

The Effect of the Training Program for Nursing Students on Child Abuse and Neglect Knowledge and Awareness Levels



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Introduction

Nurses are the first healthcare professionals to engage children and their families, and they are in an excellent position to protect children from abuse and neglect. (Bahrami et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022). They need sufficient knowledge and practice skills about Child abuse and neglect (CAN) to be aware of the potential risks and provide care with the appropriate method (Jordan & Moore-Nadler, 2014).

Most studies on nursing students' awareness and knowledge of child abuse and neglect report insufficient knowledge. That's why, it is crucial to include this subject in the nursing education curriculum to increase nurses' knowledge levels and raise their awareness (Lupariello, Coppo, Cavecchia, Bosco, Bonaccorso, Urbino, et al., 2020).

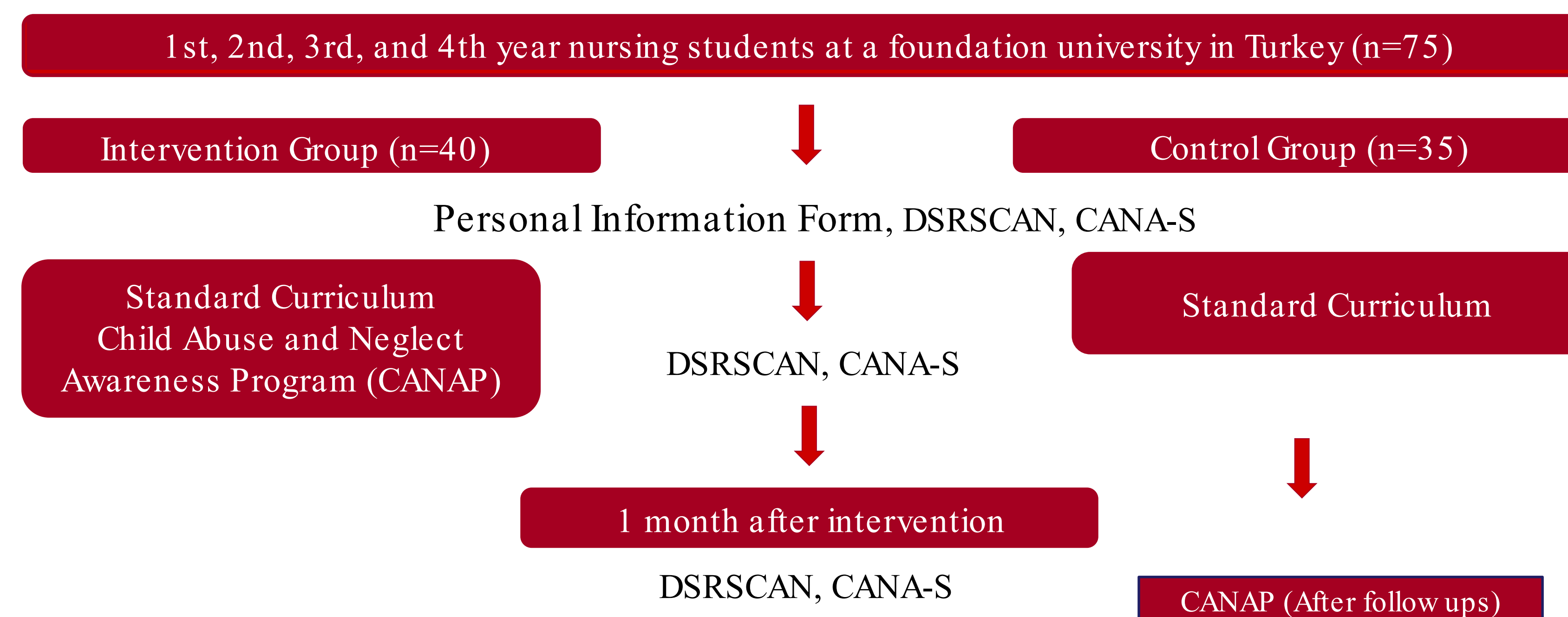
In this regard:

We developed a comprehensive Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Program (CANAP) aimed to increase nursing students' knowledge and awareness of child abuse and neglect.

Methods

A Randomized Controlled Study

- **Personal Information Form:** This form consists of eight questions regarding the sociodemographic information of university students, and it collects information on participants' experiences and whether they have received any training on CAN before.
- **Diagnosis Scale of the Risks and Symptoms of Child Abuse and Neglect (DSRSCAN):** The scale measures the level of knowledge of nurses and midwives about CAN.
- **Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Scale (CANAS):** The scale determines the child abuse and neglect awareness of students.



Results

- 1 The pre-test CANA-S scores of students' who received education program, increased significantly after the intervention and was higher than the control group.
- 2 The post-test CANA-S scores of students' who received education program increased significantly in all subdimensions and was higher than control group. (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect).
- 3 The post-test and re-test DSRSCAN scores of students' who received education program increased significantly in all subdimensions after the intervention.

Conclusion

As a result of this study, it was determined that nursing students' awareness, knowledge and risk factors of child abuse and neglect **were not sufficient.**

It has been proved that all nursing students need education on this subject, with the increase in child abuse and neglect knowledge and awareness levels after education.

Therefore, nurse candidates should be given a structured and comprehensive education on this subject before they step into the profession and recommended that a compulsory course should be added to the curriculum of nursing departments.

Nurses with adequate knowledge and awareness will contribute to preventing child abuse and neglect, which negatively affects children's biopsychosocial health, growth, and development.

Key Practice & Implications

Recognizing the symptoms and risks of CAN is an important task of nurses in terms of biopsychosocial protection of children. Providing training on this subject will enable early detection and intervention of possible or existing cases.

It is vitally important that child abuse and neglect programs should first be included in the nursing curriculum as an elective course, then its effectiveness should be evaluated with multicentre studies, and then it should take its place in education as a compulsory course.

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CANAS Total and Subscales	Experimental (n=40)		Control (n=35)		t ^a	p
	Avg.	Sd	Avg.	Sd		
CANA-S Total Pre-test	83.48	5.04	82.57	6.77	.660	.511
CANA-S Total Post-test	90.43	3.83	82.03	6.78	6.478	< 0.001
CANA-S Total Re-test	91.00	3.31	81.03	8.62	6.442	< 0.001
F^b	25.166		.869			
P	<.001		.424			
Bonferonni	1<2,3					
Eta squared	.411					
Groups	Experimental (n=40)		Control (n=35)		t ^a	p
	Avg.	Sd	Avg.	Sd		
The mean total DSRSCAN pre-test	3.95	.33	3.86	.40	1.086	.281
The mean total DSRSCAN post-test	4.34	.39	3.94	.44	4.128	<.001
The mean total DSRSCAN re-test	4.30	.41	3.98	.46	3.148	.002
F^b	38.113		2.315			
P	<.001		.106			
Bonferonni	1<2,3					
Eta squared	.514					

a: Independent sample t-test, b: Chi-Square, p<.05