

Research Article**Factors that Motivate and Hinder Blood Donation among First Time Blood Donors****Wilkinson Anne R**

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Abstract: The increased demand of blood and its components makes it important for us to spread awareness of blood donation. We need to know the factors that may prompt a donor to donate blood or hinder him from doing so. 100 first time blood donors were given a questionnaire before and after blood donation. Their responses were noted and analyzed. More males donated blood (80) compared to females (20). The first time donors were mostly in the 21-30 years age group. The replacement (51) and voluntary (49) donors were almost equal in number. Lack of an opportunity to donate blood and lack of awareness about blood donation were the main factors that hindered blood donation. Hearing about blood donation from friends, media and blood donation camps were the source of information about blood donation. Most of the donors were motivated to donate blood. We need to focus on ways to increase our voluntary blood donor pool and also to retain them.**Keywords:** Blood donation, Hinder, Motivate.

INTRODUCTION

India has a large number of patients suffering from severe anaemia due to nutritional deficiency, hemolytic anaemias like sickle cell disease and thalassaemia major, and cancers of the oral cavity, lung, breast and cervix, some of whom may require blood transfusion. In the developed world, most blood donors are unpaid volunteers. In poorer countries, established supplies are limited and donors usually give blood when a family member or friend needs a transfusion [1].

A patient's stressed relative is often unwilling to donate blood. This can create an imbalance between demand and blood stock at times. There is a need to create awareness to increase voluntary blood donation. The increasing demand for blood and its components, prompted us to take up this study on first time blood donors, to find out the factors that motivate or discourage them from donating blood. First time blood donors are more likely to express their unbiased views and hence were selected for this study.

Aims and Objectives

- To identify factors that motivates a person to donate blood
- To identify factors that inhibits a person from donating blood
- To suggest any measures to promote blood donation

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried after Institute Ethics Committee approval and with the consent of the first time blood donor donating blood at our Blood Bank or at Blood Donation camps conducted by us. 100 donors were asked questions from a validated questionnaire before and after blood donation, and the answers were recorded on the case record form. The results were tabulated and analyzed statistically.

RESULTS**Table 1: Age and sex distribution of the first time donors**

Age in years	Males	Females
18-20	8	3
21-30	51	9
31-40	15	6
41-50	5	1
51-60	1	1
Total	80	20

Table 2: Distribution of Voluntary and Replacement first time donors

Age in years	Voluntary donor	Replacement donor
18-20	6	5
21-30	26	34
31-40	13	8
41-50	4	2
51-60	0	2
Total	49	51

Table 3: Education status of respondents

Education status	Number
Less than Class 5	9
Class 5-10	29
Higher secondary- 11 and 12	18
Graduates	40
Postgraduates	4
Total	100

Table 4: Profession of respondents

Profession	Number
Service	44
Student	25
Agriculture	11
Business	8
Laborer	6
Not working	6
Total	100

Table 5: Reason for blood donation for the first time

Reason	Number
Motivated	52
Forced (for relative or friend)	34
No reason	14
Total	100

Table 6: Source of information about blood donation

Source	Number
Friends	46
Blood donation camps	28
Television	28
Radio	13
Newspaper	13
Internet	5
Movies	4

Table 7: Factors preventing person from donating blood

Factor	Number
No opportunity	72
Lack of awareness	17
Fear	8
Underage previously	2
Bad experience of others	1

Table 8: Response regarding incentives for blood donors

Incentive	Number
None	43
Certificate	36
Leave	25
Free blood	2
Money	1

DISCUSSION

WHO wants that by 2020 there should be 100% voluntary, non remunerated donor blood procurement [2]. If we are to come anywhere near this goal we have to look into factors where we can procure new donors as well as retain old ones.

The age group of our first time donors matched the age group of Indian blood donors [3, 4].

More males (80%) donated blood in our series. In another Indian study on blood donation around 64% of the blood donors were males [3]. A study in California [5] showed an equal proportion of males and females whereas a study in Lithuania [6] showed that there were more female non remunerated donors (76.5%) and more male remunerated donors (54%). More female donors were also reported in a study from Ohio [7]. A study in Iran [8] however showed 97% male donors. Women had a fear of becoming anaemic after blood donation [8].

Most of our donors like in other studies [4, 8, 9] were motivated to donate blood for a noble cause after having heard about it from friends and media. Lack of awareness about blood donation and lack of an opportunity to donate blood were the main factors that prevented them from donating blood so far. This was also corroborated by other studies [3, 9]. The media is a good way to reach the masses. None of our donors had any religious or social beliefs that prevented them from donating blood. Studies in Nigeria [1] showed that 8% and 3.6% donors did not donate blood for religious and cultural beliefs respectively. Whereas a study from Saudi Arabia [9] showed that 93% blood donors thought that blood donation is a religious duty. In Iran [8] only 0.7% donated blood for religious purpose.

Our donors did not feel a need for any incentive, although some wanted certificates, leave and availability of free blood for their relatives when required. These incentives were similar to other studies [10, 11]. We do not give monetary remuneration to any donor in our Institute, and our first time donors were not interested in the same. A donor card, certificate and T shirt is given to all our voluntary donors. In countries where paid voluntary blood donation is followed, the donors were mainly students and people of the lower socio economic groups. There are studies in Greece [11] and Iran [8] which document that some donate

blood voluntarily, just to get free blood tests done simultaneously like lipid profile, etc which is being offered there. In the West various incentives are given to attract donors like cinema and concert tickets [2, 8], lucky draw coupons for television and cars, t-shirts, travel expenses and tax reliefs. There is a lot of debate on the effect of incentives on blood safety [2].

We found an almost equal proportion of voluntary and replacement donors, as documented in another Indian study [3]. In Western studies voluntary donation predominates [5, 12]. We need to increase our pool of voluntary donors as studies have found that they are more motivated to donate blood for a noble cause and are also less likely to transmit transfusion transmitted diseases. Most voluntary donors are first time donors. Moreover replacement donors are usually family members who are donating blood at times of stress and may also be difficult to retain as potential future donors.

Post donation our donors were motivated to donate their blood in future and also motivate others to do so. They were satisfied with the environment and staff of the blood bank, which is an equally important factor in the experience of first time blood donors.

If we are to target voluntary non remunerated blood donation, we should aim at providing our blood donors the opportunity to donate at convenient locations (mobile blood banks) and at suitable times [5]. In spite of all this we have to educate and motivate blood donation in a big way.

CONCLUSION

- The 21-40 years age group was where we found the maximum number of first time blood donors and hence we should direct our awareness programs to this group.
- More males donate blood and hence we should also motivate eligible females to donate blood.
- We need to increase our pool of voluntary blood donors and also retain them.
- Factors that motivate a person to donate blood were the opportunity, willingness to donate blood again once the first donation is done, hearing about blood donation through friends and media, first hand observing the process at blood donation camps, and the good environment in the Blood Bank.
- Factors that hindered blood donation was mainly lack of awareness and an opportunity to do so. The onus for this lies on us to create awareness about blood donation, bleed donors, follow up their experience, create donor registries and remind them about their next donation when the time comes.

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