



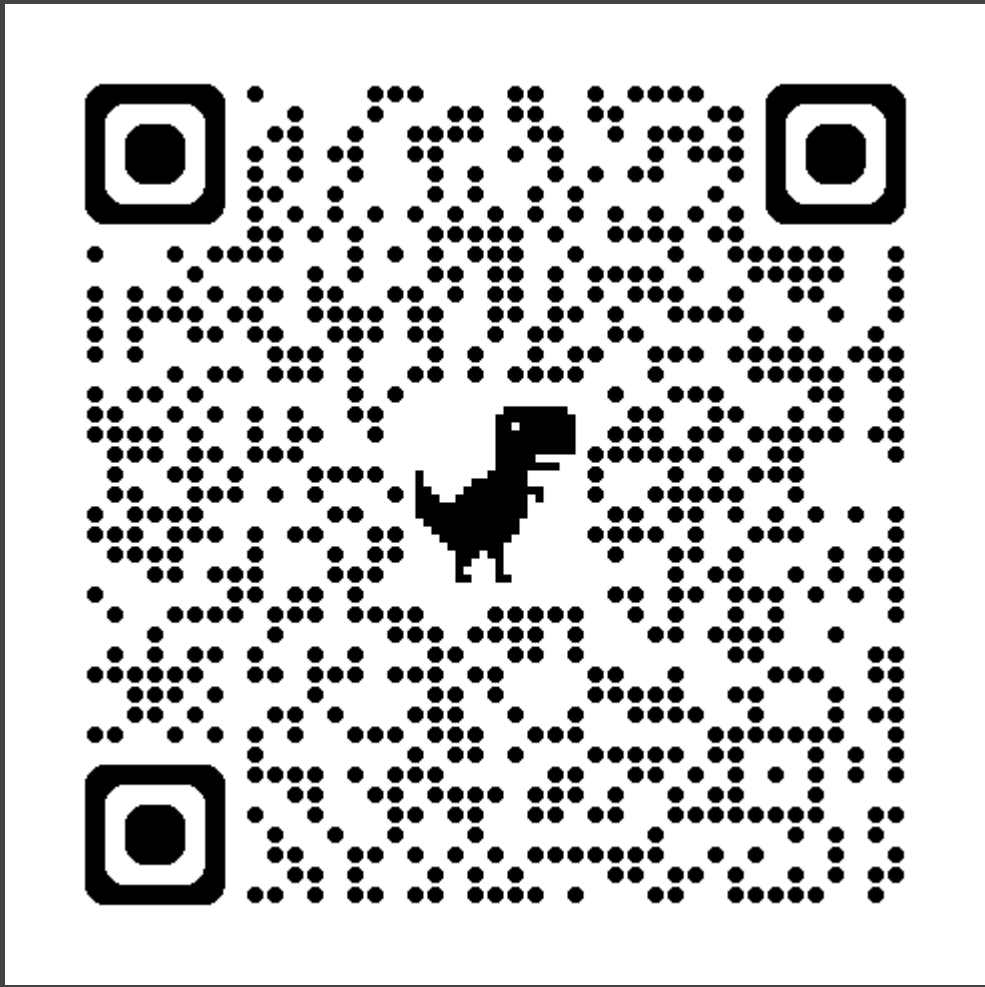
Factors that Lead to the Identification of Autism in a School-Based Sample

Diane Keister
&
Judy Reaven

University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

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Aim: Identify characteristics that relate to students being identified as autistic in an educational setting

Introduction

- Autism can be difficult to identify in both medical and educational settings
- Certain characteristics could influence the identification of autism such as:
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Severity of autistic characteristics
 - Internalizing concerns
 - Externalizing concerns
- These characteristics could lead to systemic difficulties in identification, missed diagnoses, or misdiagnoses
- **Hypothesis:** Children with lower socioeconomic status, minoritized racial and ethnic background, lower levels of autism characteristics, and higher levels of externalizing and internalizing concerns would be less likely to have formal autism identifications

Sample

- Average age was 10.30 years old
- About 70% were previously identified as autistic,
- About 75% were male, 24% were female, 1% were another gender
- Approximately 60% were Caucasian, 14% were Black, 6% were Asian, 3% were American Indian, 12% were mixed race
- About 18% identified as Hispanic or Latino

Results

- Racial and ethnic background, household income, gender, and parent education were not associated with likelihood of having an established autism diagnosis
 - $p = 0.30 - 0.57$
- Children with an established autism identification were more likely to have higher levels of reported autistic characteristics
 - $F(1, 144) = 4.26, p = 0.04$
- Youth without an autism identification were more likely to have higher parent reports of prosocial skills
 - $F(1, 143) = 13.04, p < 0.001$

Methods

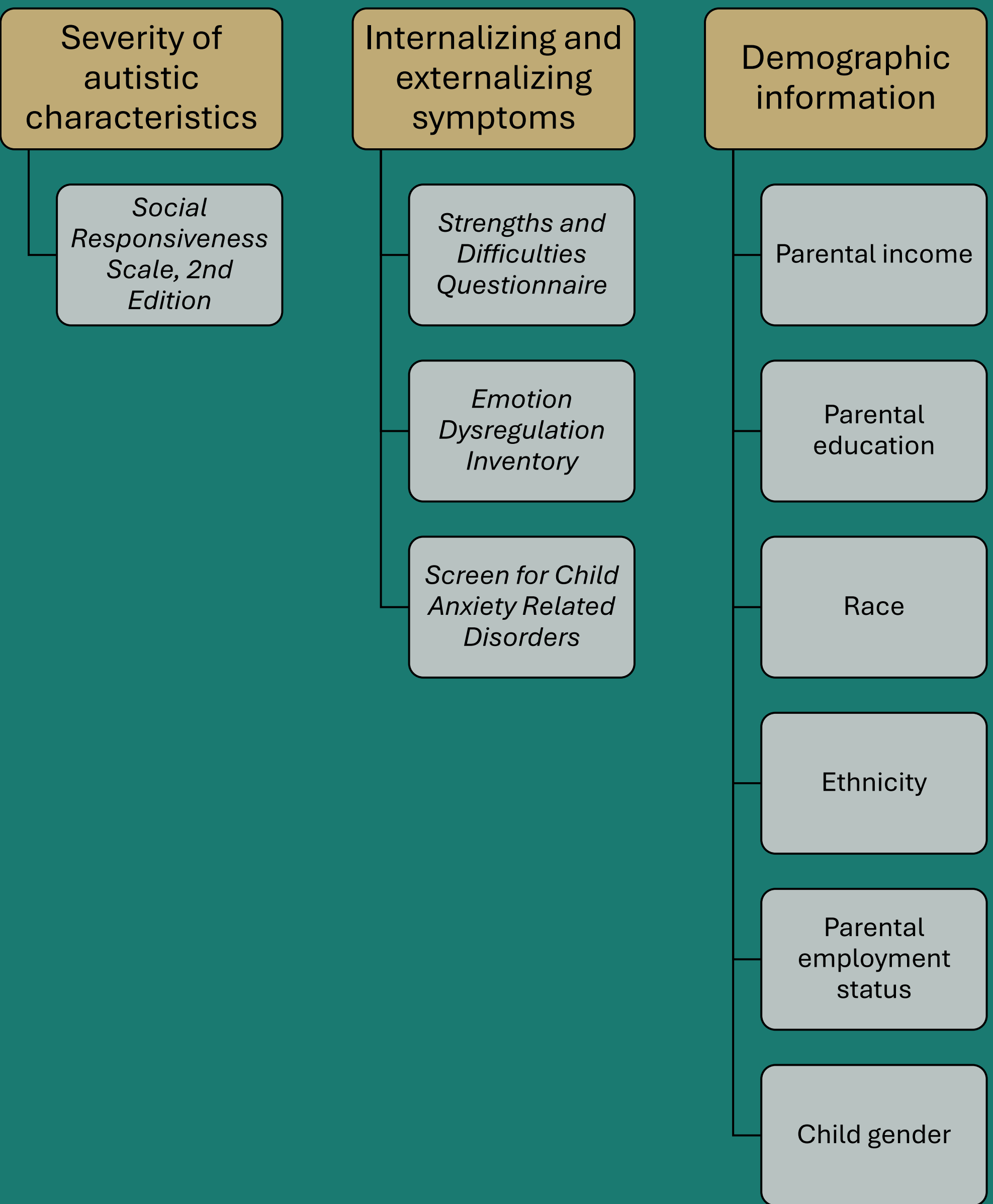
Analyses:

- Chi-square tests: autism identification and demographic information
- One-way ANOVAs and Independent samples t-tests: autism identification, internalizing/externalizing symptoms, severity of autistic characteristics

Participants:

- 183 youth with autism or suspected autism and anxiety from a school-based research study
- Between 8-14 years old
- IQ above 70
- Have an IEP, 504 plan, or school referral

Measures:



Key Points

- Demographic factors and internalizing/externalizing behaviors ***did not*** explain differences between autism identification or not
- Associations found within this study are in line with overall conceptualizations of autism
- Students who were identified as autistic had ***lower prosocial skills*** and ***higher levels of autistic traits***

Limitations

- Small sample of not autistic students
- Overall sample is small and not as diverse as other studies

Implications/Future Directions

- Effective identification of autistic students in academic settings increases supports for students and provides more access to services
- Further investigation of school providers abilities to identify autism