



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE AWARENESS REGARDING THE POSH ACT AMONG 2ND-SEMESTER B.Sc. NURSING STUDENTS IN ASRAM COLLEGE OF NURSING AT ELURU.

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ABSTRACT **Background:** Sexual harassment in educational and workplace settings is a significant concern that can adversely affect the safety, dignity, psychological well-being, and professional development of women. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) provides a legal framework for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and promoting a safe environment. Nursing students, who undergo clinical training and interact with patients, healthcare professionals, and other staff, may encounter situations in which awareness of their rights and available mechanisms for redressal is essential. **Objectives:** 1) To assess the level of awareness regarding the POSH Act, 2013, Among 2nd semester B.Sc. nursing students. 2) To categorize the level of awareness as Adequate, moderately adequate, and Inadequate. 3) To find the association between the pretest level of awareness regarding the POSH Act and selected demographic variables. **Materials and methods:** Quantitative approach was considered as appropriate research approach for the present study. The sample of this study comprised of 60 second semester B.Sc nursing students. Non probability convenient sampling technique was used to draw the sample.

KEYWORDS : POSH Act, Sexual Harassment, Awareness, B.Sc.Nursing Students.

INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment is a serious concern that can adversely affect women's dignity, safety, psychological well-being, and professional development. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act), provides a legal framework for the prevention, prohibition, and redressal of sexual harassment and promotes a safe and respectful environment. Nursing students undergo clinical training and interact with patients, healthcare professionals, and other staff, making awareness of their rights and available redressal mechanisms essential. Adequate awareness can help students recognize inappropriate behaviour, understand reporting procedures, and seek appropriate support. Early sensitization may also promote professional confidence, safety, and a culture of respect in healthcare settings.

Therefore, the present study was undertaken to assess the awareness regarding the POSH Act among 2nd-semester B.Sc. Nursing students.

Need for the Study

Sexual harassment in educational and clinical settings can adversely affect the safety, dignity, psychological well-being, and professional development of nursing students. During clinical training, students interact with patients, healthcare professionals, and other staff, highlighting the need for awareness of workplace safety and legal protections. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) provides a legal framework for the prevention, prohibition, and redressal of sexual harassment. Awareness of its provisions, reporting procedures, and institutional mechanisms is essential for enabling students to recognize inappropriate behaviour and seek appropriate support. Assessing awareness among nursing students can help identify knowledge gaps and provide a basis for strengthening orientation, sensitization, and educational programmes. Early awareness may empower students to understand their rights and responsibilities and contribute to a safer learning and clinical environment.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of awareness regarding the POSH Act, 2013, Among 2nd semester B.Sc. nursing students.
2. To categorize the level of awareness as Adequate, moderately adequate, and Inadequate.
3. To find the association between the pretest level of awareness regarding the POSH Act and selected demographic variables

Hypothesis

Research Hypothesis (H₁)

There is a significant association between the pre test level of awareness regarding the POSH Act and selected demographic variables among 2nd-semester B.Sc. Nursing students.

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

There is no significant association between the pre test level of awareness regarding the POSH Act and selected demographic variables among 2nd-semester B.Sc. Nursing students.

METHODOLOGY

- **Research Approach:** A quantitative research approach was adopted for the study.
- **Research Design:** Descriptive cross-sectional design
- **Research setting:** The Study was conducted in the 2nd semester of B.Sc. nursing students in Asram College of Nursing, Eluru, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Sample size:** A total of 60 girls were included in this study.
- **Sampling technique:** non probability convenient sampling technique was adopted for this study.

Inclusion criteria

- Students currently enrolled in the 2nd semester B. Sc nursing students in Asram College of nursing Eluru.
- Students who are willing to participate and provide informed consent.
- Students who are 18 years of age or older.

Exclusion Criteria

- Students who are absent during the data collection period.

Tools and Technique

The tool consisted of three sections:

Section A: Socio demographic Characteristics

This section collected information regarding selected socio demographic variables, including age, gender, area of residence, family monthly income, father's educational level, mother's educational level, prior awareness of the POSH Act, and source of information regarding the POSH Act. Numerical codes were assigned to the responses for the purpose of data analysis.

Section B: Structured Knowledge Questionnaire

This section consisted of a 30-item multiple-choice questionnaire designed to assess the participants' knowledge regarding the POSH Act. The items covered major aspects of the Act, including its meaning, objectives, provisions, committees, prevention of sexual harassment, and awareness-related aspects. Each correct response was assigned a score of 1, while an incorrect or unanswered response was assigned a score of 0. The maximum possible score was 30.

Section C: Structured Teaching Programme

A structured teaching programme on the POSH Act was developed and administered to the participants following the pre-test. The programme covered key areas related to the POSH Act, including its meaning,

objectives, provisions, committees, prevalence of workplace sexual harassment, and awareness regarding prevention and implementation of the Act. The programme was intended solely to enhance participants' awareness and understanding of the POSH Act. No post-test assessment was conducted; therefore, the study did not evaluate the effectiveness of the structured teaching programme.

The tool was reviewed by experts in the field of nursing for relevance, clarity, and adequacy. The reliability of the structured knowledge questionnaire was assessed using the test-retest method. A pilot study was conducted among 10 second-semester B.Sc. Nursing students to assess the feasibility and practicability of the study and data collection tool. This gave a basis for the investigator to conduct the actual study.

Data collection procedure:

Data collection is the gathering of information needed to address a research problem. The formal permission to conduct the study was obtained from the principal of the college. Informed consent was obtained from the 2nd semester B.sc nursing students. The data collection was done for a period of one month among 60 samples by convenient sampling technique. Structured Knowledge Questionnaire was administered to samples by administrator and they spent 30 – 45 minutes to answer the questionnaire. All the samples were receptive and cooperative during data collection.

Data analysis:

Descriptive statistics like frequency, mean, SD, mean percentage was used for the description of the demographic characteristics and assessment of knowledge. Chi square test was used to find out the association between pre-test level of awareness and demographic variables.

The Findings were Discussed Under the Following Headings

1. To assess the level of awareness regarding the POSH Act, 2013, among 2nd-semester B.Sc. nursing students.

The findings revealed that 48 (80%) study participants had inadequate knowledge, whereas 12(20%) study participants had moderately adequate knowledge, and 0 (0%) study participants had adequate knowledge.

2. To categorize the level of awareness as Adequate, moderately adequate, and Inadequate.

Findings revealed that 48 (80%) study participants had inadequate knowledge, whereas 12(20%) study participants had moderately adequate knowledge, and 0 (0%) study participants had adequate knowledge. pre-test mean(12.6), standard deviation(2.47).The class served as a preventive strategy by equipping students with knowledge that not only protects them during their academic years but also prepares them for professional workplace environments.

3. To find the association between the pre test level of awareness regarding the POSH Act and selected demographic variables

The study findings revealed that there is no significant association between age, gender, residential area, family monthly income level, fathers' educational level, mothers' educational level, awareness of the Posh Act, and source of information about the Posh Act. Hence null hypothesis is accepted.

Distribution of level of awareness regarding the POSH Act, 2013, among 2nd-semester B.Sc. nursing students.

Level of awareness	frequency	percentage
Inadequate	48	80%
Moderately adequate knowledge	12	20%
Adequate knowledge	00	00%

Pretest Mean & Standard Deviation

sno	mean	Standard deviation
Pre test	12.6	2.47

CONCLUSION

The present study assessed the awareness regarding the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013, among 60 2nd-semester B.Sc. Nursing students at Asram College of Nursing, Eluru. The findings revealed that 48 (80%) students had inadequate awareness, 12 (20%) had moderately adequate awareness and none had adequate awareness, with a mean score of 12.6 and standard deviation of 2.47. These findings indicate a substantial gap in students' awareness regarding the POSH Act and highlight the need for regular sensitization programmes, curriculum-based education, and accessible institutional support mechanisms to promote a safe, respectful, and harassment-free academic and clinical environment.

Recommendations

1. Regular POSH awareness and sensitization programmes.
2. Inclusion of POSH education in the nursing curriculum.
3. POSH orientation before clinical postings.
4. Strengthening and publicizing the Internal Complaints Committee.
5. Providing confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms.
6. Promoting professional boundaries and a culture of respect.
7. Conducting future interventional studies to evaluate the effectiveness of awareness programmes.

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