

Outline

The purpose of the research was to explore 'night-terror disorder', with a view to generating hypotheses for future research. The investigation aimed to draw upon the organismic wisdom of the 'research subjects', who suffered from 'night-terrors' by asking them the two research questions:

- 1) To what do you attribute your 'night-terrors'?
- 2) What do you imagine would be an effective remedy?

In addition, the study was designed to elicit data pertaining to the phenomenology of 'night-terrors' and it was hoped that themes would emerge.

The research method was a 'case-study' approach involving a sample of research subjects, who believed that they experienced 'night-terrors'. A semi-structured interview schedule was the research tool. A small, self-selecting sample of 'night-terror' sufferers was obtained via the publication of a small feature article in a local evening newspaper.

The sample were interviewed and the subsequent interviews were recorded on audio-tape and then fully transcribed. The data thus produced was reduced and displayed on matrices. Brief, summarised case-studies were also produced. The data were analysed to produce the results.

Limitations of sampling, lack of randomisation, together with possible interviewer and interviewee bias, mean that no generalisations could be made from the results of this study.

However, the results of the research did generate several hypotheses, relating to this particular sample, which highlight the need for further research, both a large scale survey and longitudinal research involving therapeutic intervention, utilising pre-treatment and post-treatment measures.

The conclusions of the research demonstrate the complex aetiology of 'night-terrors', the implication of neurological and psychological development in children, the need for thorough investigation and differential diagnoses, and the development of appropriate and effective therapeutic intervention.