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PLAY THERAPY IN REDUCING THE LEVEL OF ANXIETY AMONG HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN.

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Abstract

Hospitalization is stressful for children of all ages. Play helps children to learn to adapt to the health care experiences. A study to evaluate the effectiveness of play therapy in reducing the level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) at selected hospitals. The objectives are to (1) Assess the level of anxiety in children in experimental and control group. (2) To evaluate the effectiveness of play therapy in reducing level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) in experimental group. (3) To compare the pretest level of anxiety and post-test level of anxiety among hospitalized children in experimental and control group. (4) To associate the pre-test and post-test level of anxiety among hospitalized children of experimental group with selected demographic variables. Pre-test, post-test & control group design. The study was conducted in KCG Hospital, Bangalore. Population of the study comprises of 40 hospitalized children using simple random Sampling Technique. In the pretest 50% had severe anxiety, and 15% of the children had mild anxiety before the intervention of play therapy and the post-test 5% had severe anxiety, 30% have moderate anxiety & 65% had mild anxiety. In the pre-test mean value is 15.85 with a standard deviation of 1.68. In the post test the mean value is 23.87 with a standard deviation of 1.72. The paired 't' test value is 21.066 which is highly significant at $p < 0.001$ level. In the pretest the gender and type of family were significant; In the post-test the age of children, religion, type of family, family income, and child admission to the hospital, area of residence, and previous exposure to play therapy were significant. Thus it indicates that the play therapy was effective in decreasing the level of anxiety among the hospitalized children 3-6years.

Keywords: *anxiety, hospitalized child, play therapy, stressful event.*

Introduction

Children are priceless resources of our nation. A child is an important asset to its family, society. Being parent's means our job is to prepare our event of us stopping to be there for them. It's believed that children are our future. Hospitalization is stressful for children of all ages. Play and recreation are a natural part of childhood, and vital to normal development. Children are able to learn, master experiences, express themselves, cope with anxiety, create, achieve and develop skills through play and recreational activity, play also helps children learn to adapt to the health care experiences. Play and recreation can be therapeutic by giving children the opportunity to explore, express and process. At least 60% of children will demonstrate signs of stress related anxiety during hospitalization. Currently, it is clear that the use of play in the care of children is an indispensible ingredient in successfully implementing one of the current trends in pediatric nursing care.

Statement of the problem

A study to evaluate the effectiveness of play therapy, in reducing the level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) at selected hospitals, in Bangalore.

Objectives

- To assess the level of anxiety children in the experimental and control group.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of play therapy in reducing level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) in experimental group.
- To compare the pretest level of anxiety and post-test level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) in experimental and control group.

- To associate the pre-test and post-test level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6years) of experimental group with selected demographic variables.

Hypotheses

H_1: There will be a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test level of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) in the experimental group.

H_2: There will be significant association between the pre-test levels of anxiety in experimental group with their selected demographic variables.

H_3: There will be significant association between the post-test levels of anxiety among hospitalized children (3-6 years) in experimental group with their selected demographic variables

Methodology

The research approach in this present study was a quantitative approach. The research design selected for the study is true experimental study. The setting of the study is K.C. General Hospital, Malleswaram, Bangalore. Play therapy includes snake and ladder, building blocks, which are used to help children to express their emotions, thoughts, wishes and needs and reduce the level of anxiety due to hospitalization. The dependent variable is the level of anxiety among children 3-6yrs following hospitalization. The accessible populations in the study were all hospitalized children 3-6yrs in the selected hospitals, Bangalore, who fulfils the inclusion and exclusion criteria using simple random sampling technique. The sample size is 40 hospitalized children who met the inclusion criteria were selected, 20 hospitalized children in the experimental group and 20 hospitalized children in the control group. Data collection tool or instrument consists of two parts.

Part 1: Demographic Variables.

Part 2: Consist of modified Susan H. Spence and Ron Rapee scale (1999) to check the level of anxiety in the hospitalized children 3-6yrs.

Results

Analysis was done based on the objectives and hypothesis of the study. The level of significance was set at 0.05 levels. **Socio demographic data:** In the experimental group majority were in the age group of 5-6years 40%, male 55%, then majority of the children were Hindu 45%, nuclear families (45%). Majority were 2nd child 45%, having an income of above 20,000, 50%, 45% admitted occasionally. 65% in the rural area, 60% had medical diagnosis, 65% of them had no previous exposure.

Table 1: Data on pre–test level of anxiety among hospitalized children 3-6 yrs. in the experimental group and control group.

(N = 40)

Level of anxiety	Score	Before intervention			
		Exp. group		Cont. group	
		No.	%	No.	%
Severe anxiety.	50	10	50%	11	55%
Moderate anxiety	50 -75	07	35%	07	35%
Mild anxiety	<75	03	15%	02	10%

Table 2: Data on post–test level of anxiety among hospitalized children 3-6 yrs. in the experimental group and control group.

(N = 40)

Level of anxiety	Score	Before intervention			
		Exp. group		Cont. group	
		No.	%	No.	%
Severe anxiety.	50	01	5%	11	55%
Moderate anxiety	50 -75	06	30%	06	30%
Mild anxiety	<75	13	65%	03	15%

The pretest mean value was 15.85 with a standard deviation of 1.68. In the post test the mean value is 23.87 with a standard deviation of 1.72 which clearly indicates level of anxiety among hospitalized children 3-6yrs. The paired't' test value is 21.06 which is highly significant at $p < 0.001$ level.

Table 3: Association between the pre-test level of anxiety among children 3-6 yrs with their selected demographic variables in the experimental group.

(N = 20)

Characteristics	Category	Post-test level of anxiety						Chi square value	P Value
		Severe anxiety		Moderate anxiety		Mild anxiety			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Age of the child (years)	3-4 yrs	3	15%	2	10%	1	5%	0.099	0.779
	4-5 yrs	3	15%	2	10%	1	5%	df=4,	
	5-6 yrs	4	20%	3	15%	1	5%	NS	
Gender	Male	5	25%	5	25%	1	5%	**1.433***	**0.488**
	Female	5	25%	2	10%	2	0%	**df=4, S**	
Religion	Christian	3	15%	1	5%	1	5%	0.962	0.915
	Hindu	5	25%	4	20%	1	5%	df=4,	
	Muslim	2	10%	2	10%	1	5%	NS	
Type of family	Nuclear family	5	25%	3	15%	1	5%	**1.042***	**0.903**
	Joint family	4	20%	3	15%	1	5%	**df=4, S**	
	Separated family	1	5%	1	5%	1	5%		
Birth order of the child	1st child	4	20%	3	15%	1	5%	0.712	0.949
	2nd child	4	20%	4	20%	1	5%	df=4	
	3rd child	2	10%	1	5%	1	5%	NS	
Family income / month	Below Rs.10,000	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%	0.903	0.919
	Rs.10,000-20,000	3	15%	3	15%	1	5%	df=4	
	Above Rs.20,000	6	30%	3	15%	2	10%	NS	
Child admission to the hospital	First time	3	15%	2	10%	1	5%	0.896	0.925
	Adm. occasionally	4	20%	4	20%	1	5%	df=4	
	Adm. frequently	3	15%	1	5%	1	5%	NS	
Child admission to the hospital	First time	3	15%	2	10%	1	5%	0.896	0.925
	Adm. occasionally	4	20%	4	20%	1	5%	df=4	
	Adm. frequently	3	15%	1	5%	1	5%	NS	
Area of residence	Urban	3	15%	3	15%	1	5%	0.304	0.859
	Rural	7	35%	4	20%	2	10%	df=2 NS	
Type of diagnosis	Medical diagnosis	5	25%	5	25%	2	10%	0.853	0.652
	Surgical diagnosis	5	25%	2	10%	1	5%	df=2 NS	

Previous exposure to play therapy	Yes	3	15%	3	15%	1	5%	0.304 df=2 NS	0.859
	No	7	35%	4	20%	2	10%		

S – Non- Significant, S – Significant. *P < 0.05 level significant.

Discussion

The pretest level of anxiety among the hospitalized children 3-6yrs, in the experimental group 50% severe anxiety, 35% have moderate anxiety and 15% of the children had mild anxiety before the intervention among hospitalized children. In the control group, 55% had severe anxiety, 35 % had moderate anxiety and 10% had mild anxiety. In the post-test 5% had severe anxiety, 30% have moderate anxiety & 65% had mild anxiety after post test.

The comparison of pretest and post-test level of anxiety indicates the mean value was 15.85 with a standard deviation of 1.68. In the post test the mean value is 23.87 with a standard deviation of 1.727 which clearly indicates level of anxiety among hospitalized children 3-6yrs. The paired 't' test value is 21.066 which is highly significant at $p < 0.001$ level.

The age of children, religion, birth order of the child, family income, and child admission to the hospital, area of residence, type of diagnosis and previous exposure to play therapy were not significant. Hence, the hypothesis indicating there will be association with the pretest level of anxiety with the selected socio demographic variables in the experimental group was rejected. The gender and type of family were significant; hence the hypothesis indicating there will be an association with the pretest level of anxiety with the selected socio demographic variables in the experimental group was accepted.

The association between post-test levels of anxiety with their socio demographic variables in the experimental group reveals that the age of children, religion, type of family, family income, and child admission to the hospital, area of residence, and previous exposure to play therapy were significant. Hence, the hypotheses indicating there will be association to the pretest level of anxiety with the selected socio demographic variables in the experimental group is accepted. The gender and diagnosis of the child were not significant, hence the hypotheses was rejected.

A study was conducted to endure importance of play during hospitalization. The result was that during hospitalization, play either in the form of therapeutic play, or as in the form of play therapy, is proven to be of high therapeutic value for ill children, thus contributing to both their physical and emotional well-being and to their recovery. It helps to investigate issues related to the child's experiences in the hospital and reduce the intensity of negative feelings accompanying a child's admission to hospital and hospitalization.

Conclusion

The use of play in hospital may become a tool in the hands of healthcare professionals, in order to provide substantial assistance to hospitalized children, as long as they have appropriate training, patience, and will to apply it during hospitalization.

Recommendations

- A similar study can be done on a larger sample to generalize the findings.
- The necessary training program can be included for pediatric nurses to practice the therapeutic play as routine care in the hospital set ups.

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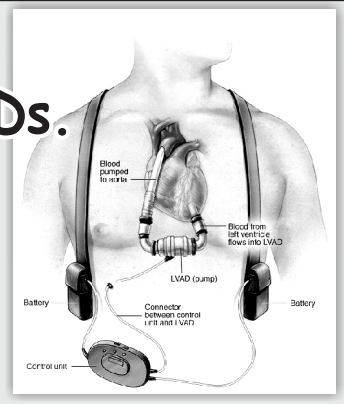
Caregivers also report stress when heart failure patients receive LVADs.



When heart failure patients receive a left ventricular assist device (LVAD), their caregivers also seem to suffer, at least initially, according to new research published March 7, 2018 in Journal of the American Heart Association. While patients reported dramatic improvement in quality of life in the first month after receiving an LVAD, caregivers reported significantly increased stress related to caregiving in terms of time constraints (no time for self-care or other obligations) and compromised social life, followed by physical strain.

(eMediNexus, 08 March 2018.)

"Always be yourself and have faith in yourself. Do not go out and look for a successful personality and try to duplicate it."

- Bruce Lee