

# Effectiveness of a Career Awareness Programme Regarding Nursing as a Career among Senior Secondary School Students in Western India

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Career awareness is important for helping adolescents make informed occupational choices. Many students have limited understanding of nursing as a profession, which may affect their career decisions. **Methods:** A pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test design was used to evaluate the effectiveness of a career awareness programme regarding nursing as a career among 60 senior secondary school students selected from Govt. Sr. Sec. School, Ghatol and Govt. Girls Sr. Sec. School, Ghatol, Banswara district, Rajasthan. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire containing 26 items, and awareness was categorized as poor, average, or good. **Results:** The mean pre-test awareness score was  $10.55 \pm 2.567$ , and the mean post-test score was  $20.8 \pm 2.884$ . The mean difference was 10.25, and the calculated t value was 20.569 with 59 degrees of freedom, which was significant at the 0.05 level. Most students shifted from poor awareness in the pre-test to good awareness in the post-test. **Conclusion:** The career awareness programme was effective in significantly improving awareness regarding nursing as a career among senior secondary school students.

**KEYWORDS:** Effectiveness, Career Awareness Programme, Nursing, Senior Secondary School Students.

## INTRODUCTION

Career awareness is a fundamental component of adolescent development because it helps students understand available occupational pathways and make realistic choices. At the senior secondary level, students often lack complete information about professional opportunities, especially in nursing, despite the wide scope and societal need for the profession. Nursing is described in the source study as a noble profession that integrates knowledge, skills, values, and compassionate care.[1-4] Since past few years a decline is seen in the number of people taking up nursing as a career. There can be many reason behind it are less number of schools can be a foremost factor, the schools that exist are in an awful condition, there is not just lack of funds, labs and clinical equipment here but the faculty too is not enough and well qualified, the age factor is another drawback, the average age for the registered nurses is

significantly high. So, the moment these registered nurses retire, there occurs an acute shortage of new ones. [5-6] Many students think that nursing is a low status level profession because of this very few students choose nursing as a career which is one of the reason for shortage of nurses in hospital and community throughout the country.[7]

The study was undertaken because nursing continues to face recruitment challenges, partly due to misconceptions, poor public image, and lack of exposure among young people. The investigator aimed to determine whether a structured career awareness programme could improve students' knowledge about nursing as a career. The study was conducted in selected senior secondary schools in Banswara district, Rajasthan.

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**Material and Methods**

A pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test design was adopted to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. The study was conducted in Govt. Sr. Sec. School, Ghatol and Govt. Girls Sr. Sec. School, Ghatol, District Banswara, Rajasthan. The sample consisted of 60 senior secondary school students from classes 10+1 and 10+2, selected using simple random probability sampling. Data were collected using a socio-demographic questionnaire and a structured awareness questionnaire consisting of 26 objective items. Each correct response was awarded one mark and each incorrect response zero, yielding a

maximum score of 26. Awareness was interpreted as poor for scores below 13, average for 14–20, and good for 21–26. The reliability of the tool was acceptable, with KR-20 = 0.756 and split-half reliability = 0.803. After obtaining administrative permission and informed consent, a pre-test was administered, followed by the career awareness programme and then the post-test using the same questionnaire. Data collection was carried out from 10 July 2017 to 20 July 2017. Statistical analysis included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and t test.

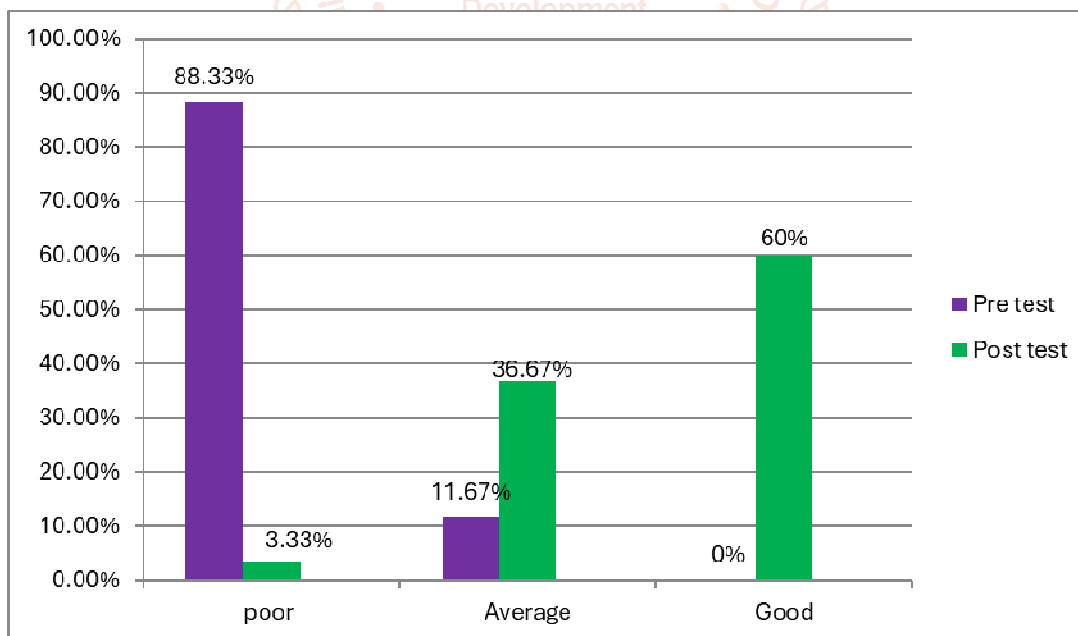
**Results**

As per the present study, the most participants were 16–18 years old, female, and enrolled in class 10+2. Most belonged to Hindu families and joint families, and many mothers were illiterate while most fathers had primary or secondary education. The most common family occupation was farming for fathers and homemaking for mothers, and most families had a monthly income below 5000.

**Table- 1: Pre test and post test career awareness score of the students regarding their career awareness in terms of nursing as a career. N=60**

Career awareness level	Score	Pre test	Post test
poor	0-13	88.33%	3.33%
Average	14-20	11.67%	36.67%
Good	21-26	0%	60%

Table-1 depict that in pre test majority of the samples 88.33% have poor career awareness, 11.67% have average career awareness, 0% have good career awareness. In post test majority of 60% have good career awareness, 36.67% have average career awareness 3.33% have poor career awareness in terms of nursing as a career (Figure-1).



**Table-2: Effectiveness of career awareness programme in terms of nursing as a career by using 't' test. N= 60**

PRE TEST		POST TEST		MEAN DIFFERENCE	df	`t` Value	Tabulated ``t`` Value
MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD				
10.55	2.567	20.8	2.884	10.25	59	20.569. **	2.0

Note :- (\*\*) -: Significant.

Table-2 reveals that the post test mean career awareness score is 20.8 which is higher than the pre test career awareness score 10.55 with the mean difference of 10.25. The calculated "t" value 20.569 which is higher than the tabulated "t" value. So there was significant improvement in mean career awareness of Students of senior secondary school. This indicates that career awareness programme in terms of nursing as a career was effective.

### Discussion

The results indicate that the career awareness programme was highly effective in improving students' awareness of nursing as a career. The baseline findings revealed that most participants had poor awareness, which suggests that nursing was not well understood as a professional option among the sampled adolescents. This is consistent with evidence that students frequently possess only partial or stereotyped knowledge of nursing and may be unaware of its educational pathways, professional scope, and advancement opportunities. [8] The post-intervention improvement was substantial and suggests that structured educational exposure can influence career-related knowledge in a measurable way. This is important because career perceptions during adolescence are still developing and can be shaped by focused guidance, especially when information is presented in a clear and engaging format. In the present study, the increase in students classified as having good awareness after the programme demonstrates that even a short intervention may correct misconceptions and broaden understanding of the profession. [9-10] These findings are in line with earlier studies showing that educational interventions can improve perceptions and knowledge regarding nursing among school-aged learners. A study of secondary school students' perspectives on nursing found that students' views were influenced by their understanding of nurses' roles, work settings, and the nature of the job, while motivations to become nurses were shaped by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Similarly, a study among adolescent students reported measurable improvement in perception after a structured teaching programme, reinforcing the value of planned educational approaches. Together, these findings support the idea that awareness is not fixed and can be modified through targeted instruction.[11-13].

The present study also has implications for workforce development. Nursing shortages continue to pose a major challenge internationally, and nursing schools are under pressure to expand capacity while the demand for nurses grows. At the same time, very few adolescents express an intention to enter nursing compared with other health professions, which may worsen future workforce gaps. Therefore, improving awareness at the school level is not merely an educational activity; it is also a long-term strategy for strengthening the health workforce pipeline. In this

regard, the current findings support the use of career awareness programmes as a low-cost and potentially high-yield intervention. The present study revealed that educational intervention was significantly impactful in upgrading the awareness of study participants. Few studies also reported that educational interventions have significant effect on enhancing the knowledge of subjects.[14-17] Career awareness interventions may therefore be especially valuable in rural school settings, where students may otherwise have limited contact with formal career counseling or healthcare professionals. By providing direct information about nursing, such programmes can help students consider a wider range of viable occupations and make more informed choices.

### Conclusion

The study demonstrated that senior secondary school students in the selected schools of Banswara district had poor awareness regarding nursing as a career before the intervention. Following the career awareness programme, their awareness improved significantly. The programme was therefore effective in enhancing students' knowledge and awareness of nursing as a career choice. This supports the use of structured career awareness programmes in school settings. The study should also be interpreted in light of its methodological limitations. The one-group pre-test post-test design does not control for all possible confounders, and the small sample from a single district limits external validity. Nevertheless, the magnitude of improvement and the statistical significance of the findings support the conclusion that the intervention was beneficial. Future studies should consider controlled designs, larger and more diverse samples, and longer follow-up periods to determine whether improved awareness translates into actual career choice.

### Limitations

The present study was conducted with minimum number of samples hence the generalisation of findings are limited. The study was conducted in single study centre. The investigator had no control over extraneous variables in the study.

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