment Channel**: As mothers work more hours, they spend less time with their children, potentially leading to negative outcomes. In Norway, children often enter high-quality formal childcare during this time.
2. **Income Channel**: Increased maternal income may provide benefits through improved resources for the child, such as access to better food, educational materials, and neighborhoods with better schools.

The research utilizes extensive population-level data, analyzing variations in maternal hours and income while testing the influence of these factors on child development. The study finds that while there is a negative coefficient associated with the time investment channel, it is not statistically significant, indicating that the time spent with children in Norway is as productive as care provided elsewhere. In contrast, the income channel has a strong positive effect, suggesting that increased maternal earnings can offset any negative impacts from reduced time investment.

Additionally, subgroup analyses indicate that while the time investment effect is stronger in higher-educated households, the income effect consistently compensates across different household types, regardless of education level or gender of the child. The findings suggest that government policies promoting subsidized and high-quality childcare can enable mothers to work more without harming child outcomes.

The study emphasizes the importance of not only subsidizing childcare but ensuring its quality, offering insights for policymakers aiming to support working mothers and benefit children’s development.