



Overview of The Level of Anxiety in Preschool-Age Children Undergoing Hospitalization In The Children's Room of dr. H Jusuf SK Hospital

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Abstract

Hospitalization is a crisis situation in children, when the child is sick and treated in the hospital. Anxiety is a negative emotional state characterized by premonition and somatic tension, such as a racing heart, sweating, difficulty breathing. The ability of a person or individual to adapt varies, so that stress or anxiety can arise. Efforts from the health sector that can be developed to minimize the negative impact of child care are by approaching parents, providing a comfortable and safe environment for children, providing toys or things that are loved by children and suggesting the implementation of family-centered care. The purpose of this study was to determine the level of anxiety in preschool-aged children who were hospitalized in the Children's Ward of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Hospital. This study used quantitative descriptive research with a survey design and used a purposive sampling technique, with a sample size of 36 respondents. The instrument used was the Facial Image Scale (FIS) observation sheet. Data analysis used univariate analysis to determine the distribution of each assessment category. The results showed that the level of anxiety of respondents in the Children's Ward of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Hospital was mostly in the moderate anxiety category, namely 18 people (50.0%). For further researchers, this research can be developed by examining other influences that can affect the level of anxiety in preschool children during hospitalization that have not been studied in this study.

INTRODUCTION

Preschoolers are children aged 3-6 years old, usually able to participate in preschool or kindergarten programs. The cognitive development of preschool children differs from the preoperational stage (Alwi, 2021). Preschoolers who become ill and require hospitalization can experience unpleasant experiences. Unpleasant experiences in preschoolers elicit various responses to hospitalization. The most common response in preschoolers undergoing hospitalization is anxiety (Whenny & Sudiarti, 2024). Interviews with 10 parents, who reported on their children's reactions to hospitalization, revealed that the majority reported anger, crying/fussiness, difficulty sleeping, and refusal to go home.

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Hospitalization in preschool children can lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which can lead to prolonged hospitalization trauma, even after the child reaches adulthood. The various effects of anxiety experienced by preschool children due to hospitalization can disrupt their growth and development and impact the healing process (Sari et al., 2023). Anxiety that is addressed quickly and effectively will make children more comfortable and cooperative with medical personnel, thus preventing disruptions to the treatment process (Wardani et al., 2023).

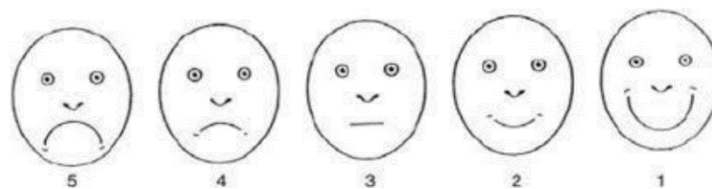
Data from the World Health Organization (2022) indicates that the percentage of children hospitalized with anxiety reaches 45%. According to UNICEF (2021), each year, 75% of 57 million children experience trauma in the form of fear and anxiety during treatment. In the United States, approximately 5 million children are hospitalized for surgery, and more than 50% experience anxiety and stress. Indonesia has 30.82% of preschool children (3-5 years old), and approximately 35 out of 100 children experience anxiety during hospitalization (Nurul Fajriati, 2023).

Based on a preliminary study conducted on November 11 in the Children's Ward of Dr. A study conducted by Dr. H. Jusuf SK found that 12 preschool children who were hospitalized experienced fear when healthcare workers were about to treat them. These 8 children showed a lack of cooperation with healthcare workers and cried. The anxiety levels of these 8 preschool children were 6 with moderate anxiety and 2 with severe anxiety.

Based on the above background, the researcher was interested in conducting a study on the anxiety levels of preschool children hospitalized in the pediatric ward of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Regional General Hospital.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a descriptive study design to assess anxiety in hospitalized preschool children. The study was conducted in the pediatric ward of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Regional General Hospital from December 7, 2024, to January 7, 2025. The population was preschool patients (aged 3-6 years) hospitalized in the pediatric ward, with an average of 80 visits per month. The sample size was 36 patients, drawn using a purposive sampling method. The inclusion criteria were children accompanied by their parents, and the exclusion criteria were children undergoing intensive care. Data collection in this study used the Facial Image Scale (FIS) observation sheet to measure the anxiety levels of preschool children. The Facial Image Scale (FIS) observation sheet, with respondents' facial expressions, was determined by scoring as follows:



This research has passed ethical approval under No. 148/KEPK-RSUD dr. H. JUSUF SK/XI/2024. The data analysis used by the researcher is univariate analysis which shows the frequency distribution of the characteristics of the research subjects, a description of the level of anxiety of the respondents.

RESULTS

Table 1 Identification of Characteristics of Research Respondents Based on Age, Gender and Hospitalization Status at the Regional General Hospital Dr. H. Jusuf SK (N=36)

Variable	Frequency (f)	Means	Minutes	Max	SD
Respondent Age	36	4,86	3	6	1,119
Gender	Frequency (f)			Percentage (%)	
Male	21			58,3	
Women	15			41,7	
Total	36			100	
Hospitalization Status	Frequency (f)			Percentage (%)	
First Hospitalized	18			50,0	
More than once hospitalized	18			50,0	
Total	36			100	

The table above shows that the distribution of respondents by age has an average age of 4.86 years with the youngest age being 3 years and the oldest being 6 years. Based on gender, the majority of respondents had a male gender of 21 people (58.3%). Based on hospitalization status, respondents who had the status of hospitalization for the first time and had the same number of people were 18 people each.

Table 2 Identification of Anxiety Levels in Pre-School Pediatric Patients Who Are Hospitalized in the Children's Room of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Hospital

Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
mild anxiety	10	27,8
moderate anxiety	18	50,0
severe anxiety	8	22,2
Total	36	100,0

The table above shows that the majority of preschool respondents are in the category of moderate anxiety as many as 18 respondents (50.0%).

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the anxiety level of respondents in the Pediatric Ward of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Regional General Hospital was mostly in the moderate anxiety category, with 18 (50.0%). Hospitalization is a situation where a child is taken to the hospital, either planned or unplanned due to an emergency (Tanaem et al., 2019). During this process, a child will experience various events that can have a psychological impact due to the unfamiliar and unwelcome hospitalization process. A common problem experienced by preschool children during hospitalization is psychological changes, one of which is anxiety (Syarif et al., 2023). Anxiety is a worry about an emotional and subjective experience that has no specific object, causing the sufferer to feel anxious. A child feels that something bad could happen and is often accompanied by autonomic nervous system symptoms and lasts for a short time (Islamiyah et al., 2024). As a result of hospitalization, children can become anxious, which can have an

impact and risk disrupting their growth and development during the recovery process. Another impact encountered is that children will refuse care and treatment (Purbasari & Puspita, 2019).

The results of the study showed that the average age of respondents was 4.86 years, with the youngest being 3 and the oldest being 6. Preschool age influences children's anxiety levels because preschoolers' coping mechanisms are less mature than adults'. Therefore, preschoolers tend to experience anxiety during hospitalization (Rahmania et al., 2024). According to researchers, anxiety levels are inversely proportional to the patient's age; that is, the older the patient, the lower the anxiety level. The causes of children's anxiety are influenced by the new environment, factors from staff (nurses, doctors, and other healthcare professionals), and family members who wait during treatment.

Children's coping mechanisms for anxiety arise when they accept the need for hospitalization (Estiani et al., 2024). Available support systems can help children adapt to the hospital environment. Children will seek support from those closest to them, such as parents or siblings, to relieve the stress of their illness. This is usually demonstrated by the child's request for care during hospitalization and to be accompanied during treatment (Cahyani, 2019). Meanwhile, non-adaptive behaviors exhibited by preschool children during hospitalization include crying softly when with their parents, difficulty sleeping, being uncooperative with treatment, refusing treatment, and even aggressive behavior such as biting, kicking, running out of the room, and dependence on parents (Laela Okta Fiana, 2023).

Research conducted by Yulianawati & Mariyam (2019) on preschool children's reactions to anxiety about hospitalization found that most children responded to injury and pain by asking for the procedure to end, grimacing, and crying during the procedure. However, most children did not open their eyes wide, clenched their teeth, acted aggressively, and screamed during the procedure. This condition stems from children experiencing anxiety about the potential adverse consequences of the medical procedure or treatment (Ulfa et al., 2024). Environmental changes that require children to leave their familiar home, playrooms, and peer groups, hospital care activities, and physical changes in the room, such as bedding, and loud noises from others in pain, can disturb and cause anxiety (Poernomo & Prawesti, 2017).

Based on hospitalization status, respondents with first-time and previous hospitalizations were equal, at 18 each. According to Jumasing et al. (2021), hospitalization experiences can influence a child's response to hospitalization. Previous experiences can provide insight into what the child is experiencing, thus influencing their responses, such as painful experiences and experiences that can help overcome fear and anxiety. Unpleasant experiences during hospitalization can lead to trauma and fear, while positive and pleasant experiences can lead to greater cooperation (Islamiyah et al., 2024). According to Fahira's (2022) research, the majority of first-time hospitalizations (22 respondents) experienced moderate anxiety. This indicates that respondents without a history of hospitalization experienced anxiety because their previous experiences with children reduced their anxiety.

The moderate level of anxiety experienced by preschool-aged children occurs because during hospitalization, children experience fear. This leads to excessive fear and crying when doctors, nurses, and other medical staff perform examinations. Preschoolers treated in the Children's Ward also experience mild levels of anxiety. Mild anxiety is associated with the tension of daily life and causes a person to be alert and increase their perceptual field. Someone experiencing mild anxiety will experience an increased perception of their surroundings (Estiani et al., 2024). The mild level of anxiety experienced by preschool-aged children occurs

because during treatment, children dislike the hospital environment. This response is demonstrated during hospitalization, where children express discomfort and want to go home quickly. Another level of anxiety that occurs in hospitalized preschool-aged children is severe anxiety. Severe anxiety significantly reduces a person's perceptual field. People with severe anxiety tend to focus on details and specifics, and are unable to think about anything else (Susantyo et al., 2024).

Research Limitations

The limitation of this study is that the researcher has not yet limited the factors that influence children's anxiety, such as the child's medical diagnosis, length of treatment and the child's experience of hospitalization.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed that the anxiety level of respondents in the Children's Ward of Dr. H. Jusuf SK Regional General Hospital was mostly in the moderate anxiety category, namely 18 people (50.0%). It is hoped that the researchers' findings in this study can provide new experiences for parents of patients to be able to reduce anxiety that occurs in children during hospitalization and for hospitals to be able to develop interventions that can be implemented to reduce anxiety in children treated at the hospital.

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