



Strengthening Families: The Impact of Couple Intimacy on Parent-Child Relations and Child Development in Pre-Adolescents



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INTRODUCTION

Couple conflict has a deep impact on family well-being, especially the relationship between parents and pre-adolescent children. Research shows that exposure to conflict can decrease warmth from parents and increase behavioral problems in children. The "spillover hypothesis" suggests conflict bleeds into parent-child relationship satisfaction (Kopystynska, 2022). Disconnected relationships can cause emotional stress and adjustment difficulties, leading to negative consequences like distorted reality, irrationality, and low self-esteem (Kosher, 2022). This study aims to investigate the effects of couple intimacy on parent-child relationships and child behavior in pre-adolescents to improve family functioning and outcomes. Understanding these effects can inform and support families facing similar challenges for better outcomes for all.

METHODS

Data will be drawn from the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (SECCYD). The study will use data collected at child aged 4.5 years, Grade 1, and Grade 6 to examine the longitudinal associations

- Interparental intimacy measured by Love and Relationship Part A – PAIR reported by both parents at child age 4.5, generating an average score
- Father's perceived warmth measured by Child-Parent Relationship Scale at Grade 1
- Child's social skills development measured by SSRS reported by parents at Grade 6

RESULTS

The study found significant correlations between couple intimacy, father's warmth, and child social skills

- Mother-reported intimacy positively related to father's perceived warmth with child ($r = .13, p < .01$)
- Father-reported intimacy positively related to father's perceived warmth with child ($r = .28, p < .01$)
- Child social skills positively related to higher mother-reported intimacy ($r = .22, p < .01$), higher father-reported intimacy ($r = .17, p < .01$), and higher father's perceived warmth ($r = .30, p < .01$)

Correlation between Couple Emotional Intimacy, Father-Child Relations, and Social Skills

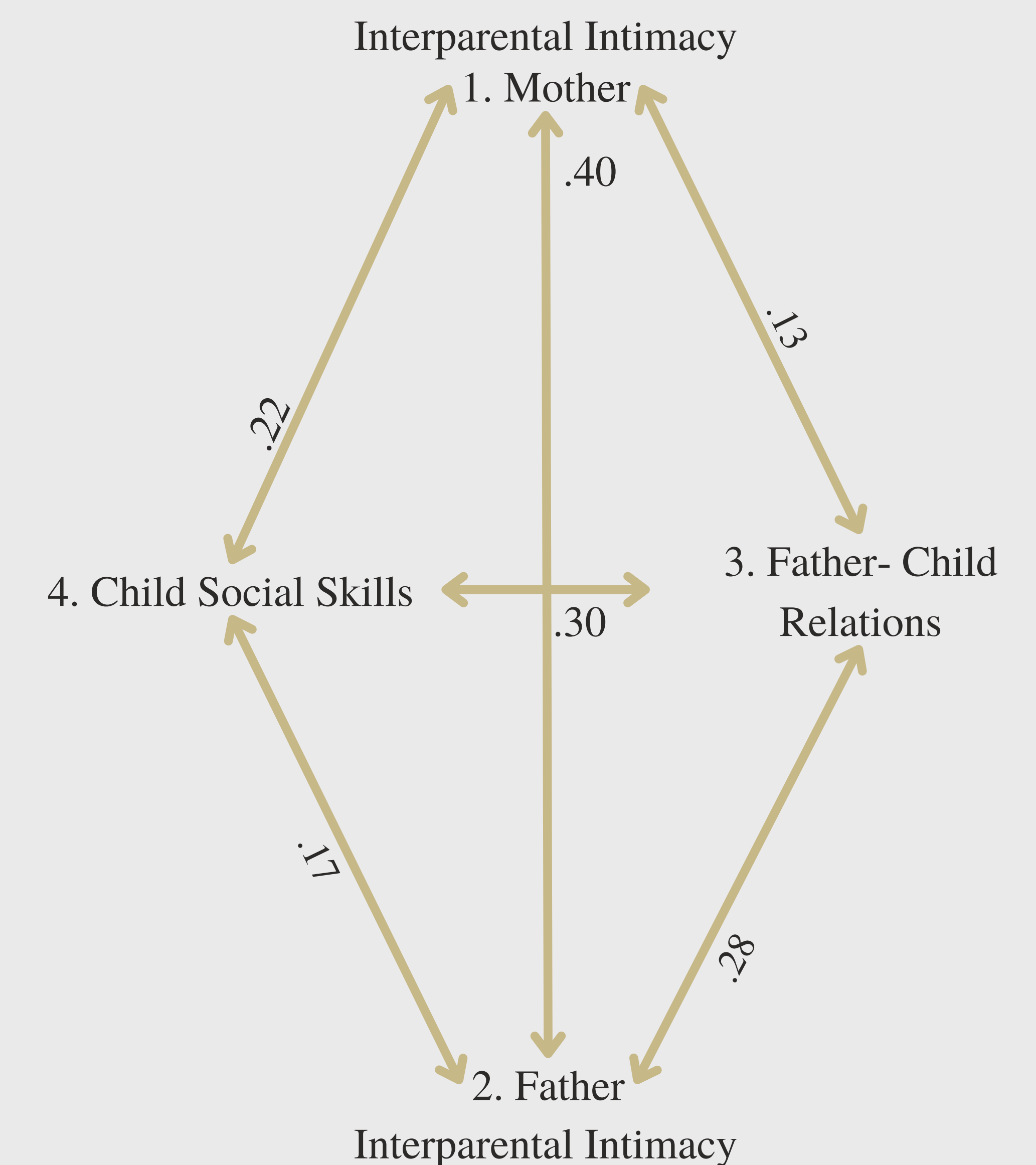
	1	2	3	4
1. CEI (Mo, 54M)	--			
2. CEI (Fa, 54M)	.40**	--		
3. FCR (G1)	.13**	.28**	--	
4. SS (G6)	.22**	.17**	.30**	--
Minimum	-3.16	-3.40	35.00	-3.29
Maximum	1.25	1.26	75.00	2.28
Means	0.00	0.00	64.41	-0.01
SD	1.00	1.00	6.61	0.92
N	880	754	742	936

Note. CEI = Couple emotional intimacy. SS = Social skills development. Mo = Mother. Fa = Father.

DISCUSSION

These findings highlight the importance of strong couple intimacy and positive father-child relationships in promoting positive child development outcomes, particularly in the area of social skills.

Visual Relationship



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