

Modeling Coparenting Quality Based on Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Intelligence, Parenting Alliance, and Psychological Flexibility

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study aimed to develop and test a structural model of coparenting quality based on marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility among Canadian parents.

Methods and Materials: This study employed a cross-sectional correlational design using structural equation modeling (SEM). The study population consisted of married or cohabiting parents residing in Canada who had at least one child between the ages of 3 and 16 years. A total of 624 parents were recruited through community organizations, educational institutions, parenting networks, and online platforms using convenience sampling. Data were collected using the Coparenting Relationship Scale (CRS), Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS), Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), Parenting Alliance Measure (PAM), and Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II). Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling were conducted using SPSS 29 and AMOS 29. Model fit was evaluated using χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, GFI, AGFI, RMSEA, and SRMR indices.

Findings: The results revealed significant positive correlations among all study variables. The proposed structural model demonstrated excellent fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.41$, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, GFI = .94, AGFI = .92, RMSEA = .048, SRMR = .041). Structural path analysis indicated that parenting alliance was the strongest predictor of coparenting quality ($\beta = .42$, $p < .001$), followed by marital satisfaction ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$), psychological flexibility ($\beta = .18$, $p < .001$), and emotional intelligence ($\beta = .15$, $p < .001$). Collectively, the predictor variables explained 68% of the variance in coparenting quality ($R^2 = .68$), demonstrating substantial explanatory power.

Conclusion: The findings indicate that coparenting quality is significantly influenced by both relational and psychological factors. Parenting alliance and marital satisfaction emerged as particularly influential determinants, while emotional intelligence and psychological flexibility contributed additional explanatory value.

Keywords: Coparenting Quality, Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Intelligence, Parenting Alliance, Psychological Flexibility

1. Introduction

The family is one of the most influential social systems affecting individual development, psychological well-being, interpersonal functioning, and adaptation across the lifespan. Contemporary family research increasingly recognizes that healthy family functioning depends not only on structural characteristics but also on relational processes that facilitate cooperation, emotional support, adaptability, and resilience in the face of daily and extraordinary challenges. Rapid social, economic, and cultural transformations have altered traditional family roles and responsibilities, making the quality of interactions between parents a central determinant of family adjustment and child development (Kalra et al., 2025; Uditha & Bulathwatta, 2025). Within this context, coparenting quality has emerged as a particularly important construct because it reflects the extent to which parents coordinate, support, and collaborate with one another in raising their children. Effective coparenting contributes to positive family environments, enhances child psychosocial development, and strengthens overall family functioning, whereas poor coparenting is associated with increased family conflict, parental stress, and adverse developmental outcomes (Roberts & Symons, 2023; Xie et al., 2025).

Coparenting quality refers to the ways in which parents work together in their parenting roles, including communication regarding child-rearing decisions, mutual support, consistency in parenting practices, and the management of disagreements related to children. Unlike marital quality, which focuses on the romantic and emotional aspects of the partner relationship, coparenting specifically concerns collaboration around parenting responsibilities. Research consistently demonstrates that successful coparenting serves as a protective factor for both parents and children by fostering emotional security, promoting family stability, and supporting adaptive family functioning (Sabah et al., 2023; Shao et al., 2024). As families face increasing demands associated with economic uncertainty, work-life balance challenges, health crises, and evolving parenting expectations, understanding the factors that contribute to high-quality coparenting has become an important objective in family psychology.

One of the most consistently identified predictors of family functioning is marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction reflects individuals' subjective evaluation of the quality of their intimate relationship and encompasses emotional closeness, communication effectiveness, conflict

resolution, and relationship fulfillment. Family systems theory suggests that relationships within the family are interconnected, meaning that the quality of the marital subsystem influences parenting behaviors and family processes. When couples experience greater satisfaction in their relationship, they are generally more capable of providing mutual support, engaging in constructive communication, and coordinating parenting responsibilities effectively. Conversely, marital dissatisfaction often contributes to conflict spillover, whereby tensions within the couple relationship negatively affect parenting interactions and family functioning (Engström et al., 2025; Uditha & Bulathwatta, 2025). Recent evidence has shown that relationship functioning among parents is closely associated with family adaptation during periods of stress and adversity, highlighting the importance of positive couple relationships in maintaining healthy family systems (Engström et al., 2025; Shen et al., 2025).

Family resilience frameworks further emphasize the significance of strong relational bonds in fostering adaptive functioning. Family resilience refers to the capacity of families to withstand, adapt to, and recover from adversity while maintaining positive functioning and developmental trajectories. Researchers have increasingly recognized that resilient families are characterized by effective communication, emotional connectedness, flexibility, and collaborative problem-solving (Low et al., 2025; Shen et al., 2025). Marital satisfaction contributes directly to these processes by creating a relational environment in which parents can coordinate their efforts and support one another during challenging circumstances. Studies examining family resilience across diverse populations have consistently highlighted the role of relationship quality in facilitating adaptive family outcomes and strengthening family cohesion (Shao et al., 2024; Son & Park, 2025).

Another factor that may substantially influence coparenting quality is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity to perceive, understand, regulate, and effectively utilize emotions in oneself and others. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence are generally better equipped to navigate interpersonal relationships, manage emotional reactions, resolve conflicts constructively, and respond empathically to the needs of family members. Because parenting and coparenting involve continuous emotional interactions and negotiations, emotional intelligence may represent a critical psychological resource for maintaining cooperative parenting relationships (Yousefi et al., 2024; Zhu, 2025). Parents who possess

stronger emotional competencies may be more capable of interpreting their partner's emotional experiences accurately, regulating negative affect during disagreements, and fostering supportive communication patterns that enhance collaboration in child-rearing.

The importance of emotional intelligence has received increasing attention within family and developmental research. Evidence suggests that emotional intelligence contributes positively to family cohesion, relationship quality, resilience, and psychological adjustment. For example, emotional intelligence has been linked to stronger family cohesion and improved relational functioning among married individuals, indicating that emotional competencies play an important role in maintaining healthy family dynamics (Yousefi et al., 2024). Similarly, emotional intelligence has been identified as a protective factor against maladaptive outcomes and has been shown to facilitate adaptive coping and resilience in both adolescents and adults (Brites et al., 2023; Zhu, 2025). Given the emotionally demanding nature of parenting and family life, it is reasonable to expect that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to effective coparenting relationships.

Parenting alliance constitutes another central component of family functioning that may directly influence coparenting quality. Parenting alliance refers to the degree of cooperation, communication, trust, and mutual respect that parents demonstrate in fulfilling their parenting responsibilities. It reflects parents' ability to work together as a team in supporting their children's development and well-being. Although parenting alliance and coparenting quality are conceptually related, parenting alliance specifically emphasizes the collaborative partnership between parents in child-rearing activities. Strong parenting alliances are associated with greater consistency in parenting practices, reduced interparental conflict, and more positive developmental outcomes for children (Sabah et al., 2023; Shao et al., 2024). Parents who perceive themselves as partners in parenting are more likely to engage in supportive interactions, coordinate their parenting efforts, and create stable family environments.

Recent family research underscores the importance of mutuality, communication, and collaborative functioning within family systems. Family mutuality has been found to enhance resilience by promoting positive family functioning and adaptive responses to stressors (Shao et al., 2024). Likewise, family communication has been identified as a mechanism through which resilience translates into improved family functioning, emphasizing the role of

cooperative interactions in maintaining healthy family systems (Sabah et al., 2023). Studies examining family climate and parent-child relationships have similarly demonstrated that supportive family interactions contribute significantly to psychosocial adjustment and developmental outcomes (Xie et al., 2025). These findings suggest that parenting alliance may serve as a foundational element of high-quality coparenting relationships.

Psychological flexibility represents another important psychological resource that may influence coparenting quality. Psychological flexibility refers to the capacity to remain aware of present experiences while adapting behavior in accordance with personal values despite the presence of difficult thoughts, emotions, or circumstances. Individuals with higher psychological flexibility tend to exhibit greater emotional regulation, adaptive coping, resilience, and interpersonal effectiveness. In family contexts, psychological flexibility may enable parents to respond constructively to parenting challenges, tolerate stress more effectively, and engage in cooperative problem-solving with their partners (Brites et al., 2023; Sezgin, 2025). Given that parenting frequently involves uncertainty, emotional demands, and conflicting expectations, psychological flexibility may play a crucial role in sustaining effective coparenting relationships.

The relevance of psychological flexibility can be understood through broader resilience research. Resilience has been conceptualized as a dynamic process involving adaptation and recovery in response to adversity rather than merely a stable personality trait (Georgoulas-Sherry, 2022; Luo et al., 2025). Research consistently demonstrates that adaptive coping, emotional regulation, mindfulness, and psychological flexibility contribute significantly to resilience and psychological well-being (Lie et al., 2023; Sezgin, 2025). Furthermore, studies examining individuals facing significant life stressors have shown that resilient functioning is associated with adaptive emotional and interpersonal processes that facilitate positive adjustment (Goldin et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2023). These findings suggest that psychological flexibility may support coparenting quality by enabling parents to manage challenges collaboratively and maintain constructive interactions despite stress.

The broader literature on family resilience provides additional support for investigating these variables within a unified framework. Family resilience has increasingly been viewed as a multidimensional process involving emotional, relational, social, and contextual resources that help families

adapt successfully to adversity (Low et al., 2025; Shen et al., 2025). Studies involving families confronting health-related challenges, developmental disabilities, migration experiences, economic crises, and psychosocial stressors consistently highlight the importance of relational functioning, communication, emotional resources, and collaborative support systems in maintaining family well-being (Im et al., 2025; Mohammadhosseini & Schmid, 2025; Son & Park, 2025; Sousa et al., 2024). These findings indicate that family adaptation depends not only on external resources but also on the quality of interpersonal relationships within the family.

Research conducted across diverse cultural and contextual settings further reinforces the importance of family-level psychological processes. Family psychological distress has been associated with disruptions in family functioning and relational adjustment (Magantor, 2024). Acculturative stress, trauma exposure, developmental disabilities, chronic illness, and community-level adversities have all been shown to influence family functioning through their effects on emotional regulation, resilience, communication, and interpersonal support systems (Goldin et al., 2022; Kosić et al., 2025; Parrott et al., 2023; Silva et al., 2024). Moreover, adaptive coping and psychosocial functioning are consistently linked to supportive family environments characterized by cooperation, empathy, and effective communication (Restrepo et al., 2023; Ulloque et al., 2023).

Although previous studies have independently examined marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, psychological flexibility, family resilience, and family functioning, relatively few investigations have integrated these variables within a comprehensive model of coparenting quality. Existing evidence suggests that each factor contributes uniquely to family functioning; however, the simultaneous examination of these variables may provide a more complete understanding of the psychological and relational mechanisms underlying effective coparenting. Furthermore, contemporary family systems are increasingly shaped by complex social and economic pressures, making it necessary to identify the factors that promote cooperative parenting and family stability in modern contexts (Kalra et al., 2025; Son & Park, 2025). Understanding these relationships may contribute to the development of family-based interventions designed to strengthen parental collaboration, improve family functioning, and enhance child outcomes.

Therefore, the present study aimed to model coparenting quality based on marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility among Canadian parents.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study employed a cross-sectional correlational design using structural equation modeling (SEM) to investigate the relationships among marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, psychological flexibility, and coparenting quality among Canadian parents. The target population consisted of married or cohabiting parents residing in different provinces of Canada who had at least one child between the ages of 3 and 16 years. Participants were recruited through community parenting organizations, educational institutions, social media parenting groups, and family service centers. A total of 624 parents participated in the study. Eligibility criteria included being at least 18 years of age, living with a spouse or long-term partner, having at least one dependent child, and being able to read and understand English. Individuals experiencing severe psychiatric disorders that could impair their ability to complete self-report questionnaires were excluded from participation.

A multistage convenience sampling strategy was utilized to obtain a diverse sample from urban and suburban regions across Canada. Prior to participation, all respondents received information regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality procedures, voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequences. Informed consent was obtained electronically before data collection commenced. The study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for research involving human participants, including respect for participant autonomy, confidentiality, and data protection. Demographic information collected included age, gender, educational level, employment status, marital duration, number of children, and household income.

2.2. Measures

Coparenting quality was assessed using the Coparenting Relationship Scale (CRS) developed by Feinberg et al. (2012). The CRS is one of the most widely used measures for evaluating the quality of coparenting relationships and consists of 35 items distributed across several dimensions,

including coparenting support, agreement, endorsement of partner parenting, division of labor, exposure to conflict, and family integrity. Participants responded to items using a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicate more positive coparenting quality. Previous studies have demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties for the scale, including strong internal consistency, construct validity, and criterion validity across diverse family populations.

Marital satisfaction was measured using the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) developed by Busby et al. (1995). This instrument contains 14 items assessing relationship consensus, satisfaction, and cohesion between partners. Responses are recorded on Likert-type scales with varying response options depending on the item content. Higher scores reflect greater marital satisfaction and relationship adjustment. The RDAS has been extensively validated in marital and family research and has demonstrated excellent reliability and validity in both clinical and nonclinical samples.

Emotional intelligence was assessed using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) developed by Wong and Law (2002). The instrument consists of 16 items organized into four dimensions: self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. Participants indicate their agreement with each statement using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicate greater emotional intelligence. Numerous studies have reported favorable psychometric characteristics for the WLEIS, including high internal consistency coefficients, factorial validity, and convergent validity across different cultural contexts.

Parenting alliance was measured using the Parenting Alliance Measure (PAM) developed by Abidin and Brunner (1995). The PAM contains 20 items designed to assess the degree of cooperation, communication, mutual respect, and support between parents in raising their children. Responses are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicate a stronger parenting alliance. Previous investigations have consistently supported the reliability and validity of the PAM and have confirmed its usefulness in assessing collaborative parenting processes within families.

Psychological flexibility was evaluated using the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II) developed by Bond et al. (2011). The AAQ-II consists of 7 items measuring psychological flexibility and experiential

avoidance. Participants rate each item on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from never true to always true. After reverse scoring where appropriate, higher scores indicate greater psychological flexibility. The AAQ-II has demonstrated satisfactory reliability, temporal stability, convergent validity, and predictive validity in a wide range of psychological and family-related studies.

All instruments used in the present study have been widely employed in family psychology research and have consistently demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability and validity. Prior to the main analyses, the internal consistency of each scale was examined using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients to ensure adequate reliability within the current sample.

2.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29 and AMOS version 29. Initially, descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis values were calculated for all study variables. Missing data patterns were examined, and cases with excessive missing responses were excluded from analysis. Assumptions of multivariate analysis, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity, were evaluated before testing the proposed model. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine bivariate relationships among the study variables.

Structural equation modeling was employed to test the hypothesized model of coparenting quality based on marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility. Confirmatory factor analyses were first conducted to evaluate the measurement models for the latent constructs. Subsequently, the structural model was estimated using the maximum likelihood estimation method. Model fit was assessed using multiple fit indices, including the chi-square statistic divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Standardized path coefficients were examined to determine the magnitude and significance of direct effects among variables. Statistical significance was established at $p < .05$ for all analyses. The final model was interpreted based on theoretical coherence, parameter estimates, and overall goodness-of-fit indicators.

3. Findings and Results

A total of 624 parents from different provinces of Canada participated in the study. The mean age of participants was 39.84 years (SD = 7.26), ranging from 24 to 58 years. Of the participants, 338 (54.2%) were women and 286 (45.8%) were men. Regarding educational attainment, 112 (17.9%) had completed high school, 178 (28.5%) held a college diploma, 251 (40.2%) possessed a bachelor's degree, and 83

(13.3%) had completed postgraduate education. The average duration of marriage or cohabitation was 12.17 years (SD = 6.45). In terms of family size, 227 (36.4%) had one child, 279 (44.7%) had two children, and 118 (18.9%) had three or more children. Preliminary screening indicated no substantial missing data, and all variables exhibited acceptable levels of skewness and kurtosis, supporting the assumption of normality for subsequent analyses.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5
1. Marital Satisfaction	48.72	8.41	-0.42	-0.31	1				
2. Emotional Intelligence	84.15	11.24	-0.27	-0.18	.56**	1			
3. Parenting Alliance	78.69	10.73	-0.36	-0.24	.69**	.51**	1		
4. Psychological Flexibility	34.91	6.18	-0.21	-0.17	.48**	.58**	.46**	1	
5. Coparenting Quality	132.47	16.92	-0.39	-0.29	.73**	.55**	.77**	.52**	1

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients for the study variables. The results showed that all variables were approximately normally distributed, as skewness and kurtosis values fell within acceptable ranges. Marital satisfaction demonstrated a strong positive correlation with coparenting quality ($r = .73, p < .01$), indicating that parents who reported higher satisfaction in their marital relationships also tended to report more positive coparenting experiences. Parenting alliance exhibited the strongest association with coparenting quality ($r = .77, p < .01$), suggesting that collaborative parenting and mutual support between partners play a central

role in effective coparenting. Emotional intelligence was positively associated with marital satisfaction ($r = .56, p < .01$), parenting alliance ($r = .51, p < .01$), psychological flexibility ($r = .58, p < .01$), and coparenting quality ($r = .55, p < .01$). Psychological flexibility also demonstrated significant positive relationships with all study variables, particularly emotional intelligence ($r = .58, p < .01$) and coparenting quality ($r = .52, p < .01$). The absence of excessively high correlations indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern, supporting the suitability of the variables for structural equation modeling.

Table 2

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for the Measurement Model

Construct	Indicator Loading Range	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Marital Satisfaction	.71 – .88	.91	.64
Emotional Intelligence	.68 – .86	.90	.61
Parenting Alliance	.74 – .91	.93	.69
Psychological Flexibility	.66 – .84	.88	.58
Coparenting Quality	.72 – .89	.94	.67

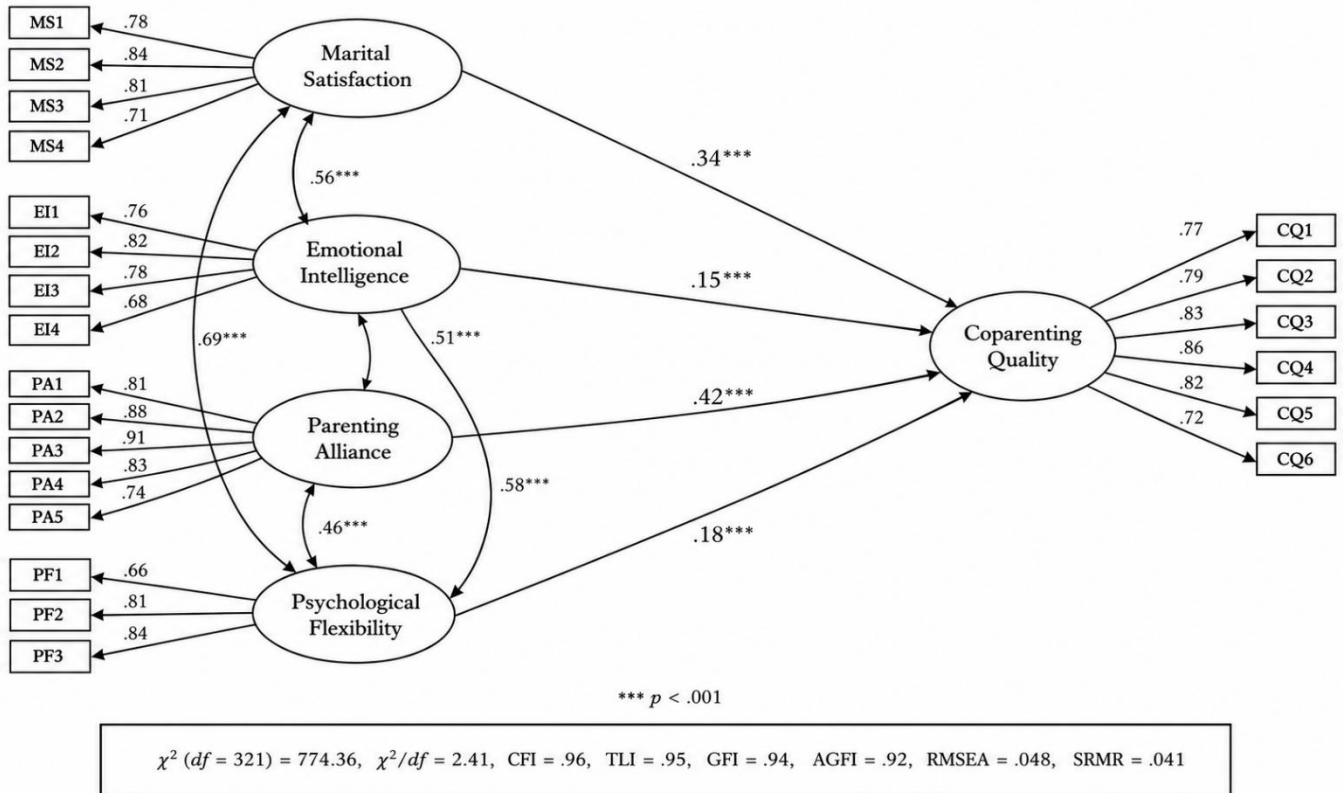
The confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to evaluate the adequacy of the measurement model before testing the structural relationships among variables. As shown in Table 2, all standardized factor loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of .60, ranging from .66 to .91. These results indicate that the observed indicators adequately represented their respective latent constructs. Composite reliability values ranged from .88 to .94,

substantially exceeding the minimum criterion of .70, thereby demonstrating strong internal consistency. Furthermore, average variance extracted values ranged from .58 to .69, exceeding the recommended cutoff value of .50 and confirming satisfactory convergent validity. Collectively, these findings support the reliability and validity of the measurement model and provide evidence that

the latent constructs were measured with sufficient precision for subsequent structural analyses.

Figure 1

Structural Model of Coparenting Quality Based on Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Intelligence, Parenting Alliance, and Psychological Flexibility



The structural model presented in Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationships among the study variables. The model specifies direct paths from marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility to coparenting quality. Standardized path coefficients indicated positive relationships among all constructs, with parenting alliance and marital satisfaction demonstrating the strongest effects on coparenting quality.

The model also accounted for the interrelationships among the predictor variables, reflecting the theoretical assumption that emotional competencies, relationship satisfaction, cooperative parenting processes, and adaptive psychological functioning collectively contribute to successful coparenting. Visual inspection of the model revealed a coherent pattern of relationships consistent with the proposed conceptual framework.

Table 3

Goodness-of-Fit Indices for the Structural Equation Model

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Value
χ^2/df	2.41	< 3.00
CFI	.96	≥ .90
TLI	.95	≥ .90
GFI	.94	≥ .90
AGFI	.92	≥ .90
RMSEA	.048	≤ .08
SRMR	.041	≤ .08

The fit indices reported in Table 3 indicate that the proposed structural model demonstrated excellent fit to the observed data. The chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio ($\chi^2/df = 2.41$) fell well below the recommended threshold of 3.00, indicating acceptable model parsimony. Incremental fit indices were also highly satisfactory, with the Comparative Fit Index (CFI = .96) and Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI = .95) exceeding recommended standards. Similarly, the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI = .94) and Adjusted Goodness-

of-Fit Index (AGFI = .92) indicated strong correspondence between the hypothesized model and the empirical data. Error-based indices further supported model adequacy, as RMSEA (.048) and SRMR (.041) were substantially below their respective cutoff values. Taken together, these results suggest that the theoretical model provides an accurate representation of the relationships among marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, psychological flexibility, and coparenting quality.

Table 4

Direct Effects of Predictor Variables on Coparenting Quality

Predictor Variable	Standardized β	SE	CR	p
Marital Satisfaction → Coparenting Quality	.34	.04	8.12	< .001
Emotional Intelligence → Coparenting Quality	.15	.03	4.37	< .001
Parenting Alliance → Coparenting Quality	.42	.05	9.56	< .001
Psychological Flexibility → Coparenting Quality	.18	.03	5.01	< .001

The structural path analysis demonstrated that all hypothesized predictors exerted significant positive effects on coparenting quality. As shown in Table 4, parenting alliance emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = .42, p < .001$), indicating that cooperative parenting, mutual support, and coordinated child-rearing practices substantially enhance the quality of the coparenting relationship. Marital satisfaction also exerted a strong positive influence on coparenting quality ($\beta = .34, p < .001$), suggesting that parents who experience greater satisfaction and harmony within their intimate relationship are more likely to engage in effective coparenting behaviors. Psychological flexibility significantly predicted coparenting quality ($\beta = .18, p < .001$), indicating that parents who are better able to adapt to challenges and regulate their responses tend to report healthier coparenting interactions. Emotional intelligence likewise demonstrated a significant positive effect ($\beta = .15, p < .001$), highlighting the importance of emotional awareness and regulation in facilitating successful parental collaboration. Collectively, the four predictor variables explained 68% of the variance in coparenting quality ($R^2 = .68$), indicating substantial explanatory power for the proposed model. These findings provide strong empirical support for the hypothesis that marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility are significant determinants of coparenting quality among Canadian parents. The magnitude of the explained variance further suggests that the integrated model captures a considerable proportion of the factors contributing to effective coparenting, underscoring the

interconnected roles of relationship quality, emotional competencies, collaborative parenting processes, and adaptive psychological functioning in family dynamics.

4. Discussion

The present study sought to model coparenting quality based on marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility among Canadian parents. The findings demonstrated that all four predictor variables were positively and significantly associated with coparenting quality. Furthermore, the structural equation model exhibited excellent fit indices, indicating that the proposed conceptual framework adequately explained the relationships among the study variables. Collectively, marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility explained a substantial proportion of the variance in coparenting quality, suggesting that both relational and psychological resources play critical roles in fostering effective parental collaboration. These findings support contemporary family systems perspectives, which emphasize that coparenting emerges from the interaction of interpersonal, emotional, and adaptive processes operating within the family system (McHale & Jenkins, 2023; Tissot & Favez, 2023).

One of the most important findings of the study was the strong positive relationship between marital satisfaction and coparenting quality. Parents who reported higher levels of satisfaction in their marital relationship also demonstrated more effective coparenting relationships. This finding is

highly consistent with family systems theory, which proposes that emotional experiences and interaction patterns within the marital subsystem influence parenting behaviors and family functioning. When couples experience trust, emotional closeness, effective communication, and relationship fulfillment, they are more likely to support one another in parenting roles and engage in cooperative child-rearing practices. Conversely, dissatisfaction within the marital relationship may create emotional strain that undermines parental collaboration and contributes to conflictual coparenting dynamics.

The observed relationship between marital satisfaction and coparenting quality aligns closely with previous empirical findings. The meta-analysis conducted by Ronaghan et al. demonstrated a robust association between marital satisfaction and coparenting quality across diverse family contexts (Ronaghan et al., 2024). Similarly, longitudinal evidence has shown that marital satisfaction predicts future coparenting quality and that improvements in couple functioning often translate into more supportive parenting partnerships (Song et al., 2025). Letot's systematic review further concluded that marital satisfaction contributes significantly to the quality of triadic family interactions involving mothers, fathers, and children, underscoring the interconnectedness of couple and parenting subsystems (Letot, 2026). The present findings therefore reinforce the notion that strengthening couple relationships may be a critical pathway for improving coparenting quality and overall family functioning.

Another important finding was the significant positive contribution of emotional intelligence to coparenting quality. Parents with higher emotional intelligence reported better coparenting relationships, suggesting that emotional competencies facilitate constructive collaboration between partners. Emotional intelligence enables individuals to perceive emotions accurately, regulate emotional reactions effectively, and respond empathically to others. Within parenting contexts, these abilities are especially valuable because parenting decisions often involve emotionally charged situations requiring cooperation, compromise, and mutual understanding. Parents who can regulate frustration, manage disagreements constructively, and recognize their partner's emotional needs may be better equipped to maintain supportive coparenting relationships.

Although relatively few studies have directly examined emotional intelligence as a predictor of coparenting quality, the present findings are consistent with broader relationship and family research. Emotional awareness and emotional

regulation have been linked to healthier couple relationships, enhanced communication, and greater relational adjustment (Song et al., 2025). Research on parenting and family functioning similarly suggests that emotional competencies facilitate adaptive interpersonal interactions and support collaborative family processes (Deschênes et al., 2022; Güre et al., 2024). From a theoretical perspective, emotional intelligence may promote coparenting quality by reducing emotional reactivity during disagreements and increasing parents' ability to engage in perspective-taking and empathic communication. Consequently, emotional intelligence appears to function as a valuable interpersonal resource that supports effective parental teamwork.

The strongest predictor identified in the present study was parenting alliance. Parents who reported stronger parenting alliances demonstrated substantially higher levels of coparenting quality. This finding is not surprising given the conceptual overlap between parenting alliance and coparenting. Parenting alliance reflects the extent to which parents view themselves as collaborative partners who share responsibility for child-rearing and support one another's parenting efforts. Effective parenting alliances are characterized by trust, mutual respect, coordinated decision-making, and shared commitment to children's well-being. Such characteristics naturally contribute to positive coparenting relationships.

The prominent role of parenting alliance observed in this study is consistent with a growing body of literature emphasizing the importance of cooperative parenting partnerships. Baumann et al. found that parental alliance plays a crucial role in maintaining relationship satisfaction and family adjustment, particularly among couples who have experienced adversity (Baumann et al., 2025). Similarly, Rassart demonstrated that self-capacities and interpersonal resources contribute significantly to parenting alliance, which in turn influences family functioning and relational outcomes (Rassart, 2026). Research involving postpartum couples has also highlighted the importance of parenting alliance in promoting adaptive family functioning and reducing relational difficulties (Rassart et al., 2024). These findings collectively suggest that parenting alliance may serve as a central mechanism through which relational and psychological strengths are translated into effective coparenting practices.

The positive association between psychological flexibility and coparenting quality represents another important contribution of the present study. Psychological flexibility refers to the ability to adapt effectively to

changing circumstances, tolerate difficult emotions, and act in accordance with personal values despite challenges. Parenting is inherently demanding and often requires individuals to navigate uncertainty, competing priorities, and emotional stress. Parents who possess greater psychological flexibility may therefore be better equipped to manage parenting challenges while maintaining constructive interactions with their partners.

The significance of psychological flexibility can be understood through resilience and adaptation frameworks. Family resilience theories emphasize that adaptive family functioning depends on the ability of family members to adjust to changing circumstances and respond effectively to stressors. Psychological flexibility facilitates these adaptive processes by promoting emotional regulation, openness to alternative perspectives, and constructive problem-solving. Evidence from mindfulness-based and resilience-oriented research supports the role of adaptive self-regulation capacities in strengthening family relationships and parenting outcomes (Rassart et al., 2024; Song et al., 2025). Furthermore, intervention studies targeting family resilience and coparenting have demonstrated that increasing adaptive coping skills contributes to improvements in parental collaboration and family functioning (Ragni et al., 2024; Schmidt et al., 2025). The present findings suggest that psychological flexibility constitutes an important psychological resource that enhances parents' capacity to engage in supportive and cooperative coparenting.

The substantial variance explained by the proposed model further highlights the importance of integrating relational and psychological perspectives in understanding coparenting quality. Previous research has often focused on isolated predictors of coparenting, such as marital satisfaction or parenting alliance. The present findings suggest that coparenting quality emerges from the combined influence of relationship functioning, emotional competencies, collaborative parenting processes, and adaptive psychological capacities. This integrated perspective aligns with family systems theory, which conceptualizes family functioning as the product of dynamic interactions among multiple subsystems rather than isolated individual characteristics (McHale & Jenkins, 2023; Tissot & Favez, 2023).

The findings also have implications for understanding child development and family adjustment. Previous research has demonstrated that effective coparenting contributes to positive child outcomes, including improved emotional regulation, reduced behavioral difficulties, and stronger

social competence (Jacobvitz et al., 2022; Ji et al., 2023). High-quality coparenting has additionally been associated with healthier family interactions, reduced conflict, and greater family stability (Lindstedt et al., 2024; Romet et al., 2025). Therefore, the factors identified in the present study may indirectly influence child well-being by enhancing parental collaboration and strengthening the family environment.

Another noteworthy implication concerns the applicability of the findings across diverse family contexts. Contemporary families encounter numerous stressors, including economic uncertainty, work-family conflict, mental health challenges, and changing social expectations. Research involving military families, divorced families, and high-conflict family systems demonstrates that effective coparenting functions as a protective factor that promotes resilience and adaptation under adverse conditions (Allen et al., 2023; Northey et al., 2025). The present findings suggest that strengthening marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility may help families maintain effective coparenting relationships even when confronted with significant challenges.

The study also supports the growing emphasis on coparenting-focused interventions. Recent intervention programs have shown promising effects in improving coparenting relationships by enhancing communication, cooperation, and relationship quality among parents (Demy et al., 2025; Ragni et al., 2024). The current results suggest that interventions may be particularly effective when they simultaneously target relationship satisfaction, emotional competencies, collaborative parenting processes, and adaptive psychological functioning. Such comprehensive approaches may yield broader benefits for family relationships and child development than interventions focused on a single domain.

5. Conclusion

Taken together, the findings indicate that coparenting quality is influenced by a complex interplay of relational and psychological factors. Marital satisfaction provides the relational foundation for cooperation, emotional intelligence facilitates empathic communication and emotional regulation, parenting alliance strengthens collaborative parenting efforts, and psychological flexibility enables adaptive responses to parenting challenges. The integration of these factors within a single explanatory model offers a

comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying effective coparenting and contributes to the expanding literature on family functioning and parental collaboration.

6. Suggestions and Limitations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the cross-sectional design prevents conclusions regarding causal relationships among the study variables. Although the proposed model demonstrated strong explanatory power, longitudinal research is necessary to establish temporal and causal pathways. Second, all data were collected through self-report measures, raising the possibility of common method variance and social desirability bias. Third, the sample consisted exclusively of Canadian parents, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Fourth, potentially influential variables such as socioeconomic status, parenting stress, child temperament, and mental health status were not included in the model. Finally, the study relied on individual perceptions rather than observational assessments of family interactions, which may not fully capture the complexity of coparenting dynamics.

Future studies should employ longitudinal and prospective research designs to examine how marital satisfaction, emotional intelligence, parenting alliance, and psychological flexibility influence coparenting quality over time. Researchers may also investigate potential mediating and moderating mechanisms that explain the relationships among these variables. Expanding the model to include parenting stress, family resilience, attachment styles, mental health indicators, and child characteristics could provide a more comprehensive understanding of coparenting processes. Cross-cultural investigations would be valuable for determining whether the observed relationships are consistent across different societies and family structures. Additionally, future research should incorporate observational methods and multi-informant assessments to complement self-report data and enhance methodological rigor.

The findings suggest that family counselors, psychologists, social workers, and parenting educators should consider coparenting quality as a multidimensional construct influenced by both relational and psychological factors. Interventions designed to strengthen marital satisfaction, improve emotional awareness and regulation, enhance parenting alliance, and increase psychological flexibility may contribute to healthier coparenting

relationships. Parent education programs should emphasize collaborative problem-solving, constructive communication, and mutual support in parenting roles. Mental health professionals working with couples and families may benefit from incorporating coparenting-focused strategies into therapeutic interventions. Furthermore, community-based family support services can play an important role in promoting parental cooperation and strengthening family resilience through preventive and educational initiatives.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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