

“Effectiveness of an Educational Interventional Programme on Knowledge Regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act, Among Nursing Students.”

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ABSTRACT

POSCO is an effective treatment for psychiatric disorders. Some patients may require treatment with continuation or maintenance POSCO because other treatment have not been effective in preventing illness relapse. Statement problem “A Pre-experimental study to assess the Effectiveness of an educational interventional programme on knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) act, among Nursing students.” Objectives: 1. To assess pre-test knowledge score of selected Nursing students regarding POSCO in selected nursing college in Bareilly (U.P.) 2. To evaluate the effectiveness of an Educational Interventional programme on knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act among Nursing students. 3. To find out the association between the pre-test level of knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act among Nursing students with their selected demographic variable. Methods of the study An evaluative research approach was used with one group pre- test and post- test design to evaluate the effectiveness of Structured teaching Program on knowledge regarding POSCO among Nursing students. Non probability Purposive sampling technique was chosen for the data collection was structured knowledge questionnaire which comprised of seven items in demographic data, 30 items on knowledge regarding all the aspects of knowledge regarding POSCO. The reliability of the tool was established by Split half method technique with reliability of the knowledge ($r = 0.72$). the pretest was administered to 60 selected Nursing students followed by Structured teaching Program. After 4 days, post-test was conducted to some samples using the same tool. The conceptual framework adopted for the study was based on Bertalanffy’s general system Model (1981). Data gathered was analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, paired ‘t’ test and chi square test. Result: The result shows in experimental group of pre-tests that 6.66% belongs to adequate knowledge or in post-test 73.33% were adequate knowledge range from 21-30 and in pre-test 70% belongs to moderate knowledge or in post-test 26.66% were moderate knowledge range from 11-20 and in pre-test that 23.33% belongs to inadequate knowledge or in post-test 0% belongs to inadequate knowledge range from 0-10. Interpretation and conclusion Comparison between pretest and post-test in experimental group of pre-tests mean value was 13.16 and SD was 3.45 and post-test mean value was 22.13 and SD was 2.77. The df value was 58 in both pre-test and post-test of experimental group. The unpaired t-test value was 0.521 in pre-test of experimental. Association between pretest knowledge scores with their demographic variables suggest that the obtained chi – square value for Age ($\chi^2 = 3.1249$, $p > 0.05$), ANM students ($\chi^2 = 3.0841$, $p > 0.05$), Religion ($\chi^2 = 3.8904$, $p > 0.05$), Type of family ($\chi^2 = 4.390$, $p > 0.05$), , family income ($\chi^2 = 7.409$, $p > 0.05$) and parents occupation ($\chi^2 = 3.554$, $p > 0.05$) and Sources of information shows no significant association between Knowledge of Nursing students regarding POSCO. Hence, the research hypothesis H2 stated that there is significant association between the pre-test knowledge score with their selected demographic variable is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted.

Keywords: Knowledge, Effectiveness, Nursing students, Structured Teaching Program, POSCO

INTRODUCTION:

Children are considered the most valuable and vulnerable members of society. They represent the future

of a nation and require proper care, protection, and support for healthy physical, psychological, and social development. According to the United Nations

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Children's Fund, a child is defined as any individual below the age of 18 years. Children depend on adults for their safety, education, and overall well-being. Therefore, ensuring their protection from harm, exploitation, and abuse is a fundamental responsibility of families, communities, and governments.^[1]

Despite global efforts to safeguard children, many of them continue to face various forms of abuse and violence. Child abuse refers to any act or failure to act by parents, caregivers, or others that results in harm, potential harm, or threat of harm to a child. It can occur in several forms such as physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse. Among these, child sexual abuse is considered one of the most serious violations of children's rights and dignity. According to the World Health Organization, child sexual abuse includes the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully understand, is unable to give informed consent to, or is not developmentally prepared for. Child sexual abuse has severe and long-lasting consequences on the physical and mental health of children. Victims may experience depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and difficulties in relationships later in life. Globally, millions of children are affected by sexual violence each year, making it a significant public health and social issue. Healthcare professionals, especially nurses, often come into contact with children and families and therefore play an important role in identifying, preventing, and reporting cases of abuse.^[2]

In India, the issue of child sexual abuse gained significant attention after several reported cases highlighted the vulnerability of children and the lack of specific legal protection. To address this serious concern, the Government of India enacted the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act in 2012. This Act was specifically designed to protect children below 18 years from sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and exploitation. The Act also ensures child-friendly procedures for reporting, recording evidence, investigation, and trial of offences. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act defines various forms of sexual offences against children and prescribes strict punishments for offenders. It also makes it mandatory for individuals, including healthcare professionals, to report suspected cases of child sexual abuse to the appropriate authorities. Failure to report such offences is considered punishable under the Act.

Therefore, it is essential for healthcare providers, particularly nursing students who are future professionals, to have adequate knowledge regarding the provisions of the POCSO Act. Nursing students frequently interact with children during clinical postings in hospitals and community settings.

Their awareness and knowledge regarding child protection laws are crucial for early identification, appropriate care, and timely reporting of child sexual abuse cases. However, studies have indicated that knowledge regarding the POCSO Act among students and healthcare professionals is often inadequate.^[3]

Therefore, improving the knowledge of nursing students through educational interventions is important to strengthen the protection of children and ensure proper implementation of the law. Hence, the present study aims to assess the effectiveness of an interventional program on knowledge regarding the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act among nursing students.^[4]

NEED FOR THE STUDY:

Child sexual abuse is a serious global public health and human rights issue. According to global estimates published in *The Lancet*, approximately 18.9% of females and 14.8% of males worldwide experience sexual abuse during childhood. Most victims are abused before the age of 18 years, which highlights the vulnerability of children and adolescents globally.^[4]

The consequences of child sexual abuse include long-term physical, psychological, and social problems such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and impaired social relationships. Therefore, governments and international organizations emphasize the importance of awareness programs, legal protection, and preventive strategies to protect children from sexual exploitation.^[5]

Healthcare professionals, including nurses, play a crucial role in identifying, reporting, and preventing child abuse. However, studies show that awareness and knowledge regarding child protection laws among students and professionals are still inadequate in many countries. This creates a strong need for educational and interventional programs.^[5]

Child sexual abuse is also a major concern in India. A national survey conducted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development reported that over 53% of

children in India have experienced some form of sexual abuse.^[6]

To address this serious issue, the Government of India enacted the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in 2012, which provides legal protection to children below 18 years and prescribes strict punishments for sexual offences.^[7]

Despite the existence of this law, cases of sexual offences against children continue to increase. Reports indicate a 94% rise in reported POCSO cases from 2017 to 2022, highlighting the seriousness of the problem.

Furthermore, studies assessing awareness of the POCSO Act have shown insufficient knowledge among the general population and students. For example, research found that only about 43.2% of participants had adequate awareness regarding child sexual abuse and the POCSO Act, while more than half had inadequate knowledge.^[8]

This indicates a significant gap between legislation and public awareness, emphasizing the need for educational interventions, particularly among healthcare students. According to national crime statistics, Uttar Pradesh reports one of the highest numbers of sexual crime cases against children in India. In recent data, the state recorded 9,852 sexual crime cases against children, accounting for about 14% of the national total.^[9]

The high incidence of such crimes in Uttar Pradesh highlights the urgent need for stronger preventive strategies, awareness campaigns, and proper knowledge of legal provisions among healthcare professionals and students. Nurses often serve as the first point of contact for victims in hospitals and community settings; therefore, their knowledge regarding the

POCSO Act is essential for timely identification, reporting, and support of affected children.^[10]

Child abuse is an important public health issue, and cases may also occur within hospital settings. Therefore, it is essential to study the incidence of child abuse in hospitals to identify the magnitude of the problem and to improve knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess pre-test knowledge score of selected Nursing students regarding POCSO in selected nursing college in Bareilly (U.P.)
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of an Educational Interventional programme on knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act among Nursing students.
3. To find out the association between the pre- test level of knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act among Nursing students with their selected demographic variable.

HYPOTHESIS

H1: There will be a significant difference between mean pre-test and post-test knowledge scores regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act among Nursing students.

H2: There will be a significant association between the pre-test level of knowledge regarding Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act among Nursing students with their selected demographic variable.

Research approach: Quantitative research approach

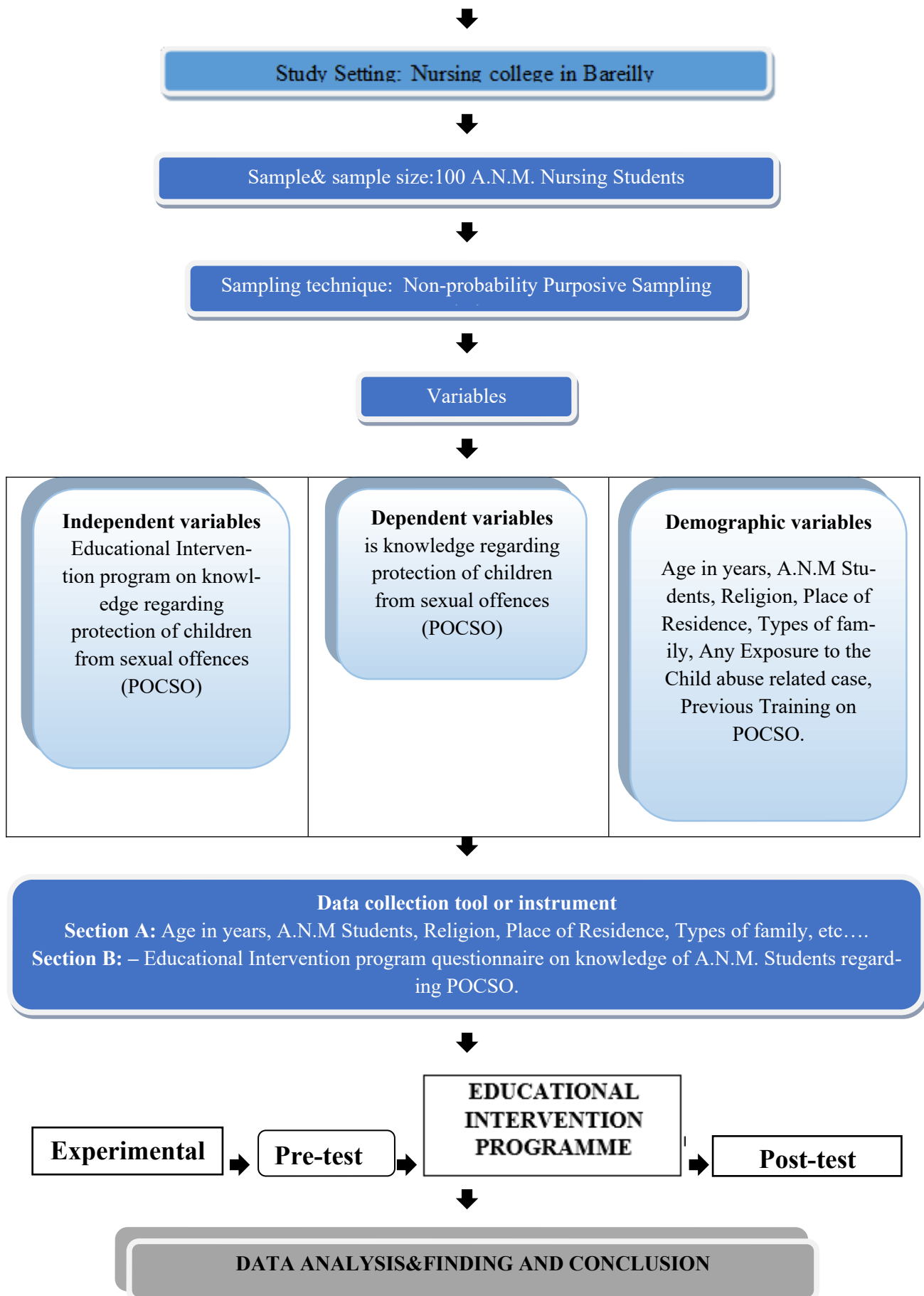


Research design: Pre- experimental (one group pre-test and post-test research design)



Target population: A.N.M. Nursing Students

Accessible population: A.N.M. Nursing Students in selected nursing college



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**Section A: Description of sample characteristics****Table-1 frequency and Percentage distribution n=100**

S.NO.	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
		FREQUENCY	%
1.	Age in years		
	a. Below 20 yrs	58	58%
	b. 21-24 yrs	30	30%
	c. More than 24 yrs	12	12%
2.	Religious		
	a. Hindu	41	41%
	b. Muslim	34	34%
	c. Christian	20	20%
	d. Others	5	5%
3.	Place of Residence		
	a. Urban	54	54%
	b. Rural	33	33%
	c. Semi-Urban	13	13%
	d. Others	00	00%
4.	Types of family		
	a. Nuclear	52	52%
	b. Joint	48	48%
	c. Extended	0	0%
	d. Other	0	0%
5.	ANM Students		
	a. 1 st Year	50	50%
	b. 2 nd Year	50	50%
6.	Any Exposure to the Child abuse related cases		
	a. Yes	22	22%
	b. No	78	78%
7.	Previous Training on POCSO		
	a. Yes	21	21%
	b. No	79	79%

Section B: Data on level of knowledge of Pre-test and Post-test after the Structure teaching programme among Nursing students at selected nursing college in Bareilly (U.P.)

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Level of Knowledge

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	OBTAINED SCORE	SAMPLE (100)			
		Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
a. Adequate	21-30	21	21%	82	82%
b. Moderate	11-20	30	30%	13	13%
c. Inadequate	0-10	49	49%	5	5%

Section C: Data on comparison of Pre-test and Post-test knowledge score

Table 3: Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Knowledge Score

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	df	Unpaired t-test
	(MEAN±SD)		
PRE-TEST	13.16±3.45	58	0.521
POST-TEST	22.13±2.77	58	7.839

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