

Introduction

Background

- Marital conflict is a predictor of marriage outcomes, and has also been shown to have negative impacts on marital partners and their children as well.
- Research shows that how conflict is resolved, or conflict resolution strategies, is a crucial factor in observing impacts of marital conflict on children. Conflict resolution strategies can be positive or negative.
- Emerging adulthood is a developmental period between 18-25, but despite it being a crucial stage in development, little research has been conducted on the continued effects that parents' marital conflict may have on children beyond childhood or adolescence.

Aims

- Investigate the association between parental marital conflict, specific resolution strategy use, and the mental health outcomes of emerging adults.
- Identify the associations between parental reports of marital satisfaction, marital conflict, and strategy use and how these reports relate to emerging adult mental health outcomes.
- Observe discrepancies in the mother-father-child triad reports of marital conflict and parental resolution strategy usage.

Method

Sample

- Surveys collected from 176 Texas Christian University students and 163 of their parents.

Measures

- Student Mental Health Outcomes: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965). The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ; Kroenke et al., 1999). The General Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7; Spitzer et al., 2006).
- Child Perceptions of Conflict: Children's Perceptions of Interparental Conflict scale (CPIC; Grych et al., 1992).
- Parent Report of Conflict: Conflicts and Problem-Solving Scales (CPS; Kerig, 1996).
- Parent Marital Satisfaction: Couple Satisfaction Index-16 (CSI-16; Funk & Rogge, 2007).

Analysis

- Simple linear regressions, mediational analyses, and paired sample t-tests were used to analyze the data.

Results

Linear Regression Results for Child Depression:

- Mother and father report of couple avoidance was positively related to child depression.
- Father report of self-demand/partner withdraw was positively associated with child depression.

Linear Regression Results for Child Anxiety:

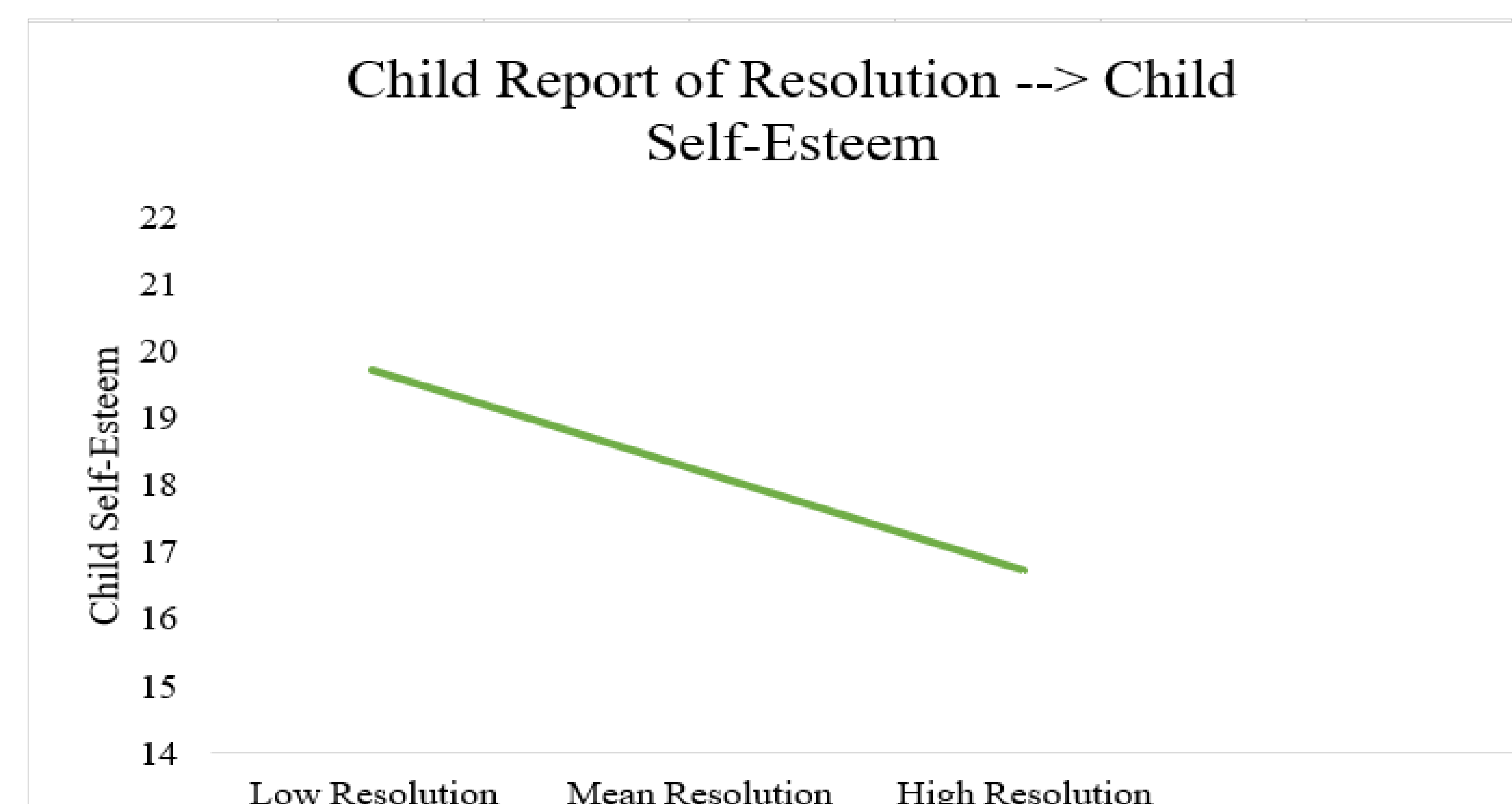
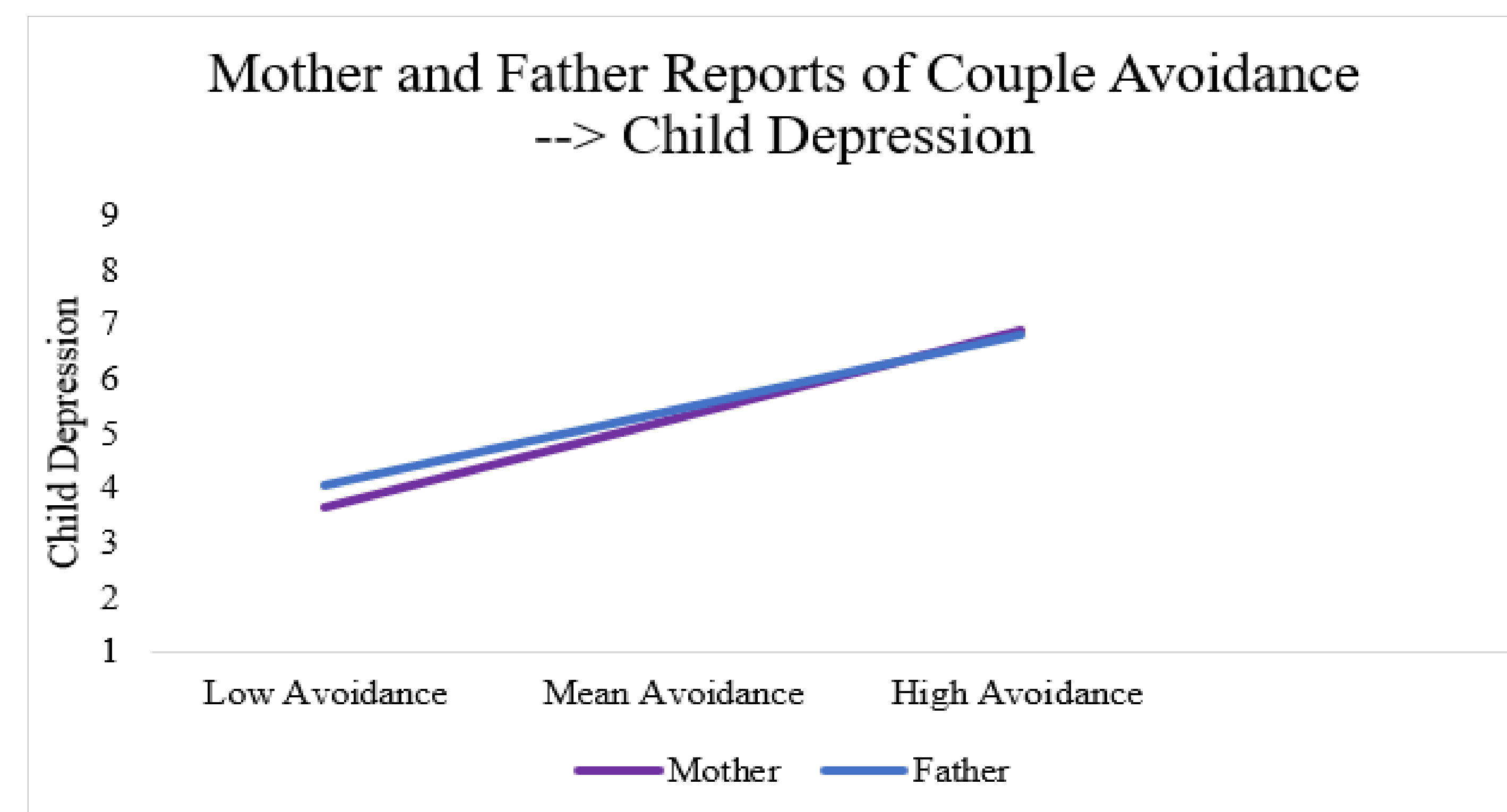
- Mother and father reports of couple avoidance were positively related to child anxiety.
- Father report of couple collaboration was negatively related to child anxiety.

Linear Regression Results for Child Self-Esteem

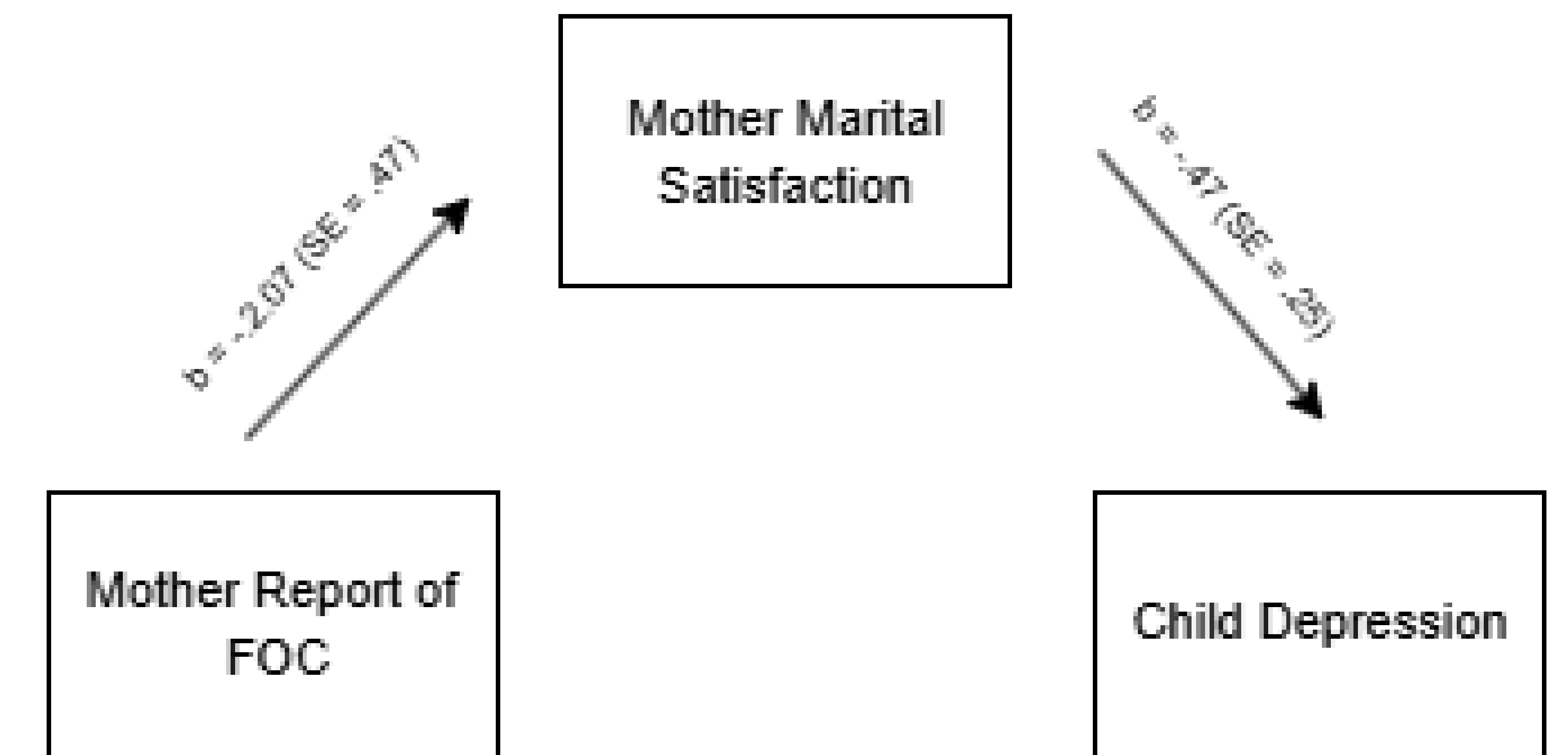
- Child report of resolution was negatively associated with child self-esteem.

Mediation Results for Child Depression

- There was an insignificant effect of mother reports of conflict on child depression (*c* path). Mothers' reports of conflict were negatively associated with their marital satisfaction (*a* path). Marital satisfaction was, in turn, negatively associated with child depression (*b* path).



Mediation of Mother Marital Satisfaction



Discussion

Impacts on Emerging Adult Mental Health

- Poor use of conflict strategies may negatively impact emerging adult mental health.

Marital Satisfaction

- Consistent with past research, frequency of conflict and conflict strategy use influence marital satisfaction in both mothers and fathers.

Discrepancies

- Results did not demonstrate any discrepancies between mother-father-child reports of conflict frequency or conflict strategy use.

Limitations

- The sample is not reflective of the broader population.

Future Directions:

- Examine the impact of other child perceptions of interparental conflict.
- Consider parent-child relationship as a factor.

References

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