

Conflicts of interest

The authors have none to declare.

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Knowledge and attitude towards body and organ donation among people in Lanja – A rural town in India



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Aims and objectives: To study the attitude and knowledge towards body and organ donation among people in rural India.

Material and methods: The present study was conducted in a rural town called Lanja, in Konkan region of Maharashtra in India. A questionnaire covering demographic data, knowledge and attitude of the participants was prepared and distributed to 400 students, middle aged and senior citizens.

Results: 91.5% of the respondents were aware about body and “organ donation and transplantation”. Television and newspaper (55.2% and 45.8%) were found to be the most popular sources of information on organ donation. Highest percentage (56.2%) believed that a healthy person can be a donor, while 32.8% believed that a cardiac dead person can be a donor. Only 29.4% individuals believed that a brain dead person can be a donor and 22.4% clearly stated having no idea regarding the health status of a donor.

Highest awareness was observed regarding eye donation, i.e. 92%. High awareness was also observed regarding heart, kidney and liver donations, i.e. 71.1%, 61.2% and 54.2% respectively. Awareness regarding body donation and other organ and tissue donations ranged from 21% to 40%.

Conclusion: Awareness regarding both body and organ donation in rural India is high. However there is lack of understanding regarding concept of brain death. Awareness regarding body and other organ and tissue donations besides eye, kidney, etc. need further awareness drives.

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Pundit Madhusudan Gupta – A versatile genius and forefather of modern medical education in India



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Aims and objectives: Pundit Madhusudan Gupta performed the first human cadaver dissection in modern time India on 10th January, 1836. To commemorate that heroic West Bengal Government in 2014 has declared 10th January each year as Medical Education Day. Though 179 years have elapsed since that 1836 event the recent commemoration has renewed our interest about this pioneer medical man. Our objective was to explore the life and

work of Pundit Gupta in the context of his time and his relevance today.

Material and methods: Using internet access literature search was done at existing online databases like Google Scholar, PubMed, Cochrane, Embase, HINARI, SearchMedica, Ovid, CiNii, JSTOR, EBSCO, etc. by various keywords to retrieve pertinent data and hand-search was made through relevant literatures in libraries of different institutions in Kolkata and in various personal collections. Cross-references obtained were searched further. Relevant data was compiled.

Results: Pundit Gupta was brave enough to fight prejudice against human cadaver dissection in his contemporary environment but he also made many other pioneering contributions to medical education in India. He encouraged Indian students to learn modern medicine, wrote and translated modern medical books in Indian languages, coined Indian equivalent of modern medical terminologies; did medical research, medico-legal autopsies, expressed views and remedies on public health problems to Government, stressed women’s health; worked as a medical practitioner and medical administrator as well.

Conclusion: Even 159 years after his demise Pundit Gupta is still relevant today with his inspiring versatile genius and exemplary contributions.

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Perceptions of first year medical students towards voluntary body donation



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Aims and objectives: Medical schools across the world are using body donation programs to sensitize medical students such that they maintain a respectful attitude towards the human cadaver during dissection. Under such circumstances it is critical to analyze the baseline perceptions of medical students towards whole body donation. Hence we conducted this study to assess knowledge, attitude and practices regarding whole body donation among first-year students in a medical college in India.

Material and methods: A self designed, pretested questionnaire was framed to explore perceptions of first-year MBBS students towards whole body donation. The questionnaire was administered among 100 first year MBBS students before the summative assessment and their responses were collected and analysed.

Results: The completed questionnaire was returned by 98 individuals and it was observed that 88% students were familiar with the term body donation. 51% of students were willing to donate their bodies for anatomical studies however 85% were unaware of the authorities to approach for pledging bodies. 66% students opined that they would encourage their family members/relatives to pledge their bodies although only 16% felt they would be comfortable dissecting bodies of known ones. 42% students were of the opinion that more awareness was required among general population however only 5% were ready to actively participate in awareness programs.

Conclusion: It may be concluded that medical students could form a potential donor population provided the donation process