

■ ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Assessment of Knowledge and attitude about POCSO Act amongst Medical Practitioners

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Child sexual offences as well as neglect is one of the most prevalent and crucial social issue worldwide. The child sexual abuse is an offence which is commonly under-reported in India. It is found that more than 3 million children become victim of abuse each year.¹ Many more cases among them are unreported. The newly adopted POCSO Act, 2012 deals with all forms of sexual abuse of children and the principles to handle the child in a systematic way and it is the most detailed law regarding this problem. The current study aims to analyze the level of knowledge & attitude and awareness about various practical issues of CSA in context of the POCSO Act, 2012. **Methods:** This is a questionnaire-based study conducted amongst the Medical practitioners of Ahmednagar city. A questionnaire was prepared on Google form consisting of 10 questions about POCSO Act 2012. About 157 medical practitioners from Ahmednagar city participated in study. The questionnaire distributed to the doctors & it was focused on knowledge, understanding, their attitude, and practice toward child abuse and POCSO Act 2012. **Result:** Out of total 10 questions average point score was 6.11/10. Most disappointing observation made is majorly 57% RMP doesn't know about the punishment if he/she fails to report the case under POCSO Act. **Conclusion:** The study showed that knowledge & attitude about POCSO Act 2012 amongst medical practitioner in Ahmednagar city was satisfactory. But in addition to strengthening of legislature, more in depth knowledge regarding child sexual abuse among medical professionals will help to eradicate this sensitive childhood social issue.

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INTRODUCTION

Child sexual offences as well as neglect is one of the most prevalent and crucial social issue worldwide. The child sexual abuse is an offence which is commonly under-reported in India. It is found that more than 3 million children become victim of abuse each year.¹ World Health Organization (WHO) defines Child Sexual Abuse as "The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is not able to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws of society or social taboos".²



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