

The Application of Storytelling Therapy in Reducing Anxiety in Preschool-Aged Children Experienced Hospitalization: Literature Review

Musviro¹, Sri Wahyuningsih¹, Rella Desinta K. A.¹

¹Department of Pediatric and Maternity Nursing, Nursing Diploma Program, Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Jember, Lumajang, Indonesia

Correspondence should be addressed to:
Musviro
musviro@unej.ac.id

Abstract:

Hospitalization is a condition that requires children to be hospitalized; this situation can cause children to feel anxious; anxiety due to hospitalization in preschool-aged children can cause excessive fear, which causes children to be uncooperative, decreased appetite, and decreased sleep quality so that the process of healing becomes obstructed and affects the child's growth and development if not treated immediately. Dig deeper into the effect of storytelling therapy in reducing anxiety in preschool-aged children who experience hospitalization. The method used in preparing the Literature review uses the PRISMA checklist and PICOS. The secondary data obtained comes from journals with predetermined discussions. Based on the results of a literature search through six databases. Researchers get 342 articles that match the keywords. The researcher then screened based on the title (n=119), abstract (n=57), and full text (n=15) adjusted for inclusion criteria. Storytelling therapy is carried out for three days starting on the first day the child enters the children's room, carried out for 10-20 minutes independently with the assistance of parents. Storytelling therapy by telling stories can reduce anxiety, which influences overcoming anxiety caused by hospitalization in preschool-aged children by controlling children's negative thoughts through stories and changing their negative outlook to a positive one through the stories told. Storytelling therapy is a therapy that can be used in nursing care for preschool children who experience anxiety due to hospitalization.

Article info:

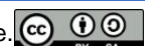
Submitted:
07-01-2023
Revised:
01-02-2023
Accepted:
02-02-2023

Keywords:

hospitalization; children; pre-school age children; storytelling

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53713/htechj.v1i1.7>

This work is licensed under CC BY-SA License.



INTRODUCTION

Hospitalization is a process that occurs for a planned or emergency, requiring a person to be treated at home sick (Harsismanto, 2019). According to the World Health Organization (WHO) prevalence of preschool children undergoing hospitalization increased in 2017 by 45%, and data obtained from UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) in 2017 showed that nearly 5.8 million preschool children experienced hospitalization each month and Indonesia alone the number of children who are treated at home sick in 2019 as much as 25.26%. For preschool-aged children, hospitalization is an unpleasant experience because when a child is treated in a health care facility such as a hospital, the child will face a new environment that is foreign to him with nursing care providers that the child cannot understand and health procedures that cause the child to feel worried.

Anxiety due to hospitalization will cause children to feel anxious and uncooperative, which can hinder the healing process; besides, anxiety that is not treated will have a long impact on

children (Christabel, 2018), so atraumatic care interventions are needed. Atraumatic care is an intervention in nursing care that is expected to help children prevent and overcome the anxiety they experience during the nursing process (Patel and Vageriya, 2019), and one form of atraumatic care therapy is storytelling therapy. Storytelling therapy is an appropriate cognitive intervention in the use of audio to reduce anxiety in preschool children by telling stories through words, sound, and pictures, expressing their feelings about a change in life that they are feeling in their environment, growing the strength within themselves to increase resilience in life (Safitri, 2017). This study aims to dig deeper into the effect of storytelling therapy in reducing anxiety in preschool-aged children who experience hospitalization.

METHOD

The method used in preparing the Literature review uses the PRISMA checklist and PICOS. The secondary data obtained comes from journals with predetermined discussions. Based on the results of a literature search through six databases (Elsevier, Springer, NEJM, CINAHL, NCBI dan Scholar). Researchers get 342 articles that match the keywords. Researchers then screened based on the title (n=119), abstract (n=57), and full text (n=15), which were adjusted to the inclusion criteria.

Table 1. PICOS Criteria for Article Screening

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Population/Problem	Preschool-aged children who experience anxiety due to hospitalization.	Children outside of preschool-aged
Intervention	Storytelling therapy	Non-storytelling therapy
Comparison	No comparison	-
Outcome	Analysis of the effect of play therapy by story telling in preschool-aged children who experience anxiety due to hospitalization.	Not describe Analysis of the effect of play therapy by storytelling in preschool-aged children who experience anxiety due to hospitalization
Study Design	Quasi-experimental studies, randomized control and trial, systematic review, qualitative research, and cross-sectional studies	No exclusion
Publication Years	After 2015	Before 2015
Language	English, Indonesian	Other than English, Indonesian

RESULT

Based on research results found in 15 journals, the results show that storytelling therapy by telling stories can reduce anxiety, which has an influence on overcoming anxiety caused by hospitalization in pre-school-aged children. Of all the journal articles found, the statistical test results are valuable positive where the p-value is 0.05.

Table 2. The Result of Article Mapping

No	Title	Population	Method	Results
1.	The effect of storytelling in a play therapy on anxiety level in pre-school children during hospitalization in the general hospital of Buton (Yati, Wahyuni, and Islaeli, 2017)	The target population in this study was all children treated at the General Hospital of Buton. There were 30 pre-school children selected in this study using accidental sampling, with 15 assigned to each group	Quasi-experimental study with pretest-posttest control group design	Findings showed that the mean level of anxiety in the intervention group in pretest was 42 and in posttest was 31.53. The Wilcoxon matched paired test showed a $p=0.003$ (<0.05), which indicated that there was a statistically significant effect of storytelling on the level of anxiety in pre-school children.
2.	The effects of preoperative story telling interventions on preoperative anxiety and postoperative pain (Álvarez-García and Yaban, 2020)	The incidence of anxiety in the pediatric population	Systematic review and meta-analysis were	Storytelling preoperatively was shown to be effective in relieving preoperative state anxiety in children ($d \frac{1}{4} 3.71$), preoperative trait anxiety in adults ($d \frac{1}{4} 0.64$), and postoperative pain in adults ($d \frac{1}{4} 0.24$). Postoperative pain in children and preoperative state anxiety in adults was reduced but without significant difference.
3.	The Effectiveness of Storytelling on Separation Anxiety in Hospitalized Children with Chronic Diseases (Shafiee, Gharibvand, and Hemmatipour, 2018)	Forty hospitalized children with chronic diseases were selected. In this clinical trial study, on the basis of Spence's Preschool Anxiety Scale and using random sampling,	Clinical trial studies	The results showed a significant reduction in anxiety in children in the experimental group compared with children who did not receive four sessions of statistically significant differences in anxiety between the two groups after the intervention.
4.	The effect on anxiety and behavioral disorders in children undergoing surgery: a randomized controlled trial (Zohre, 2020)	The statistical population included 30 who were selected by a multistage random sampling method.	Quasi-experimental study with pre-test and post-test.	The results showed that narrative therapy had a significant effect on anxiety and there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. That is, the mean scores of the experimental group in the post-test compared to the control group were significantly lower in terms of school anxiety.
5.	The application of spiritual stories to worry children with hospitalization at the Al Islam Hospital in Bandung (Nurjanah and Fitriani, 2019)	Collecting data was done through observation with Mc. Murty Faces Anxiety Scales. Data analysis used paired t test to compare the children's anxiety level, before and after intervention.	Quasi-experimental pilot research	The average score of anxiety before being treated with spiritual stories was 3.5 while the average score after being treated with spiritual stories was 1.5. Statistical test results showed a p value of 0.001, it can be concluded that there is the influence of spiritual stories applied to children's anxiety levels.

No	Title	Population	Method	Results
6.	Impact of Storytelling on Anxiety in 4-7 Year Old Children in Hospital: A Randomized Clinical Trial Study (Judge, 2018)	The samples were 40 children aged 4 to 7 years which were admitted at Ahvaz educational hospital for different medical reasons.	Clinical trials	The findings showed that there is a statistically significant difference between mean anxiety in the two groups after intervention and storytelling caused anxiety reduction among hospitalized children compared to the children who had not received intervention ($p \leq 0.01$).
7.	The effect of a clown model is implemented in the hospital on the anxiety and depression level of ill children and their mothers (Alparslan and Bozkurt, 2018)	The population of the study consisted of 461 sick children who were under treatment in pediatric services from Sivas State Hospital in Turkey and their mothers.	Descriptive and experimental study	96% of the children stated that they had enjoyed the clowns, 84% the clowns had been entertaining and relieving, 94% wished the clowns would visit them again and 80% said the first thing they would remember when they were hospitalized again would be the clowns. The presence of clowns during hospital stay was found useful for managing children's anxiety and depression ($p < 0.05$), but it was not efficient for their mothers ($p > 0.05$)
8.	The effect of storytelling on anxiety and behavioral disorders in children undergoing surgery: a randomized controlled trial (Sekhavatpour et al., 2019)	Was conducted on ten children in the intervention group and ten children in the control group.	Randomized controlled clinical trial (RCT)	The results showed that significantly decreased in the intervention group after book reading, but the mean total anxiety and its three dimensions did not show statistically significant differences before and after treatment in the control group ($p > 0.05$). The mean scores of the Behavioral Disorder questionnaire significantly decreased in the intervention group after reading the book ($p = 0.001$), but significantly increased in the control group ($p < 0.001$).
9.	Advances in Nursing Science & Research Exploring Learning of Pediatric Burn Patients through Drawing and Storytelling (Godshall, 2020)	They suggested future research should assess pediatric burn patients as a separate population, as well as investigate adherence to multiple aspects of the burn care regimen.	The research method was qualitative using storytelling.	Sixteen of the twenty children identified at least one learning point from the discharge teaching coloring book. It was concluded that children want to learn about how to care for their bodies in order to achieve optimum health and quality of life.

No	Title	Population	Method	Results
10.	The Effect of Story Telling on the Anxiety Level of Preschool Children Undergoing Hospitalization at RSUP Dr. M. DJAMIL Hospital Padang (Safitri, 2017)	preschool age children undergoing hospitalization in the acute and chronic rooms at Dr.M.DJAMIL Hospital Padang.	Pre-experimental	40% of children experience high levels of anxiety, 60.0% of children experience moderate levels of anxiety. After Story Telling therapy, it was found that 20.0% of children experienced moderate levels of anxiety and 80.0% of children experienced low levels of anxiety. There is the influence of story telling on the anxiety level of preschool children undergoing hospitalization at Dr.M.DJAMIL Hospital Padang.
11.	Story Telling Therapy And Watching Cartoon Animation Against Anxiety (Padila, Agusramon, and Yera, 2019)	10 pre-school age children who have been treated with measuring anxiety levels using PASR	Quasi-experiment two groups before after or pretest and posttest group.	Treatment using story telling (story telling) more significantly reduces anxiety in pre-school age children at Rafflesia Hospital Bengkulu City compared to watching animated cartoons, with the average score of the 5th posttest results between story telling therapy and watching animated cartoons, namely 2.00 and 8.00.
12.	Brief Report Effect of Digital Storytelling on Anxiety in Patients Who Are Candidates for Open-Heart Surgery (Moghimian et al., 2019)	80 patients were randomly allocated into 2 groups. The intervention group received routine training and digital storytelling.	Quasi-experimental study	There was no significant difference in the anxiety of both groups during the 2 days before the surgery ($P = .40$). After the surgery, the mean of anxiety scores in the intervention group was lower than that of the control group ($p < 0.001$)
13.	The Effect of Storytelling and Guided-Imagery on the Level of Change in Anxiety of Preschool-aged Children Undergoing Invasive Actions (Legi, Sulaeman, and Purwanti, 2019)	There are 24 preschool children in the pediatric ward. Respondents were divided into four groups, namely storytelling interventions for groups of children accompanied by parents and those not accompanied by parents, and interventions	Purposive sampling	The results of statistical tests showed that there was an effect of storytelling therapy on reducing the anxiety level of preschool-aged children who were subjected to invasive measures. Storytelling is applied as a traumatic care intervention to reduce the anxiety of preschoolers.

No	Title	Population	Method	Results
14.	The Effect of Fairytale Therapy on Reducing Anxiety Levels in Preschool-aged Children in the Irna III A Room of Mataram City Hospital (Ahba, 2019)	All preschool children who experience anxiety in the Irna III A room of the Mataram City Hospital are 15 children in the treatment group and 15 children in the control group.	Quasi-experiment	The results of the study were obtained during the pre-test, the average respondent's anxiety level was in the severe anxiety category (73%). After being given fairy tale therapy, the results during the post-test were that the average respondent's anxiety level was in the moderate category (67%). is accepted and H0 is rejected, there is an effect of fairy tale therapy on reducing anxiety levels in preschool-aged children in the Irna III A room at the Mataram City Hospital.
15.	The Comparison between Effectiveness of Storytelling and Play Therapy on Kindergarten Children Separation Anxiety (Pouyamamanesh and Aghdam, 2017)	The statistical population were children of Garmsar city kindergartens who reported that they could not separate from mothers and could not adjust to the kindergarten environment, teacher and classmate for more than 4 weeks. Procedure	The method of this research was randomized clinical trial with a control group design	The results showed that storytelling and play therapy were effective in reducing separation anxiety disorder in the post-test ($\alpha < 0.05$) but there was no significant difference between the effectiveness of storytelling and disruption of play therapy ($\alpha > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The application of story telling therapy can be done to pre-school aged children in various ways, namely by telling stories, watching animations, telling stories while watching animations and reading books by themselves, story telling therapy by telling stories can stimulate children's development such as sensory-motor, intellectual development, development social development, creativity development, self-awareness development moral development, and stories also have the power to have a big impact on the mind and emotions, especially if the story is real, this is because an interesting story can provide a view of a sense of security and peace, a sense of trust self towards himself, as well as instilling a sense of sensitivity in his mind so that children are able to distinguish between what is good and what is bad, instilling awareness of truth and justice, courage, honesty, loyalty, sacrifice, and honor, when applying story telling therapy by means of independent story telling can be done n for three consecutive days with a time of giving 10-20 minutes and time by way of group storytelling carried out for one week for 30 minutes. Story therapy has positive impacts, including being able to give pleasure to children, building a friendly atmosphere between children and nurses so that it can reduce children's anxiety levels and can become a media for channeling pent-up emotions in children.

Story telling therapy by telling stories that are done at the right time when the child is relaxed with a duration of giving therapy for 10-20 minutes can reduce anxiety levels in children

undergoing hospitalization where by telling stories will make children happy, comfortable and entertained so that the level of anxiety in children is reduced and the application of storytelling stimulation with audiovisual has a positive influence on the development of children's feelings by viewing children as a behavioral system, where protection and control of the behavioral system should be patterned, and stimulated continuously and have a purpose, besides that there are factors that influence the effectiveness of therapy including selection of themes or titles that are fun for children, story material delivered continuously in a sustainable and enjoyable manner, use of language styles that are appropriate to the child's level of understanding, choose the time and determine the appropriate duration of time, it says that reading a story to children for ten minutes with full attention and enthusiasm may last longer in the child's mind, and the storyteller's ability to present it more interestingly with the intonation and tempo that suits the story.

Storytelling or storytelling has proven to be effective for nurses to implement for preschool patient patients while the child is hospitalized because, in storytelling therapy, the stimulus is given continuously, and the stimulation that is carried out continuously makes the child function his brain and new synapses are formed to respond to stimulation. Stimulation will strengthen old synapses and automatically make the brain function better, if the stimulation in the form of storytelling therapy is given repeatedly, a memory will occur in the child's brain so that children can remember and understand more deeply, so storytelling therapy can make children understand their situation, reducing the anxiety he is feeling, understanding his new environment and being cooperative in carrying out treatment and improving the language development of preschoolers.

CONCLUSION

The main anxiety in preschool children who experience hospitalization is caused by separation, changes in the environment, and changes in roles and factors from health workers who are foreign to them. The application of storytelling therapy to preschool-aged children is made by telling stories, watching animations, telling stories while watching animations, and reading books by themselves, and the application of storytelling therapy can be made for 10-20 minutes. Therapy Storytelling has proven to affect overcoming anxiety in preschool children due to hospitalization with teaching children to control negative thoughts in a positive direction through stories. Nurses can do storytelling therapy as a therapy that can be used in nursing care for preschool children who experience anxiety due to hospitalization.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If needed, you can thank the research funders and any research participants in this section. If needed, you can thank the research funders and any research participants in this section. Thank you to the Universitas Jember for providing the opportunity to explore stunting, which currently needs attention, and thanks to the team who has completed this review.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest in this research.

REFERENCES

- Ahba, A. A. P., & Novi, E. R. N. (2019). The Effect of Fairytale Therapy on Reducing Anxiety Levels in Preschool-aged Children in the Irna Ili A Room of Mataram City Hospital. *PRIMA*, 5(2), 1–6.
- Alparslan, Ö., & Gülçin, B. (2018). The Effect of a Clown Model Implemented in Hospital on the Anxiety and Depression Level of Ill Children and Their Mothers. *Arts and Health*, 10(2), 138–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2017.1334679>.
- Álvarez-García, C., & Züleyha, Ş. Y. (2020). The Effects of Preoperative Guided Imagery Interventions on Preoperative Anxiety and Postoperative Pain: A Meta-Analysis. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, 38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ctcp.2019.101077>.
- Christabel, C. S. M. D. (2018). Effectiveness of Origami on Hospitalized Anxiety among Children. *International Journal of Advance Research and Development*, 3(8), 169–73. <https://www.ijarnd.com/>.
- Godshall, M. (2020). Advances in Nursing Science & Research Exploring Learning of Pediatric Burn Patients through Drawings and Storytelling. <https://doi.org/10.39127/ANSR>.
- Hakim, A. (2018). Impact of Storytelling on Anxiety in 4-7 Year Old Children in Hospital: A Randomized Clinical Trial Study. *Scientific Journal of Hamadan Nursing & Midwifery Faculty*, 26(3), 155–64. <https://doi.org/10.30699/sjhnmf.26.3.155>.
- Harsismanto, L. Y., & Alfhatona, I. (2019). Effectiveness of Touch And Talk Therapy and Storytelling Therapy on the Anxiety of Children Aged 3-6 Years. 07(April).
- Ji, M., Tang, A., Zhang, Y., Zou, J., Zhou, G., Deng, J., Yang, L. et al. (2018). The Relationship between Obesity, Sleep and Physical Activity in Chinese Preschool Children. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15030527>.
- Koolae, A. K., Vazifehdar, R., Bahari, F., & Akbari, M. E. (2016). Impact of Painting Therapy on Aggression and Anxiety of Children with Cancer. *Caspian Journal of Pediatrics*, 2(2), 135–41. <https://doi.org/10.22088/acadpub.BUMS.2.2.135>.
- Kumarawati, K. T. Y. W., Minarti, N. M. A., & Ari, N. L. (2018). THE EFFECT OF STORY THERAPY ON THE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN. *Community of Publishing in Nursing (COPING)*, 6, 41–48.
- Legi, J. R., Sulaeman, S., & Purwanti, N. H. (2019). The Influence of Storytelling and Guided-Imagery on the Level of Change in Anxiety of Preschool-aged Children Performed Invasive Actions. *Journal of Telenursing (JOTING)*, 1(1), 145–56. <https://doi.org/10.31539/joting.v1i1.496>.
- Moghimian, M., Akbari, M., Moghaddasi, J., & Niknadjad, R. (2019). Brief Report Effect of Digital Storytelling on Anxiety in Patients Who Are Candidates for Open-Heart Surgery. 34(3), 231–35. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JCN.0000000000000569>.
- Mujahidin, E., & Pancawati, A. D. (2018). Islamic Education Effects of Story Material. 211–28.
- Musviro, & Fibriansari, R. D. (2019). *Child Nursing Practicum Module*. KMH.
- Nurjanah, N., & Fitriani, H. (2019). The Application of Spiritual Stories To Anxiety Of Children With Hospitalization At Al Islam Hospital In Bandung. *Technology Transformation in Healthcare for a Better Life ISGH*, 3(1), 317–23. https://scholar.google.co.id/scholar?hl=id&as_sdt=0,5&as_ylo=2019&q=anxiety+storytelling+children.
- Padila, A., Yera. (2019). Story Telling Therapy and Watching Cartoon Animation Against Anxiety. *Journal of Telenursing (JOTING)*, 1, 51–66.
- Patel, N., & Vageriya, V. (2019). Effect of Psycho Educational Intervention on Level of Anxiety among Hospitalized Children: A Systemic Literature Review. *Journal of Drug Delivery and Therapeutics*, 9(4-s), 855–860. <https://doi.org/10.22270/jddt.v9i4-s.3389>.

- Pouyamamanesh, J., & Aghdam, G. F. (2017). The Comparison between the Effectiveness of Storytelling and Play Therapy on Kindergarten Children Separation Anxiety. *4*(3), 28–36. <https://doi.org/10.22037/ijabs.v4i3.21615>.
- Renty, F. D., & Riyad, A. (2014). The Effect of Storytelling Play Therapy on Anxiety Levels in Preschool-aged Children (3-5 Years) Due to Hospitalization. 179–84.
- Safitri, A. S., Hendika. (2017). The Effect of Story Telling on the Anxiety Level of Preschool Children Undergoing Hospitalization at Rsup. *Journal of Health Sciences*, *1*, 44–50.
- Sekhavatpour, Z., Khanjani, N., Reyhani, T., Ghaffari, S., & Dastoorpoor, M. (2019). The Effect of Storytelling on Anxiety and Behavioral Disorders in Children Undergoing Surgery: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Pediatric Health, Medicine and Therapeutics*, *10*, 61–68. <https://doi.org/10.2147/phmt.s201653>.
- Shafiee, S. M., Gharibvand, S. S., & Hemmatipour, A. (2018). The Effectiveness of Storytelling on Separation Anxiety in Hospitalized Children with Chronic Diseases. *Journal of Research in Medical and Dental Science*, *6*(5), 284–90. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov.
- Yati, M., Wahyuni, S., & Islaeli, I. (2017). The Effect of Storytelling in a Play Therapy on Anxiety Level in Pre-School Children During Hospitalization in the General Hospital of Buton. *Public Health of Indonesia*, *3*(3), 96–101. <https://doi.org/10.36685/phi.v3i3.134>.