

A Qualitative Exploration of Early Interventionists' Beliefs and Practices with Families from Marginalized Backgrounds



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BACKGROUND

Early interventionists can best be described as specialists who work with children aged 0-3 across several disciplines (speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc.) and are employed in statewide programs across the US (Funds of Knowledge, 2006). Early intervention programs have become available in every state to children in need, but there is often a barrier between providers and the families they service, as a majority of providers are white, monolingual females.

Purpose:

To address this gap in the field of early interventionism, the study was devised to uncover biases both conscious and implicit in nature, with the goal of creating recommendations for a culturally diverse training for EIs that addresses these concerns.

METHODS

A qualitative research study design was used.

Participants:

A Qualtrics study was sent out to the Florida Early Steps program, and from there, 132 responses were received. A stratified sampling technique was utilized in order to ensure that 20 randomly selected participants would accurately reflect the demographics of all those who applied to be part of the study. In the end, only 17 of these 20 participants completed the set of 2 interviews.

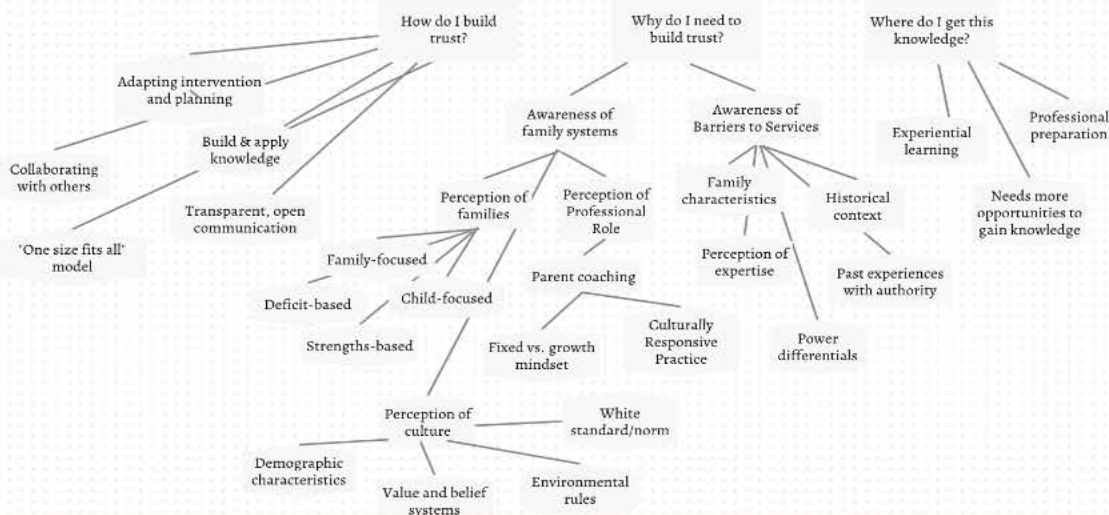
Procedure:

Participants underwent 2 interviews, the first of which asked questions about two vignettes that the participants read:

- Vignette 1- described a black family who were being investigated by CPS about a traumatic brain injury their child had sustained while in the home
- Vignette 2- described a Latino family whose daughter required EI services, but the mother could not participate in sessions due to her poor mental health

The second vignette asked about cultural beliefs/practices of the interventionists.

Codebook



RESULTS

The codebook developed by the research team encompassed three underlying themes: "Why do I need to build trust?", "Where do I get this knowledge?", and "How do I build trust?" Transcriptions coded by the Otterai software were coded for the subcodes identified in Figure 1.

REFERENCES

- Funds of knowledge for teaching in Latino households. (2006). *Funds of Knowledge*, 101-124. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410613462-10>
- Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). (2022, August 4). *Institutional Review Board (IRB) written procedures: Guidance*. HHS.gov. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/requests-for-comments/guidance-for-institutions-and-irbs/index.html>

DISCUSSION

It is important to note that this study is still in its early stages of development. As such, there is no conclusive data to answer the initial research question of how early interventionists view both their own culture and that of their clients and how that affects their practice. By April, conclusions will have been drawn from the data, and there will be a more definitive answer to these questions posed by the research team.