



Original Research Article

Whole Body Donation –An Attitude and Perception in North Maharashtra

Bhusari Prashant Amanrao^{1*}, Kathe Dinesh Prakash², Khairnar Karan Bhagwan², Shukla Kushal², Chormunge Vijay Balkrishna³

¹Associate Professor & HOD, Dept. of Anatomy

²Assistant Professor, Dept. of Anatomy

³Associate Professor & HOD, FMT

MVPS Dr.Vasantrao Pawar Medical College. Nashik.

*Correspondence Email: drprashantbhusari@rediffmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Body donation is defined as act of giving one's body after death for medical research and education. Learning of anatomy without dissection on human body is never considered perfect. There is Bombay Anatomy Act under which dead bodies are provided to medical and teaching institutes. With increase in number of medical colleges in our country, there is increase in demand of cadavers for Anatomy dissection and research purpose. We have started whole Body donation awareness programme by various ways. Aim was to study the effect of body donation awareness programme in North Maharashtra, to compare the awareness among rural & urban population, to analyze the collected data of male & female donated bodies, and to study the body donation of most common age group. Conclusion: After doing more body donation awareness programme, involving mass media & society, there was increase in awareness of body donation among population in terms of increasing registration for body donation. There is more awareness in urban population that rural, male dead bodies are more than female and most common age group of body donation is 71-80 yrs. of age.

Key Words: Body donation awareness, Rural -Urban population, Male- Female ratio.

INTRODUCTION

Body Donation is defined as act of giving one's body after death for medical research & education. Cadavers remain a principal teaching tool for medical educators & anatomists. Learning of Anatomy without dissection on human body is never considered perfect. These donated bodies are used for the purpose of the study of Anatomy of human body, research purposes, medical students for learning different surgical procedures, for mounting specimens in museum. The terms Anatomical Donation, Body Donation or Body Bequest are commonly used and synonymous.

For the collection of dead bodies for teaching purpose, there is Bombay Anatomy Act. ^[1]

“An act to provide for the supply of unclaimed bodies of deceased persons and for donation before death by a person of his body or any part thereof after his death to hospitals and medical and teaching institution for therapeutic purposes or for the purpose of medical education or research including anatomical examination and dissection” under which dead bodies are provided to medical & teaching Institutes. Act regulates the use of dead bodies for medical purposes. Cadavers used by these institutions are usually unclaimed bodies obtained by police but there is a risk of infectious diseases, so we should initiate whole body donation programme & encourage society to donate bodies for beneficiaries of human being. Sanner (1997) in another study concluded that if one is prepared to give from the body in life, one is also prepared to give after death. ^[2]

There has been lots of resistance towards body donation. According to Cantarovich (2005), some of main reasons are: lack of awareness, religious uncertainties, distrust of medicine, hostility to new ideas and misinformation. Society

should accept that “using” body parts is moral and offers a source of health for everybody. Here comes the role of mass media and it has played an important role. ^[3]

With increase in number of medical colleges in our country, there is increase in demand of cadavers for Anatomy dissection and research purpose. For this whole body donation programme should be conducted & society should aware of its importance and how it is helpful for medical education & research purpose. In a study, Golchet et al (2000) reported that many factors such as age, religion, culture, personality characteristics, views on death and mortality, body image and humanitarian concerns influence people's opinion towards body donation. ^[4]

Since 2000, we have started a whole body donation Awareness programme. We did awareness at various levels like campaigning through publishing articles in newspaper, circulating pamphlets, giving lectures in Ashrams, IMA society, NGO's community centers. We also did programme on Radio, TV Channels. On 19th August of every year there is SAMAJDIN of our institute, in which various programmes are conducted, on this day we felicitate the relatives of body donors by giving memento in memory of donated person. Due to this programme, there is a tremendous increase in awareness of whole body donation among people.

Conesa et al (2004) studied the influence of different sources of information such as television, the press and radio, magazines, hoardings and posters, campaign about donation, information given by health professionals etc. towards body donation. It was observed that the medium with the greatest impact on the population is television; the second factor is the press and radio; the third is magazines and talks with friends/family; the fourth is hoardings and posters, and campaigns about organ

donation; and the last factor is information given by health professionals. It was concluded that opinion on donation is more favorable among subjects who have received information on an individual basis and at specialized meetings. [5] Arraez-Aybar et al (2004) reported that Anatomy teachers are generally in favour of donation (86.5%), especially of organs alone (52.7%) and this aspect was not affected by their religious beliefs. [6]

Aims & Objectives:

- To study the effect of body donation awareness programme in North Maharashtra.
- To study the comparison of body donation awareness among rural & urban population.
- To analyze the data of male & female donated bodies.
- To study the whole body donation of common age group.

MATERIAL & METHODS

In this study, we have collected a data from records of donated bodies from year 1991 to 2010. Total 108 whole bodies were donated in this period. From 1991 - 2000, donated bodies were voluntary i.e. before the start of body donation awareness programme. In our Institute Body donation awareness programme was started from 2000 onwards. The results were compared before & after starting of of body donation awareness programme. Also body donation registration data was analyzed from 1991-2010.

Donated bodies genders, age, area of residence were recorded separately and the data so collected was analyzed and statistically compared.

OBSERVATION & DISCUSSION

All major religions approve of body and organ donation as a charitable act of giving and for medical and dental teaching, research, and transplants. Most express that it is an individual decision. Various factors are believed to have attributed towards body donation. In one study, Fennell and Jones (1992) reported that the most common reasons for making a body bequest were to aid medical science, and gratitude to the medical profession. [7]

Boulware et al (2004) concluded that demographic and attitudinal factors were found to be strongly related to willingness to consider whole body donation. [8] Gillman (1999) reviewed the positions of the major faith groups about donation and concluded that the large majority of faiths take a positive stance towards donation. [9]

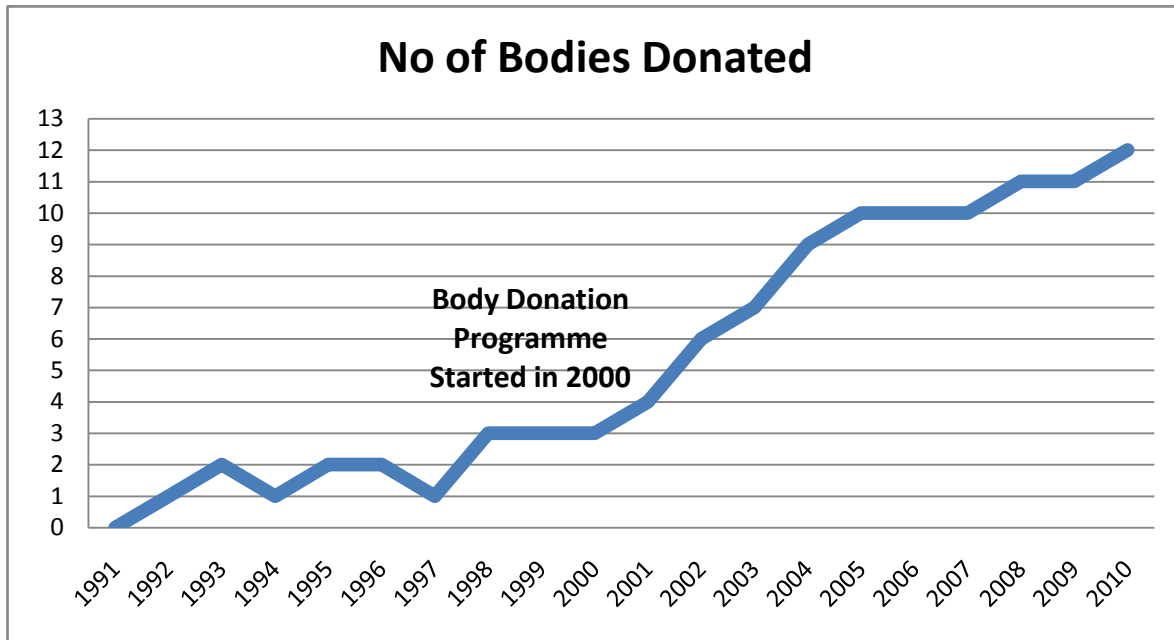
The data was collected from records of body donated in the department of Anatomy MVP's Dr. Vasantrao Pawar Medical College, Adgaon, Nashik. 108 donated dead bodies record thus analyzed and following things are observed.

a) Effect of body donation awareness programme

It is observed that in 1991-2000, total 18 dead bodies were donated voluntarily i.e. before starting of body donation awareness programme. Body donation awareness programme was started from 2000 onwards. From 2001 to 2010, it is observed that total no. of bodies donated were 90.

From above data the graph is plotted showing effect of body donation awareness programme.

Graph No.1: Showing comparison of No. of body donated before & after body donation awareness Programme.



It was found that, No. of donated bodies were increased three times after starting body donation awareness programme. And registration for body donation increased tremendously.

b) Rural-Urban Ratio

It is observed that out of 108 donated dead bodies, only 21 bodies were from rural area and 87 bodies were from urban area. So the ratio of rural to urban population of donated bodies is 1: 4.1. This suggests that awareness among urban population is more as compared to rural population.

c) Male - Female Ratio

It is observed that out of 108 donated dead bodies, there were 81 male bodies and 27 female dead bodies.

Table No.1: Showing comparison of male-female and urban-rural donated dead bodies.

	Rural	Urban	Total
Male	15	66	81
Female	06	21	27
Total	21	87	108

So it is observed that male dead bodies were more than female dead bodies.

Age group-108 dead bodies record was analyzed and tabulated according to 10 years interval age group.

Table No.2: Showing No. of dead bodies in different age groups

Age	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
Total	02	05	09	09	29	37	15	02

From the above table it is observed that the most common age group of donated dead bodies is 71-80 yrs. of age.

CONCLUSION & SUMMARY

Our Institute has taken serious measure to increase awareness of body donation.

From 2001 onwards, In terms of campaigning – involvement of media, News paper, Lectures, felicitating relatives of body donors and it creates impact on the society.

Patnaik (2002) suggested that one should inculcate the habit of donation voluntarily the body after the death. Voluntary donation of body is not much different from donation of organs including eyes, kidney, liver, heart or simply blood; only a bent of mind is needed. It is seen that the decision of an individual to donate his/her body for anatomical examination is a vital contribution towards the understanding and advancement of medical science. ^[10]

From the above study following conclusion is made-

- a) After doing more body donation awareness programme, involving mass media & society, there is increase in awareness of body donation among population.

It is observed that after starting body donation awareness programme there is 3 times increase in body donation and increase in registration.

- b) There is more awareness in urban population than rural population, it may be due to educational &

socioeconomic status, so more body donation programmes should be conducted in rural population.

- c) Male dead bodies are more than female.
- d) Most common age group of body donation is 71-80 yrs. of age.

From above it is suggested that-

Awareness among population is increasing day by day by different body donation awareness programme. Rural area should be motivated for body donation.

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We are very thankful to our Late Dr. Vasantrao Pawar Sir, for his encouragement, guidance & taking extra efforts on this Body donation awareness programme. We always remember such an extra-ordinary personality in our life.

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