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“Effectiveness of play intervention on anxiety among hospitalized children: A Systematic Review”

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Abstract

Hospital stay itself is a source of fear, confusion and emotions that are hard to process for young children and those with communication or developmental delays. Exposure to hospital environment, operating room, being away from the comfort of the familiar, new sensory triggers, new people, observing others in pain, will have a significant impact on a child's mind and emotional health. An electronic search was conducted by using the following databases: CINAHL, MEDLINE, PUBMED, Social science abstracts. The search term entered was “effectiveness of play intervention anxiety among hospitalized child”. Inclusion criteria were all articles written in English language and published since 2012, Descriptive, cross-sectional, systematic review, quasi-experimental studies were included. A mesh search using the term “effectiveness of play interventions on anxiety among hospitalized children” based on systematic review it was found that: Play Interventions are effective in reducing anxiety among hospitalized children.

Key words- Play Intervention, Hospitalization, Child, Anxiety

Effectiveness of play intervention on anxiety among hospitalized children: A Systematic Review

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Introduction

Each child is unique, so predicting reaction to an illness is often difficult. A visit to the hospital can be a frightening experience for children. The presence of unfamiliar sights and sounds, an increase in strangers, a fear of pain and procedures, and a lack of normalization may trigger anxiety in hospitalized children.

Hospitalization is the disruption of the lifestyle of children and their families. The change from home to hospital environment creates stress. The difference between hospital and home disturbs the child and adds to stress, for example, environment mealtime, toileting, feeding, bath time, and recreation.

Hospital stay itself is a source of fear, confusion and emotions that are hard to process for young children and those with communication or developmental delays. Exposure to hospital environment, operating room, being away from the comfort of the familiar, new sensory triggers, new people, observing others in pain, will have a significant impact on a child's mind and emotional health. Unfavorable experience in these circumstances can result in fear towards medical staff, feelings of mistrust and betrayal towards family members and sometimes leads to severe consequences like post-traumatic stress disorder.

A cross-sectional study was conducted to explore the effects to hospitalization on critically ill School age Children. A convenience sample was recruited of 21 developmentally appropriate children.. Children were asked open-ended questions related to their hospital experience and drawings were used to assess the stress. Most children has high level of stress (ranged: 73-87%) based on the analysis of their drawings and open-ended questions. The study concluded that hospitalization leads to development of more stress in School age Children.

Anxiety is the most commonly reported emotion of children when confronted with surgery or stressful medical procedures and a risk factor for pre-, intra and postoperative complications. It is estimated that 60% of children suffer from anxiety in the preoperative period. Excessive anxiety and stress can affect children's physical and psychological health and it has been associated with number of negative behaviors (e.g. agitation, crying and spontaneous urination) also it hinders their ability to cope with surgery and may also inhibit their post-operative recovery.

Methods-

An electronic search was conducted by using the following databases: CINAHL, MEDLINE, PUBMED, Social science abstracts. The search term entered was "effectiveness of play intervention anxiety among hospitalized child". Inclusion criteria were all articles written in English language and published since 2012, Discriptive, crossectional, systematic review, quasiexperimental studies were included. A mesh search using the term "effectiveness of play interventions on anxiety among hospitalized children" was also conducted through the health Teton data systems to seek out textbook references. There was no exclusion criteria, and all articles, books and book chapters found significant were included to the current review. The search generated total 62 articles. out of 60 articles the full text of the 36 articles were retrieved and reviewed.

Results

Analysis was done.62 papers wwre retrieved by the search. among them 36 were evaluated to be higher quality A systematic review was done to evaluate the effectiveness of play Intervention on anxiety among hospitalized child

The reviews were divided into three areas

- **Literature related to anxiety due to hospitalization**
- **Literature related to Play interventions.**
- **Literature related to Play interventions in reducing anxiety among the hospitalized children.**

Out of 10 studies five studies (50%) were descriptive studies on anxiety among hospitalized children had moderate to severe level of anxiety among children. Another three studies (30%) were a comparative study which focused on comparison of anxiety level among hospitalized and non hospitalized child and they revealed that Hospitalized children had more anxiety symptoms as compared to non hospitalized child. Two studies (20%) were non-experimental studies which revealed that the anxiety events are significantly higher among hospitalized child in comparison to Non hospitalized. None of the study revealed that the hospitalized child had no anxiety.

Sample review

Literature Related to Anxiety due to hospitalization

A study was conducted to compare the frequency and severity of manifestations of anxiety, depression, delirium, and withdrawal in 43 pediatric patients of age 6-17 years hospitalized in intensive care unit (n=18) versus ward settings (n=25) and to evaluate the impact of preexisting psychopathologic disorders on the expression of these symptoms. As measured by the Hospital Observed Behavior Scale, subjects in the intensive care unit exhibited apprehension, anxiety, detachment, sadness, and weeping more often than did patients in the ward. Results revealed that Behavior was also significantly influenced by severity of illness, duration of hospitalization, number of previous hospitalizations, and presence of a preexisting anxiety or mood.

A study was conducted on fears of 110 school-age children during hospitalization and their coping strategies and subjects were selected by convenient sampling from medical & surgical units of University Pediatric Hospital at El-Shatby and Students Health Insurance Hospital in Alexandria were included in the study. Data was collected through a socio demographic and clinical data questionnaire, Child Medical Fear Scale (CMFS) and School agers' Coping Strategies Inventory (SCSI). The findings showed a significant positive relation between fears related to physical hurt and duration of present admission where ($p = 0.04^*$, $r = 0.19$). In addition, there was significant positive relation between fears related to physical hurt and number of previous admissions where ($p = 0.02^*$, $r = 0.30$) and significant positive relation between fears related to loss of control and number of previous admissions where ($p = 0.04^*$, $r = 0.11$). The findings also revealed significant positive relation coping strategies (behavioral distraction) and number of previous admissions ($p = 0.001^*$, $r = 0.52$). Based on the findings of the present study, it is concluded that the most feared items for hospitalized school age children are operating room, getting a shot, darkness, hurting self and sleeping alone, missing and failure in school, having to stay a long time in hospital and dying in hospital.⁴⁷

Literature Related To Play interventions

A study was conducted on the importance of play during hospitalization of children in order to review, detect and highlight all data cited regarding the role of play in Greece. Literature review was achieved by searching the databases Scopus, PubMed, Cinhal in English, using the following key words: therapeutic play, play therapy, hospitalized child, therapist. Result showed 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 contributed 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. A quasi-experimental study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of bibliotherapy on stress among 60 hospitalized children (6-12 yrs.) from pediatric ward of Bishop Benziger Hospital and Holy Cross Hospital, Kollam by purposive sampling method in selected hospitals, Kollam. Pretest posttest control

group design was used in the study. The bibliotherapy material which was used in the study includes a story consists of three chapters and worksheet for follow up activities which includes coloring pictures, matching and puzzles. The findings showed that as the calculated 't' value of stress of hospitalized children in the experimental group i.e., 27.48 is larger than table value $t(29) = 2.04$. It showed that there is an effectiveness of bibliotherapy in reducing the stress of hospitalized children. The results revealed that all the samples had moderate and severe stress. It is evident that bibliotherapy was highly effective in reducing the stress of hospitalized children with medical conditions. Hence, it could be utilized as an adjunct therapy in the hospital settings to reduce the anxiety.

Literature related to play interventions in reducing anxiety among the hospitalized children.

Fifteen out of 35 studies (42.8%) assessed the effect of play interventions on anxiety among hospitalized child and it was found that play intervention was effective enough to reduce anxiety among hospitalized child. ^(23,24) Further Eleven more studies assessed the effect of play intervention on anxiety among hospitalized child and it was found that when play intervention combined with other interventions was effective enough to reduce anxiety among hospitalized child

Sample review

An Experimental study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of play interventions among 60 preoperative hospitalized school age children of 6-12 yrs. who were selected by using purposive sampling technique and divided into experimental and comparison group. Two group pre-test post test design was used. Pretest anxiety was assessed and play intervention (video game) was given to the experimental group (n=30) along with the routine care and only routine care to the control group (n=30). The data was collected by using demographic Performa and numerical state anxiety scale. The study result showed that the calculated 't' value ($t = 4.225$) was greater than the table value ($t_{58} = 1.671$) at 0.05 level of significance. The pre-test anxiety score was independent of all the demographic variables such as age, gender, religion, type of family, residence, care giver present during hospital stay, past child reactions to any procedures. The results depicted that the play intervention was effective in reducing the anxiety among hospitalized children.

An experimental study was conducted to assess the effect of play among 60 immobilized children in hospital. Subjects were randomly assigned to the experimental or control group. Children in the control group were exposed to the regular ward stimuli while the experimental group participated in four periods of planned play designed to expand the child's life space. Children were interviewed following the play periods and data analyzed using quantitative and qualitative analysis. Results of the study indicated that immobilized children exposed to planned play periods expressed more positive feelings toward themselves and significant others than the control group.

Conclusion

- Based on the above stated reviews it was found that: Play Interventions are effective in reducing anxiety among hospitalized children.

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