

Knowledge & Attitude towards Organ Donation

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Abstract

Background: Organ and tissue transplantation has become a vital part in the health care in every country. Hence it has become the need of the hour to the knowledge and attitude of the general public towards organ donation. **Purpose:** The study was designed to determine the knowledge regarding organ donation among general population, to find out the attitude towards organ donation among general population, to find an association between knowledge of general population regarding organ donation and demographic factors and to find an association between attitude of general population towards organ donation and demographic factors. **Methods:** A cross sectional descriptive survey was designed among 100 and a questionnaire survey conducted among general population in Kerala. **Results:** The overall knowledge about organ donation among study participants was 97% (n=100). And 97% showed a favourable attitude towards organ donation. **Conclusion/Implications for practice:** majority of participants are aware about the legislation and the process of organ donation. This study shows the importance of creating awareness among the general population and conduct studies to explore the common obstacles which prevent people from volunteering for organ donation.

Keywords: Organ Donation; Attitude; Knowledge.

Introduction

Organ donation and transplantation have become a lifesaving hope for many people. According to a report of National Foundation of Transplants (2016), one organ donor can save eight lives. The National Institute of Health (2016) reported that there are many diseases, like CKD, terminal lung disease, and Heart Failure can be cured only by means of transplantation. Organ donation is made legal in India by Transplantation of Human Organs Act 1994 of the Government of India. The progress of modern medicine has made a tremendous change in the area of organ transplantation, even the transplantation of vital organs. Still, in India lots of people die or struggle due to inadequate donors. The public are unaware about the great benefits of organ donation for the recipients and their families. Majority of the people needing transplantation are young. Hence donating organs to a person like that will prevent the whole family from being ruined.

A cross sectional study conducted among undergraduate medical students in South India revealed that 74% felt that there is need for organ donation to save life of others, but only 53% responded positively towards it (Sucharitha, 2013). To increase the frequency of organ donation, degree of awareness of community should be increased, negative attitude of society should be eradicated and obstacles against organ donation should be conquered (Saha, 2016).

Organ donation followed by brain death is infrequent in India. Transplantation of Human Organs Act 1994 of the Government of India (THOA) defines brain death as "the stage at which all functions of the brainstem have permanently and irreversibly ceased". In India, social, religious and cultural factors influence the attitude of the general population.

Objectives

1. To determine the knowledge regarding organ donation among general population.
2. To find out the attitude towards organ donation among general population.
3. To find an association between knowledge of general population regarding organ donation and demographic factors.
4. To find an association between attitude of general population towards organ donation and demographic factors.

Methods

This study used a cross sectional descriptive survey design with a sample size of 100. This study was conducted in general population through self selection sampling method. The data

collection was conducted from December 2019 to March 2020. Data collection instrument consist of demographic proforma and structured questionnaire on knowledge and attitude towards organ donation. The researcher developed questionnaire was mailed to the study participants as Google forms via social Medias (face book, WhatsApp).

Ethical considerations: The investigator explained the study objectives and process to all of the participants. The respondents were given a choice to express their willingness to participate in the survey by adding a specific question in this regard. Participants were free to terminate the participation at any point during the study with no repercussions. To protect the confidentiality, all of the data were anonymized using serial numbers. All personal information was secured and kept safe.

Results

Major findings of the study:

Section I: Characteristics of the samples

The data shows that majority of the samples i.e. 66 % ($n=100$) belongs to 20-30years of age. Most of the samples i.e. 77.2% were females and only 22.8% were males. While considering the religion, 66% were Christians, 27% Hindus, 3% were Muslims, 3% were from other religion and the least 1% were not interested to reveal their religion. The educational status of the samples reveals that 60.4% were graduates and 27.8% were post graduates. The occupational status indicates that 43% were employed in private sector and 12 % were government employed. Among the samples 56% were unmarried and 85% were from nuclear family (Figure.1).

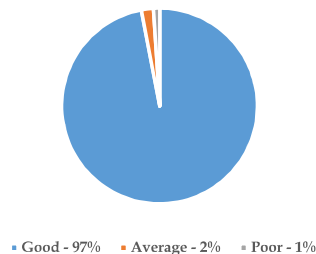


Fig. 1: Knowledge of general population regarding organ donation.

Section II: Knowledge of general population regarding organ donation

The level of knowledge of general population regarding organ donation shows that majority i.e. 97% had good knowledge, 2% average and the least 1% had poor knowledge (Table:1).

Table 1: Participant's Knowledge about organ donation.

Item	F	%
The term organ donation means?		
The removal of the tissues of the human body from a cadaver.	9	7.8
The removal of the tissues of the human body from a living donor.	7	6.1
The removal of the tissues of the human body for the purpose of transplantation to another person.	55	47.8
Can include transfer of cell/ova/foetus/sperm.	2	1.7
All of the above	39	33.9
Others	3	2.6
Why is organ donation done?		
To save someone's life	98	90
Out of compassion/sympathy	2	1.8
	3	2.8

For money		
As a 'responsibility	5	4.6
Others	1	0.9

Source of information about organ donation among study participants

Heard from doctor	32	13.5
Internet /online resources	57	24
TV	39	16.5
Radio	15	6.3
Newspaper or magazines	56	23.7
Friend or colleague	23	9.7
Others	15	6.3

What organs can be donated?

Kidney	40	40
Blood	22	22
Heart	39	39
Eye	39	39
Liver	38	38
Skin	19	19
Bone marrow	22	22
Lungs	17	17
All of above	66	66

Which of the following factor holds the greatest importance near you when donating an organ

Relation to the person	17	17
Age of recipient	15	15
Religion of recipient	0	0
Health status of recipient	62	62
Substance abuse of the body	9	9
Assurance of the respectful treatment of the organ	30	30
None of the above	8	8

For living donation, who should give consent

Donor	95	95
His family	19	19
His spouse	11	11
His friends	1	1
His doctor	5	5

For donation after death, who should give consent

Family	83	83
Spouse	40	40
Doctor	4	4
Friend	1	1

Who should make such decisions about organ donation in case of unclaimed dead bodies

Charitable organization	8	8
Medical colleges / doctors	40	40
Police	17	17
A judge	31	31
No one	22	22

Can parents / guardians make substitute decision making for mentally disabled persons in the regard of organ donation

Yes	53	53
No	16	16
Don't know	31	31

Are you aware of any local or international legislation with regards to organ donation

Local legislation	34	34
International legislation	4	4
Both of the above	39	39
None of the above	23	23

Section III: Attitude of general population towards organ donation

The study reveals that 92% have favourable attitude, 4% had neutral and the least 4% have unfavourable attitude towards organ donation. Around 40% of the study samples fear that organs could be wasted or mistreated, 20% fear that it can lead to organ trade (Table 2 & 3).

Table 2: Participant's Attitude about organ donation.

Attitude Rating	f	%
Favourable	92	92
Neutral	4	4
Unfavourable	4	4

Table 3: Participant's Attitude towards organ donation.

Item	f	%
Do you believe that there is a danger that donated organs could be misused, abused or misappropriated?		
Never	23	23
Sometimes	61	61
Often	13	13
Most of the time	1	1
All the time	2	2
Who would you like to donate your organs to?		
Family member	76	76
Can be any one	20	20
Don't know	4	4
Should organ donation be promoted		
Yes	94	94
No	1	1
Don't know	5	5
Does organ donation involve any risks		
Yes	73	73
No	15	15
Don't know	12	12
Is there any need for having effective laws to govern the process of organ donation?		
Yes	91	91
No	8	8
Don't know	1	1

Section IV: Association between knowledge and demographic factors

Chi-square test shows that there is a significant association between knowledge level and age of the general population, other demographic factors such as gender, religion, education, occupation, and marital status shows no association with the knowledge level of the study samples at $p < 0.05$ (Table 4).

Table 4: Association between Knowledge and Demographic factors.

Demographic Variables	Knowledge			Chi Square test	Significance
	Good	Average	Poor		
Age					
20-30	62	1	-	0.046	S
31-40	27	1	-		
41-50	8	-	1		
Gender					
Female	73	-	2	0.29	NS
Male	24	-	1		
Religion					
Christian	62	-	2	8.99	NS
Hindu	29	-	-		
Muslim	2	1	-		
Others	2	-	-		
Rather not to say	1	-	-		
Education					
Secondary School	2	-	-	0.75	NS
Senior Secondary	9	-	-		
Graduate	57	1	-		
PG & above	29	-	2		
Occupation					
Student	22	-	-	0.91	NS
Unemployed	16	-	-		
Private	42	1	1		
Government	17	-	-		

Marital Status

Married	45	-	2	0.44	NS
Unmarried	52	1	-		

Section VI: Association between attitude and demographic factors

Chi-square test shows that there is no significant association between attitude of general population and the demographic factors like age, gender, religion, education, occupation, and marital status of the study samples at $p < 0.05$ (Table 5).

Table 5: Association between Attitude and Demographic factors.

Demographic variables	Attitude			Chi Square test	Significance
	Favourable	Neutral	Unfavourable		
Age					
20-30	58	3	2	0.84	NS
31-40	26	1	1		
41-50	8	-	1		
Gender					
Female	69	4	2	0.43	NS
Male	23	-	2		
Religion					
Christian	59	3	2	0.99	NS
Hindu	26	1	2		
Muslim	3	-	-		
Others	3	-	-		
Rather not to say	1	-	-		
Education					
SSLC	2	-	-	0.99	NS
Plus two	9	-	-		
Graduate	52	3	3		
PG & above	29	1	1		
Occupation					
Student	20	2	-	0.64	NS
Unemployed	17	-	-		
Private sector	40	2	2		
Govt. sector	15	-	2		
Marital Status					
Married	43	2	2	0.98	NS
Unmarried	49	2	2		

Discussion

According to this study awareness and attitude about organ transplantation is good in general population. There must be awareness programmes to enhance both living and cadaver donations. Education programmes must focus to eliminate the misconception towards organ donation so that, the public will get sufficient information and the misconceptions can be dispelled.

Limitations and recommendations

This study has limitations of a cross-sectional design and small sample size. This makes it difficult to generalize the findings. Therefore, future studies should include larger samples and qualitative studies such as focused group discussions for an in-depth understanding of the issues.

Conclusion and Implications for Practice

In the present study, majority of the participants were aware of and supported organ donation. Majority of participants are aware about the legislation and the process of organ donation. This study shows the importance of creating awareness among the general population. It is recommended to conduct qualitative studies to explore the factors favouring organ donation among young adults.

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