

Research Article

Attitude of General Population towards Organ Donation in a Rural Community of Ernakulam District

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A B S T R A C T

Background: Organ donation is defined as an act of giving one or more organs, without compensation, for transplantation to another person. For many of the end stage organ diseases, organ transplantation is the most preferred treatment. The need for organ transplantation is higher than the availability. For the transplantation program to be successful awareness regarding organ donation is needed and people must have a positive attitude towards donating organs. The present study was undertaken to assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation residing in a rural community of Ernakulam District.

Materials and methods: A descriptive analytical survey was conducted to assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation. A 5 point likert scale was used to assess the attitude towards organ donation. 100 subjects were selected using convenient sampling technique. The collected data was analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics

Results: The results of the study revealed that among 100 subjects, 81% of general population were having positive attitude, 19% were having neutral attitude and none of the subjects were having negative attitude towards organ donation. Even though majority of subjects were having positive attitude towards organ donation only 34% subjects were willing for organ donation. There was a significant association between the attitude of general population towards organ donation with demographic variables like religion and history of organ transplantation among family members/ relatives/ friends at P<0.05 level of significance.

Conclusion: The study revealed that majority of the participants were having positive attitude towards organ donation.

Keywords: Attitude, General Population, Organ Donation

Introduction

“Give yourself and those in need an elixir of life by pledging your organs” according to Mohith Agadi. Donating an

organ is highly valued, as it is gifting and saving the life of someone, as one organ donor can save up to eight lives. Organ donation is defined as an act of giving one or

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more organs, without compensation, for transplantation to another person.¹ Common transplantations include kidneys, heart, liver, pancreas, intestines, lungs, bones, bone marrow, skin, and corneas. Some organs and tissues can be donated by living donors, such as a kidney or part of the liver, part of the pancreas, part of the lungs, or part of the intestines. Even though possible while living, most donations occur only after the donor's death.²

Even though organ transplantation has been in practice in India since many years, there was always a discrepancy between the need and availability of organs. More than 5 lakh people die yearly in India due to lack of availability of organs for transplantation. Organ transplantation is the only hope of life for many people suffering from end stage organ diseases, and for majority of them it remains as an unfulfilled dream.³

Lack of awareness and negative attitude towards organ donation could be the possible reasons for the gap between the need and availability of organs. Religious and superstitious beliefs, cultural factors, misinformation's related to organ donation, ignorance of general population, and lack of family consensus have been identified as some of the barriers for the successful implementation of organ donation programs in India.⁴ For the success of transplantation program, the public should be aware of its significance and they need to develop a positive attitude towards organ donation.⁵ This study attempted to find out the attitude of general population aged 18 years and above towards organ donation in a selected rural community of Ernakulam district.

Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted to assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation.

Statement of the Problem

A descriptive study to assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation in a selected rural community of Ernakulam district.

Objectives

- To assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation
- To find out the association between the level of attitude of general population towards organ donation with selected demographic variables

Hypothesis (Level of Significance $P < 0.05$)

H1: There is a significant association between the level of attitude of general population towards organ donation with selected demographic variables.

Materials and Methods

Setting of the Study: The study was conducted in a rural community of Ernakulam district.

Research Approach: The approach used in this study was descriptive analytical survey design.

Sample: 100 people aged 18 years and above.

Sampling Technique: Convenient sampling technique

Inclusion Criteria: People aged 18 years and above residing in a rural community of Ernakulam district.

Data Collection Instruments

Section A: Socio demographic variables of general population which contained 10 items.

Section B: 5 point likert scale which contained 15 items to assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation. Each item was rated against a 5 point scale which scores 0- Strongly Disagree, 1- Disagree, 2- Neutral, 3 - Agree, 4- Strongly agree. The maximum score was 60 and minimum score was 0. An additional question was included (Yes/ No type question) to assess their willingness for organ donation.

Reliability of the tool

Reliability of the tool was established by split-half method, and the correlation coefficient was $r = 0.76$. Hence, the tool was considered reliable and feasible for the main study.

Result

Data were analysed by descriptive and inferential statistics using Microsoft excel and R software.

Section A: Distribution of socio demographic variables of general population.

Table 1, shows the sociodemographic variables of the study participants. Even though majority of the participants were familiar with the term organ donation, only 2% of the participants had a relative/ friend, who donated their organs, which reflects the fact that the organ donation rate is poor in this community.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of socio demographic variables of general Population n = 100

S. No.	Demographic Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age in years		
	18-40	43	43
	41-60	30	30
	>60	27	27
2.	Gender		
	Male	54	54
	Female	46	46
3.	Religion		
	Hindu	40	40

	Christian	60	60
4.	Marital status		
	Married	84	84
	Single	16	16
5.	Education		
	Illiterate	12	12
	Up to 10 th Standard	27	27
	Plus two/ Pre degree	22	22
	Degree and above	39	39
6.	Occupation		
	Unemployed	32	32
	Daily wager	22	22
	Government job	12	12
	Private job	31	31
	Student	3	3
7.	Monthly income in rupees		
	<10,000	70	70
	10,000-20,000	20	20
	21,000-30,000	7	7
	>30,000	3	3
8.	Have you heard about organ donation?		
	Yes	94	94
	No	6	6
	If yes, source of information		
	Television	60	64
	Newspaper	25	27
	Health workers	6	6
	Friends/ Family	3	3
9.	History of organ donation among Family members/ friends/ relatives		
	Yes	2	2
	No	98	98
10.	History of organ transplantation among Family members/ Friends/ Relatives		
	Yes	2	2
	No	98	98

Section B: Attitude of general population towards organ donation.

Table 2, shows the attitude of general population towards organ donation, which was assessed by using a 5 point Likert scale. The maximum score of the attitude scale was 60 and minimum score was 0. The mean attitude score was

48.09 with standard deviation 5.40. Even though majority of subjects were having positive attitude towards organ donation, only 34% subjects were willing to donate their organs. These findings show that there exist certain factors rather than attitude which act as barriers for organ donation program in our country.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distribution of attitude score of general population towards organ donation n= 100

S. No.	Level of Attitude	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Positive attitude (>45)	81	81
2.	Neutral attitude (16-45)	19	19
3.	Negative attitude (≤15)	0	0

Section C: Association between level of attitude of general population towards organ donation and selected demographic variables.

Table 3, shows that there was a significant association between the attitude of general population towards organ donation with demographic variables like religion ($p = 0.005$) and history of organ transplantation among family members/ relatives/ friends ($p = 0.03$) at $P < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 3. Association between level of attitude of general population towards organ donation and selected demographic variables n= 100

S. No.	Variables	Attitude towards organ donation		p-value
		Neutral	Positive	
1.	Age in years			
	18-40	4	39	0.09
	41-60	8	22	
	Above 60	7	20	
2.	Gender			
	Male	10	44	0.89
	Female	9	37	
3.	Marital status			
	Married	17	67	0.73
	Unmarried	2	14	
4.	Religion			
	Hindu	13	27	0.005*
	Christian	6	54	

5.	Education			
	Illiterate	5	7	0.1
	Up to 10th Standard	5	22	
	Plus two/Pre degree	5	17	
	Degree and above	4	35	
6.	Occupation			
	Unemployed/ Student	7	28	0.62
	Daily wagger	6	16	
	Government job	2	10	
	Private job	4	27	
7.	Monthly Income			
	Below Rs.20,000/-	17	73	1
	Above Rs.20,000/-	2	8	
8.	Have you heard about organ donation?			
	Yes	17	77	0.32
	No	2	4	
9.	History of organ donation among Family members/ friends/ relatives.			
	Yes	0	2	1
	No	19	79	
10.	History of organ transplantation among Family members/ Friends/ Relatives			
	Yes	2	0	0.03*
	No	17	81	

Discussion

This study was conducted to assess the attitude of general population towards organ donation. The study findings showed that, 81% of general population were having positive attitude, 19% were having neutral attitude and none of the subjects were having negative attitude towards organ donation. 34% participants were willing for organ donation. There was a significant association between the attitude of general population towards organ donation with demographic variables like religion ($p=0.005$) and history of organ transplantation among family members/ relatives/ friends ($p=0.03$) at $P<0.05$ level of significance.

In our study, majority of participants, 81% were having positive attitude towards organ donation. The findings are comparable to a previous study which showed majority, 62% of participants had moderately favourable attitude towards organ donation.⁶ The results were also comparable

to two similar previous studies which showed that 58% and 67% of participants were having positive attitude towards organ donation.^{4,1}

Another significant finding of our study was that even though majority of the subjects were having positive attitude towards organ donation, only 34% subjects were willing to donate their organs. The findings can be compared to a previous study that showed even though more than half of the participants were having positive attitude towards organ donation, only 2.3% had registered for the same.⁴ A similar study also concluded that even though majority of the participants had a positive attitude, 62.2% were willing to donate their organs.¹

Our study established a significant association between the attitude of general population towards organ donation with demographic variables like religion and history of organ transplantation among family members/ relatives/ friends at $P<0.05$ level of significance. A similar study also showed a significant association between the attitude of participants towards organ donation with religion at $P<0.05$ level of significance.⁴

The finding of our study indirectly shows that there is certain other factors other than attitude which act as the barriers for organ donation program in our country. Opposition from family, fear of death, complications after living organ donation, fear of misuse of organs, religious beliefs etc. could be few among them. Effective measures should be taken by the government and voluntary organizations to overcome these barriers by organizing educational programs which provide relevant information to general public with the involvement of media, religious scholars and medical professionals which in turn will help to overcome the shortage of organs for transplantation in India.⁷

Conclusion

The result of the study showed that majority of the subjects (81%) had positive attitude towards organ donation and there was a significant association between the attitude of general population towards organ donation with demographic variables like religion and history of organ transplantation among family members/ relatives/ friends at $P<0.05$ level of significance. Even though majority of subjects were having positive attitude towards organ donation, only 34% subjects were willing to donate their organs.

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Conflict of Interest: None

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