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| **Title of Research Presentation** A prospective cohort study on use, benefits and gaps in early childhood care and education: the disadvantaged parents’ view  |
| **Background/Objectives**Although early childhood care and education’s efficacy has been widely demonstrated, the problem to reach the families most in need continues persisting. This longitudinal cohort study examines the parents’ view on accessibility, adequacy and effects of early childhood care services in respect to family health and parenting abilities.**Methods**In this longitudinal cohort study, 500 families of nine rural and urban communities were followed over three years by personal interviews in their home settings. Half of the sample consisted of highly burdened families with poverty, cultural deprivation due to migration, psychiatric or medical health problems as well as unemployment and personal indebtedness. The study was conducted in two cohorts, one of families with children from birth up to 2.5 years of age respectively, the other with children aged 2.5 years at the first and 5 years at the second time of measurement. Interviews included accessibility and perceived benefit of services in maternity care, day care services, home visiting and parental education programs. User profiles were elaborated and connected to children’s health opportunities (measured by parental health education and the Sense of Coherence-Scale by Antonovsky) and to parenting styles. Data analysis combined descriptive statistics and content analysis. **Results**Three profiles of care user families were found: middle-class parents with good access and positive use of childhood care services, migrant parents with problems of access to services but positive use when related to services and families with economic, social, psychological and health problems for whom neither access to nor use of services is given. All three profiles show specific patterns of health opportunities measured by SOC scale values and of educational practices but do not differ in their priorities of family resources.**Conclusions:**There is a strong need for specialized outreach services for families with social, psychological and economical background for burdened non-migrant families.**Discussion**Studies focusing on parents’ views are rare but needed. This study shows how certain forms of deprivation are not covered by care systems due to an expert focused perspective in research and practice of early childhood care and education.**Keywords**Early childhood care and education, salutogenesis, family health,  |