

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge Regarding Pocso Act Among Adults in the Selected Rural Community, Kuppam Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Background: The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, introduced in 2012, serves as a comprehensive legal framework aimed at safeguarding children from sexual crimes. Medical and dental professionals play a critical role in identifying and reporting such cases, contributing significantly to the protection and well-being of affected children. The POCSO Act of 2012 is a comprehensive law designed to protect children from sexual offences, harassment, and child pornography. It safeguards the interests of the child at every stage of the legal process, including the filing of a police complaint, the recording of evidence, and the conduct of investigations, as well as ensuring prompt trials in designated courts, one in eight children globally are believed to have been subjected to online sexual solicitation during the same period. This includes unwanted sexual conversations, non-consensual sexting, intrusive sexual questions, and requests for sexual acts made by adults or other youth. The first Indian study on child sexual abuse, published in 2007, revealed that 53.22% of children had experienced some form of sexual abuse, yet the majority of these incidents went unreported. Considering the high incidence of child abuse not reported due to not having knowledge regarding POCSO act. Therefore, the present study aims to assess the knowledge regarding POCSO Act among Adults in the Selected Rural community, Kuppam, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh. With the objective of increasing the knowledge for rural adults on POCSO

Methods: a Qualitative descriptive design was conducted in December 2025 among 110 adults at Gonuguru village in Kuppam were selected by a purposive sampling technique, the data was collected through self-administered knowledge questionnaire through interview technique for 30-35 minutes the data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and interventional statistical analysis.

Results of the study: in regards of level of knowledge regarding POCSO Act among adults about 19 (17.27%) of them were under excellent knowledge and 70 (63.64%) of them were under good knowledge, 21 (19.09%) of them were under fair knowledge about POCSO Act, with the mean, SD and p-values of knowledge scores among adults shows that the level of knowledge on POCSO ACT mean were 15.18 with a SD of 5.728 the association of scores of knowledge on POCSO ACT among adults

with their selected demographic variables monthly income was significant at the levels of ($p < 0.076$), Do you know about POCSO Act was significant at the levels of ($p < 0.000$), respectively. Other variables such as Age, gender, religion, educational status, occupation, type of family, source of information were not significant

Conclusion: The present study assessed the knowledge regarding POCSO Act among adults (20 to 40 yrs) in selected rural community At Kuppam The findings revealed that The adults about 21 (19.09%) of them were having fair knowledge. Hence there is a need to assess the awareness regarding the importance of teaching adults about the knowledge of POCSO Act.

Keywords: Assess, Knowledge, Pocso Act, Adults

I. INTRODUCTION

“POCSO is not just a law; it is a commitment to childhood.” – Meera Joshi

Children are invaluable assets to a country, cherished not only by their mothers, families, and communities but also by the world at large. Child abuse encompasses various forms of cruelty inflicted upon a child, including physical harm, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as of 2006, child maltreatment is categorized into four main types: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional (psychological) abuse, and neglect. These forms of abuse have profound, long-lasting effects on children's well-being and development, making the protection of children a fundamental concern for society as a whole.¹ The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, introduced in 2012, serves as a comprehensive legal framework aimed at safeguarding children from sexual crimes. Medical and dental professionals play a critical role in identifying and reporting such cases, contributing significantly to the protection and well-being of affected children² The POCSO Act of 2012 is a comprehensive law designed to protect children from sexual offences, harassment, and child pornography. It safeguards the interests of the child at every stage of the legal process, including the filing of a police complaint, the recording of evidence, and the conduct of investigations, as well as ensuring prompt trials in designated courts.³ The World Health Organization defines child sexual abuse as the involvement of a child or adolescent in sexual activities that they do not fully understand, cannot consent to, or are developmentally unprepared for, or that violate legal or social norms.⁴

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data show a steady increase in crimes against children. In 2015, there were 94,172 cases reported, rising to 106,958 in 2016 and 129,032 in 2017, and reaching 141,764 in 2018. In 2018, offences registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) made up approximately 34–35% of all crimes against children.⁵ The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported a 4.5% rise in crimes against children in 2019 compared with 2018. According to the report, 148,185 offences against children were recorded nationwide in 2019, of which 31.2% were registered under the POCSO Act (2012). Between 2017 and 2019, Maharashtra reported the highest number of POCSO cases (8,503) in the country. Notably, in nearly half of these cases, minors were lured online and coaxed into meeting offenders, who subsequently subjected them to sexual abuse or exploited them by promising marriage.⁶ Hence, based up on the above data, the following study was planned with an aim toward evaluating the knowledge and awareness of POCSO Act among adults in the rural areas.

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

A qualitative Descriptive research design was conducted in december 2025 among 110 adults to assess the level of knowledge regarding POCSO Act in Selected Rural community at Kuppam.” . the samples were selected by using Non probability Purposive Sampling Technique, informed consent were taken before the study, 110 adults in Selected Rural community at Kuppam , knowledge were assessed by using structured self-administered questionnaire. Which includes demographic variables and Questionnaire on knowledge regarding pocso act.

Objectives of the present study includes

1. To assess the the knowledge regarding POCSO act among adults in the selected rural community, Kuppam, Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh”.
2. To Find out the association between POCSO act with their selected socio demographic variables among adults

Collected data was entered into MS Excel 2013 and analyzed using Epi Info 7.0. Appropriate statistical methods used to find out the results based on the objectives.

III. RESULTS

The results of the study were presented as Tables and graphs as per the objectives of the study.

Section-A: Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables.

Table: 1- frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables among adults
N=110

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	FREQUENC Y (F)	ENTAGE (%)
1.	Age(in years)		
	a) 20 – 30years	75	68.18
	b) 31 - 40years	35	31.82
	TOTAL	110	100.00
2.	GENDER		
	a. Male	32	29.09
	b. Female	78	70.91
3.	TOTAL	110	100.00
	3.Religion		
	a) Hindu	82	74.55
	b) Muslim	14	12.73
	c) Christian	14	12.73
	TOTAL	110	100.00
4.	Education status of adult		
	Primary education	44	40.00
	Secondary education	12	10.91
	Higher secondary	17	15.45
	Graduates	27	24.55
	Post graduates and above	10	9.09

	TOTAL	110	100.00
5.	Occupation of the adult		
	No work	57	51.82
	Private sector	19	17.27
	Business	13	11.82
	Household	13	11.82
	Government service	8	7.27
	TOTAL	110	100.00
6.	Monthly income		
	<10,000	69	62.73
	10,001-20,000	25	22.73
	20,001-30,000	15	13.64
	30,001-40,000	1	0.91
	TOTAL	110	100.00
7.	Type of family		
	Nuclear family	71	64.55
	Joint family	39	35.45
	TOTAL	110	100.00
8.	Do you know about POCSO Act?		
	Yes	81	74.31
	No	28	25.69
	TOTAL	110	100.00
9.	If yes sources of information		
	a) Television	31	28.18
	Media	57	51.82
	Newspaper	22	20.00
	TOTAL	110	100.00

Table-1 Demographic Variable shows about 75 (68.18%) of adults belongs to 20-30years 35 (31.82%of them belongs to 31-40 years. majority 78 (70.91%) of the adults were female 32(29.09%) of them were male. Majority 82 (74.55%) of the adults were Hindu 14 (12.73%) were belongs to Muslim, 14 (12.73%) were belongs to Christian. About 44(40.00%) adults were belongs to primary education, 12(10.91%) of them were belongs to secondary education 17 (15.45%) of them were belongs to higher secondary 27 (24.55%) of them were belongs to graduates 10 (9.09%) belongs to post graduates and above. about 57(51.82%) adults were having no work, 19 (17.27%) of them were belongs to private sector, 13 (11.82%) of them were belongs to business, 13 (11.82%) of them belongs to household and 8 (7.27%) of them were belongs to government service. about 69 (62.73%) of the adult monthly income is <10,000, 25 (22.73%) of the adult income is 10,001 to 20,000, 15 (13.64%) of the adult income is 20,001 to 30,000 and 1 (0.91%) of the adult income is 30,001 to 40,000. About 71 (64.55%) of the adult were living in nuclear family, 39 (35.45%) of the adult were living in joint family. About 81 (74.31%) of the adult answered yes and 28(25.69%) of the adults answered no. Majority 57 (51.82%) of the adult get source of information from media, 31 (28.18%) from television and 22 (20.00%) from newspaper

Section-B: Frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge regarding POCSO Act among adults.

Table: 2- Frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge regarding POCSO Act among adults.

N=110

S.No	Levels of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1	Excellent Knowledge	19	17.27
2	Good Knowledge	70	63.64
3	Fair Knowledge	21	19.09
5	Total	110	100

The above table - 2: Shows that levels of knowledge regarding POCSO Act among adults are About 19 (17.27%) of them were having excellent knowledge and 70 (63.64%) of them were having good knowledge, 21(19.09%) of them were under fair knowledge

Section-c: Association between levels of knowledge with the demographic variables of adults

Table: 3 - Association between levels of knowledge with the demographic variables of adults

N=110

Demographic Variables Of Upper Primary School Children	Levels of Knowledge						Chi Square value	P Value	Results
	Excellent		Good		Fair				
1.Age (in years)	F	%	F	%	F	%	4.7122	0.095	NS
a) 20-30 years	14	73.68	43	61.43	18	85.71			
b) 31-40 years	5	26.32	27	38.57	3	14.29			
2. Gender									
a) Male	5	26.32	17	24.29	10	47.62	4.3493	0.114	NS
b) Female	14	73.68	53	75.71	11	52.38			
3. Religion									
a) Hindu	17	89.47	51	72.86	14	66.67	5.2124	0.266	NS
b) Muslim	1	5.26	8	11.43	5	23.81			
c) Christian	1	5.26	11	15.71	2	9.52			
4. Education status									
a) Primary education	4	21.05	32	45.71	8	38.10	10.1311	0.256	NS
b) Secondary education	3	15.79	6	8.57	3	14.29			
c) Higher secondary	2	10.53	9	12.86	6	28.57			
d) Graduates	8	42.11	16	22.86	3	14.29			
e) Post graduates and above	2	10.53	7	10.00	1	4.76			
5. Occupation of the adult									
a) No work	7	36.84	40	57.14	10	47.62	10.1206	0.257	NS
b) Private sector	6	31.58	9	12.86	4	19.05			
c) Business	3	15.79	8	11.43	2	9.52			

d) Household	1	5.26	7	10.00	5	23.81			
e) Government service	2	10.53	6	8.57	0	0			
6. Monthly income									
a) <10,000	7	36.84	49	70	13	61.90	11.4112	0.07	Significant
b) 10,000-20,000	7	36.84	12	17.14	6	28.57			
20,001-30,000	4	21.05	9	12.86	2	9.52			
30,001-40,000	1	5.26	0	0	0	0			
7. Type of family									
a) Nuclear family	11	57.89	48	68.57	12	57.14	1.3659	0.505	NS
b) Joint family	8	42.11	22	31.43	9	42.86			
8. Do you know about POCSO Act?									
a) Yes	17	94.44	55	78.57	9	42.86	15.3716	0.000	Significant
b) No	1	5.56	15	21.43	12	57.14			
9. If yes sources of information									
a) Television	2	10.53	24	34.29	5	23.81	6.6786	0.154	NS
b) Media	10	52.63	35	50	12	57.14			
c) Newspaper	7	36.84	11	15.71	4	19.05			

Table:3 Denotes the calculated X 2 values of the levels of knowledge regarding POCSO Act with their selected demographic variables revealed that there is a significant seen at monthly income at the levels of ($p < 0.076$), Do you know about POCSO Act at the levels of ($p < 0.000$), and other variables were not found to be significant.

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study assessed the to assess the level knowledge regarding among adults (20 to 40 yrs.) in selected rural community at Kuppam. Regarding Objective 1, **assess the** levels of knowledge regarding POCSO Act among adults are About 19 (17.27%) of them were having excellent knowledge and 70 (63.64%) of them were having good knowledge, 21(19.09%) of them were under fair knowledge. These findings indicate that the minimum of adults had fair knowledge Similar findings were reported by **Ramandeep₁; Sharma, Richa et al.(2023)** who identified inadequate knowledge regarding pocso act Regarding Objective 2, Denotes the calculated X 2 values of the levels of knowledge regarding POCSO Act with their Selected demographic variables revealed that there is a significant seen at monthly income at the levels of ($p < 0.076$), Do you know about POCSO Act at the levels of ($p < 0.000$), and other variables were not found to be significant

Overall, the findings of the present study indicate that the level of knowledge was regarding POCSO Act among adults are About 19 (17.27%) of them were having excellent knowledge and 70 (63.64%) of them were having good knowledge, 21(19.09%) of them were under fair knowledge. Hence there is a need to assess the awareness regarding the importance of teaching adults about the knowledge of POCSO Act.

V. CONCLUSION

Overall, the present study aims to evaluate the knowledge regarding POCSO Act. The adults about 19 (17.27%) of them were having excellent knowledge and 70 (63.64%) of them were having good knowledge, 21 (19.09%) of them were having fair knowledge. Hence there is a need to assess the awareness regarding the importance of teaching adults about the knowledge of POCSO Act.

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