



# The Relationship Between Unmet Needs of Parents with Hospitalized Children and the Level of Parental Anxiety in Iran

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## Highlights

- The majority of the unmet needs belonged to the areas of support, guidance, and counseling.
- There was a very weak positive relationship between the unmet needs related to the sick child and parental anxiety.
- In the Iranian context, fathers have fewer opportunities to be at the bedside of their hospitalized child.

## Abstract

### Purpose

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between parents' unmet needs with hospitalized children and the level of parental anxiety.

### Design and methods

This correlational study was conducted on 194 parents with hospitalized children. The data were collected using the questionnaires of “revised needs of parents with hospitalized children” and “Zung's anxiety scale”. The data were then analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS software version 19.

## Results

There was a very weak positive relationship between the number of unmet needs of the sick child and the physical symptoms of anxiety ( $P = 0.038$ ,  $r = 0.149$ ) and overall anxiety score ( $P = 0.018$ ,  $r = 0.17$ ). However, there was no significant relationship between the number of unmet needs in other groups. Also, there was no significant relationship between the total number of unmet needs and parental anxiety. The most frequent unmet needs of parents, respectively, belonged to 1) support and guidance, 2) needs of other family members, and 3) comfort.

## Conclusions

It might not be possible to obviate all the parental needs during the child's hospitalization. It is noteworthy that failure to meet those parental needs directly related to the child may cause anxiety for the parents.

## Practice implications

Meeting the needs of parents regarding support and guidance, comfort, other family members, and needs directly related to the child is recommended to prioritize in pediatric nursing care.

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## Keywords

Unmet needs; Anxiety; Parents; Hospitalized children

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