



INSIGHTS INTO BODY DONOR'S ATTITUDES AND PERSPECTIVES; A SURVEY ON VOLUNTARY BODY DONATION

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ABSTRACT

The study delves into the motivations behind voluntary body donation (VBD) by conducting a retrospective analysis of 120 registered body donors at the Department of Rachana Shareera, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan. The historical context of body donation is explored, tracing its roots back to Hindu religious literature and highlighting key milestones, such as the enactment of the Anatomy Act in India in 1948.

The primary aim of the study is to evaluate the reasons driving individuals to voluntarily donate their body after death. The materials include the body donor register and relevant literature from Ayurvedic classical texts, contemporary science, journals, publications, and articles. The methods involve a retrospective analysis of the registered voluntary body donors. The study sheds light on the multifaceted reasons behind voluntary body donation, providing insights that can support educational and awareness initiatives in promoting Voluntary body donation.

KEY WORDS: Voluntary Body donation, Body Donors

INTRODUCTION

Without Practical knowledge, theoretical knowledge will be incomplete. So, for better understanding of human anatomy, dissection plays a very important role. Voluntary body donation (VBD) programs form the backbone of cadaveric teaching and learning in medical schools. As famous quotation says "LIVE AFTER DEATH", tells us the importance of Body donation. The history of body donation can be traced long back to Puranas, the Hindu religious literature which narrates a story of Vrutraasura, the troublesome demon, of whom the Gods and the mankind wanted to get rid of. On the request from Lord Indra, the great sage Dadhichi, by his power of yoga, left his body. His bones were utilized to make the weapon Vajra, using which the demon was killed¹. This may be considered as the first body donation in the world.

In Sushruta Samhita kala there is a reference of cadaveric dissection to obtain full-fledged knowledge of human body². This implies that may be in that period also, there were some people who donated the bodies instead of performing *Maranotthara Samskara* (rituals to be performed after death).

During the time 300 BC, Herophilus was the first scientist to systematically perform scientific dissections of human cadavers. The early Christian author Tertullian states that Herophilus vivisected at least 600 live prisoners, however this account has been disputed by many historians. He is often seen as the Father

of Anatomy³. During 13th century –Pope Boniface prohibited dissection of human body⁴.

In 1750-1832- there was selling of dead body. People also resorted to murder to retrieve cadaver⁵. In 1828 W. Burke and W. Hare were convicted for 16 murders⁶.

In India, the Anatomy Act was enacted in 1959 to provide unclaimed bodies of deceased persons to hospitals and medical and teaching institutions for the purpose of anatomical examination and dissection⁷.

According to Wikipedia "Body donation, anatomical donation, or body bequest is the donation of a whole body after death for research and education⁸. "In spite of having so much cultural and religious beliefs some people come forward to donate their bodies the reasons may be of following-

1. Self-willingness to help for education
2. Inspiration from others and other trust or societies
3. No family members to perform their final rites
4. Son/daughter not taking care of parents
5. Economically poor to perform final rites
6. Others.

So, a retrospective study has been conducted in Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan to evaluate the reason behind voluntary body donation.



AIM

1. To evaluate the reasons for Voluntary Body Donation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A) Materials:

1. Body donor register in Department of Rachana Shareera, SDMCAH Hassan.
2. Ayurvedic classical text books, related books of contemporary science, various journals, publications, articles.

B) Methods:

A retrospective study has been carried out among 120 voluntary body donors, who were registered in Department of Rachana Shareera, SDMCAH Hassan.

RESULTS

The present retrospective survey study was conducted among 120 Voluntary Body Donors, who have registered in Department of Rachana Shareera, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara

College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, to evaluate the reason behind voluntary body donation. It shows results like, a total of 65% of voluntary body donors are willing to donate their bodies for education purpose to help students in academics which comes under first category. Out of 120, 32(26.6%) members are inspired by some trust and societies and also by friends and family members who have already registered for Body donation. About 3.3% of people who have registered for Voluntary Body Donation as they do not have any family members to perform their final rites. And about 3 members (2.5%) falls into fourth category where their Son/Daughter are not taking care of their parents. About 0.83% fall under fifth category who are economically poor to get their final rites performed. Out of 120 members, 3 members falls under sixth category for various reasons like personal relationship problems, being atheist, who is not having any interest in religious rites, and some who are in old age home. (Figure No.1: Pie chart showing the results of reasons behind voluntary body donation in percentage).

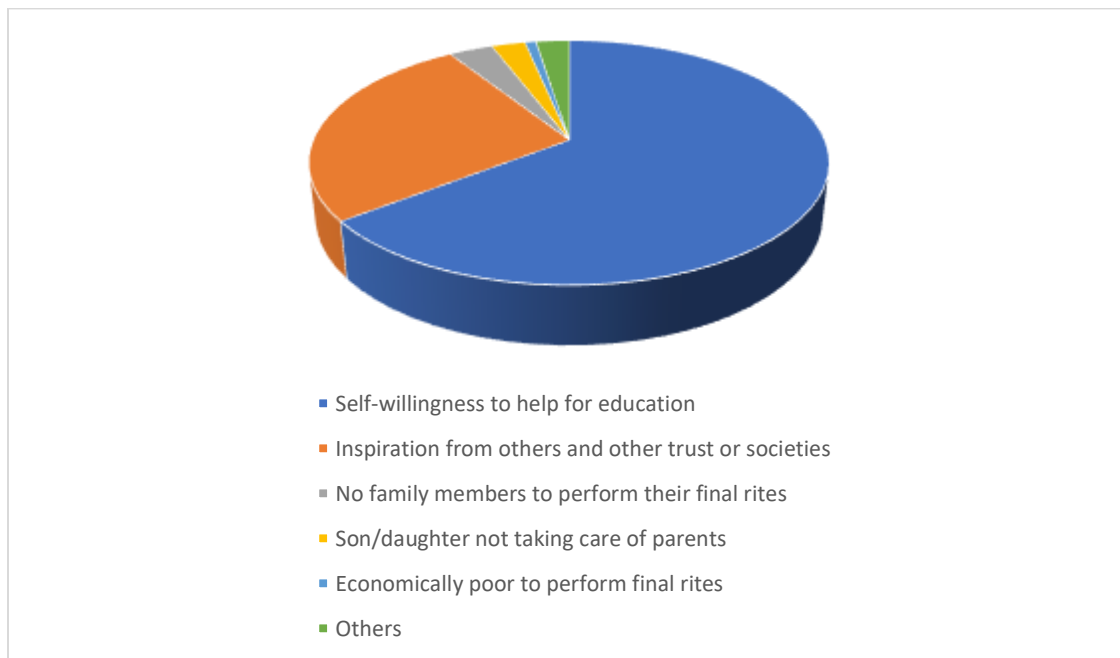


Figure No.1: Pie chart showing the results of reasons behind voluntary body donation in percentage

Among 120 Voluntary Body Donors, 53 are males, 67 are females (Figure No.2: Pie chart showing the results of Gender ratio for voluntary body donation in percentage). When we take age into consideration 7 members fall under age less than 35 years and 113

members fall under age more than 35years (Figure No.3: Pie chart showing the results of people showing interest in voluntary body donation based on their Age in percentage).

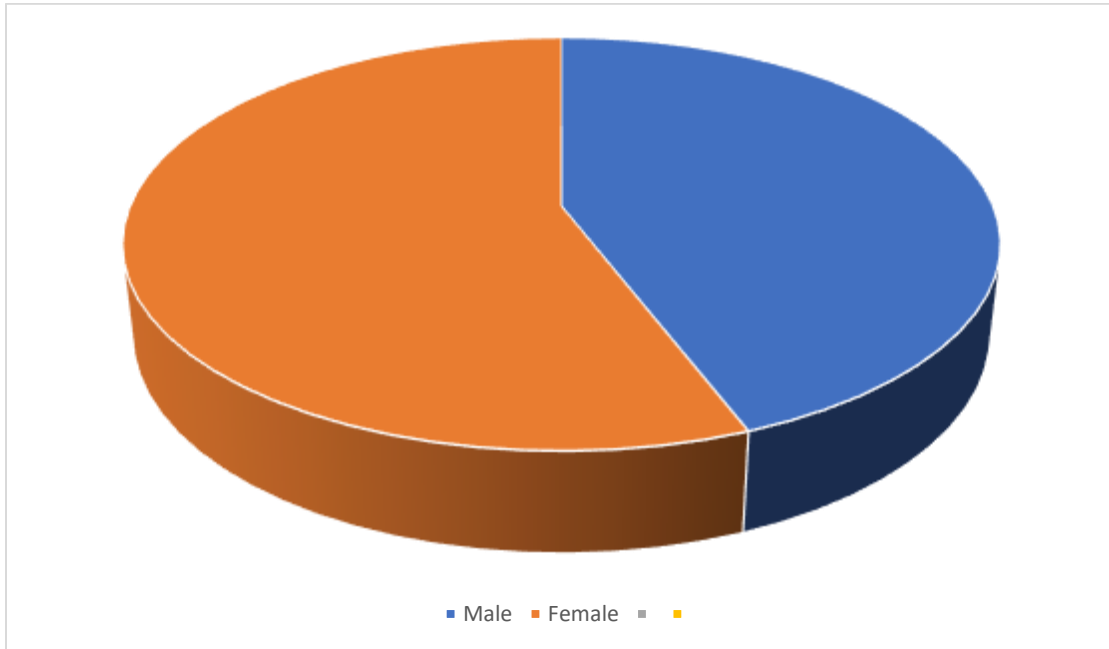


Figure No.2: Pie chart showing the results of Gender ratio for voluntary body donation in percentage

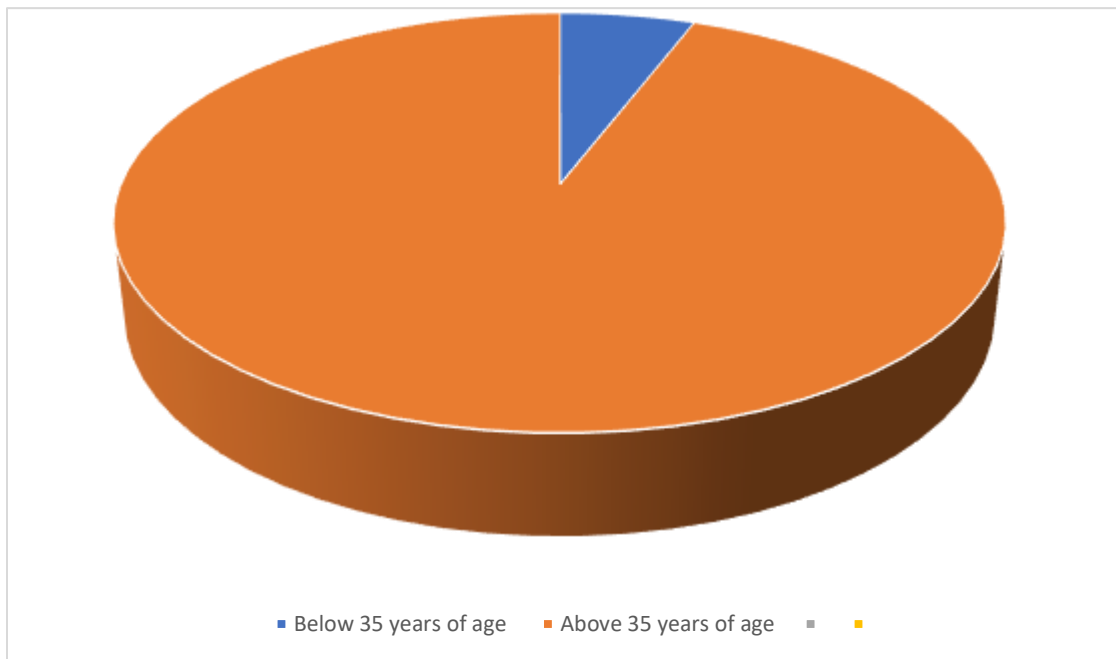


Figure No.3: Pie chart showing the results of people showing interest in voluntary body donation based on their Age in percentage.

DISCUSSION

Among 120 members, 65 percent are eager to offer their bodies in order to help medical education; both well-educated and uneducated people are equally interested in VBD as a means of assisting students with their academic endeavors, with the belief that their bodies should not be wasted. Even if, they pass away, they wish their body to be fully utilized.

26.6% of members say that they are motivated to donate their bodies by their friends, family members, relatives, neighbors and other trusts and societies. Even though they were unaware of VBD, they learnt about it from friends and family. Some of them who were motivated by the Trust and societies after becoming aware that, their ultimate mission in life is to serve society in whatever way they can, like providing food, monetary support or by donating their properties for the development of schools/hospitals or Ashrams and likewise. As these cluster of



people often attended Satsanga, Viveka jagrithi camps, Spiritual talks by Seers which has motivated them to decide to donate their eyes after their demise and also the whole body for medical education and research.

3.3% of the individuals who have registered for voluntary body donation do so because they have no family members who are willing to carry out their last wishes. In that some of them don't have kids to carry out their last wishes, and some of them wish to pass away quietly without causing any trouble to others. Furthermore,

2.5% of individuals who registered for voluntary body donation stated that their son or daughter was not caring for their parents. In certain instances, children who have migrated abroad may not be prepared to care for their parents. 0.83% of people cannot afford to have their last rites done. Due to their isolation and lack of access to their children, they are unable to have their last rituals carried out.

Among 120 members, three are in an assisted living facility like Orphanage center, old age home, have personal relationship issues, are atheists, or have no interest in participating in religious rituals.

CONCLUSION

The present study has shown that most of the people who have registered for VBD, are donating their bodies self-willingly for the purpose of Medical education, to help students in academics. Following this, the inspiration from other trusts, societies, friends, and family members ranks as the second reason why the majority of people are eager to donate. People who have registered with no family members to perform their final rites, and Son/daughter not taking care of parents are equally less while people who are economically poor to get performed their final rites are very few. Members with different reasons like personal relationship problems, being atheist, who is not having any belief in religious rites, and some who are in old age home are also very few.

Demographically, the study reveals that both male and female actively participate in voluntary body donation. Those above 35 years show an extreme interest in body donation, while individuals below 35 years exhibit comparatively lower interest. The findings emphasize the crucial role of voluntary body donation in medical education and highlight the diverse motivations that drive individuals to make this altruistic contribution.

In conclusion, the study sheds light on the multifaceted reasons behind voluntary body donation, offering insights that can inform educational and awareness initiatives in promoting this noble cause.

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