International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Level of Anxiety among Hospitalized Pre-school Children

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A B S T R A C T

Pre-school children are the children who are more prone to the stress because hospitalization is a unique experience for them and their ability to treat anxiety is still limited. The present study was conducted to assess the level of anxiety among hospitalized pre-school children at selected hospitals of Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh. The descriptive research design was used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. The sample size was consists of 60 hospitalized pre-school children. The data conducted by using the "Modified Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale". The result of the study showed that majority of 58.3% of children experienced moderate anxiety and 20% of children experienced mild anxiety and 13.3% of the children experienced severe anxiety and 8.3% of children experienced very severe anxiety during hospitalization. There was no significant association between the levels of anxiety with their selected demographic variables. So the study concluded that hospitalization is a stressful experience for pre-school children and some type of interventions such as play activities must be recommended during hospitalization of pre-school children

Keywords: **Anxiety, Hospitalized pre-school children**

Introduction

The sick children need hospitalization. It is stressful experience for both children and their families. Hospitalization causes the interruption of the child's active growth and development. The child is removed from daily routine of home and brought in a unfamiliar setting causing loss of contact with siblings, relatives and peers. Hospitalization for children is considered to be frightened and stressful experience for the pre-school children. Illness and hospitalization are the form of crisis which children face in their childhood. Hospitalization is the disruption of the life of children and their families. The children's reaction to the hospitalization and coping strength depend on the age, developmental stage, body image, fear, reason for hospitalization and previous hospitalization. Anxiety is an emotional response to a threatening situation and it's most commonly seen in children who are prolonged hospitalized.

Background of the study

Anxiety is one of the psychological disorders that can occur in children undergoing hospitalization. The impact of hospitalization can interfere with growth and healing process in children that is playing one of the non-pharmacological therapies in children. Children are vulnerable and dependent creatures who are always curious, active even hopeful; this is where the child's part of life begins for the next period (Nursalam, 2013), at pre-school age, Children's activity increases which often causes fatigue so that the range of illness due to weak immune system, until the child is required to undergo hospitalization.

Statement of the problem

A descriptive study to assess the level of anxiety among hospitalized pre-school children in selected hospitals at Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the level of anxiety among hospitalized pre-school children by using Modified Hamilton Anxiety Scale.

2. To find out the association between the level of anxiety among pre-school children with their selected demographic variables.

Hypothesis

H_0 - There will be no significant association between the levels of anxiety and hospitalized pre-school children with their demographic variables.

H_1- There will be a significant association between the levels of anxiety and hospitalized pre-school children with their demographic variables.

Material and methods

Research Approach: The Quantitative Research Approach was used in the study.

Research Design: Descriptive research design was used.

Research Setting: The present study was conducted in selected pediatric wards of Asian Vivekanand Super Specialty Hospital, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Sample: In present study, the sample consists of children in the age group of 3-6 years who fulfilled the inclusive criteria.

Sample Size: A total of 60 pre-school children were selected as a sample from the selected pediatric wards of Asian Vivekanand Super Specialty Hospital, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Sampling technique: Purposive sampling technique was used.

Development of tool for data collection

The developed tool was organized in two sections:

Section A: A set of demographic variables consists of age, gender, birth order, educational status, history of previous hospitalization, number of hospitalization days, primary care giver, religion, area of residency, family monthly income, type of family and education of parents.

Section B: Modified Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A Scale) was used to assess the level of anxiety among hospitalized pre-school children.

Validity of the tool

The validity of the tool obtained from the 5 experts in the field of Nursing and the suggestions given by the validators were followed.

Reliability of the tool

The Modified Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A Scale) was reliable at 0.967 by using Cronbach's Alpha method through SPSS. Hence the tool was considered as proceeding.

Data collection Procedure

A formal written permission was obtained from the medical superintendent of the hospital to conduct the study. The data was collected on the basis of inclusion and exclusion criteria. The data collection was carried out from 1st august to 12th august. On the day one the purpose of the study was explained to the parents and an informed consent was taken from the parents before starting the study.

Analysis of Data

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data based on the objectives and hypothesis of the study. Mean, median, range and standard deviation were used to calculate.

Result

The result was compound by using descriptive and inferential statistics based on hypothesis and objectives of the study.

Presentation of the Data

Section A: Description of demographic factors of children.

Section B: Level of Anxiety among hospitalized pre-school children.

Section C: Association between levels of anxiety among hospitalized children with their selected demographic variables.

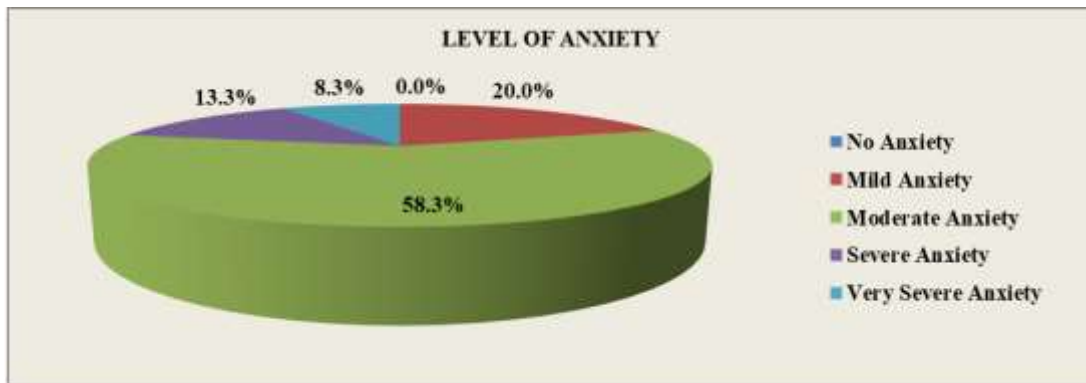**Section A: Description of demographic factors of children**

- 25% of children belonged to 3 years, 4 years, 5 years and 6 years from each aged group.

- Majority 53% of children were female and 47% of children were male.

- Majority 66% of the children were first born and 34% of the children were second born or above.

- Majority 40% of the children were studying in LKG and 38% of children were studying in UKG & Above and 12% of children were not started their schooling yet and 10% of children were studying in Pre-KG.

- Majority 58% of the children were previously hospitalized and 42% were not previously hospitalized.

- Majority 50% of the children were hospitalized for 3-4 days and 28% of the children were hospitalized for 5-6 days and 12% of the children were hospitalized for 1-2 days and 10% of children were hospitalized for ≥7 days.

- Majority 92% of the children had mother as primary care giver and 8% of the children had others as primary care giver.

- Majority 60% of the children were Hindu and 26% of children were Muslim and 13% of children were Christian and 1% of children had other religion.

- Majority 56% of the children belong to urban area and 44% of the children belong to rural area.

- Majority 58% of the children's family monthly income was 5001-10,000 rupees and 32% of children's family monthly income was 2001-5000 rupees and 10% were having >10,001 rupees.

- Majority 54% of the children belong to nuclear family and 46% of the children belong to joint family.

- Majority 42% of the mothers were studied till High School and 30% of mothers were having Higher secondary education 12% of mothers were having elementary education and 10% of the mothers were illiterate and 6% of mothers were graduate.

- Majority 45% of the fathers were having Higher secondary education and 30% of fathers were studied till High School and 13% of fathers were having elementary education and 5% of fathers were graduate and 7% of fathers were illiterate.

Section B: Distribution and classification of pre-schoolers according to their level of anxiety:

N=60

LEVEL OF ANXIETY	FREQUENCY (f)	PERCENTAGE (%)
No Anxiety	**0**	**0.0%**
Mild Anxiety	**12**	**20.0%**
Moderate Anxiety	**35**	**58.3%**
Severe Anxiety	**8**	**13.3%**
Very Severe Anxiety	**5**	**8.3%**

Section C: Association between level of anxiety among hospitalized children with their selected demographic variables:
N=60

Demographic variables	Mild Anxiety		Moderate Anxiety		Severe Anxiety		Very Severe Anxiety		Total Sample Size	Chi-square test
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	χ2
• **Age in years**										
3 years	3	20.0%	11	73.3%	1	6.7%	0	0.0%	15	χ2= 1.561
4 years	2	13.3%	10	66.7%	2	13.3%	1	6.7%	15	df= 3
5 years	5	33.3%	5	33.3%	4	26.7%	1	6.7%	15	**NS**
6 years	2	13.3%	9	60.0%	1	6.7%	3	20.0%	15	

Variable	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Total	Statistics
Gender										
Male	7	25.0%	17	60.7%	1	3.6%	3	10.7%	28	χ^2= 4.817
Female	5	15.6%	18	56.2%	7	21.9%	2	6.2%	32	df=3 NS
Birth order										
First born	4	10.0%	25	62.5%	6	15.0%	5	12.5%	40	χ^2= 9.107
Second & above	8	40.0%	10	50.0%	2	10.0%	0	0.0%	20	df= 3 NS
Educational Status										
Not started yet / Pre-KG	3	42.9%	3	42.9%	0	0.0%	1	14.3%	7	χ^2= 6.497
LKG	1	16.7%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	6	df= 9
UKG & above	5	20.8%	13	54.2%	4	16.7%	2	8.3%	26	NS
	3	13.0%	15	65.2%	4	17.4%	1	4.3%	22	
History of Previous hospitalization										
Yes	7	20.0%	20	57.1%	5	14.3%	3	8.6%	35	χ^2= 0.83
No	5	20.0%	15	60.0%	3	12.0%	2	8.0%	25	df= 34 NS
Number of hospitalization days										
1-2 days	2	28.6%	5	71.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	χ^2= 3.156
3-4 days	6	20.0%	17	56.7%	4	13.3%	3	10.0%	30	df= 9
5-6 days	3	17.6%	10	58.8%	3	17.6%	1	5.9%	17	NS
≥7 days	1	16.7%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%	1	16.7%	6	
Primary care giver										
Mother	11	20.0%	34	61.8%	7	12.7%	3	5.5%	55	χ^2= 8.119
Others	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	2	40.0%	5	df= 3 NS
Religion										
Hindu	9	25.0%	19	52.8%	6	16.7%	2	5.6%	36	χ^2= 16.331
Muslim	3	20.0%	9	60.0%	2	13.3%	1	6.7%	15	df= 9
Christian	0	0.0%	7	87.5%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	8	NS
Others	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	
Area of residency										
Urban	8	23.5%	22	64.7%	2	5.9%	2	5.9%	34	χ^2= 4.867
Rural	4	15.4%	13	50.0%	6	23.1%	3	11.5%	26	df= 3 NS
Family monthly income										
<2000	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	χ^2=15.930
2001-5000	4	21.1%	6	31.6%	7	36.8%	2	10.5%	19	df= 6
5001-10,000	7	20.0%	25	71.4%	1	2.9%	2	5.7%	35	NS
>10,001	1	16.7%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	6	
Type of family										
Nuclear family	5	15.6%	19	59.4%	5	15.6%	3	9.4%	32	χ^2= 1.028
Joint family	7	25.0%	16	57.1%	3	10.7%	2	7.1%	28	df= 3 NS
Education of mother										
Illiterate	1	16.7%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	6	χ^2=11.323
Elementary	1	14.3%	5	71.4%	1	14.3%	0	0.0%	7	df= 12
High School	4	22.2%	9	50.0%	1	5.6%	4	22.2%	18	NS
H. Secondary	5	20.0%	15	60.0%	5	20.0%	0	0.0%	25	
Graduation	1	25.0%	2	50.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	4	

Education of father										
Illiterate	0	0.0%	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	4	χ2=14.558
Elementary	2	25.0%	3	37.5%	2	25.0%	1	12.5%	8	df= 12
High School	6	22.2%	13	43.1%	4	14.8%	4	14.8%	27	**NS**
H. Secondary	2	11.1%	15	83.3%	1	5.6%	0	0.0%	18	
Graduation	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	

NS= Not significant , S= Significant (at p<0.05), df= degree of freedom

Discussion:

The present study was conducted to assess the level of anxiety among hospitalized pre-school children. The result of the study revealed that moderate level of anxiety (58.3%) was present in hospitalized pre-school children and there is no significant association between the level of anxiety with their selected demographic variables such as age, gender, birth order, educational status, history of previous hospitalization, number of hospitalization days, primary care giver, area of residency, religion, family monthly income, type of family, education of mother and education of father. So therefore, null hypothesis was accepted. Some interventions are required to make the hospital stay more comfortable.

Conclusion:

Anxiety during hospitalization is very common in pre-school children. The results shows that majority (53.3%) of the pre-school children had moderate level of anxiety during hospitalization. Being researchers, we should focus on therapeutic interventions such as play therapy should be provided during hospitalization of children.

Nursing Implications:

The findings of the study have implications in the field of nursing education, nursing practice, nursing research and nursing administration.

Nursing Education: Nursing education is concerned in preventive and primitive aspects. Therefore awareness program or health on management of anxiety should be included in the nursing curriculum.

Nursing Practice: Nurses play a crucial role in helping the child and parents during hospitalization. Therapeutic play activities can be provided to the child to reduce anxiety during hospitalization.

Nursing Research: Nurses are the heart of health care delivery system and it is their responsibility to give priority to the children and make the hospitalization more relaxing. So further studies can be done on interventions of reducing anxiety during hospitalization.

Nursing Administration: The nurse administrator should take the interest in providing information on management of anxiety such as therapeutic interventions should be included.

Recommendation:

- A similar study can be replicated on a sample with different demographic characteristics.
- A similar study can be replicated on a large sample.
- An experimental study can be conducted on effectiveness of play therapy in reducing anxiety.
- A study can be conducted to find the factors which influence in developing the anxiety in children during hospitalization.

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