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Research Article

**MOTIVATION, MISCONCEPTION AND MYTHS RELATED TO  
VOLUNTARY BLOOD DONATION**<sup>1</sup>Dr. Muhammad Yaqoob, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Ahmed Muneeb, <sup>3</sup>Dr. Hamza Babar<sup>1</sup>DHQ Hospital, Rawalpindi Pakistan<sup>2</sup>Army Medical College, Rawalpindi Pakistan<sup>3</sup>Rawalpindi Medical College, Rawalpindi Pakistan**Abstract:**

**Background:** In Pakistan, the blood donation and transfusion practices are based on primitive practice of replacement donors whereas all around the world, the practice of voluntary blood donation has replaced the replacement donation. The survey regarding misconceptions and motivation may help the blood donation centers to develop their future policies to inspire people for donating blood on a regular basis and to inspire non-donors to start donating blood.

**Objectives:** To assess the knowledge, attitude and practice towards blood donation. To identify factors behind motivation for voluntary blood donation and to determine misconceptions and myths associated with blood donations

**Methodology:** This was a descriptive cross sectional survey conducted in Islamabad. The data was collected from 204 respondents residing in urban, rural and slum areas through a questionnaire and processed in SPSS software version 20.

**Results:** In our study 78 respondents were residing in urban areas, 51 in rural and 75 in slum areas. Out of 204 sample, only 77 were blood donors and amongst them only 29% had donated blood to unknown persons. Among 111 respondents who required blood, only 7% received it from voluntary donors. The most important motivational factor for donating or intend to donate blood was helping family or friends in need (76.5%) followed by spiritual satisfaction (71.2%). Among non-donors, 52.7% had never donated blood because no one ever asked while families of 48.8% didn't allow donation. 48% feared that it may lead to permanent weakness or anemia while 44.8% were concerned about the sterility of equipment.

**Conclusion:** The practice of voluntary blood donation is almost nonexistent in our population. To overcome the prevailing misconceptions and reported fears, it is important to provide adequate information about donation to potential donors. Appropriate motivational campaigns should be launched among the population to make it a regular practice in order to increase voluntary blood donation

**Key words:** Voluntary, Donation, Motivation, Misconception

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Blood donation has significant role in saving lives. Due to ever increasing transfusion needs, the blood centers are facing rise in the demand of the blood. The recruitment of voluntary, non-remunerated donors is the most important challenge throughout the world. Both developed and developing countries have problems with the unpaid blood donation system. WHO policy is to achieve 100% non-paid donations by the year 2020 [1]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) blood donation rate is high in high-income countries as compared to middle and low-income countries. Out of 112.5 million blood donations per year, 50% come from high income countries [1]. The shortage of safe blood is compounded by the shortage of donors in developing countries, where that blood is needed most [2]. Situation in Pakistan is not very encouraging. Although 70% population is under 30 years of age, voluntary blood donation comes from only 10 % [4].

It is known fact the voluntary donation is safer than replacement transfusion<sup>1</sup>. Although the trend of voluntary blood donations has increased considerably in last decade but many previous reports have shown that people have insufficient knowledge, diverse attitude and many misconceptions about the blood donation [2]. Increase in the level of awareness and positive attitude towards blood donation is the highest priority of all blood transfusion centers.

Recruitment and retention of donors to sustain and increase the donor base are critical for blood banks<sup>2</sup>. The initial step for achieving this goal is to perform comprehensive studies measuring the current situation of awareness, knowledge, beliefs, and both positive and negative attitudes of the population towards blood donation [3]. This study was conducted to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice towards blood donation, to identify factors behind motivation and to determine misconceptions and

myths associated with blood donations among people of Islamabad which may help the blood donation centers to develop their future policies to motivate people to donate blood and to urge donors to keep on donating blood on a regular basis and to inspire non-donors to start donating blood.

**METHODOLOGY:**

**Study Design:** Cross sectional survey

**Study Population:** General population of Islamabad

**Study Setting:** Urban, rural and slum areas of Islamabad

**Duration of Study:** 8 weeks

**Sample Size:** 204 calculated by Openepi sample [4] size based on the formula

$$n = [DEFF * Np(1-p)] / [(d^2 / Z_{1-\alpha/2}^2 * (N-1) + p*(1-p)]$$

**Sampling Techniques:** Non probability quota sampling

**Inclusion criteria:** Males and females between 18 – 65 years

**Exclusion criteria:** Persons not fit for blood donation on medical ground and People having patients with blood disorders in their family

**Ethical Consideration:** Informed written consent from study participants. Confidentiality of the subject during and after the study. Technical and ethical approval from IRB

**Data Collection Tool:** Self-administered semi structured questionnaire both in English and Urdu was used after pilot testing. Data was collected from the study subjects by a team of medical students.

**Data Analysis:** Data was analyzed by SPSS version 20. For categorical variables frequency and percentages were calculated.

**RESULTS:**

Out of 204 respondents, 67.2% were males and 32.8% were females. Majority (45.1%) belonged to age group 20-30 years while 33.3% were between 31-50 years. 38.2% respondents were residing in urban areas, 25 % in rural and 36.8% in slum areas.

**Table 1: Age**

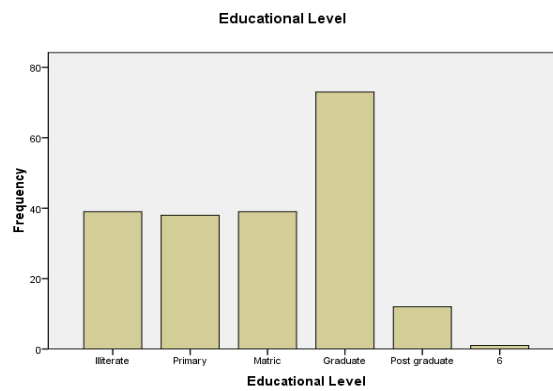
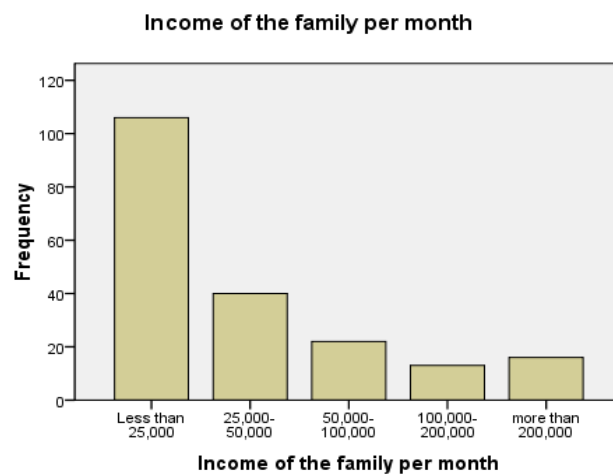
Age	Frequency	Percent
Less than 20	12	5.9
20-30	92	45.1
31-50	68	33.3
More than 50	32	15.7
Total	204	100.0

**Table 2: Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	137	67.2
Female	67	32.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3: Residence**

Residence	Frequency	Percent
Urban	78	38.2
Rural	51	25.0
Slum	75	36.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure 1: Educational Level****Figure 2: Family Income**

**Table 4: Blood Group**

	Frequency	Percent
A	21	10.3
B	61	29.9
AB	8	3.9
O	24	11.8
Don't know	90	44.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5: Type Of Recipient**

	Family	Friend / Relative	Unknown person	Total
Recipient	32	16	29	77

**Table 6: Type Of Donor**

	Family	Friend / Relative	Free volunteer	Professional donor	Total
Donor	64	38	8	1	111

**Table 7: Motivation Factors behind donation/ intent to donate blood N = 153**

s/ N	Item	Frequency	Percent
1	To help family or friend in need	117	76.5
2	Spiritual satisfaction / sense of purpose of life,	109	71.2
3	Reciprocal basis	38	24.8
4	Personal history of receiving blood in past when in need	51	33.3
5	For advertising blood drives/ blood donation campaign	51	33.3
6	To get free blood grouping / screening	42	27.5
7	Money of gift	28	18.3

**Table 8: Misconceptions and myths among non-donors** N = 127

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percent
1	Unknown fear	54	42.5
2	Concern about sterility of equipment	57	44.8
3	No one ever asked	67	52.7
4	Afraid of sight of blood/ needle prick	42	33.0
5	Process is long and boring	43	33.8
6	Not have enough blood	53	41.7
7	Family don't allow	62	48.7
8	Fear of discovering of existing illness e.g. HIV, Hepatitis etc	55	43.2
9	Leads to permanent weakness / anemia	61	48.0
10	Religious beliefs / social obligations	16	12.5
11	Leads to infertility	29	22.8
12	Fear of weight gain	49	38.5

**DISCUSSION:**

The current study found that the knowledge of the respondents is not up to the mark. These results are similar to several previous studies<sup>3</sup>. However some studies have shown higher level of knowledge and more positive attitude regarding blood donation. Among University students, Giri & Phalke, found overall good knowledge in the respondents, but that survey was carried out in the institute of Medical Sciences that could be one of the reasons of student's better knowledge [6].

Recruiting a sufficient number of safe blood donors is an emerging challenge especially with the increase in demands as a result of an increase in population size and an increase in the number of medical facilities. The present study had been conducted in Capital city in order to understand the various factors contributing to beliefs, attitudes, and level of knowledge associated with blood donation and transfusion that should help blood centers in building and maintaining an adequate and safe blood supply. Spiritual satisfaction is a major motivating factor for the local population to donate blood in the current study while few people believe that blood donation is a religious duty. A higher rate (91%) of religious belief has been reported in another recent Saudi

study<sup>4</sup>. In the present study other common reasons for blood donation are receiving blood in past, and helping friends or relatives. The results are comparable with study conducted by Raina and Kumari [5].

In our study, main reasons for not donating blood were fear of illness, objection from elders, never been asked for blood donation and fear of needle/sight of blood. The least common causes were fear of discovering illness and weight gain/weight loss. A study in Pakistan reported that 10.2% of the participants avoid donating blood because of the fear of transmission of diseases<sup>5</sup>. Similarly a study reported misconception of acquiring AIDS and hepatitis due to blood donation among the French population [6].

**Recommendations**

The practice of voluntary blood donation is almost nonexistent in our population. To overcome the prevailing misconceptions and reported fears related to voluntary blood donation, it is important to provide adequate information about donation to potential donors. Appropriate motivational campaigns should be launched among the population to convert altruistic behavior toward blood donation into a

regular practice in order to increase voluntary blood donation.

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