# Knowledge, Attitude, Perception Among Students, Teachers And Lay People Regarding Human Dignity And Assessment Of Barriers To Whole Body Donation-A Cross Sectional Study.

## ABSTRACT

This cross-sectional study was conducted on consented students, teachers and in laymen by a structured questionnaire to assess the knowledge, attitude and perception towards dignity and voluntary body donation. The obtained data was analyzed through descriptive statistics.

**RESULTS**

The data analysis shows that the teachers are having significant knowledge regarding human dignity when compared with laypersons and students. There is no significant difference in the mean attitude regarding human dignity in teachers VS students when compared with laypersons. The perception regarding human dignity is more in laypersons when compared with teachers and students.

**CONCLUSION**

This study insist to conduct more organized efforts like body donation camp to raise the awareness about willed body donation. The donors and their families have to be given social honour, recognition and appropriate incentives like health care facilities.

## INTRODUCTION

Anatomy is the study of structure of human body and forms the basic subject studied by undergraduate and postgraduate students. Dissection of human cadavers forms an integral part of anatomy learning and research. The visual tactile experience gained during systemic dissection is an incomparable aid to understand anatomy (1). Only source for the cadavers in the medical institutions will be unclaimed bodies and few donated bodies. Thus it is imperative that our medical fraternity and health care professionals has to support and give awareness regarding voluntary body donation.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To determine the knowledge, attitude and perception of medical students (2nd year), teachers in medical college and laypersons of Dakshina Kannada and neighboring districts, regarding human dignity in order to determine their view about voluntary body donation.
2. To assess the barriers to whole body donation.

## METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional study was conducted on consented students, teachers and in laymen by a structured questionnaire to assess the knowledge, attitude and perception towards dignity and voluntary body donation. The obtained data was analyzed through descriptive statistics.

## RESULTS

The data analysis shows that the teachers are having significant knowledge regarding human dignity when compared with laypersons and students. There is no significant difference in the mean attitude regarding human dignity in teachers VS students when compared with laypersons. The perception regarding human dignity is more in laypersons when compared with teachers and students.

## CONCLUSION

This study insist to conduct more organized efforts like body donation camp to raise the awareness about willed body donation. The donors and their families have to be given social honour, recognition and appropriate incentives like health care facilities.

## KEYWORDS

Dignity, Dissection, Cadaver.
wards human dignity and voluntary body donation. The participants were divided into three groups:
1. Teachers
2. MBBS students (2nd year)
3. Lay persons

Study Design – Questionnaire based; administered through paper and pen mode.

Inclusion criteria for the study
1. Teachers in Medical colleges
2. MBBS students (2nd year)
3. Lay persons

Exclusion criteria for the study
First year MBBS students.

Statistical analysis - The obtained data is analyzed through descriptive statistics. P value is considered as <0.05

Results
The total number of participants in this study was 60. Each group comprises 20. The analysis has done on the knowledge, attitude and perception on human dignity and voluntary body donation.

Table 1. showing the Mean knowledge, Attitude and Perception regarding human dignity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Mean Knowledge</th>
<th>Mean Attitude</th>
<th>Mean Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>4.25±0.63</td>
<td>3.85±0.93</td>
<td>3.69±1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay persons</td>
<td>3.67±0.76</td>
<td>3.72±0.71</td>
<td>3.75±0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>3.77±1.04</td>
<td>3.85±0.90</td>
<td>3.00±0.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After analyzing the data by descriptive statistics this study found that the knowledge regarding human dignity was higher in teachers when compared with lay person and students. The attitude towards dignity was same in teachers and in students (table 1).

But the perception regarding human dignity was more in lay persons when compared with teachers and students (table 1). ANOVA used to compare the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding human dignity within the groups and between the groups. And the results shows that there is no significant different in knowledge, within groups and between groups. But the attitude and perception regarding human dignity was more in lay persons. When the data analyzed by Pearson co relation this study found that there is no significant increase in attitude or perception in relation with knowledge in teachers and in students. But in lay persons there is significant increase in attitude and perception in relation with their knowledge.

This study found that the knowledge regarding voluntary body donation is more in teachers. 95% confidence interval does not vary from 3.06 to 3.73. The knowledge, Attitude and Perception regarding voluntary body donation has been compared between groups and within groups by ANOVA. And the results shows that there is no significant different in knowledge, within groups and between groups. The teachers are having the knowledge regarding body donation but their attitude and perception regarding the same is significantly decreased when compared with other two groups (Table 2). The students are also having knowledge regarding body donation but their attitude and perception regarding the same is decreased (table 2). Lay person does not have much knowledge regarding body donation but their attitude and perception regarding voluntary body donation is significantly increased (table 2).

Discussion
The present study aimed to determine the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding human dignity in order to determine their view about voluntary body donation. The data analysis shows that the teachers are having significant knowledge regarding human dignity when compared with laypersons and students (table 1). The knowledge regarding human dignity is more in students when compared with laypersons. These findings could be because of the difference in the study. There is no significant difference in the mean attitude regarding human dignity in teachers VS students when compared with laypersons (table 1). This could be because of their experience in hospital atmosphere. The perception regarding human dignity is more in lay persons when compared with teachers and students (table 1), because of their lack of knowledge regarding human dignity and organ donation and they are handling the things in an emotional back ground. This study shows a slightly lower prevalence of adequate knowledge regarding human dignity in laypersons when compared to earlier studies (5). In the present study 70% lay persons are ready to donate their organs because they want to help others.

Anatomy is the study of structure of human body and forms the basic subject studied by undergraduate and postgraduate students. Dissection of human cadavers forms an integral part of anatomy learning and research. Only source for the cadavers in the medical institutions will be unclaimed bodies and few donated bodies. As the number of medical colleges increases in the present scenario, most of the medical schools are facing difficulties in obtaining adequate number of cadavers. This paucity is negatively affecting anatomy teaching programs. Thus willed body donation is the need of the hour (6).

This study also aimed to determine the barriers to whole body donation. This section also carried out by a questionnaire method. The knowledge regarding voluntary body donation in teachers is more when compared to students and lay persons (table 2). There is no significant difference in attitude towards body donation in teachers VS students (table 2). But the attitude and perception towards body donation are significantly increased in lay persons when compared to other two groups (table 2). The present study shows that the teachers in medical colleges and 2nd year MBBS students agree the importance of cadaveric dissection in a medical college, these two groups attitude and perception regarding body donation is poor. The study high lights the foremost reason of refusal to voluntary body donation is the anxiety of disrespectful behavior observed towards cadavers. And many of the teachers (during their student life) and students agreed that they have witnessed improper attitude towards cadavers by themselves and their peers at some point of time during dissection. Majority of the respondents agree that religion supports body donation. None of the religions object to organ donation or body donation in principle although in some, there is varying thought (7). Psychological barrier is an aspect which needs to be addressed. Majority of the teachers and students are reluctant to donate their body. But at the same time the lay persons are showing positive attitude and are having good perception regarding body donation. This could be because majority of this group does not have an experience with dissection. In a similar study conducted to assess the attitudes of Turkish anatomists toward body donation majority of the respondents objected to donating their bodies due to psychological reasons (8). Still greater concerns lies in the fact that teachers in medical colleges and MBBS students are even more reluctant to donate their body or approve body donation by a family member because of their unpleasant experience in the dissection classes. In this study there is no significant difference in the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding human dignity and body donation among males and females.

The voluntary body donation has to be accepted by the society and considered as a noble act like blood donation. There is a great need to create public awareness regarding body donation and organ donation, beginning with the health care professionals who can motivate the same. Health care workers especially doctors have to take an initiation and establish a relationship of trust among patients and their relatives. The
opinions and belief are the governing factors in shaping public opinion and attitude towards donation.

This study recommends to reinforce the necessity of giving education regarding the importance of organ donation and body donation. This basic education or training for teachers / doctors has to be started from first year of the course immediately after the commencement of the course. The first year students of medical professions need to be trained regarding the handling of the cadavers in a dissection hall. The anatomy teachers in first year has the responsibility to train their students to believe that the cadavers are their first patients and dissection on cadavers is a landmark, to recognize emotional issues that students may confront and to guide them toward becoming humane physicians. This study also found that education about organ donation or voluntary body donation is lacking in medical curriculum at undergraduate and post graduate levels.

This study found that the main barrier for voluntary body donation is the disrespectful behavior they see during cadaveric dissection and mishandling of dissected parts of a cadaver. In order to agree with the religious support about body donation many people wished to attain salvation by a proper funeral.

Conclusion- Though the healthcare professionals and medical students had the knowledge regarding human dignity and voluntary body donation, their attitude and perception towards the same was poor when compared to lay persons. Their knowledge need to reflect to their attitude and perception. Health care workers especially doctors have to take an initiation and establish a relationship of trust among patients and their relatives. Due assurance should be given to prospective donors that their bodies will be treated with respect and dignity. The awareness regarding the respectful treatment to the cadavers to be given to the students and the feelings of the donors and their family members behind body donation should be stressed on each student's mind. The practice of honoring the cadavers at commencement of dissection, by teachers and students should be entertained. There should be a provision for a donor to take a decision on the disposal of their body parts after the purpose. The present study recommend to introduce the details of Anatomy Act in medical curriculum at undergraduate level and post graduate level and conduct more and more awareness programs like body donation camps.

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REFERENCES