

Dental Care Prevention In Low Socio-Economic Families: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Background: Prevention of caries in low socio-economic families within the first 1000 days of life, also called Early Childhood Caries (ECC) is one important aim of the METAHEALTH project. This explorative study reports on the ways dental care professionals approach preventive education to this targeted group.

Method: Semi-structured interview was used as the qualitative research method. Topics addressed included , current practices, interactions with parents of young children, challenges faced, technological insights, and collaborative efforts among dental care providers. Rigorous procedures ensured validity and reliability, including systematic data collection, participant selection, neutral interview settings, interviewer training, verbatim transcription, and thorough coding using Atlas.Ti software, ultimately facilitating coherent data analysis and relationship establishment.

Findings: Seven dental care professionals participated. Results regarding technology usage for preventive oral care indicate a preference for media channels like apps and websites, especially to reach families with low socioeconomic status. Suggestions include multilingual options and integrating dental messages into games. Some are skeptical, preferring human interaction. One provider mentioned the need for user-friendly tools, while another joked about futuristic tech advancements.

Conclusions: Dental care providers employ diverse approaches to provide preventive oral care to parents of children under three, particularly those with low socioeconomic status. Lack of uniformity leads to methodological variations, yet providers agree on the importance of consistency. They adapt by simplifying information, addressing language barriers, and discussing affordable treatment options. Many recognize the potential of media channels like apps and games, proposing innovations such as technology-assisted treatment summaries, although some providers remain hesitant about technology adoption.