

THE IMPACT OF CHILD'S INHIBITORY CONTROL ON MARITAL
SATISFACTION AND COPARENTING

by

YASAMAN AHMADI-KASHANI

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Yasaman Ahmadi-Kashani

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Title: The Impact of Child's Inhibitory Control on Marital Satisfaction and Coparenting

A child's ability to cope with emotional and stressful situations relies on the development of inhibitory regulation systems. Research shows that there is a possible association between child characteristics, in particular higher-level executive functioning, and the marital subsystem. Additionally, research has indicated that couples with less marital satisfaction have less supportive coparenting behavior. While some literature has addressed the effects of a child's cognitive functioning on marital satisfaction and the couple's relationship dynamics, less is known about how children's inhibitory control in particular affect the parents' marital relationship in preschool-aged children.

Furthermore, few of these studies have included both parent-reported and observed measures of children's inhibitory control.

The present study examined the relations among child's inhibitory control, marital adjustment, and coparenting. These associations were assessed within a sample of 76 biological mothers who are cohabiting with their partners as well as their 3 to 5-year-old preschool-aged children. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine if observed and reported child inhibitory control predicted maternal reports of marital adjustment. Additionally, the extent to which coparenting mediates the relation between child's inhibitory control and marital satisfaction was investigated. Results indicated that

although there is a significant association between coparenting and child's inhibitory control, there is no association between child's inhibitory control and marital satisfaction. The significance and limitations of these findings are discussed, as well as recommendations for future research.