
CHILDCARE ATTENDANCE AND CHILDREN'S EXTERNALIZING AND INTERNALIZING BEHAVIORS: EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FOR ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

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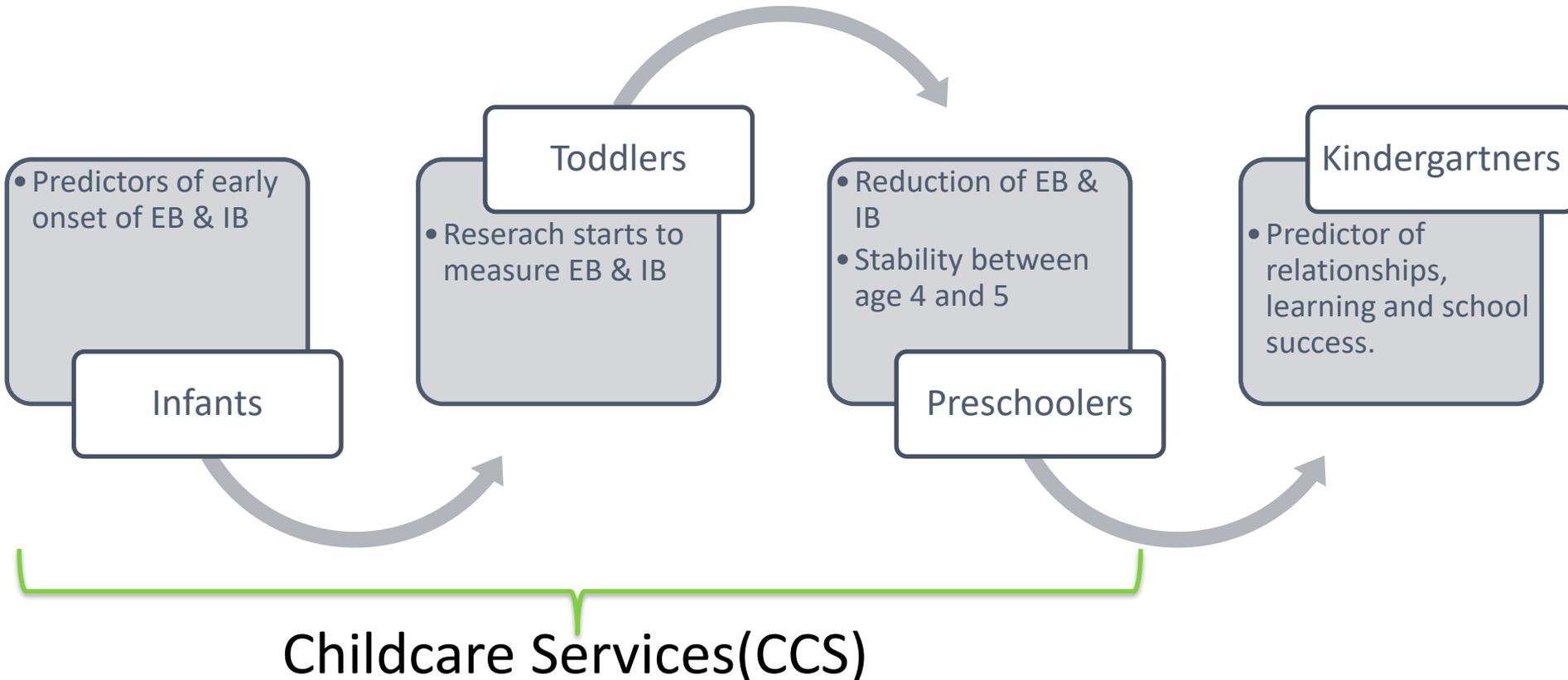
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January 2014

12th Hawaii International Conference on Education

In educational context....

- Appropriate behaviors = adaptation;
- Externalizing behaviors (EB) & internalizing behaviors (IB) = interfere with relationships, learning, school success.



Research questions

- What is the relationship between childcare attendance from infancy and EB and IB during early childhood?
- What factors influence this relationship?

Theoretical framework

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Lemay & Bigras, 2012; Mashburn & Pianta, 2010)

- 1) Attending childcare, or not, depends on certain family variables;
- 2) Childcare process quality has the most direct influence on children's development.
- 3) The influence of process quality is modulated by a child's personal characteristics;
- 4) Contextual variables can modulate the level of process quality and/or the effect process quality on individual children;
- 5) The amount of exposure to childcare can also modulate the level of process quality and/or the effect of process quality on individual children;
- 6) Multidimensional process quality construct should take into account local specificities and be measure accordingly .

Data base

Young children and their living environment project

- Longitudinal study:
 - 188 children
 - 3 types of care (Centers, family-based childcare, and home with parents)
 - 10, 15, 18, 24, 36 & 48 months-old
- Measured several aspects of children's development and explored factors influencing their developmental trajectories



1st study – Infancy to preschool years

Context

- Several studies have examined the relationship between CCS attendance and EB and IB.
- They yielded mixed results.

Objective

- Compare, in toddlerhood and then during the preschool years, EB and IB of children from middle-high and low SES backgrounds who attended CCS from infancy with children remaining under parental care.

Method

- **66 children:** 44 in childcare (6 low SES) and 22 at home (7 low SES)
- **Measures :**
- 10 months: Questionnaires = type of care and SES
- 24 and 48 months: EB & IB with the CBCL
- **Analyses:** 2X2X2 mixed-design ANOVAs

Results

- Relationship between CCS attendance and EB and IB is modulated by **family socioeconomic characteristics.**
 - ≠ middle-high SES backgrounds.
 - = low SES backgrounds.

2nd study – Infancy & toddlerhood

Context

- Each child experiences the CCS differently.
- Boys and temperamentally difficult children more sensitive to low-quality CCS.
- Quality have been measured has a one-dimensional concept.

Objective

- Explored whether specific features of process quality interact with a child's gender and temperament in infancy, to explain EB and IB in toddlerhood

Method

- **80 children:** 41 boys, 39 girls;
- **Measures :**
- 18 months - Questionnaires = gender and temperament. Observations = 4 dimensions of process quality
- 24 months - EB & IB with the CBCL
- **Analyses:** 4 hierarchical regression analyses

Results

- Relationship between the **quality of the educator's interactions** with children and children's **EB** moderated by child gender and temperament.
- **Quality of the programming** predicted **IB**.

3rd study – toddlerhood & preschool years

Context

- The need to study quantity, type, and structural quality of care.
- Many research assumed a direct relationship.
- Ecological system theory :
 - Mediator?
 - Moderator?

Objective

- Examine how quantity, type, and quality of care experienced in toddlerhood interacted in predicting EB and IB of preschool age children attending childcare from infancy.

Method

- **70 children:** 45 in Centers; 25 in family-based CCS
- **Measures :**
- 24 months - Questionnaires = quantity, type, structural quality
Observations = 9 dimensions process quality;
- 36 months - EB & IB with CBCL.
- **Analyses:** 8 hierarchical regression analyses

Results

- Direct effect of **quality of observation** practices .
- ≠ support to the mediation models.
- Moderating effect of **quantity and type** of CCS on children's EB and IB.
- ≠ moderating effects of structural quality.

Synthesis

Relationship between childcare attendance and EB and IB :

- Children aged 24, 36 and 48 months old who attended CCS generally exhibited EB and IB within the normal range.

Factors modulating this relationship:

- **Trajectories between 24 and 48 months old:**
 - Family socioeconomic background X CCS attendance
- **At 24 months old:**
 - Quality of the programming → direct effect on IB of all children
 - Quality of the educator-child interactions → EB of girls and temperamentally difficult children
- **At 36 months old:**
 - Quality of observation practices → direct effect on EB & IB of all children
 - Quantity X Type moderate the influence of process quality on EB & IB

Relevancy

- Contribute to the literature → CCS attendance ≠ more EB and IB in children
- Contributes to filling the gap → dimensions of process quality = less EB and IB
- **Originality:**
 - 1) Articulating process quality as a multidimensional concept;
 - 2) Stressing the pertinence of using instrument that are ecologically valid within the context in which process quality is measured;
 - 3) Providing empirical support for most of the propositions formulated to operationalize the ecological perspective.

Conclusion

Limitations

- Attrition
- Quantitative nature of the research

Implications

- Qualitative or mixed methods should be used;
- Quality measurement tools aligned with the curriculum in place;
- Propositions formulated from an ecological perspective;
- Quality of educator's observations practices should be targeted.

Aknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Canadian Council on Learning, and the Université du Québec à Montréal for financing this study.

Also, our warmest gratitude goes to the children, families, child care educators who invested their valuable time by participating in the study, as well as to the research professionals and assistants who gathered the data.

We would like to thank a valuable colleague, Joanne Lehrer, who provided helpful feedback on this presentation.

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