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Breaking the cycle: how poverty affects children's oral health in developing nations-a rapid review

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Abstract

Background: Oral diseases remain a significant public health challenge worldwide, disproportionately impacting children in developing countries due to socioeconomic hardship and limited healthcare access. **Purpose:** This rapid review evaluates the relationship between low household income and children's oral health outcomes in developing countries. **Method:** We followed PRISMA 2020 and Cochrane Rapid Review guidelines. A systematic search of five databases (2012-2022) using refined keywords identified eligible studies. Quality assessment used the NIH tool. **Results:** Of 1,574 articles identified, 13 met inclusion criteria. Most were cross-sectional studies from China, India, Nigeria, Brazil, and Syria. A consistent association was found between lower socioeconomic status and worse oral health outcomes, including higher DMFT/dmft scores, gingivitis, and early childhood caries (ECC). **Conclusion:** Low socioeconomic status (SES) is

associated with worse oral health outcomes in children in developing countries. Copyright © 2025 Setiawan, Indriyanti and Sukmasari.

Author keywords

children; developing countries; oral health status; poverty; socioeconomic factors

Indexed keywords

MeSH

Child; Child, Preschool; Dental Caries; Developing Countries; Humans; Oral Health; Poverty; Social Class

EMTREE medical terms

child; dental caries; developing country; epidemiology; health; human; poverty; preschool child; social class

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