

INTRODUCTION

- Dental visits beginning in infancy allow early detection and prevention of oral disease and improve oral and general health¹
- Children's books about going to the doctor are used for entertainment and to help prepare children for appointment²
- Unknown is how children's books about going to the dentist can serve as a medium for teaching and behavioral modification

PURPOSE

- To describe and assess characteristics and content of the most-rated *going to the dentist* children's books
- To assess differences in characteristics and content between books written by healthcare professionals and non-healthcare professionals

METHODS

Book Identification

Obtained a convenience sample from *Amazon.com* using search terms:

- "first dental visit book"
- "kids dentist visit book"
- "going to the dentist book for kids"
- "kids dentist visit book"

Book Selection

Removed duplicates & books that did not meet inclusion criteria of:

- (a) a children's picture book
- (b) portraying a dental visit
- (c) written in English

Final list consisted of 94 books (n=94)

Content Analysis

3 analytic domains: book characteristics, scientific information, and behavioral content

Coding manual used a dichotomous scale (Yes/No)

Descriptive & correlational analysis

RESULTS

Figure 1: Book Characteristics

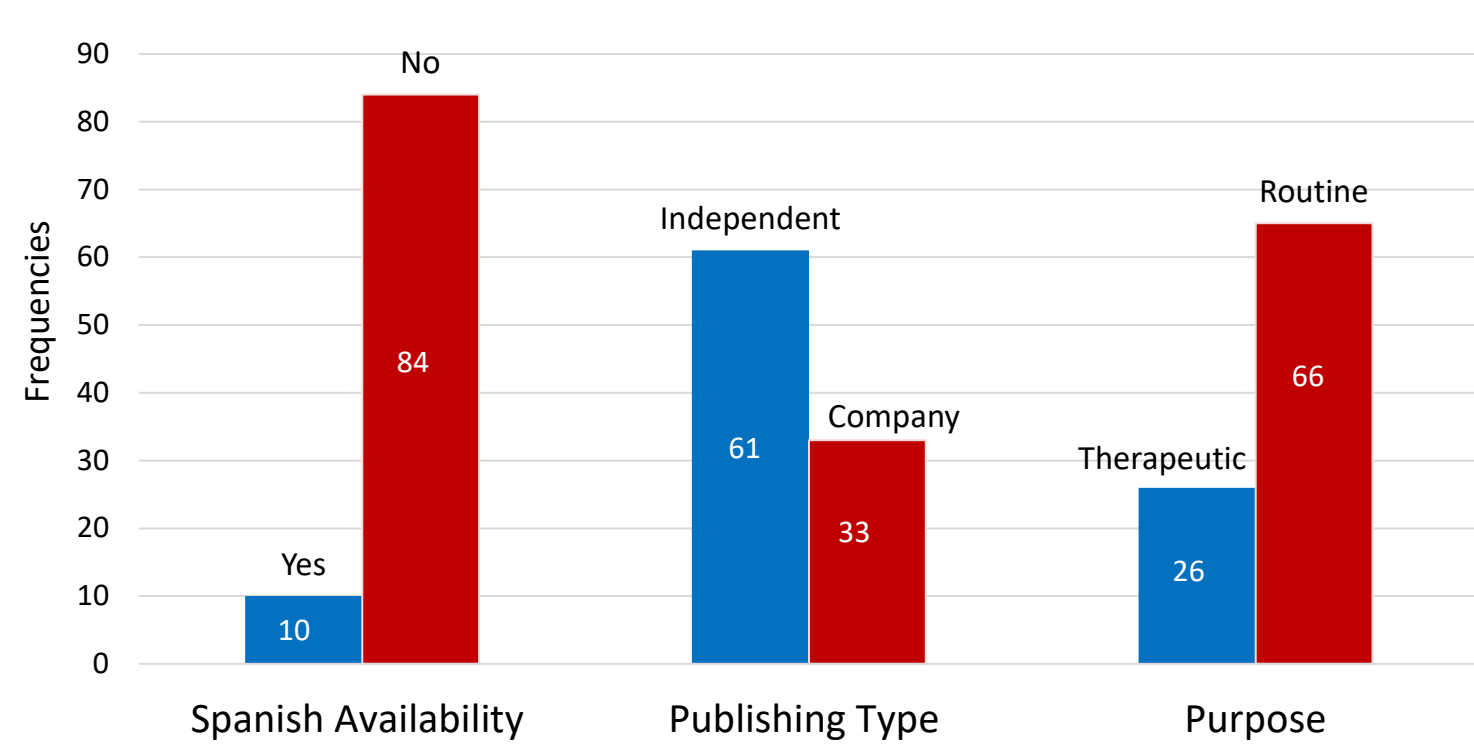


Figure 2: Scientific Content

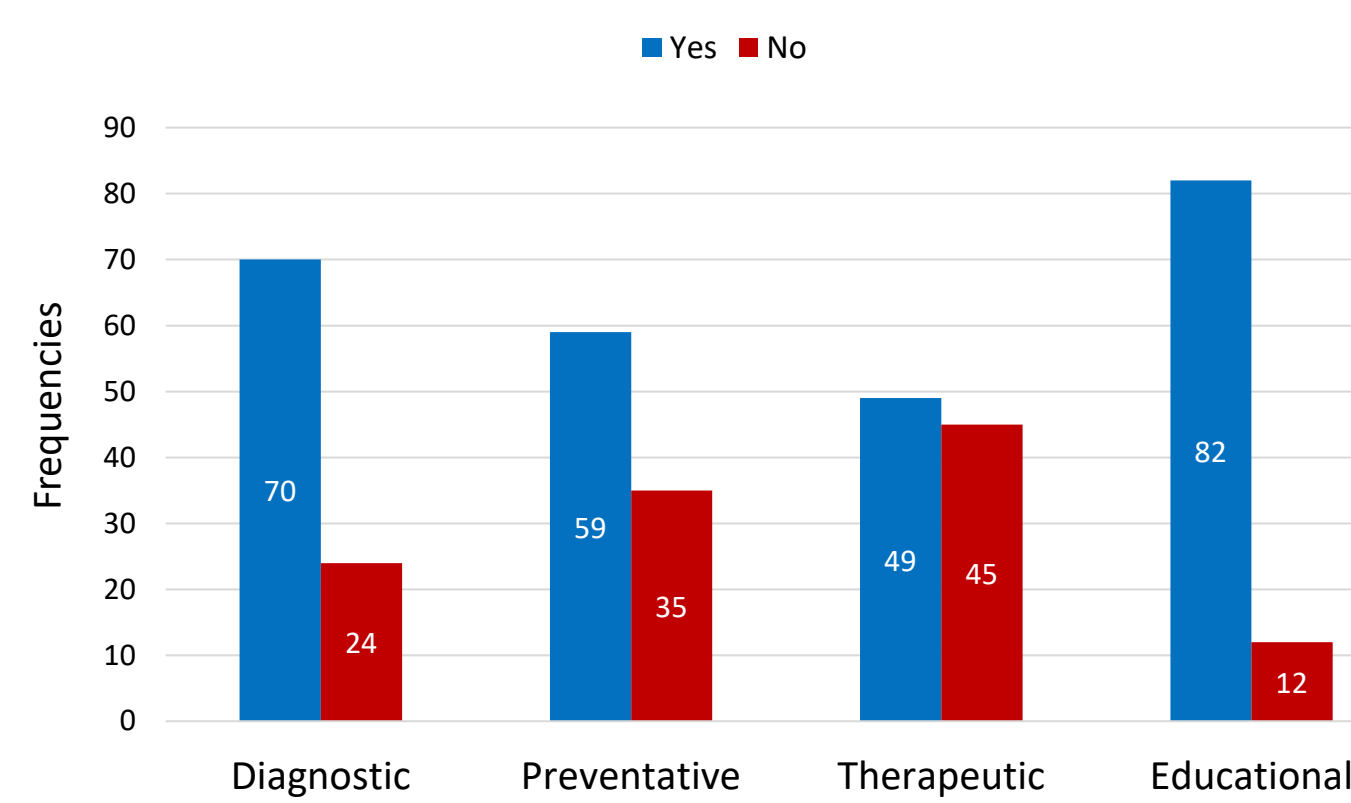
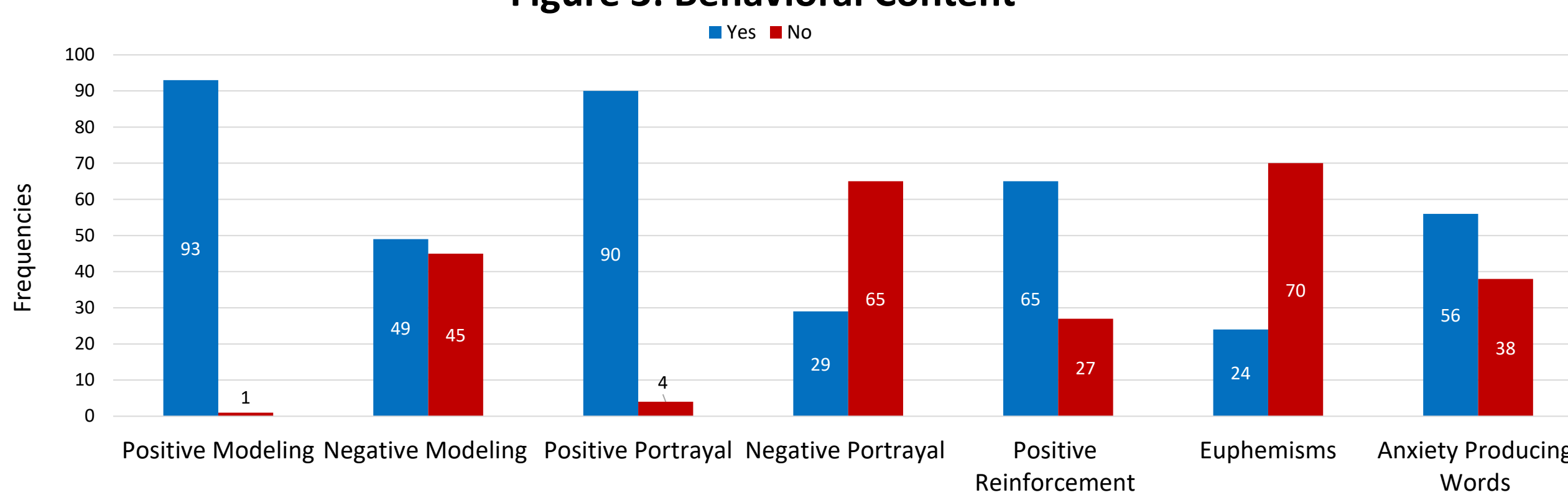


Figure 3: Behavioral Content



DISCUSSION

Authors with a healthcare background were more likely to author books available in both English and Spanish, and to publish independently. There was no significant difference between groups in the purpose of the book. Authors with a healthcare background were more likely to include educational (oral health information, nutrition, anticipatory guidance) and behavioral components (dental euphemisms) in their children's literature. Authors with a healthcare background also included more elements of diagnosis and prevention, as well as anxiety-producing words, though these results were not significant. With a more equivalent sample size of books written by healthcare professionals and non-healthcare professionals, it is likely that these findings would have been significant.

While books written by healthcare professionals tend to have more accurate information, they are not the most accessible or available to consumers. This points to a need for more educated professionals to contribute to children's dental literature either through direct authorship or contributing their expertise.

A future direction for this study includes examining the representation of women doctors in children's dental books. Books with medical-related content consistently portray a gender imbalance that can influence children to believe in a false reality.³

CONCLUSION

Overall, the content of children's books about going to dentist vary according to the author's professional background. Books written by healthcare professional providers provide the most accurate and *positive* information about dental visits and oral homecare. Caregivers, educators, and healthcare professionals should pay attention to the content of children's book which should contain accurate and engaging information about oral health and positive portrayals of dental visits.

PURPOSE

Subdomain Title	Brief Explanation
Consumer	
Accessibility	language (English vs. Spanish)
Publishing Type	independent vs. publishing company
Purpose of Book	routine check-up vs. therapeutic (filling, extraction)
Scientific*	
Diagnostic	exam, x-rays, risk assessment
Preventative	cleaning, fluoride application
Therapeutic	restoration, extraction
Educational	nutrition, OHI, anticipatory guidance
Behavioral*	
Positive Modeling	child excitement, cooperation, compliance
Negative Modeling	uncooperative, disobedient, poor oral hygiene
Positive Portrayal	friendly dentist and staff, fun waiting room
Negative Portrayal	shaming, inflicting pain, unfriendly characters
Positive Reinforcement	high fives, verbal praise, prizes
Euphemisms	ex "sugarbugs" instead of "cavities"
Anxiety-Producing Words	ex "shot," "hurt," or "pain"

*Per AAPD Guidelines

Table 2: Domains Assessed By Book Authorship

	Total No. Books (n=94)	Book Author		P-value
		Non-Healthcare Professionals (n=74)	Healthcare Professionals (n=20)	
Book Characteristics				
Available in Spanish				
Yes	10	5	5	0.033*
No	84	69	15	
Publishing Type				
Company	33	32	1	0.001*
Independent	61	42	19	
Purpose				
Routine	65	50	15	0.305
Therapeutic	26	22	4	
Scientific Content				
Mentions Diagnostics				
Yes	70	55	15	0.600
No	24	19	5	
Mentions Prevention				
Yes	59	45	14	0.451
No	35	29	6	
Mentions Therapeutic				
Yes	49	43	6	0.026*
No	45	31	14	
Mentions Education				
Yes	82	62	20	0.046*
No	12	12	0	
Behavioral Content				
Anxiety				
Yes	56	47	9	0.134
No	38	27	11	
Dental Euphemisms				
Yes	24	12	12	0.000*
No	70	62	8	
Positive Reinforcement				
Yes	65	53	12	0.237
No	27	19	8	
Positive Portrayal				
Yes	90	70	20	0.377
No	4	4	0	
Negative Portrayal				
Yes	29	27	2	0.018*
No	65	47	18	
Positive Modeling				
Yes	93	73	20	0.787
No	1	1	0	
Negative Modeling				
Yes	49	40	9	0.472
No	45	34	11	

*Statistically Significant

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