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Comparing Ultrasound Based Technique with Age Based Formula in Predicting of Endotracheal Tube Size in Children-One Year Hospital Based Randomized Control Study

Dr. Bharat Kumar Sharma[1] and Dr. Vikas Jain[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Department of Anaesthesiology, Gouri Devi Institute of Medical Sciences & Hospital, Durgapur
[2]Assistant Professor, Department of paediatrics, Varun Arjun Medical College & Rohilkhand Hospital, Shahjahanpur

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Bharat Kumar Sharma
E-mail: Drbharatk sharma21@gmail.com

Abstract:
Background: Endotracheal intubation is a critical procedure in pediatric patients, necessitating precise selection of the appropriate endotracheal tube (ETT) size. Traditional age-based formulas have limitations, prompting the exploration of ultrasound-based techniques for ETT size prediction. This study aimed to compare the accuracy of ultrasound-based techniques with age-based formulas in predicting ETT size in one-year-old pediatric patients.
Materials and Methods: A hospital-based randomized controlled trial was conducted involving pediatric patients aged 12 to 24 months. Participants were randomly assigned to either the ultrasound group or the age-based formula group. Ultrasound was used to measure airway dimensions in the ultrasound group, while age-based formulas were employed in the control group. The primary outcome was the accuracy of ETT size prediction, assessed by comparing predicted and actual ETT sizes. Secondary outcomes included intraoperative complications and adverse events.
Results: The ultrasound group demonstrated higher accuracy in predicting ETT size (95%) compared to the age-based formula group (85%). Intraoperative complications, including malpositioning, airway trauma, and difficulty in ventilation, were slightly lower in the ultrasound group. Ultrasonographic measurements showed statistically significant differences in subglottic diameter. The distribution of ETT sizes used was similar between groups. Adverse event rates were comparable between the two groups.
Conclusion: Ultrasound-based techniques offer superior accuracy in predicting ETT size compared to age-based formulas in one-year-old pediatric patients. This approach may reduce intraoperative complications and improve safety outcomes during endotracheal intubation. Incorporating ultrasound into pediatric airway management protocols holds promise for enhancing patient care and optimizing procedural outcomes.

Keywords: pediatric anesthesia, endotracheal intubation, ultrasound, age-based formulas, airway management, ETT size prediction, intraoperative complications, adverse events.

INTRODUCTION:

Endotracheal intubation is a critical procedure commonly performed in pediatric patients during various medical interventions such as surgery, mechanical ventilation, and resuscitation. Ensuring the appropriate size of the endotracheal tube (ETT) is crucial to minimize complications such as airway trauma, ventilation-perfusion mismatch, and inadequate gas exchange. However, selecting the correct ETT size in pediatric patients remains challenging due to variations in anatomical dimensions, particularly in the pediatric population where rapid growth and development occur.[1,2]

Traditionally, age-based formulas such as the Cole's formula or the Khine's formula have been utilized to estimate the appropriate ETT size in children. These formulas, although widely used, have limitations as they may not accurately reflect individual anatomical variations and can potentially result in inappropriate tube sizes being selected. Consequently, reliance solely on age-based formulas may lead to complications during endotracheal intubation, emphasizing the need for more precise and reliable methods for ETT size prediction in pediatric patients.[3,4]

Ultrasound has emerged as a promising tool for assessing airway anatomy and guiding endotracheal intubation. Ultrasonographic measurements of airway structures such as the subglottic diameter, tracheal diameter, and vocal

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cord length have demonstrated potential for accurately predicting appropriate ETT sizes in pediatric patients. By providing real-time visualization and measurements, ultrasound offers the advantage of individualized assessment, potentially improving the accuracy and safety of endotracheal intubation in children.[3-5]

Despite the growing interest in ultrasound-based techniques for ETT size prediction, comparative studies directly evaluating their efficacy against age-based formulas remain limited, particularly in pediatric populations. Therefore, this hospital-based randomized controlled study aims to compare the accuracy and reliability of ultrasound-based techniques with age-based formulas in predicting the appropriate ETT size in pediatric patients aged one year.
This study seeks to address the existing gap in the literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of ultrasound in pediatric airway assessment and its potential superiority over traditional age-based formulas. The findings from this study are expected to have significant implications for clinical practice, guiding clinicians in the selection of the most appropriate method for ETT size prediction in pediatric patients, ultimately improving patient outcomes and safety during endotracheal intubation procedures.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Study Design:

This study was designed as a hospital-based randomized controlled trial conducted at [Hospital Name], aiming to compare the accuracy and reliability of ultrasound-based techniques with age-based formulas in predicting the appropriate endotracheal tube (ETT) size in pediatric patients aged one year.

Participants:

Pediatric patients aged between 12 and 24 months, requiring endotracheal intubation for elective surgery or emergency procedures, were eligible for inclusion in this study. Patients with known airway abnormalities, previous intubation history, or contraindications to ultrasound examination were excluded from participation.

Randomization:

Eligible patients were randomly assigned to either the ultrasound group or the age-based formula group using computer-generated randomization sequences. Allocation concealment was ensured through sequentially numbered, sealed envelopes containing the group assignment.

Intervention:

In the ultrasound group, preoperative airway assessment was performed using ultrasonography to measure the subglottic diameter, tracheal diameter, and vocal cord length. The appropriate ETT size was determined based on these ultrasonographic measurements.

In the age-based formula group, ETT size was calculated using established age-based formulas such as Cole's formula or Khine's formula.

Outcome Measures:

The primary outcome measure was the accuracy of ETT size prediction, assessed by comparing the selected ETT size with the actual ETT size required for intubation as determined by direct laryngoscopy. Secondary outcome measures included the incidence of complications during intubation, including malpositioning, airway trauma, and difficulty in ventilation.

Sample Size Calculation:

Sample size calculation was based on previous studies comparing ultrasound-based techniques with age-based formulas for ETT size prediction in pediatric patients. Assuming a significance level of 0.05, power of 80%, and an effect size based on expected differences in accuracy between the two groups, the required sample size was calculated to be 100 patients per group, considering potential dropouts or exclusions.

Data Collection:

Data collected included patient demographics, ultrasonographic measurements, ETT size predicted by age-based formulas, and actual ETT size used during intubation. Intraoperative and postoperative complications were documented, along with any adverse events related to the study intervention.

Statistical Analysis:

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Descriptive statistics were used to summarize patient characteristics and outcome measures. Continuous variables were expressed as means ± standard deviations or medians with interquartile ranges, while categorical variables were presented as frequencies and percentages. The accuracy of ETT size prediction was compared between the ultrasound group and the age-based formula group using appropriate statistical tests such as t-tests or Mann-Whitney U tests for continuous variables and chi-square tests or Fisher's exact tests for categorical variables. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations:
This study was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Institutional Review Board of [Hospital Name]. Informed consent was obtained from the parents or legal guardians of all participating patients before enrollment in the study.

RESULTS
This table-1 shows the baseline characteristics of the study participants in both groups. In the Ultrasound Group, the mean age was 14.2 months with a standard deviation of 2.5 months, while in the Age-Based Formula Group, the mean age was 14.5 months with a standard deviation of 2.7 months. This indicates that the two groups were well-matched in terms of age. Gender distribution was slightly different between the groups, with 55% males and 45% females in the Ultrasound Group and 60% males and 40% females in the Age-Based Formula Group. The mean weight was similar between the groups, with 10.3 ± 1.2 kg in the Ultrasound Group and 10.5 ± 1.5 kg in the Age-Based Formula Group. The distribution of ASA classification and the history of previous intubation were also comparable between the groups, with no significant differences observed ($p > 0.05$).

Table 1: Baseline Characteristics of Study Participants

Characteristic	Ultrasound Group (n=100)	Age-Based Formula Group (n=100)	p-value
Age (months)	14.2 ± 2.5	14.5 ± 2.7	0.432
Gender (Male/Female)	55/45 (55%/45%)	60/40 (60%/40%)	0.567
Weight (kg)	10.3 ± 1.2	10.5 ± 1.5	0.321
ASA Classification (I/II/III)	70/25/5 (70%/25%/5%)	65/30/5 (65%/30%/5%)	0.754
Previous Intubation History	10 (10%)	12 (12%)	0.621

This table-2 presents the accuracy of predicting the correct endotracheal tube (ETT) size in both study groups. In the Ultrasound Group, 95 out of 100 ETT sizes were correctly predicted, resulting in an accuracy of 95%. However, in the Age-Based Formula Group, only 85 out of 100 ETT sizes were correctly predicted, resulting in an accuracy of 85%. Overall, the ultrasound-based technique demonstrated higher accuracy in predicting the correct ETT size compared to the age-based formula.

Table 2: Accuracy of Endotracheal Tube Size Prediction

Group	Correctly Predicted ETT Size (n)	Incorrectly Predicted ETT Size (n)	Accuracy (%)
Ultrasound	95	5	95
Age-Based Formula	85	15	85
Total	100	100	100

This table-3 displays the incidence of intraoperative complications during endotracheal intubation in both study groups. In the Ultrasound Group, 2% of patients experienced malpositioning, 3% experienced airway trauma, and 1% had difficulty in ventilation. Similarly, in the Age-Based Formula Group, 5% experienced malpositioning, 4% experienced airway trauma, and 3% had difficulty in ventilation. Overall, the incidence of complications was slightly lower in the Ultrasound Group compared to the Age-Based Formula Group.

Table 3: Incidence of Intraoperative Complications

Complication	Ultrasound Group (n=100)	Age-Based Formula Group (n=100)
Malpositioning	2 (2%)	5 (5%)

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Complication	Ultrasound Group (n=100)	Age-Based Formula Group (n=100)
Airway Trauma	3 (3%)	4 (4%)
Difficulty in Ventilation	1 (1%)	3 (3%)

This table-4 compares ultrasonographic measurements of airway structures between the two study groups. The subglottic diameter was slightly larger in the Ultrasound Group (6.8 ± 0.9 mm) compared to the Age-Based Formula Group (6.5 ± 0.8 mm), with a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.041$). Similarly, the tracheal diameter and vocal cord length were slightly larger in the Ultrasound Group compared to the Age-Based Formula Group, although the differences were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4: Comparison of Ultrasonographic Measurements Between Groups

Measurement	Ultrasound Group (Mean ± SD)	Age-Based Formula Group (Mean ± SD)	p-value
Subglottic Diameter (mm)	6.8 ± 0.9	6.5 ± 0.8	0.041
Tracheal Diameter (mm)	10.2 ± 1.2	9.8 ± 1.1	0.072
Vocal Cord Length (mm)	5.5 ± 0.7	5.3 ± 0.6	0.093

This table-5 shows the distribution of endotracheal tube (ETT) sizes used in both study groups. In the Ultrasound Group, the most commonly used ETT size was 4.5 mm (40%), followed by 5.0 mm (30%), 5.5 mm (25%), and 6.0 mm (5%). Similarly, in the Age-Based Formula Group, the most commonly used ETT size was also 4.5 mm (35%), followed by 5.0 mm (25%), 5.5 mm (30%), and 6.0 mm (10%).

Table 5: Distribution of Endotracheal Tube Sizes Used

ETT Size	Ultrasound Group (n=100)	Age-Based Formula Group (n=100)
4.5 mm	40	35
5.0 mm	30	25
5.5 mm	25	30
6.0 mm	5	10

This table-6 reports adverse events related to the study intervention in both study groups. In the Ultrasound Group, 2% of patients experienced hoarseness, 1% experienced laryngospasm, and 3% had coughing. Similarly, in the Age-Based Formula Group, 3% experienced hoarseness, 2% experienced laryngospasm, and 4% had coughing. Overall, the incidence of adverse events was comparable between the two groups.

Table 6: Adverse Events Related to Study Intervention

Event	Ultrasound Group (n=100)	Age-Based Formula Group (n=100)
Hoarseness	2 (2%)	3 (3%)
Laryngospasm	1 (1%)	2 (2%)
Coughing	3 (3%)	4 (4%)

DISCUSSION:

Endotracheal intubation is a critical procedure in pediatric patients, essential for various medical interventions. However, selecting the appropriate endotracheal tube (ETT) size remains challenging due to anatomical variability and growth factors in children. This study aimed to compare ultrasound-based techniques with age-based formulas for predicting ETT size in one-year-old pediatric patients, addressing an important gap in the literature.

Our findings demonstrate that ultrasound-based techniques showed superior accuracy in predicting the correct ETT size compared to age-based formulas. The ultrasound group achieved a higher accuracy rate (95%) in predicting ETT size compared to the age-based formula group (85%). This suggests that ultrasound offers a more precise and

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individualized approach to ETT size prediction, potentially reducing the risk of complications associated with incorrect tube sizing.[6,7]

In terms of intraoperative complications, the ultrasound group exhibited a slightly lower incidence compared to the age-based formula group. Malpositioning, airway trauma, and difficulty in ventilation were less frequent in the ultrasound group, indicating the potential for improved safety outcomes with ultrasound-guided intubation.[7,8]

Ultrasonographic measurements of airway structures, including subglottic diameter, tracheal diameter, and vocal cord length, were found to be slightly larger in the ultrasound group. While statistically significant differences were observed in subglottic diameter measurements, the clinical significance of these differences requires further investigation. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that ultrasound may provide more accurate assessments of airway anatomy, contributing to better ETT size selection.[8,9]

The distribution of ETT sizes used in both groups showed similar patterns, with the majority of patients receiving ETT sizes ranging from 4.5 mm to 5.5 mm. This consistency highlights the applicability of both ultrasound-based techniques and age-based formulas in clinical practice, with slight variations reflecting individual patient anatomical differences.[9,10]

Regarding adverse events, the incidence rates were comparable between the two groups, indicating similar safety profiles. Hoarseness, laryngospasm, and coughing were the most commonly reported adverse events, with low occurrence rates in both groups.
These findings underscore the potential benefits of ultrasound-guided techniques in pediatric airway management. By providing real-time visualization and accurate measurements of airway structures, ultrasound offers a valuable tool for improving the precision and safety of endotracheal intubation in pediatric patients.[8-10]

Limitations
While this study contributes valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study was conducted at a single center, limiting generalizability to other settings. Additionally, operator proficiency in ultrasound may vary, potentially influencing the accuracy of measurements. Further multicenter studies with standardized protocols are warranted to validate these findings and explore long-term clinical outcomes.

Conclusion
In conclusion, our study highlights the potential of ultrasound-based techniques as a superior method for predicting endotracheal tube (ETT) size in pediatric patients compared to traditional age-based formulas. Ultrasound offers real-time visualization and accurate measurements of airway structures, leading to higher accuracy rates in ETT size prediction and potentially reducing intraoperative complications. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating ultrasound into pediatric airway management protocols, with the potential to improve patient safety and outcomes during endotracheal intubation procedures. Further research is warranted to validate these findings and optimize ultrasound protocols for widespread clinical implementation.

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