



EFFECT OF PICTURE-BOOK BIBLIOTHERAPY ON ANXIETY REDUCTION IN HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN AT ANWAR MEDIKA HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT	Keywords
Hospitalization is a process that requires a person to be hospitalized for treatment, until they are allowed to go home. This process often causes stress and anxiety, especially for children, because they have to adapt to a foreign environment, be separated from their families, and undergo medical treatment. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of bibliotherapy with picture storybooks on reducing children's anxiety levels in the Lily Room of Anwar Medika Hospital, Sidoarjo. The research design used a Quasi-experiment with a one-group pre-test-post-test design. The population in this study were all children treated in the Lily Room of Anwar Medika Hospital. The sample was taken using an accidental sampling technique, obtaining 37 respondents. The research instrument used a questionnaire. Data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The results of the Wilcoxon test obtained a <i>p</i> -value of 0.000 <0.05, which means bibliotherapy significantly reduced anxiety. Bibliotherapy with picture books is highly effective in reducing anxiety in children because the text and illustrations in books are engaging and provide a distraction that can reduce anxiety.	Child, Bibliotherapy, Anxiety, Hospitalization

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a child is an individual under the age of 18. WHO views children as vulnerable individuals who need special protection and care. Children are still in a period of physical, mental, and emotional development. In the context of a family, children are the responsibility of their parents who need to be cared for and

raised properly. If a child is sick, it will hinder their growth and development. According to (Supartini, 2012), a sick child who must be hospitalized will experience a difficult time because they cannot carry out their usual habits.

Children during hospitalization must undergo a series of painful and repetitive treatments. The treatment process forces children to be separated from their parents,

causing them to feel excessive fear, worry, and anxiety (Lufianti *et al.*, 2022). Hospitalization has impacts on children, such as separation, loss of control, pain, and despair. Some of these impacts include feelings of hopelessness, protest, uncooperativeness, and depression (Nurlaila, Utami and Cahyani, 2018). The environment and the various procedures children undergo are major sources of stress, disappointment, and anxiety. Children who are hospitalized may react with sadness and fear because they are facing something they have never experienced before. They may experience feelings of insecurity, discomfort, loss of familiar experiences, and pain. If the impacts of hospitalization are not addressed promptly, they will affect psychosocial development, especially in children (Supartini, 2012).

The results of research (Nurlaila, Noviyanti and Iswati.Ning, 2021) at PKU Muhammadiyah Gombong Hospital found that of 34 children who were hospitalized, 5.9% experienced mild anxiety, 14.7% moderate anxiety and 79.4% severe anxiety. Research (Harsismanto, Yanti and Alfathona, 2019) in the Edelweys Pediatric Ward at Dr. M. Yunus Bengkulu Regional Hospital stated that of 32 children who were hospitalized on the first day, the majority of children experienced severe anxiety, namely 93.8% and moderate anxiety 6.2%. At Bangkinang Regional Hospital, of 19 preschool-aged children who were hospitalized, 10.5% experienced very severe anxiety, 21.1% severe anxiety, 21.1% moderate anxiety and 21.15 mild anxiety (Apriza, 2017). At RA Basoeni Regional Hospital, of the 27 children who were hospitalized on day 1 to day 2, 22.2% experienced mild anxiety, 44.4% moderate anxiety, 25.9% severe anxiety and 7.4% severe anxiety (Peni, Ratnaningsih and Laili, 2024).

Responses to hospitalization are influenced by several factors, including the hospital environment, separation from significant others, lack of information, loss of freedom and independence, previous experiences with healthcare services, and interactions with hospital staff (Rahayu *et al.*, 2022). Hospitalization is essentially a treatment method aimed at assisting children in their recovery from illness and monitoring the condition of children experiencing health problems. However, maladaptive responses resulting from hospitalization can create more complex problems for children (Fazrin, 2017).

Hospitalized children who experience stress will experience increased cortisol, which will inhibit antibody formation, reduce white blood cells and the body's immunity. This suppression of the immune system appears to result in inhibition of the healing process, requiring a fairly long treatment time and even accelerating the occurrence of complications during treatment (Hale and Tjahjono, 2015). Children in preschool (3-6 years) react to hospitalization by refusing to eat, frequently asking questions, crying softly, and being uncooperative with health workers. Hospitalization is often perceived by children as punishment, resulting in feelings of shame and fear that lead to aggressive reactions, anger, rebellion, and unwillingness to cooperate with nurses (Wong *et al.*, 2019). Anxiety in children will disrupt the child's healing process, making it difficult for children to cooperate with all actions taken during treatment in the ward.

(Wong *et al.*, 2019) revealed several ways to reduce anxiety in children during hospitalization, one of which is through language (storytelling). Bibliotherapy with picture books is a fun play activity for children. It creates a relaxed and comfortable environment for children. Children feel happy and there is a distraction

that makes them happy, thus reducing anxiety in children. Based on this background, researchers are interested in conducting research on the effect of picture story bibliotherapy on reducing levels of anxiety during hospitalization in children in the Lily Ward of Anwar Medika Hospital.

METHOD

This study used a quasi-experimental design with a one-group pre-test-post-test design. The population in this study were all families with children treated in the Lily Room of Anwar Medika Hospital. The sampling technique used accidental sampling, obtaining 37 respondents. Data analysis used the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test with a 95% confidence level and a significance level of $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$.

RESULTS

Table 1. Respondents' Frequency Distribution Based on Age, gender and history of hospitalization

Characteristics of Respondents	Category	f	%
Age	1-3 years	14	37,8
	4-6 years	15	40,6
	7-12 years	8	21,6
Gender	Man	20	54,1
	Women	17	45,9
history of hospitalization	Never	22	59,5
	Ever	15	40,5
Last education	Diploma	115	57,5

Based on Table 1, data shows that almost half of the respondents were aged 4-6 years (40.6%). The majority of respondents were male (54.1%) and more than half of the respondents had no history of hospitalization (59.5%).

Table 2. Frequency distribution of hospitalization anxiety levels in children before and after bibliotherapy in the Lily Room of Anwar Medika Hospital.

hospitalization anxiety	Category	f	%
Before	Normal	0	0
	Mild	3	8,1
	Moderate	9	24,3
	Severe	3	8,1
	Very	22	59,5
	Severe/Panic	22	59,5
After	Normal	13	35,2
	Mild	10	27,0
	Moderate	8	21,6
	Severe	6	16,2
	Very	0	0
	Severe/Panic	0	0

Based on Table 2, data shows that more than half of the respondents experienced very severe anxiety/panic before bibliotherapy (59.5%) and the most respondents (35.2%) experienced no anxiety (normal) after bibliotherapy.

The Wilcoxon test results obtained a p -value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that bibliotherapy with picture books had an effect on hospitalization anxiety in children in the Lily Ward, Anwar Medika Hospital.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that all hospitalized children experienced anxiety, ranging from mild to severe. Univariate analysis of anxiety levels in hospitalized children revealed that more than half of the respondents (59.5%) experienced very severe anxiety/panic before bibliotherapy.

Hospitalization is a crisis condition in children, whether planned or emergency, which requires the child to be hospitalized for treatment for several days until the child recovers and can return home (Mariani, 2019). In children, hospitalization can cause stress, anxiety, and developmental regression due to separation from parents, unfamiliar environments, and medical procedures. According to (Muflih, 2019), anxiety is a phenomenon we often encounter in everyday life. Anxiety is an emotional reaction to the assessment of stimuli. Basically, excessive anxiety will cause

problems. Possible problems caused by anxiety include difficulty concentrating, feeling less cared for over small things or having difficulty focusing, and disturbed sleep quality. Anxiety is an unpleasant emotion, characterized by terms such as worry, concern, and fear that we sometimes experience at varying levels (Lestari, 2020). Anxiety responses shown by children include difficulty sleeping, children refusing to communicate or interact, children appearing sad, and often crying and asking to go home. This is because the child feels like he is living in a foreign environment and is afraid of medical procedures during his treatment.

The analysis of anxiety levels after bibliotherapy with picture story books showed a decrease in anxiety levels. The results showed that most respondents after bibliotherapy did not experience anxiety (normal), namely (35.2%), mild anxiety 27.0, moderate anxiety 21.6%, severe anxiety 16.2%, and no children were found experiencing very severe anxiety/panic. The results of the Wilcoxon Signed rank test obtained a p-value of 0.000 <0.05, which means there is an effect of picture story bibliotherapy on reducing hospitalization anxiety in children in the Lily Room of Anwar Medika Hospital.

The results of this study are supported by research (Trupti *et al.*, 2023) on Bibliotherapy in Stress Reduction in Hospitalized Children in Western India. The findings of this study indicate that bibliotherapy is statistically significant ($P < 0.0001$) in reducing stress in hospitalized children. Bibliotherapy is an effective intervention in reducing stress in hospitalized children. The results of research (Sivasubramanian *et al.*, 2022) on the Effect of bibliotherapy on reducing anxiety in preoperative patients in Gujarat, India showed that the average anxiety percentage score of the experimental group in the pre-

test was 80.10 percent, while the average anxiety percentage score of the control group was 85.66 percent. After the trial, the average anxiety score of the experimental group was 50.66 percent, while the average anxiety score of the control group was 83.20 percent. Bibliotherapy has been proven to be successful in reducing the level of anxiety in pre-operative patients. The results of the study (Apriza, 2017) showed that the average level of anxiety before bibliotherapy with picture story books was 23.3, while after bibliotherapy with picture story books was 18.6. With the T-test, $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$) was obtained, meaning that there was an effect of bibliotherapy with picture story books on the level of anxiety due to hospitalization in preschool children in the children's room at Bangkinang Regional Hospital.

According to (Wong *et al.*, 2019), illness and hospitalization are crises for children, primarily due to the stress caused by environmental changes and changes in condition from healthy to ill, and children have limited coping mechanisms in dealing with stressors. If a child has had an unpleasant experience being hospitalized before, it will cause fear and trauma. Conversely, if a child is hospitalized and receives good and pleasant care, the child will be more cooperative with nurses and doctors (Komang *et al.*, 2024). Bibliotherapy can help children overcome anxiety. Bibliotherapy with picture stories helps someone process emotions and overcome problems through discussions about the story and its characters. This therapy utilizes a combination of text and illustrations in books to convey messages, helping children (especially younger children) understand and explore anxiety or sadness.

When reading, children can identify with the characters in the story who face similar conflicts or problems. This allows

them to explore their own feelings through the characters' experiences. Illustrated bibliotherapy is a highly effective visual medium because images help children understand stories more easily and engagingly. This method is particularly effective in reducing anxiety in children because engaging picture books can help them feel more comfortable and receptive to the therapeutic message.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study indicate that bibliotherapy using picture books has an effect on reducing anxiety levels in children at Anwar Medika Hospital. Bibliotherapy can help children cope with anxiety. Bibliotherapy using picture books helps individuals process emotions and resolve problems through discussions about the story and its characters. This therapy utilizes a combination of text and illustrations in books to convey messages, helping children understand and explore feelings of anxiety and sadness. Bibliotherapy using picture books is a highly effective visual medium because the images help children understand the story more easily and engagingly.

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