

“EFFECTIVENESS OF RELAXATION TECHNIQUES ON LEVEL OF CARE BURDEN AMONG PARENTS OF THALASSEMIA CHILDREN”



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Abstract

Over 250 million people in the world and around 20 million in India carry the gene for beta-thalassemia. One lakh children are born world over with the homozygous state for thalassemia, of which, 8,000 to 10,000 children are born in India. **IAP, Textbook of Paediatrics (2006)**⁴. Caregivers often experience physical, psychological, and financial stress, and social isolation. Therefore, to identify care givers burden and help them to cope with it, a pre-experimental study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of Relaxation Techniques on level of care burden among parents of thalassemia children at selected hospitals, Indore. One group pre-test post-test design with purposive sampling technique was used to select 20 parents of thalassemia children based on certain predetermined criteria. Pre test was conducted using a Semi structured interview schedule (Rating Scale) to assess the level of care burden and then relaxation technique was introduced to them. Herbert Benson relaxation response was practiced for 15 minutes twice a day for 24 sessions. After 24 sessions, post test was taken with the same tool. The findings revealed that mean post test score 72.85 was lower than mean pre test score i.e. 86.55, mean difference was 13.7, calculated SD was 14.61 and computed 't' value ($t_{19} = 4.19$) which was significant at $P \leq 0.01$ level, thus indicated that relaxation techniques was effective in decreasing the level of care burden among parents of thalassemia children. However, no significant association was found between pre-test score and selected demographic variables.

Key words: Thalassemia, Relaxation Techniques, Caregivers, Care Burden, Herbert Benson relaxation response.

Background

Thalassemia is most common single gene disorder in the world and represents a major health burden worldwide. It is a heterogeneous disorder recessively inherited resulting from various mutations of the genes which code for globin chains of Hb (haemoglobin), leading to reduced or absent synthesis of globin chains and when beta chain synthesis is affected it is called as beta thalassemia. First described by Cooley and Ice in 1925 and the first case of beta-thalassemia in India was reported by Dr. Mukherjee from Calcutta in 1938.

Recent estimate revealed that more than 52 million caregivers are providing long-term care in the home settings. Many caregivers have chronic health problems as a direct result of the burden itself. Working caregivers reduce their work hours, take frequent leaves or absence, arrive late or leave early from their work setting and miss career opportunities. The caregiver must be recognized and supported by communities and the healthcare

delivery system. Financial, emotional and hands-on help is needed to prevent caregiver's burden and burnout. **Laura Brumm (2008)**²

Need of the Study

Among Indians, prevalence of thalassemia is very high among certain communities, such as Punjabis, Gujaratis, Bengalis, Parsis and Sindhis. **(Pathlabs,lal,2009)**¹¹.

Family caregivers are often described as the backbone of the long term care system: they provide nearly 80% of the country homecare. Today, patients are released from the hospital “quicker and sicker” families with no medical experience are often providing hospital level care at home. **(Aldridge, susan,2008)**¹. Care presents many challenges for family members, including emotional stress, strenuous physical activity leading to depression. “Yet there are no ‘sick days’ for a family care giver, who is solely responsible for administering medicines and other treatments, providing nursing and personal care, doing the shopping, preparing the meals, taking care of the house holds, paying bills, keeping track of appointments and arranging transportation for medical visits. **(Brody E. Jane, 2008)**³

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