



## effectiveness of bibliotherapy on stress among hospitalized children

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### ABSTRACT

*Hospitalization is the disruption of the routines of the children and their families. The change from home to hospital, in terms of their environment, toileting, feeding, bath time and recreation create stress. Children comfort a wide variety of stressful and potentially traumatic events that may overwhelm their natural ability to cope and heal. The stress of illness and hospitalization increases the value of play which not only facilitates normal development but also provides a means to learn about health care, to express anxieties, to work through feelings. There are various therapeutic play techniques including stories, drawings, music, dramatic play and pets. Bibliotherapy is the use of books as a therapeutic intervention. The present paper aims to understand the effectiveness of bibliotherapy on stress among hospitalized children in selected hospitals, Kollam.*

**KEYWORDS :** bibliotherapy, stress, hospitalized children.

### Introduction

Hospitalization whether it is elective, planned in advance, or the result of an emergency or trauma is stressful for children of all ages and their family. If the child has had a previous illness or hospitalization, how that event unfolded and the child's response to it greatly affects the child's view of future occurrence. Each child is unique, so predicting reaction to an illness is often difficult. Much of the research on the effects of hospitalization on children has been based on adult assumption of the child's experience and in children's self-reports

Hospitalization and prolonged illness can retard growth and development and cause adverse reactions in the child based on the stage of development. They react with defense mechanisms like regression anxiety, negativism, depression, phobia, unrealistic fear, suppression or denial of symptoms and conscious attempts to mature behavior. The nurse is often the first person the child sees when the child enters the health care delivery system and therefore has a unique opportunity to influence child by providing various recreational activities like structured or unstructured play therapy.

The best techniques or materials used for children regarding hospitalization and health care are videotapes and books. Children naturally enjoy stories, having books read to them, memorable characters, ideas can unblock emotions and provide opportunity for the client to organize, understand themselves and others as guided by a well trained therapist. Children do not have to "own" their problems as books provide some psychological distance and safety. Bibliotherapy is the use of written materials or computer or listening, use of audio or video tapes for the purpose of gaining understanding or solving problems relevant to a person's developmental or therapeutic needs. A majority of the studies shows mixed results for the efficacy of bibliotherapy, it generally appears to be more successful as an adjunctive therapy. Despite such mixed research result, however, interest in the use of bibliotherapy appears to have increased in the past few years

### Design and Methods

The researcher selected quasi-experimental method with pretest-post test control group design. Sample consisted of 60 hospitalized children between six to twelve years of age. The samples were selected from pediatric wards of Bishop Benziger Hospital and Holy Cross Hospital, Kollam by purposive sampling method. The researcher underwent a contact hour course in bibliotherapy from department of learn well resource, Canada. The bibliotherapy material which is used in the study includes a story consists of three chapters and worksheet for follow up activities which includes coloring pictures, matching and puzzles. Stories of bibliotherapy are provided through read aloud method by researcher and followed by worksheets which included coloring pictures, matching and puzzles. The bibliotherapy material selected for this particular study is developed by the researcher based on review of research articles, non-research literature, discussion with experts and guide. The stress of hospitalized children in both the experimental and control group were assessed prior to the intervention. Bibliotherapy was given to the experimental group alone. Stress

of the hospitalized children in both the group were assessed on the first day of hospitalization using the stress scale and bibliotherapy intervention, which consists of stories was given through read-aloud method by the researcher and followed by worksheets given to the experimental group on next two consecutive days. Story which is used for the bibliotherapy is divided in to two parts of which story chapter one and two along with worksheet part one was given on the second day of hospitalization and story chapter there and part two of worksheets was given on third day of hospitalization. On the fourth day of hospitalization stress of the hospitalized children in both the groups was assessed using the same stress scale.

After the completion of the intervention to the experimental group, stress of both the groups (control and experimental) are assessed on the fourth day of hospitalization.

### Tools

#### Part 1 : Demographic profile

Part 11: Stress rating scale: The tool was developed on the basis of hospital stress rating scale developed by Volcier and Bohannon (1975). The scale has four subscales such as events related to hospitalization, patient-staff relationship, Ward environment and special difficulties arising out of the disease.

### Results

#### Description of the sample characteristics

Among the total respondents, 46.7 percent were in the age group of 6-9 years and 53.3 percent of them were in 10-12 years. Regarding the sex of the children, 55 percent constituted of females and remaining 45 percent were males. Most of the hospitalized children were from rural area. Most of the hospitalized children i.e., 59 percent belonged to the first birth order. Most of the children had one or two previous hospitalization. With regard to the caregiver at the hospital most of them mentioned i.e., 98.3 percent as mother and all of them had previous exposure to painful procedure.

Description of stress among hospitalized children

The figure 1 is about here

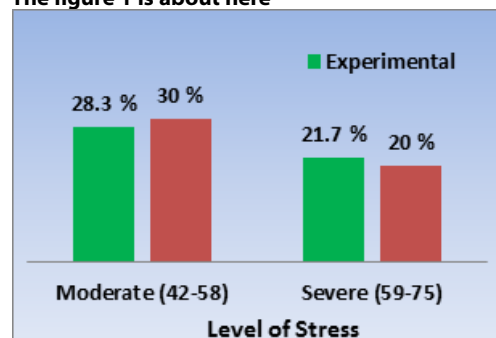


Figure 1 shows that majority of the samples, ie. 58.3 percent experienced moderate stress whereas 41.7 percent had severe stress during the pretest.

**Evaluation of effectiveness of bibliotherapy on stress of hospitalized children**

In order to analyze the effectiveness of bibliotherapy on stress in the experimental group, the following hypotheses were formulated.

**H<sub>1</sub>** – There will be a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of stress of the hospitalized children after receiving bibliotherapy.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>** – There will not be a significant difference between pre-test and post-test stress scores of the hospitalized after receiving bibliotherapy.

**The table 1 is about here**

Table 1 Mean, standard deviation, paired 't' value of stress in experimental group.			
Mean	Paired standard deviation	Paired 't'	df
16.5	3.29	27.48	29
t <sub>(29)</sub> = 2.04 *significant			

Table 1 reveals 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<sub>(29)</sub> = 2.04, Hence null hypothesis Ho<sub>1</sub> is rejected and research hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> is accepted. It shows that there is an effectiveness of bibliotherapy in reducing the stress of hospitalized children.

**Conclusion**

This study drawn the conclusion based on the findings of the study. Pre-test 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 stress.

**Limitations**

The study was limited to a particular geographic area (Kollam) and Small number of samples (60) used to conduct the study has restricted the generalization of results

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