

Assess the Effectiveness, of Group Play Therapy for Preschool Children on Reduction of Preschooler Separation Anxiety Disorder

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Abstract: *Play therapy is a form of counseling or psychotherapy that uses play to communicate with and help people, especially children, to prevent or resolve psychosocial challenges. This is thought to help them towards better social integration, growth and development, emotional modulation, and trauma resolution. The various research studies are done to reduce the school phobia among the children by providing different play therapies or strategy to reduce children separation anxiety disorder. This study was based on Quantitative and evaluative approach. The method used for this study was Non equivalent control group pre test post test design i.e., quasi experimental research design. 60 samples were selected with non-probability purposive sampling technique which divided into two control group (30) and experimental group (30). Sample selection was based on inclusive and exclusive criteria. The tools used for this study was modified preschool separation anxiety scale with including selected Demographic variables, which was prepared on the basis of review of literature, various information & informal discussion with the patients. While data collection process followed the ethical consideration such as written permission was obtained from school authority and informed written consent obtained from mothers of preschool children. Based on the objectives and the hypothesis the data were analyzed by using various statistical tests. Analysis of data showed that there is significant difference between pre test and post test level preschooler separation anxiety disorder in experimental group. The calculated 't' values are much higher than the tabulated values. Hence it is statistically interpreted that the group play therapy for preschool children was effective to reduce the preschooler separation anxiety disorder.*

Keywords: Group Play Therapy, Preschooler, Separation Anxiety Disorder, Phobia, School Environment

1. Introduction

“Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning”

Mr. Roger

Play is a child, natural medium to learn, communicate & explore their world. Play therapy allows children to explore feeling & make sense of an recover from difficult life experiences in a safe & trusting environment. Play therapy helps children understands Confused feeling & upsetting events. Play therapy helps the children work through emotional, social & behavioural disabilities& helps address family problems. Use of medium of play, rather than talk, to help the child learn to express themselves, explore & make sense of the world in which they live & resolve any difficult or painful express.¹

A Preschool, also known as nursery school, pre primary school, playschool or kinder garden, is an educational establishment or learning space offering early childhood education to children before they begin compulsory education at primary school. Going to Pre School is ‘A small step for a giant exposure in a child’s life’. This is the first exercise in which children are separated from the comfort and secure zone of their parents. Therefore, it has to be a place which is a second home to the child; a place, which has enough material to attract and make the child feel comfortable.²

This is the first place where the child builds his/her self-esteem. A child learns the importance of his own name, things and friends. Every child learns to communicate with his teachers and fellow students in the Pre School. It is the

right place for the child’s foundation for lifelong progress. The skills and knowledge that the child develops in the Pre School have a great impact on the aptitude and attitude of the child later in life. Anxiety disorders are among the most frequently occurring childhood disorder with prevalence estimates approaching 10% among preschool children. Advances in early childhood assessment, albeit still largely depends on parental reports, now make it easible to study anxiety symptoms in young children.³

The pre-schoolers took part in a two-hour study using of various scenarios designed to detect if the child has an anxious disposition or not. The researchers prompt the child to show a range of emotion and behaviours through these scenarios. The study included leaving the participants in a room with a stranger and playing with new, exciting toys. The episodes were each recorded through a one-way mirror for later coding. Coding is the process of labelling the observations made by the researchers so that the data can be compared and analyzed. Over 90% of the parents and preschool participants returned for another lab session. This was to assess child and parent interaction. This included six tasks ranging from book reading to block building. Over 400 mothers and 400 fathers also completed a questionnaire based on parenting style.⁴

2. Literature Survey

A study was conducted to determine Maternal separation anxiety is a construct that describes a mother's experience of worry, sadness, or guilt during short-term separations from her child. This investigation examined potential differences in psychological correlates between mothers with high and low levels of anxiety when their children were 8 months, 3

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1/2 years, and 6 years of age. High levels of maternal separation anxiety had different psychological correlates contingent upon the age of the child. Depressive symptomatology and separation anxiety were unrelated at times 1 and 2, but when the children were 6 years old, mothers who had the highest levels of anxiety tended to have more depressive symptomatology, fewer coping skills, a more negative representation of self, and embraced more traditional sex-role values. Study findings are discussed with respect to their relevance to the mother's role as developmental partner to the child and linked to major theoretical perspectives that address the mother-child relationship.¹¹

This longitudinal study explored how adult mental representations of attachment relationships and memories of childhood experiences with parents contributed to a mother's anxiety about separation from her own infant. The Maternal Separation Anxiety Scale, the Adult Attachment Interview, and the Mother-Father-Peer Scale were administered to a sample of 49 first-time mothers. The mothers with insecure attachment representations, when asked to remember details of their own childhood, reported more negative recollections of early parental care giving, particularly rejection and discouragement of independence. When their own infants were 2 months old, these mothers experienced heightened levels of maternal separation anxiety. The findings provide theoretical and empirical support for the view that very high levels of maternal separation anxiety may indicate dysfunction.¹²

Soodabeh et. al. (2011) done the research is to investigate the efficiency of family management training in reducing anxiety difficulties in preschooler children (4 to 6 year) in Ahvaz. Total 50 mothers were randomly chosen and divided into experimental and control groups. Result is multivariate analysis of covariance demonstrate that experimental intervention is efficient in reduction of children anxiety.(p=0.03) the result indicate that family anxiety management training has been effective in reduction of anxiety disorder in anxious children. Therefore, it can be useful strategy as an educational and preventive programe in preschool and school children.²²

Kimberly howard et. al. (2011) done research to examined association between early mother child separation and subsequent maternal parating behavior and children outcome in a sample of 2080 families. Result is the effect of separation on child aggression at age 5 was mediated by aggression at age 3, suggesting that the effect of separation on children's aggressive behavior are early and persistent.²³

Fatemeh Mollamohammadi et. al. (2017) done research to evaluate play therapy on social skill and social anxiety in preschool anxiety the methodology of this study was experimental with a pretest post test in case and control groups the population consists of all preschool children result the result indicated that play therapy could be effective in reduction of anxiety and the findings imply that play therapy can be helpful in solving the problems related to social anxiety and social skill disorder.³⁸

Jamshid Jarareh et. al. (2016) conducted this study was to investigate the effectiveness of group play therapy in preschooler children creativity and adhesion control. The research method was experimental along with pre test post test design in control group. the major findings of the research indicate that group play therapy in preschool children creativity and aggression has a significant effect.³⁹

3. Problem Definition

“Experimental study to assess the effectiveness of group play therapy for preschool children on reduction of preschooler separation anxiety disorder among the mothers of preschool children in selected urban area.”

4. Objective

- 1) To assess the effectiveness of group play therapy on reduction of preschooler separation anxiety disorder among the mothers of preschool children.
- 2) To assess the existing level of preschooler separation anxiety among the mothers of preschool children.
- 3) To associate the pre test level of preschooler separation anxiety score among the mothers of preschool children with their selected demographic variable.
- 4) To correlate the post test level of preschooler separation anxiety score of experimental group with control group.

5. Material and Methods

Non Equivalent Control Group Pre Test Post Test Design (Quasi Experimental Research Design) was chosen for this study. In the present study sample were divided into two group control group and experimental group in which pre test was administered by means of Modified preschool separation anxiety scale for both the group depicted as P1 and then Group Play Therapy was given only for experimental group depicted as X, a post test was conducted using the same Modified preschool separation anxiety scale again for both the group depicted P2. The study design is depicted as –

Group	Pre Test	Group Play Therapy	Post Test
Control group	P1	--	P2
Experimental group	P1	X	P2

A quantitative Evaluative approach was found to be more appropriate to assess the effectiveness of group play therapy for preschool children on reduction of preschooler separation anxiety disorder. The proposed study was undertaken in at selected urban area. The population and samples were preschooler mothers who were fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria and the sample consisted of sixty preschooler mothers which is divided into two groups control and experimental group equally. The sampling technique used in this study was non-probability purposive sampling. Tools used for data collection include two section namely demographic variable and Modified preschool separation anxiety scale.

6. Results

Modified preschool separation anxiety scale is used for data collection. The analysis was done with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics.

SN	Data analysis	Method	Remark
1.	Descriptive statistics	Frequency and percentage.	To describe distribution of demographic variable
		Mean, standard deviation	To determine the level of preschooler separation anxiety disorder.
2.	Inferential statistics	Paired "t" test	To compare the level of preschooler separation anxiety disorder.
		Unpaired "t" test and one way ANOVA and Chi square test	Associate demographic variables with level of preschooler separation anxiety disorder.

The data was analyzed and is presented in the following sections:-

Section I

Deals with analysis of demographic data of the mothers of preschool children in selected urban area in terms of frequency and percentage.

Section II

Deals with analysis of data related to assessment of the existing preschooler separation anxiety disorder among the mothers of preschool children in selected urban area in terms of frequency and percentage.

Section III

Deals with analysis of data related to assess the effectiveness of group play therapy for preschool children on reduction of preschooler separation anxiety disorder among the mothers of preschool children in selected urban area

Experimental	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	t value	P value
Pre	30	57.76	5.09	31.04	0.000
Post	30	34.76	2.64		

The comparisons of the pre test and post test means of the anxiety of experimental group were done by the paired t test. The pre test average score was 57.76 with standard deviation of 5.09. The post test average score was 34.76 with standard deviation of 2.64. The test statistics value of the paired t test was 31.04 with p value 0.00. Shows significant difference in the pre and post test anxiety level.

Anxiety POST	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	t value	P value
Experimental	30	34.77	2.65	14.83	0.000
Control	30	51.27	5.49		

The comparisons of the post test means of the anxiety of experimental & control group were done by the unpaired t test. The post test average score for experimental group was 34.77 with standard deviation of 2.65. The post test average score of control group was 51.27 with standard deviation of 5.49. The test statistics value of the unpaired t test was 14.83 with p value 0.000. Shows the significant difference in the

post test anxiety. Hence it proves the effectiveness of group play therapy.

Section IV

Deals with analysis of data related to the association of the pre test level of preschooler separation anxiety score among the mothers of preschool children with their selected demographic variable

7. Discussion

The findings of the study have been discussed with reference to the objective and hypothesis. As per the findings of the study it provide the description related to demographic variable, which shows majority of mothers were between the age below 25 years, 36.67%. With primary education qualification and housewife. As well as majority of the mothers in this study belongs to nuclear family, and they are having two children and majority of the mothers having poor information regarding the separation anxiety disorder.

In this study the investigator also assess the level of separation anxiety disorder of mothers of preschool children. So findings shows that majority of the mothers pursue the average information regarding the effectiveness of play therapy on reduction of separation anxiety.

The present study also Shows significant difference in the pre and post test anxiety level.

8. Conclusion

Anxiety is normal, but highly subjective human emotion while normal anxiety serves a beneficial and adaptive purpose, anxiety can also become the cause of tremendous suffering for millions of people. Separation anxiety is common in children. It may be hard to see your child visibly upset by your departure. Separation anxiety is normal in young children, until they age 3-4 years, when children are left in a daycare or preschool, away from their parent or primary caregiver it is also important to note significant life changes experienced by the child either previous to or present at the onset of the disorder.

According to the investigator assess the level of separation anxiety of mothers of preschool children regarding the effectiveness of group play therapy findings and analysis of data shows that mothers of preschool children having the poor information regarding separation anxiety disorder but after provision of play therapy there is significant difference in the pre and post test anxiety level. So as per findings, I accept the hypothesis H1 and H2.

9. Future Scope

The future scope of this study has implications for nursing administration, nursing education, nursing research and nursing practice.

Nursing Practice

School teachers are the appropriate persons for helping mothers to increase their knowledge regarding effectiveness

of group play therapy on reduction of preschooler separation anxiety. Pediatric health nurse can conduct health education to improve the knowledge of mothers regarding separation anxiety of preschool children.

Nursing Education

Nursing education is developing rapidly in India and nurse from our country can be found all over the world providing care and education. The nursing education curriculum must include imparting knowledge about the use of various audio visual aids and teaching strategies.

Now a days much importance is given to awareness and promotion of health than the curative aspects. As the needs of society are continuously changing newer components must be incorporated in the nursing curriculum. Nursing education must emphasize on preventive and rehabilitative aspects.

The nursing teachers can use the result of the study as an informative illustration for the students. Nursing students must be able to recognize the importance of knowledge of mothers on child separation anxiety. Nursing students can conduct educational programmes, role plays, workshop, and campaign regarding play therapy for separation anxiety and its prevention in the community to educate the community.

Nursing Administration

As a part of administration, the nurse administrator plays a vital role in educating clients and students nurse. Nursing administration can depute nurse for various workshops, conference, and special courses; and also in-service education programs can be arranged for nursing staff.

This study suggests that nurse administrations should conduct in service education for the nursing staff about effectiveness of group play on separation anxiety and its preventive measures. These findings will help the administrator to implement health education program on prevention of separation anxiety during school health camps.

Nursing Research

Nursing research is an essential aspect of nursing as it uplifts the profession and develop new nursing norms and a body of knowledge The study can be published in journal to disseminated knowledge about child separation anxiety. The nurse researcher should motivate the clinical nurse to apply the research findings in practice.

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