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Hispanic Caregivers' Communication Preferences for Content, Delivery, and Sources of Nutrition Education: Qualitative Findings

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Background



- Childhood obesity prevalence:
 - 20% of children
 - 25.8% of Hispanic children
(*CDC, 2020*)
- Preschool age a critical period for obesity prevention (*Matusik & Malecka-Tendera, 2011*)
- Difficult to engage caregivers in school-based interventions (*Miller et al., 2018; Hingle et al., 2010*)

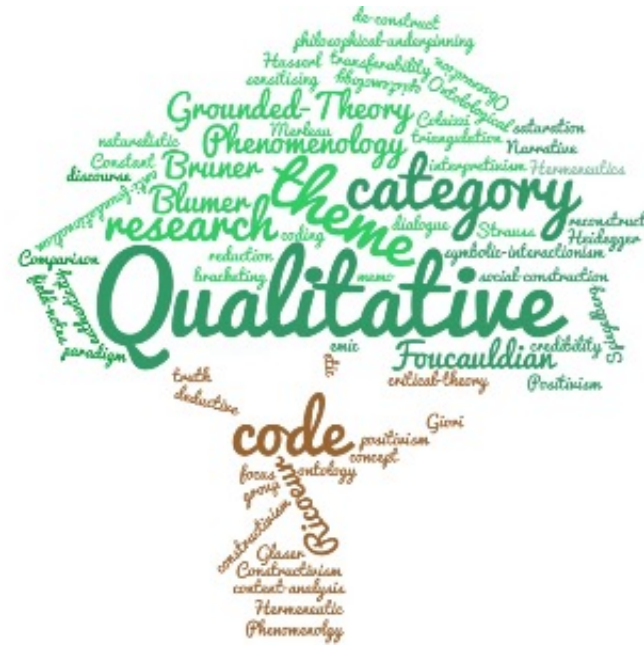
Objective

- To explore communication preferences of low-income Hispanic caregivers of preschoolers on preferred content and delivery of nutrition-related educational information



Study Design, Setting & Participants

- Semi-structured qualitative interviews with Hispanic caregivers of 3- to 5-year-old children (n=25)
- Recruitment sites: Head Start Centers in Washington, D.C.
- Data collection: July-August 2020



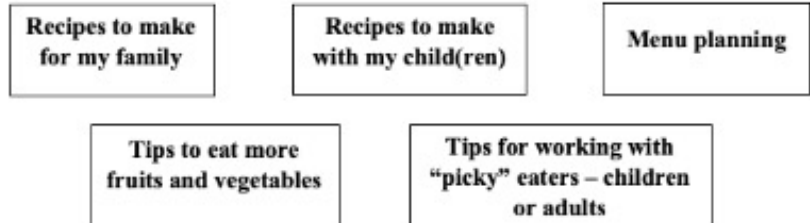
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Qualitative Script

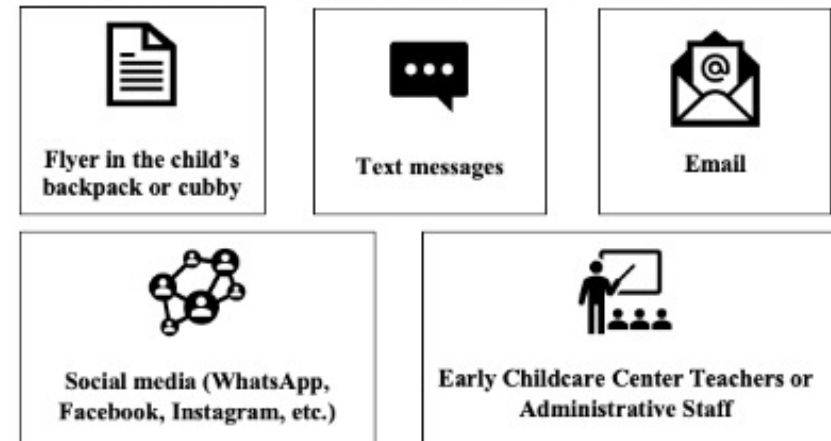
- Does [CHILD] like to try new foods?
 - *Prompt:* Tell me about a time you tried to introduce a new food.
 - *Follow-up:* How did your family respond?
- Sometimes there are things we want to modify about the way our children eat. Is there anything about the way your child eats that you would like to change?
 - Are there foods that you would like your family to eat more of but find it difficult to incorporate them?
 - Are there foods you want your family to eat less of but find it hard to remove them from your menu at home?

I am going to share my screen again to show you types of nutrition information.

Please tell me which of these you currently receive from the early childhood center.



I am going to share my screen again to show you ways to receive information.



Results

Characteristic	Mean \pm SD
Caregivers' age (y)	36 \pm 6
Years in the U.S.	14 \pm 4
Number of adults living in the house	3 \pm 1
Age of child	4 \pm 1
	n (%)
Born outside of U.S.	24 (96)
Language spoken – only Spanish/Spanish better than English	22 (88)
Education level – less than high school or high school	18 (72)
WIC participation	16 (64)
Marital status – married/partnered	18 (72)

Results

Theme 1: Preferred Content of Nutrition Education	Representative quotes
Foods that are Healthy for the Child	“I know that vegetables provide fiber and vitamins and all that, meat and all. But yes, more information would be good because, for example, the grains, there are a lot of things I see that say they’re good, it’s good to eat a certain quantity of grain, but other studies say don’t eat much grain. Then I’d like to know more exactly about the age and the recommended quantity for children.” (ID 01)
Strategies to Feed Vegetables to the Child	“Sometimes it’s due to a lack of time or ideas...So [ideas for eating more fruits and vegetables] would help me to see what we could do to make a vegetable beautiful and to make it attractive in the children’s eyes. ” (ID 12) “[The most useful]... vegetables, how to prepare vegetables...maybe they’d like eating it more and it would be easier. ” (ID 20)

Results

Theme 2: Delivery Methods	Representative quotes
Digital Messages: Videos, Texts, and Social Media	“I think it’s better, like a video, a video, because you can see it...a book is good, but in a video, it can be explained in more detail... ” (ID 25)
Printed Information	“ On paper would be good to have , like something illustrated and to make something for the child.” (ID 07)
In-Person Nutrition Classes	“The cooking or food demonstrations. That helps apart from just watching like on YouTube or the media, it’s more personal. When you look at the person who is there putting things together, and you say, ‘oh wow, that can be done.’ ” (ID 03)
Recipes	“[Recipes] would help me because sometimes I feel like I’m repeating the same thing, like I’m making the same thing. It’s the same and the same, and I’d like to get more options. Probably add a new vegetable and try new things, and it could help me leave the routine of what we typically cook... ” (ID 13)

Results

Theme 3: WIC Nutrition Educators as Preferred Sources of Nutrition Education	Representative quotes
	“The ones that have helped a lot are from WIC, for example, it’s the only place where I’ve had help, and it worked a lot for me, because the nutritionist is very good, and she explains to me well when I go... Everything helped me a lot because they give great ideas.” (ID 11)
Theme 4: Cultural Traditions in Food Prepared	
	“It helps if we have the Latin flavor, it’s very difficult for me to adapt to others...other types of food. No, because I don’t know them well... sometimes the Latin flavor is missing. ” (ID 13)

Discussion



Parents want to receive vegetable feeding strategies

(Davis et al., 2017; van der Horst et al., 2016; Hingle et al., 2012)



Multifaceted skills & communication methods

(Gans et al., 2009; Sahin et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2019)




Food environment

(Lindsay et al., 2018; Wyse et al., 2011; USDA, 2021)

Strengths

- Findings consistent with the literature
- Robust sample size
- Multifaceted support for caregivers
 - SMS/MMS
 - Video
 - Social media
 - Print

Limitations

- Como se llama?

- Caregiver self-report/bias
- Environmental/COVID-19

Conclusions – Applications

- **WHAT** – Content
- **HOW** – Method
- **WHO** – Messenger



Conclusions – Implications

- **WHEN** – timing
- **WHERE & WHY** – environmental factors



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