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Nursing perception of the children hospitalized in a university hospital

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Abstract

The study was carried out in order to determine the nursing perception of children hospital patients between the ages 6-18. The descriptive cross-sectional study was realized between the dates of February 2013-February 2014 with children hospital patients. No sample selection was made and a sample was created out of the 206 children who accepted to participate the study. The data collection was prepared in line with literature and expert opinion; and the data collecting form, consisting of children's socio-demographic characteristics and written and pictured questions about the nursing perception was used. 51 % of the participating children were girls and their average of age was $12,22 \pm 3,22$. 46,1 % of the children were hospital patients due to a chronic illness and 31,6 % mention that they have experienced hospitalization many times. When the children were asked about the responsibilities of the nurses; while 74,8 % gave the answer that they give an injection, 1,9 % responded that they play with us. When the perception of nurses shown to the children through facial expressions according to age groups were analysed; 68 % marked good-humoured, 25,2 % tired, 3,9 % sad and 2,9 % angry. In line with the findings of the study it was seen that the children perceive the nurse as good-humoured and besides of that they are more interested in concrete interferences and rarely add play to care. In line with these results it can be recommended that the nurses increase and support applications regarding appropriate psychosocial care in order to decrease the stress of the hospitalized children due to the illness and treatment and to convert the crisis to a benefit.

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1. Introduction

Being hospitalized in a hospital affects the development of the children in a negative way and it may cause biological and psychosocial stress (Atay et al., 2011; Çavusoglu, 2009). The caregiver nurse at the hospital has a big impact on the hospitalization experience of the child. The child who is hospitalized has to face with the side effects of the treatment, invasive procedures and also the anxiety caused by being separated from his/her friends while fighting the disease (Beytut et al., 2009). The nurse has big responsibilities during this process.

Child nurse should give a nursing care which aims to heal the child physically, spiritually, cognitively and socially. The nurse should know the physical, physiological and psychological characteristics and the perception process of the child are not fully developed. However, the nurse should also know that this is an ongoing developing process and the perception and reaction against the disease differs in accordance with the chronological age and the developmental characteristics (Brown & Fosket, 1999; Pena & Juan, 2011). The nurse should know that the care given to the child must be family-centered and the nurse has to be able to use the verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in accordance with the age and the level of development of the child (Okuyucu et al., 2003; Park., 2004). Developing standards of care shape up the responsibilities of the child nurses (S'lusarska et al., 2004; Cavusoglu, 2009). With the developing standards of care, how does the child see the nurse as a caregiver, what kind of attitude does the nurse have while care giving? If the answers to these questions are positive as a result of proper care, then the perceived image of the nurse is positive for the child and the child has a positive attitude towards the hospital and the disease to get well. In the light of this literature, this descriptive type of study was planned to determine the nursing perception of the children between 6-18 years of age who were hospitalized in child health care services.

2. Method

This sample of this descriptive study consisted of 206 voluntary children between 6-18 years of age who were hospitalized at the University Hospital in Istanbul between February 2013- February 2014. Information has been prepared in accordance with the literature and expert opinion and was collected with the "Data Collection Questionnaire" which included questions about the socio-demographic characteristics and perception of the nursing profession. Data collection questionnaire consisted of 17 questions to determine the child's and family's socio-demographic characteristics and also 8 questions to measure the child's nursing perception (whether the child has a relative who is a nurse, his/her observations about the nurse's duties, positive and negative behaviors/attitudes of the nurses, etc.) so a total of 25 questions were composed. Data were evaluated by using SPSS 17.0 package program with appropriate statistical methods.

3. Results

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the children (n=206)

Demographic features		n	%
Gender	Female	105	51.0
	Male	101	49.0
Age	8-12 years old	112	54.4
	13-18 years old	94	45.6
Reason for hospitalization	Chronic disease	95	46.1
	Acute disease	111	53.9
Hospitalization experience	1-3 times	103	50.0
	4-6 times	30	14.6
	7 and above	73	35.4
Duration of hospitalization	1-7 days	162	78.6
	8 days and above	44	21.4
Information about the responsibilities of nurses	From parents	197	95.6
	From friends	9	4.4
Total		206	100

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