

# Determinants Which Influence to Donate Blood Voluntarily at a Northeast District of the State of Tamil Nadu, South India

Sir,

Blood donation is a noble act and blood donors are the angels of Goodwill since they donate blood for saving human lives. Blood donor recruitment and retention is important as human blood is an essential to save human life.<sup>(1)</sup> This study designed and conducted over a period of eight weeks to investigate determinants which influence to donate blood voluntarily, in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu, South India. The respondents ( $n = 70$ ) were selected using systematic sampling method. Chi-square and independent t-test was used to find significance between determinants.

Among the education level of the blood donors, the majority of them were undergraduates (45.7%) and post graduates (30%). It shows that education is an important determinant in blood donation decision.<sup>(2)</sup> 84.3% of male and 15.7% of females were donating blood, and it shows male donors are more predominant in voluntary blood donation.<sup>(3)</sup> The frequency of blood donation by donors was 4 times, and mean value of first time blood donation was at the age of 21 years.

Among the majority of the respondents-92.5% reported religious heads and over half those 57.1% reported that spouse or family members influenced them to donate blood voluntarily. Over 60% of respondents indicated that they have an opportunity to be recruited via advertisements or by personal phone calls or a direct appeal (invitation) from blood bank. As a part of donor motivations, about 40 to 50 voluntary blood donation camps were conducted in and around district by John Scudder Memorial Blood Bank, Christian Medical College, Vellore. These camps play a major role in creating awareness and motivation among the community in and around the district (e.g.) educational institutions, religious ceremonies, community programmes and marriage receptions.

With the emergence of e-mail as a common form of communication this study suggests that e-mail has proven to be an effective method of reaching new donors.<sup>(4)</sup> Younger people seem to prefer SMS and e-mail. The notice boards and posters have potential to make a significant contribution to donor recruitment and retention programs in Colleges. Using of appropriate communication techniques might be helpful in recruiting new blood donors.

Willingness to donate blood was significantly high among donors within high level of education. Blood donation has few problems; to name a few-myths, misconceptions, beliefs and above all, fear of pain involved during the process and 'faceless' sort of service.<sup>(5)</sup> Blood donors should be treated with respect and concern by staff of blood bank since they are the life savers of many. The determinants contributing to voluntary blood donation are influenced only when good services are provided by blood bank.

**Umakanth Siromani, Thankamony Thasian<sup>1</sup>,  
Kurusilappattu Gurupachai Selvaraj<sup>2</sup>,  
Dolly Daniel, Joy J Mammen,  
Sukesh Chandra Nair, Rita Isaac<sup>1</sup>**

Departments of Transfusion Medicine and Immunohaematology,  
<sup>1</sup>Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs (RUHSA) and <sup>2</sup>Professor,  
Department of Bio-Statistics,  
Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamilnadu, India  
E-mail: siromaniumakanth@yahoo.co.in

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