



## Dentistry as Uniting Research Platform

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**Received:** August 14, 2019

**Published:** September 05, 2019

**ISSN:** 2581-4893

**DOI:** 10.31080/ASDS.2019.S01.0002

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Recently, qualitative research is becoming more and more popular in medical field, nursing research in particular. However, this research paradigm seems to be overlooked by many dental research institutes.

Dentistry is a unique field of practice. It encompasses dental knowledge that relies on evidenced based research and at the same time it is in close contact with patient experiences and opinions toward the influence of dental treatment on their appearance and related quality of life.

In this sense it represents an overarching view that embraces both positivism and interpretivism. Positivism views the world of facts based on physical evidence, whereas interpretivism looks at the facts from human perspective. It has been argued that those two paradigms do not meet. Physical evidence vs feelings and perceptions.

In dentistry, however, it might be argued that patients experience sometimes are the best available evidence in dental research practice. Apart from objective signs of dental health problems, patients view of themselves is the corner stone to what the dentist sees as ultimate treatment aim. Another important issue in dental practice lies at the heart of qualitative research finding. It is the mutual understanding and effective dentist-patient communication. This fact represents an important aspect of everyday dental practice.

The intimate professional relationship between the dentist and his/her patient is crucial in the outcome of dental treatment. This relationship is built on trust. Trust is the result of fruitful understanding to what dental professional can achieve. In everyday dental practice it might be difficult to fulfil the entire treatment

objectives, as written in the textbooks due to patient's view to the treatment outcome.

It appears there is a gray zone in dental practice. This zone is the overlapping between the ultimate objective aspect of treatment, which relies on evidence-based knowledge (positivism) and patients views on the treatment outcome (interpretivism). This opinion might target debate. This debate can be solved by giving qualitative research more attention in dental practice.

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