

The Role of Maternal in Children Anxiety: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: Anxiety is known as a normal reaction of stress, when anxiety becomes excessive it can wear down the person. Anxiety in the childhood causes that person experience adversities in next steps of life. Mother and child are two creatures who their life linked to each other greatly. Mother's anxiety along the time causes child's anxiety. So, this study is done by the aim of examining the mother's role in decreasing child's anxiety.

Methods: This study was conducted based on systematic review method and focused on the research question 'what is the role of mother's anxiety in appearing of children's anxiety?' The main stages of the research strategy is as follows: in the first stage, recognized the resources in databases, in this stage an electronic research was doing to identify published articles from 2008 to 2013 in Persian databases: Iran medex, Iran doc, Sid and Latin databases: CINHALL, Cochran, Pub Med, Science Direct, Eric. According to inclusion and exclusion criteria, after quality assessment 10 articles ere qualified for entering to study.

Results: The results of the data analysis indicating that various conditions from mother can effect on children's anxiety: 1.excessive support 2.parent's anxiety 3.maternal negative emotions. Mother's anxiety, excessive interference, negative emotions and intense attachment to mother, along the time causes child's anxiety significantly.

Conclusion: According to research findings base on different aspects of mothers character on children's behavioral disorder, by controlling mothers anxiety and helping mother to control emotions and avoid excessive support of their children can reduce negative role of mother on child's anxiety.

Key words: Child, Anxiety, Mothers, Educational Models

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Introduction

Anxiety is known as a normal reaction to stress which helps in coping with difficult situations. But too much anxiety can be exhausting [1]. Social anxiety disorder is of common brain disorders in children and adults [2]. The prevalence of anxiety disorders in children accounts for ten percent of the total brain disorders [3]. All categories of anxiety disorders are more prevalent in females compared to males [4].

Anxiety disorders can be present for years in patients and can get worse if left untreated. Anxiety disorders are often associated with other brain disorders, such as depression which may cover anxiety symptoms or make them worse. Of particular concern is that the anxiety seems to begin within family and move on. Similarly, children of parents with anxiety disorders are more likely to develop anxiety disorders than children with healthy parents [5]. The researchers of American Psychiatric Association interviewed two thousand children and found that they understand anxiety, the concerns and lack of attention in their parents. They will grow anxious, bored and with a full sense of failure and frustration. They will usually suffer from headache and stomach ache. However, seventy percent of parents think their anxiety has negligible impact on children [6]. Congenital or hereditary causes of mental disorders play more roles than other factors; we inherit

many traits from our parents. As a result, ethics and human behavior influence children as well. Paying attention to the character of children in early childhood avoids mental health crisis. The mother's role is far more important than the role of the father. Parents have a duty to comply with health regulations to keep body and living environment healthy, because they would involve the child in non-negligible risks, if they threaten the body health. The effects of these risks will manifest in the future through sadness, depression and anxiety [7].

Child anxiety can be explained greatly by four early maladaptive schemas include: loneliness, failure, submission, vulnerability, and parenting practices [8]. The parental instability and inflexible terms of discipline can have great influence on children's anxiety [9]. Inappropriate interactions of parents and children along with parental anxiety can cause children to understand the world as insecurely and to not have the ability to deal with risk [10]. Shayqian et al. (2008) found that the mental state of the mother during pregnancy and after birth is effective on the process of childbirth, birth and mental health of the infant [11].

Child, especially in the first years of life is a poor creature in need of extra care and security. The child has no self-determination and independence, and his/her life and perfection are dependent on the mother's life. The child



would be anxious, depressed and even undeveloped, if unnoticed [12].

The lives of mother and baby are both being linked to each other dramatically. So close relationship that can cause two opposite effects on the formation of human character. On the one hand, it can make the child to be full-grown, normal human. On the other hand, it can lead to mental disorder and subsequent psychological suffering for both, if this relationship is destructed [13]. The words, mood and act of mother have an effect on children [14]. Evidence suggests that too much support, having too high expectations; subtlety and sensitivity in parents will result in children with the symptoms of obsessive - compulsive and distress thoughts [15]. The results of the study by Sabzian and colleagues (2013) suggest that educational intervention based on training collaborative games (mother - child) was effective on reducing the symptoms of the social phobia and generalized anxiety disorder. Using this intervention can be effective in reducing symptoms of social phobia and generalized anxiety disorder in children with these problems [16].

The findings of Yazdkhasti et al. (1389) indicated the interaction of personality traits, emotional instability, conscientiousness, agreeableness and perceived maternal control with anxious students.

Few studies have investigated the role of mother in reducing child anxiety. According to the research, this study examined the role of mother in reducing child anxiety.

Method

The systematic review was used purposefully and focused. The research question is “What is the role of mother in reducing the child anxiety?” Search for information was retrieved, evaluated and integrated. The inclusion criteria were: 1 – Empirical and review studies with emphasize on distressed children. 2- Studies that have examined the role

of mother in anxiety of children. 3- Articles that have been written in English and Persian.

Exclusion criteria included: Editorial report, commentary, bulletin, book review, short report and items such as books, magazines and reports presented at conferences. These items were excluded due to the lack of ability to answer the research question such as being limited or short and impossibility of qualitative evaluation. The main stages of the search strategy are as follows: First, identifying resources in databases was discussed. At this stage, an electronic search to identify articles published from 2008 to 2013 was done in the Persian (Iran medex, Iran doc, Sid) and Latin databases (CINHAL, Cochran, Pub Med, Science Direct, Eric). At this stage the following terms were used separately and then combined to perform a free search in databases and electronic journals: child, anxiety, mothers, educational and models. 14,308 articles were identified in the first phase and according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 10 articles were included after qualitative evaluation. It should be noted that at the first stage of screening the titles and in the second stage the abstracts were reviewed. Qualitative evaluation of papers was done by the two browsers members individually, and in case of disagreement was referred to the third person. Chart number one shows the final synthesis of the inclusion and exclusion of the first studies.

Results

After searching, screening and qualitative assessment of studies in the systematic review, finally the synthesis was carried out on ten articles among which one was in Persian and nine articles were in English. (Table 1)

The result of the analysis suggests that anxiety of the mother can affect children in many situations including: 1- Extreme support 2- the anxiety of parents 3- mothers' negative emotions 4- authoritative parenting. The result is given in Table 1.

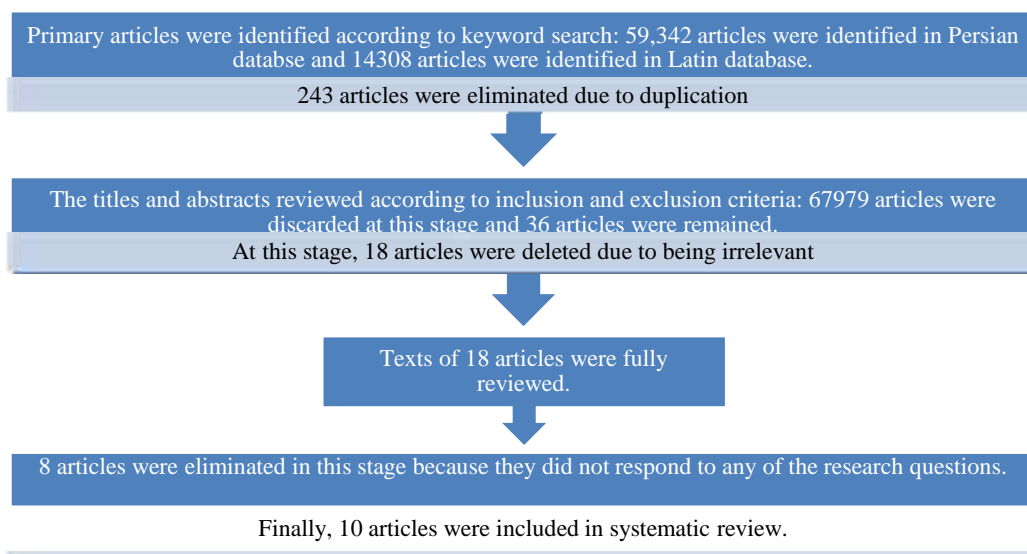


Figure 1. Diagram of inclusion and exclusion of the first studies in the final

Table 1. Characteristics of selected papers to examine the role of the mother in the child's anxiety

Article Number	Author	Yaer	The Sample Size	Age of Samples	Location	Journal	The Main Findings
1	Bitá Ajilchi	2013	140 Mothers and Their Children	4 th and 5 th Grade Female Students of Elementary School	Tehran	Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences	There is a significant relationship between parenting styles of mothers and anxiety in children, authoritative parenting style is negatively associated with child anxiety. In other words, women who are authoritative in their parenting style, their children will experience less anxiety [14].
2	Kristine M. Pahl	2011	236	Children 4 to 6 Years Old	Brisbane, Australia	Journal of Anxiety Disorders	Negative emotions of mothers directly affect anxiety in children [17].
3	Kiri Clarke	2013	90 Children and Their Mothers	7 to 12 Years Old	South Africa	Journal of Affective Disorders	Excessive support of mothers which is significantly associated with maternal anxiety, leading to anxiety in adolescents and adults [18].
4	Jennifer L. Hudson	2011	202 Children	4 Years Old	Australia	JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY	Anxiety of mother, extreme interference, negative emotions, and intense attachment of mother to child is leading to anxiety significantly over time [19].
5	Jennifer H. Mitchell	2012	42 Anxious Children and 35 Non-anxious Children with their mothers	8-12 Years Old	Sydney Australia	Journal of Experimental Child Psychology	The results indicated that skills training for mothers can increase the authoritative parenting style [6].
6	Mona Amrollahi Nia	2012	152 Students with Their Mothers	9-13 Years Old	Tehran	The Journal of Behavioral Sciences	1 - Strict parenting style has a significant positive correlation with the presence of panic symptoms in children, while permissive style has an inverse significant relationship with separation anxiety in children. 2 - None of the parenting styles of the mother is able to predict child anxiety [7].
7	Kerstin Thirlwall	2010	4-5 Years Old	24 Children and Their Mothers		Behaviour Research and Therapy	Parental control is a risk factor in the development of childhood anxiety. The excessive control of parents will increase anxiety and reduce confidence of children [20].
8	Bitá Ajilchi	2013	10-11 Years Old	140 Children and Their Mothers	Tehran	Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences	Results indicate that parenting skills training can increase authoritative parenting style and reduce maternal stress levels and depression in children [21].
9	Allison M. Waters	2011	5-12 Years Old	85 Children	Australia - Queensland	Journal of Anxiety Disorders	Parenting style as excessive support, anxious parenting of mother, rejection and emotional conflicts will increase anxiety in children [22].
10	Marcy Burstein	2009	25 Families with at least One 8 to 12 Years Old child	25 Families with at least One 8 to 12 Years Old child	Baltimore Region	Behavior Research and Therapy	When parents modeled anxious behavior, their children showed more anxiety. The findings showed that the modeling effect of parental anxiety has spread beyond the area of the child's behavior and may directly affect the subjective and cognitive feelings of children in middle childhood. The impact of modeling was not just about the mother's but anxiety in both parents has an impact on children's anxiety [23].

Excessive Support: Sometimes the mother will spend all her time and energy on the child; prohibit the child from doing this or that thing. This behavior has the power to make decisions for the child and dependent upon him, and makes no determination. This behavior has taken the power to make decisions out of the hands of the child and made him/her dependent with no determination. Mother has to care for child more than anything else. But it should not be enough to improve the sense of self-worth in the child. Indulge in child support will take away the confidence. The children, who are supported by the mother excessively, will lose their character; refuse to go to class in school. They are even instable in marital life with no voice. These children do not have a normal intellectual development and quickly get nervous in the face of adverse situations. Mother's care should be in the level of excreting the evil by the mother or feeling safe as to feeding and growing in any sense. The child needs to have the mother at his/her side in the first years. The mother should assure the child to be there in case of need.

Anxiety in Parents: Children learned anxiety from their parents showing more anxiety in stressful environments. Family led to the formation of mental - psychological, physical, social structure of the child. If there is mental health and peace in the family, the children will have a healthy multi-dimensional structure while if there is conflict, contradiction, high expectations and parental disrespect towards each other, children invariably are grown stressful with educational and identity problems. Obviously these kids have low confidence. They lose many positions due to the weakness in self-expression.

The Negative Emotions of Mother: We mean tend to experience negative emotions in different positions by negative emotions. Emotions play an important role in children's lives and make daily activities fun for the child and bring him to various activities. The impact of emotion on the child's daily activities is not always beneficial and invigorating. These emotions may have negative effects. In such cases, the child has lost the concentration power and fell behind course activities. Success and failure in life is largely a function of emotional state in childhood. Negative emotions such as fear, anger, and jealousy have negative effects on child development. Desirable emotions like love, happiness, joy, and curiosity are essential for normal development of children. Keeping a balanced happiness and pleasure is effective on the personality development of the child while losing it cause defects in the child's mental development and even cause delay in development of speech devices, and personality disorders. A child who is raised in an unloving environment is quiet and unresponsive with no reactions to the smile or tendency toward him/her. If the infant is deprived of kindness perception, a state of depression appears. In such a situation the signs of mental suffering and emotional states can be seen that are mostly false fears. Maternal affection is the most beautiful respond to the need for peace and security of the child. Realization of many talents is subject to having these feelings. Controlling emotions in mother affects the child's life over various aspects. Actually controlling emotions in mother makes the child

pragmatic, well-minded, honest, a helpful and efficient person in the progress of society.

Discussion

The present study was conducted to investigate the role of the mother in the child's anxiety. The findings show the significant effects of maternal anxiety in the anxiety of children over time. The findings are consistent with other researches by van der Bruggen CO [20] et al. (2010), Karimi [24] et al. (2004). They found that there is a positive relationship between trait anxiety in children and parental controls which play an important role in anxiety of children. The findings are in line with findings of Khanjani [23] et al. (2013) entitled "The Quality of Interaction in the Mother-Child Interaction and Social Anxiety in Children". Their study found that over supportive and rejecting interactive style of parent predicts social anxiety of children in future. Indifferent and rejecting parent will raise social anxiety in their children as well. The finding of present study is consistent with the findings of Suzan Bögels [25] et al. (2011) entitled "Parent and Social Anxiety". They suggested that the role of mothers and fathers in reducing social anxiety and in teaching self-esteem are important. Given that parental control is a risk factor in the development of childhood anxiety as one of our results and the studies that have been done in this area all have support this subject, this should be considered in family education programs. Among these studies we can mention Hatamian [26] and colleagues (2013) and Murray [27] and colleagues. The results of these studies show that analyzing family environment reveals the fact that children will feel a value that feeds their self-esteem and increases their confidence if the parents are kind and providing a reasonable control with appropriate emotional support. While in control based family environment, children are placed in a rigid frame and deprived of the self-analysis opportunities leading to decreased self-esteem and increased anxiety.

Hashemian [21] and colleagues (2013) examined the relationship between temperament and parenting style in child with anxiety disorders. Results showed that children's temperament and parenting style are influential factors on anxiety disorders of children. The findings of Bagherpour Kamachali [22] and colleagues (2012) showed that mental health and academic success of children with a firm and confident parenting patterns will be more than mental health and academic success of children with permissive and authoritarian parenting.

Conclusion

According to recent research findings, controlling the anxiety of mothers and helping them to control emotions and to avoid excessive support can reduce the negative role of mothers in anxiety of children. Therefore providing the guidance and training for mothers is suggested for preventing negative effects of mothers' role on anxiety of children. And due to the lack of studies in this area, it calls for more research to be done in this area.

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