

Coparenting Alliance as a Buffer Between Economic Hardship and Child Development among Families of Color

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Introduction

- Systems of oppression (e.g., racism, discrimination) can be harmful for Hispanic and Black families (Haider & Roque, 2021). Oppression may impact the economic wellbeing of families (Harrell, 2000)
- The burden of economic hardship may disrupt family processes and influence child outcomes (Conger et al., 2002; Haider & Roque, 2021).
- Coparenting alliance can buffer child outcomes (Feinberg, 2003; Feinberg, 2009; Adler-Baeder et al., 2018)
- The current study examines the association between economic hardship and preschool child outcomes (effortful control, empathy, and language development) when moderated by coparenting alliance.

Sample

Table 1. Characteristics of the Sample (N=1,162 parents)

Sociodemographic Descriptives	Percentages	
	Mother	Father
Father (M= 25 yrs., SD= 6.15)		
Mother (M= 23 yrs., SD= 4.66)		
Child Sex	51% (Female)	49%(Male)
Race/Ethnicity		
Black African	41%	43%
Hispanic	9%	7%
Material Hardship (Yes)		
Could not make payment	64%	66%
Turned off service (gas, water)	27%	25%
Evicted	10%	9%
Education		
None	32%	32%
High School Diploma	50%	47%
GED or High School Equivalency	10%	15%
Other	9%	6%
Relationship Status in General		
Married	25%	
Divorced	1%	
Separated	2%	
Never been married to each other	72%	

- Data are from the Building Strong Families study that provided relationship skills education to low-income unmarried couples transitioning to parenthood (Wood et al., 2012).

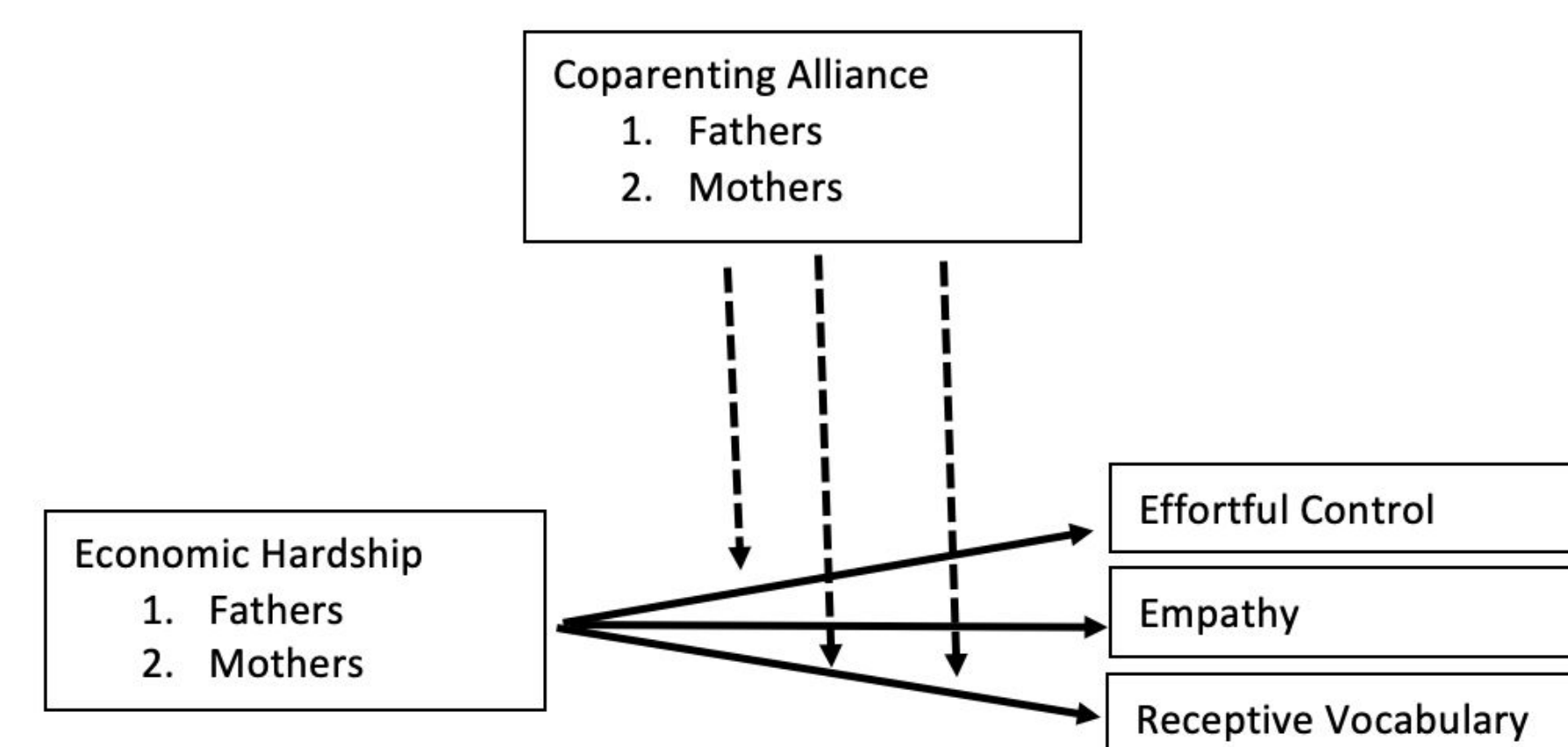
Results

Table 2.
Summary of Linear Regression Results

	Effortful Control			Empathy			Vocabulary		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	2.60	.26	<.001***	3.85	.17	<.001***	100.07	6.10	<.001***
Material Hardship Mother	-.09	.30	.77	-.10	.20	.62	-2.10	7.30	.77
Material Hardship Father	-.07	.48	.88	-.37	.33	.26	-5.32	12.09	.66
Mother Coparenting Alliance	-.02	.03	.55	.00	.02	.92	-.43	.62	.49
Father Coparenting Alliance	.01	.04	.74	.00	.03	.90	-1.55	.93	.09
Mother Parenting	.01	.02	.57	-.11	.01	<.001***	-.76	.53	.15
Father Parenting	.01	.01	.45	-.00	.01	.92	-.88	.47	.07
Mother Age	-.00	.01	.42	-.01	.00	.08	.17	.13	.20
Father Age	-.00	.00	.42	-.00	.00	.24	.04	.10	.71
Child sex	.35	.04	<.001***	.05	.03	.06	1.50	.93	.10
Marital Status	.02	.02	.25	.00	.01	.82	-.58	.38	.13
Mother Education	.01	.03	.62	.03	.02	.09	1.41	.55	<.05*
Father Education	.04	.02	.16	.01	.02	.57	1.77	.57	<.01**
More children at home	.02	.02	.32	-.02	.01	.06	-1.53	.36	<.001***
Race: African American Mother	-.03	.08	.70	.05	.05	.28	1.27	1.73	.46
Race: African American Father	.02	.08	.81	-.04	.05	.38	-1.27	1.78	.47
Race: Hispanic or Latinx Mother	.03	.08	.70	-.03	.05	.63	-1.61	1.89	.40
Race: Hispanic or Latinx Father	.01	.08	.94	-.03	.05	.49	-.84	1.77	.64
Father Live with the child: Most of the time	.0	.02	.63	.01	.01	.47	-.80	.54	.14
Material Hardship M X Mother Alliance	.02	.08	.74	.03	.05	.59	.27	1.77	.88
Material Hardship F X Father Alliance	.02	.11	.83	.08	.07	.29	.85	2.72	.75

Note. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001. T2 = 36 months. Children Reference Group 1=Male, 2= Female. Further information about BSF available upon request.

Methods



Study Hypothesis:

Is the relationship between economic hardship and child outcomes (effortful control, empathy, and receptive vocabulary) accounted for by coparenting alliance?

Conclusions & Implications

- No support for any hypotheses
- Future work may consider parenting measures as moderators.

Study Strengths:

- Considers positive developmental processes reported by mothers and fathers among low-income families of color.
- Child outcomes inform children's awareness of the construction of the "other(s)".

