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The Link Between Intellectual Disability and Juvenile Delinquency

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The Link Between Intellectual Disability and Juvenile Delinquency

Sociology 3053 Research Methods

By: Scarlet Bates

Abstract

The correlation between intellectual disability and juvenile delinquency is striking. Across the globe we see a higher number of offenders with an intellectual disability. Youths with intellectual disabilities may be more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Early identification and intervention for intellectual disabilities, along with support for social and emotional development, could be crucial in reducing the likelihood of juvenile delinquency.

Hypothesis

Youths with intellectual disability are more likely to be involved with juvenile delinquency for a number of reasons. These reasons include: academic achievement, social isolation, and struggles with self control and communication.

Methods

For my research I had to use secondary data. I conducted a systematic literature review. I spent time reading various articles on intellectual disability and juvenile delinquency. I looked at trends, causes, outcomes, experiment, and data. Next, I compared articles. I look at what research lined up and what research was not consistent. Lastly, after reviewing the articles and various data I concluded my findings and decided whether my hypothesis was correct or not.

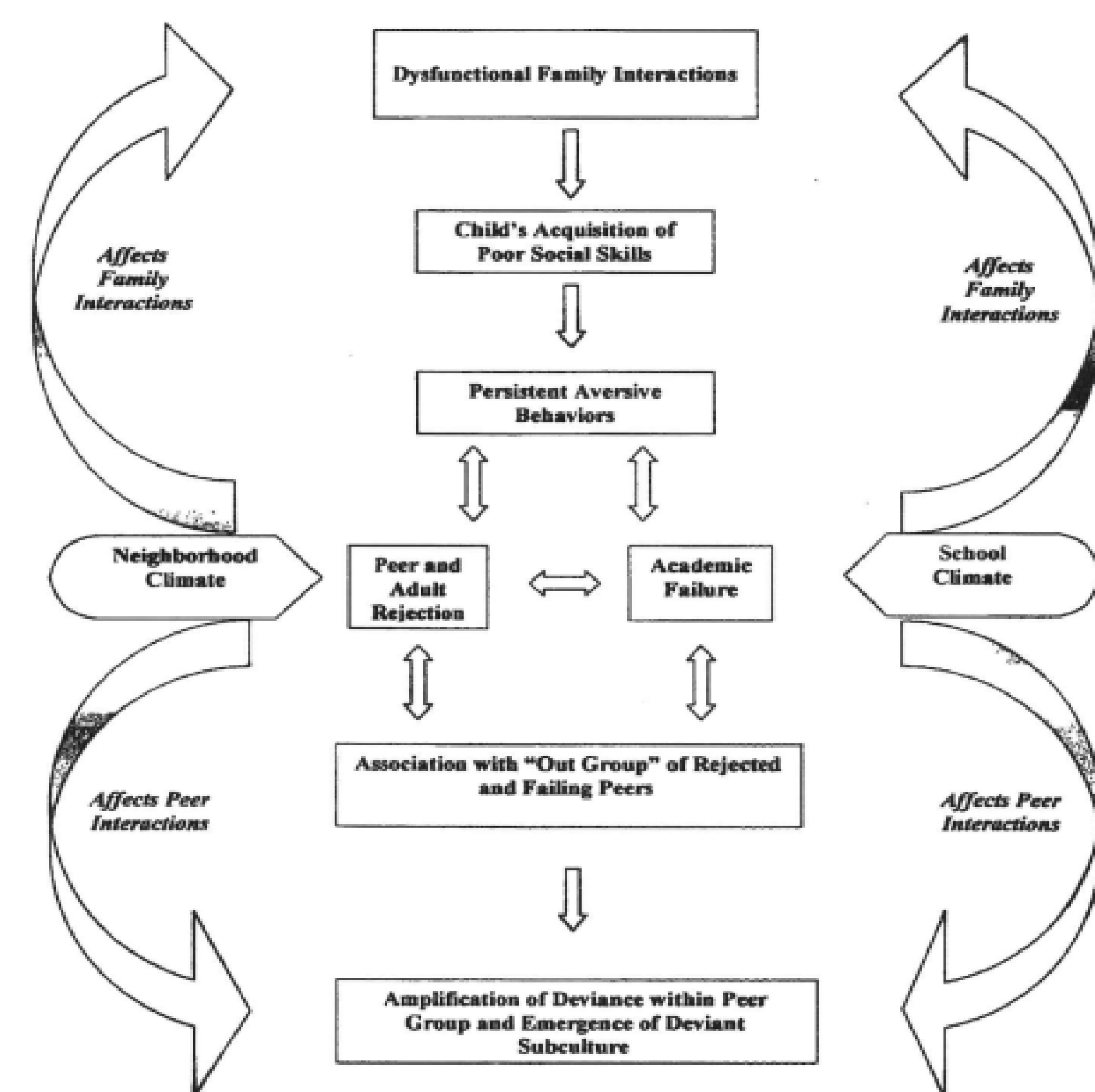


FIGURE 1. Early-onset antisocial behavior: developmental pathway.

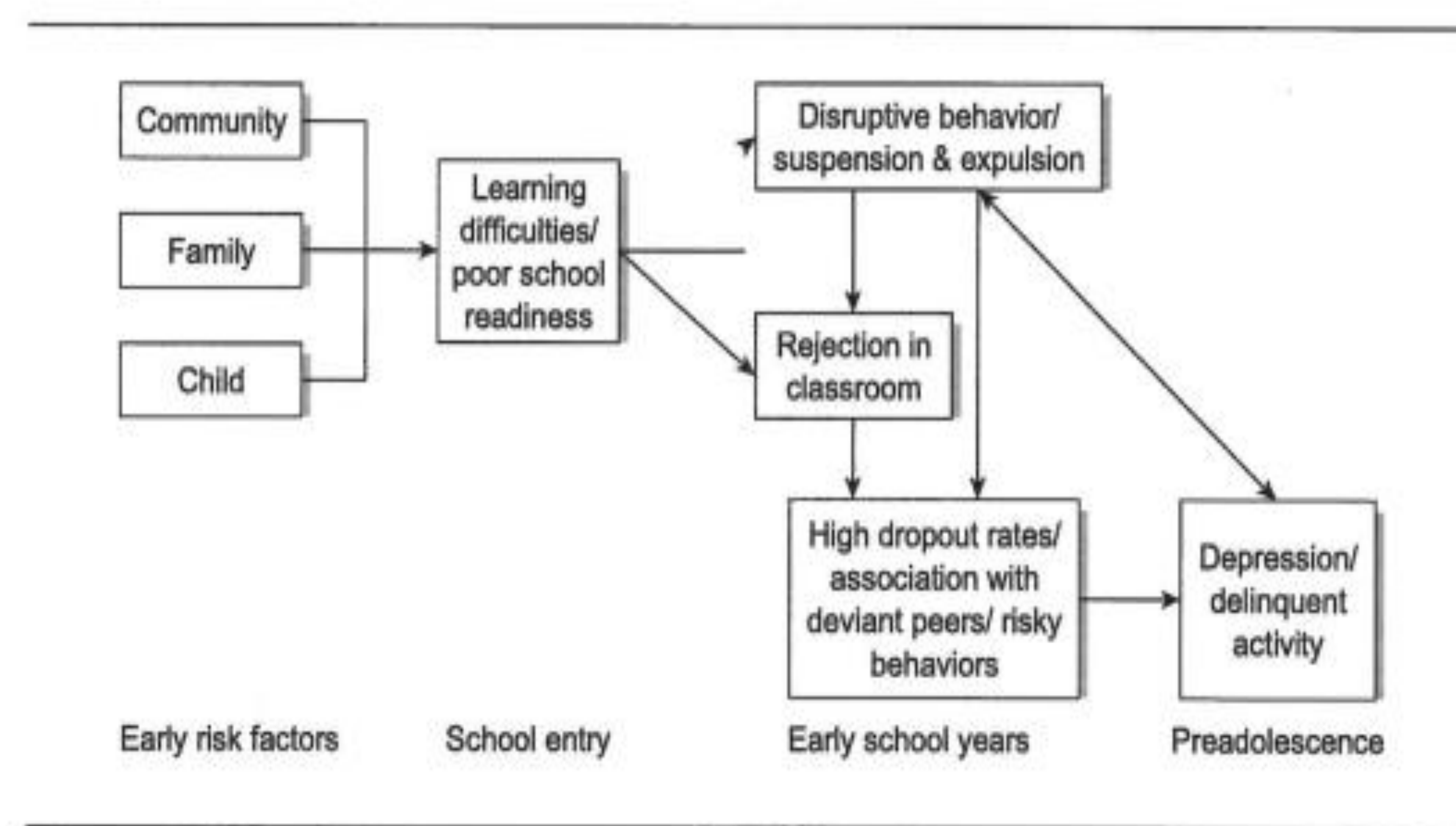


Figure 1. Pathways to delinquency for youth with learning disorders.

Results

In my research I found that there is a higher percentage of juveniles in correction centers that have some form of an intellectual disability. Studies did show that symptoms of learning disabilities such as disruptive behaviors, rejection in the classroom, and low self esteem can lead to higher rates for dropping out. Correlates between juvenile delinquency and intellectual disability differ in ways. However there are also ways the two overlap. These include: Academic frustration, misinterpreted behaviors (this can be self control deficits that may be misconstrued as intentional), and social alienation, which can make it harder to connect with others, leading to risk of seeking acceptance of less desirable group.

Conclusion

Youths with intellectual disabilities are a diverse population, meaning that experiences and risk factors may vary greatly. The high use of incarceration as a way to control adolescents with behavioral problems that stem from intellectual disabilities indicates a disconnect between our society and struggling youth. The key is early intervention. Studies show that if we can help youth struggling with intellectual disabilities, then we can lower the risk of delinquent behavior or behaviors that will lead them to correctional centers.

References

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Author links open overlay panel Dalun Zhang a, a, b, Abstract Youth with disabilities are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system and tend to be repeat offenders. Current intervention strategies have produced differential effects between those with and without disabilities. Yet, Farrington, D. P., Alltucker, K. W., Archwamety, T., Barrett, D. E., Brewster, D. R., Bronfenbrenner, U., Bullis, M., Carney, M. M., Cohen, M. A., Cottle, C. C., Dodge, K. A., Drakeford, W., Farrington, D., Gavazzi, S. M., Hoeve, M., & Katsiyannis, A. (2010, September 23). Juvenile offenders with and without disabilities: Risks and patterns of recidivism. Learning and Individual Differences. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S104160801000111?via%3Dihub>