

Exploring the complex factors influencing Organ Donation Decisions – A Comprehensive Review

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ABSTRACT

Objective. To comprehend the current factors that impact the decision of organ donation.

Methods. A search was conducted in the databases in order to carry out a more comprehensive search of the available literature. Keywords such as "organ donation," "tissue and organ procurement," and "organ transplantation" were utilized, along with Boolean operators, in order to generate relevant papers that were in line with the objective of the study. A search was conducted in the online databases of PubMed, CINAHL, and Medline, and studies that were relevant to the topic were included. **Results.** The results showed that judgements about organ donation are influenced by a number of important factors. These factors can be broadly divided into two categories: external influences, such as family dynamics, social conventions, and features of the healthcare system, and individual-level factors, such as personal beliefs, attitudes, and religious or cultural considerations. **Significant impacts** included the function of education, awareness initiatives, and trust in the healthcare system. **Conclusion:** This systematic review offers insightful information about the complex process involved in making decisions about organ donation. Effective initiatives to promote organ donation and eventually save more lives can be developed by healthcare professionals, legislators, and researchers by recognising and understanding the wide range of factors that influence people's decisions.

KEYWORDS

Tissue and Organ Procurement, Brain Death, Transplantation, opinion.

Introduction

Donating an organ is a crucial aspect of contemporary medicine that could save countless lives.¹ Organ transplants are vitally needed because over 120,048 men, women, and children in the US are on the waiting list for treatments that could save their lives.² Despite the significance of organ donation, approval rates for the practice vary greatly between nations and regions, with statistics ranging from 31.3% to 85%.³ Developing measures that effectively

promote organ donation requires an understanding of the unique environment and features of each group.⁴

The preferred course of treatment for serious organ failure is transplantation. Even though organ donation is widely acknowledged as a worldwide issue, claim for organs exceeds source in almost all nation on the planet.⁵ Policies to remedy this undersupply can be informed by an understanding of the factors that influence people's decision to give or not. However, in order to fully understand the interplay of various influences, people's ideas frequently need to be comprehended via a larger narrative.⁶

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic caused a global drop in transplants performed in 2020 compared to 2019, In terms of transplantation rates, the Americas is the most active region out of the six WHO regions, with 54,084 transplants (55.0 per million people). With 36,181 transplants (42.7 per million people), Europe ranks second).⁷ The process of donating an organ is difficult and is dependent on the donors' or their families' generosity. Establishing standardised evaluation criteria for these hospitals' potential could therefore encourage efforts to improve performance.⁸ Given that there is a significant global concern over the discrepancy between the supply and demand for donor organs, it is of the utmost importance to conduct an analysis of the characteristics of the organ donation procedure and to identify the factors that influence the decision-making process.⁹

The intricate procedure of organ donation might totally limit conscious choices if false information about brain death and donation procedures is ignored or if donor family members' emotional reactions are underappreciated.¹⁰ It's important to recognise that most organs utilised in transplant recipients come from people who have passed away from brain death. Family members may experience trauma or struggle to decide whether to give their organs.¹¹

Organ donation is legal everywhere in the globe, there is a significant supply and demand imbalance in nations like India. Transplants in India are extremely rare, with just 6,000 kidneys, 1200 livers, and 15 hearts done annually, despite the country's need for 258,000 organs annually, including 185,000 kidneys, 33,000 livers, and 50,000 hearts. Due to this, India has had an organ scarcity, which might be remedied even if only 5–10% of accident victims donate their organs.¹²

The Transplantation of Human Organs Act (THOA) was conceded in India in 1994 and allows a person to commit to donating their organs upon death. The public can also promise to donate different tissues thanks to the 2014 regulations.¹³ Despite the opt-in system, an individual has the autonomy to decide whether or not to contribute, and in the incident of a brain stem death, the family has the last say over whether or not to make a donation.¹⁴ As a result, the family has a significant influence in deceased organ donation. According to research, a conflict of values arises when decisions are made differently than they appear to be, is the reason why the majority of relatives stayed stuck in a difficult situation.^{15,16} According to more research, there are a variety of reasons why someone can refuse, including strong emotions, incapacity to make decisions, and a lack of enthusiasm to participate in the donation process. Denial can occur for a variety of reasons, including social pressures, perceived norms, religious convictions, and the desire to lessen the pain of others.¹⁷ There is evidence to support two distinct methods to decision-making: "rational decision-making" gathering pertinent information and considering all options and "moral decision-making," which involves allowing others' actions to influence one's own decision.¹⁸

The literature on organ donation in India is devoid of evidence regarding the elements that impact familial consent, such as beliefs towards brain death or psychosocial and demographic characteristics that may indicate the effectiveness of organ donation.¹⁹ Designing interventions and policy discussions aimed at improving donation decisions with family members can be aided by such evidence.²⁰ It is critical to document the views and intentions of household members regarding organ donation in order to enhance understanding of potential strategies for increasing donation rates.²¹ The goal of the current study is to understand decision-making process and to meticulously document case studies of successful cadaveric organ donation.²²

This review study aims to critically analyze the current evidence that impacts the factors influencing the decision regarding organ donation. The inquiry centers on the subsequent matters: What are the different factors that influence the decision to donate an organ?

1. Scope and Methodology

This constitutes a scoping review. A range of online search engines was utilized to identify databases that may contain references. The review questions directly inspired the established criteria for selecting the studies. Rationales were provided for both inclusion and exclusion. Studies examining organ donors of all ages to ascertain their demographics were included. All collected results met the criteria for inclusion. We omitted reviews, abstract

notions, conference proceedings, letters, commentaries, opinions, and book chapters in favor of studies, with or without a comparison group, relevant to our research inquiries. We excluded studies not published in English. Selected studies underwent a comprehensive quality assessment utilizing extensive critical review criteria. The PEO criteria were considered regarding any impact on influencing organ donation.

Search Strategy: The selected databases were utilized throughout the entire data collection procedure. We conducted a search on PubMed, CINAHL, and Medline. Logical operators and keywords were employed in the search to mitigate data saturation. It is essential to prove that a thorough and extensive search was conducted. MeSH terms utilized for the inquiry. The search strategy encompassed (((((Tissue and Organ Procurement [MeSH Terms] OR Brain Death [MeSH Terms] OR Tissues [MeSH Terms] OR Transplantation [MeSH Terms] OR Tissue Donors [MeSH Terms]))) AND (((attitude [MeSH Terms] OR opinion [MeSH Terms] OR intention [MeSH Terms])))). Standards of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) were adhered to. To ensure the research incorporates contemporary strategies for facilitating organ donation, we exclusively included articles from the past 12 years.

Study Selection: Using MESH keywords, two authors conducted an independent evaluation of all of the publications that were discovered through database searches. They then collaborated with a third author to discuss any disagreements that were detected. Following the acquisition of the complete texts of the studies that were chosen for the first level, each of the studies was put through an independent examination by the same two writers in order to determine whether or not it was eligible. Documentation and classification of the reasons for exclusion were carried out with great care.

Data Extraction: The data extracted from each report was obtained by two reviewers in an independent manner. A standard proforma was utilized in order to collect information regarding the study's design, time period, participant characteristics, description of the intervention, maternal outcomes, findings, and limitations pertaining to the study. The data was obtained by two reviewers, each of which worked separately.

Quality and Bias Assessment: Publications undergo a quantitative evaluation through the Newcastle-Ottawa Quality Assessment Scale, which assigns a rating based on the criteria of selection, comparability, and exposure categories. Randomised controlled trials examining various aspects of trial design, execution, and reporting were scrutinised employing the Cochrane Risk of Bias tool. The checklist-based tool from the Joanna Briggs Institute was employed to assess the qualitative and quasi-experimental studies.

Search Results: A Boolean search for relevant terms yielded 270 records. Consequently, a total of 122 records were identified in CINAHL, 88 in Medline, and 70 in PubMed. PRISMA flow diagrams were developed and are presented in Fig 1. Several items were excluded due to their irrelevance to the study's topic. After the elimination of duplicates, the abstracts of all articles were examined. Following the elimination of 68 duplicates, 202 records were identified as suitable and qualified for subsequent screening. A total of 190 records were excluded from the screening process by two independent authors for several reasons: 92 records were eliminated due to interventions not being based on online or digital platforms, 88 records were excluded because the age group exceeded 25 years, and 10 records were removed as the interventions were unrelated to the intended outcomes. Five articles were removed from the remaining twelve due to the absence of full-length papers for three of them, while two were classified as conference proceedings.

Synthesis of Results: The findings are encapsulated in Table 1. The synthesis of results adhered to a convergent synthesis approach, wherein a multitude of outcomes were collected both prior to and subsequent to the intervention. These outcomes were evaluated through self-reports, post-intervention questionnaires, and results that directly addressed the research questions. This discussion is organized into three sections focusing on the factors influencing organ donation from the perspective of the organ donor. The synthesis of results adhered to a convergent approach, wherein a multitude of outcomes were collected both prior to and following the intervention. These outcomes were evaluated through self-reports, post-intervention questionnaires, and results specifically addressing the research questions. This discussion is organized into three sections, focusing on the factors that influence organ donation from the perspective of the organ donor.

2. Result and Discussion

The above studies characteristics were followed by, Turkey^{23, 24}, Syria²⁵, England²⁶, Saudi Arabia^{27, 28}, Austria & Switzerland²⁹, China³⁰. Most of the Studies were cross sectional survey studies some of survey study some of paper based survey study and some of exploratory study. The used were not having any exposures. The

key finding was as follows,

Knowledge and information regarding organ donation:

One of the most common barriers mentioned was a lack of understanding regarding organ donation and the procedures involved. Families believe they should not give up hope for their loved ones' survival as long as their heart continues to beat, they are still alive, and their bodily organs continue to function.³¹

This is partially due to families' ignorance of the idea of brain death, which is especially evident during periods when the patient is in a vegetative state or coma. ³²draw attention to the misconception about regaining brought on by prior knowledge of coma recovery. Additional research also demonstrated that a contributing factor in donation refusal is a lack of knowledge.

²⁵pull attention to that There is no relationship between age, gender, or even educational attainment, suggesting that various societal groups may be included in the system. ²⁷make a note that Although many understand its significance, potential donors are discouraged by ignorance of its details and donation process. Employer and government support, along with improved awareness efforts, may boost donor registrations.

Religious Belief

According to ³³ there are differences in the consent rate depending on whether a person believes in fate, accepts death as inevitable, survives after death, or continues to exist after death. According to ³⁴ religion and culture have a significant influence on organ donation, with Muslims in particular holding religious beliefs that have great significance for many Asians. Because organ transplantation is legally recognised by the Catholic faith as a "service of life," persons who identify as Catholics were having a more positive attitude towards organ donation. ³⁰draw attention that Although their knowledge of organ donation was limited, young people were aware of it. The kind of household registration, degree of education, and religious affiliation all strongly influence a person's propensity to donate. People's willingness to contribute can be influenced by the supportive atmosphere for organ donation in society as well as their accurate knowledge of the rules and regulations around organ donation.

Personal donation

Priorities should be given to ascertaining a person's intentions prior to death, making sure that any misunderstandings are cleared up before a choice is made, promoting and enrolling new members, and confronting those who would like to disregard the wishes of others. The features of the deceased were identified by ³³ as one of the critical criteria that influence the satisfaction process. In actuality, the willingness of the deceased to consent to donation prior to death is one of the most predictive elements in the decisions made by families regarding donation.³⁵ pointed out that families' reasons for donating organs would be indirectly impacted by the patient's prior expression of desire and quickness in signing up. The consent rate in this case would be 95%. According to ³⁶ over 80% of families' consent to donation provided they are aware that their loved one had consented to it beforehand. As a result, in this instance, the deceased's approval as well as the happiness of the family are crucial. ²⁹draw attention that, there exists a positive correlation between knowledge and attitudes regarding organ donation and the occurrence of family discussions—an aspect that can be theoretically influenced—we propose that educational initiatives aimed at fostering family conversations about organ donation could serve as an effective strategy for enhancing awareness.⁴³

Anxiety surrounding contributions

The study conducted by (Hosseinrezaei et al., 2014) revealed that similar beliefs about donation, such as the primary concerns raised were the apprehension of not dying at the moment of donation and the dread of experiencing pain post-mortem. A separate investigation revealed that individuals who signed an organ donor card exhibited a pronounced sense of perceived self-efficacy and acceptance of mortality, whereas those who chose not to donate displayed a marked apprehension towards death and experienced bodily anxiety.

The role of media

The assumption that a patient with brain death can recover and the imposition of a dubious attitude towards death are two ways in which the media plays a part. Some of the families may choose not to receive donations in this way. Families' decisions to accept donation appear to be influenced by films that show organ sales and exchanges as well as the possibility of patients returning to life.²⁶

³⁷demonstrated that relatives were exposed to a substantial amount of information regarding organ donation through the media, the majority of which was regrettably unfavourable. Furthermore, their study result showed that, certain obstacles to organ donation, some of which are propagated by showing unfavourable media portrayals of the practice. ³⁸ brought this issue up as well. ^{Forty} They stated that the videos that the media shows its viewers

can lead to families becoming less certain about organ donation.

Organ donation is a vital component of medical care that has the power to save many lives. However, understanding the dynamics influencing individuals' decisions regarding organ donation is complex and multifaceted. In the review study titled "Unravelling the Dynamics: Understanding the Multifaceted Influence on Organ Donation Decisions," the authors delve into this complexity, aiming to provide insights that can inform strategies to increase organ donation rates. In this discussion, we will compare this study with other similar research to glean a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing organ donation decisions.

The findings indicated that a number of factors influence whether or not organ donation is accepted. Accepting brain death is one of the other effective aspects in donation. Since acknowledging brain death makes donation possible, we advise the medical staff to make sure families are informed about brain death at the time of donation.³⁹ Families should be provided with clear and understandable information in order to accomplish this goal. Secondly, they need to take into account the perspectives and experiences of families in this intricate scenario and work to resolve any contradictions or misunderstandings. The medical team must adhere to all clinical guidelines and protocols pertaining to brain death.⁴⁰ This shows that the medical staff makes every attempt to allay concerns and uncertainties regarding any kind of decision. One of the prominent themes in studies on organ donation decisions is the influence of culture and religion. For instance, research by ⁴¹ demonstrated how cultural beliefs and religious doctrines significantly impact individuals' willingness to donate organs.⁴¹ Similarly, ⁴² found that cultural attitudes towards death and the afterlife play a crucial role in shaping organ donation decisions within specific ethnic communities. These findings align with the review study's emphasis on the need for culturally sensitive approaches to promote organ donation.

Socio-economic factors also emerge as significant determinants of organ donation decisions. Studies by ²⁸ highlight the disparities in access to information and healthcare resources, which influence individuals' ability to make informed decisions about organ donation. Moreover, socio-economic status can affect perceptions of altruism and the willingness to engage in charitable acts, including organ donation, as discussed in the review study.⁴³

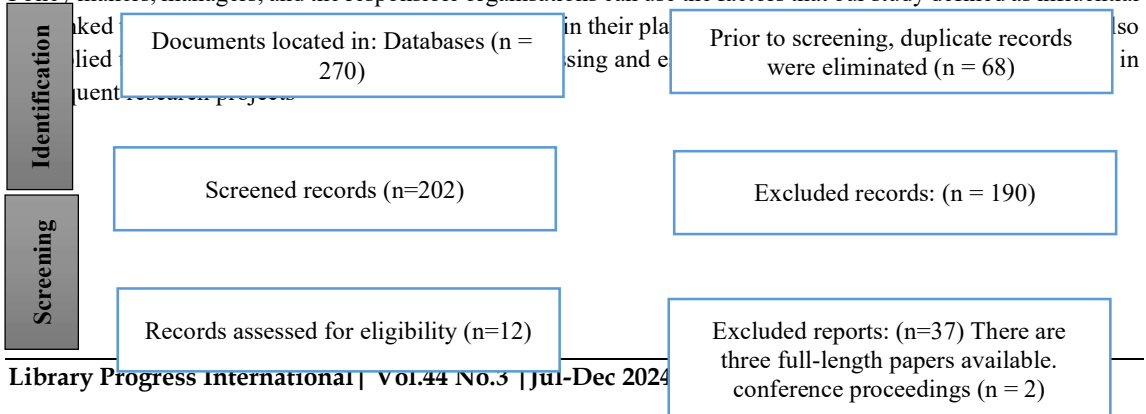
The review study underscores the role of psychological factors, such as fear, distrust, and misconceptions, in shaping organ donation attitudes. Similarly, research reveals how fear of medical procedures and distrust in the healthcare system act as barriers to organ donation among certain demographic groups. Understanding and addressing these psychological barriers are crucial for designing effective interventions to promote organ donation, as emphasized by both the review study and related research.⁴⁴

Finally, the review study emphasizes the importance of policy and institutional frameworks in facilitating organ donation. This aligns with findings which highlight the role of legislative measures, public awareness campaigns, and healthcare infrastructure in shaping organ donation rates.⁴⁵ By comparing different policy approaches and institutional practices, researchers can identify best practices for promoting organ donation within diverse socio-cultural contexts.⁴⁶

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the review study "Unravelling the Dynamics: Understanding the Multifaceted Influence on Organ Donation Decisions" provides valuable insights into the complex array of factors shaping individuals' attitudes towards organ donation. By comparing this study with other similar research, we can appreciate the nuanced interplay between cultural, religious, socio-economic, and psychological factors in influencing organ donation decisions. Moving forward, it is essential to continue exploring these dynamics and developing targeted interventions to enhance organ donation rates and ultimately save more lives.

Policy makers, managers, and the responsible organisations can use the factors that our study defined as influential



The review's included studies (n = 9)

Included

Figure 1. Prisma Flowchart

Results:

Table 1 depicts the study characteristics and details are discussed as follows.

Table 1. Study Characteristics (Cont.)

Author and Reference	Design	Sample size	Exposure	Key findings	Quality assessment Instrument	Rating
Akpınar Söylemez et al	Cross-sectional survey	600 patients	Nil	On the Organ Donation Attitudes Scale, the students' mean scores for the positive and negative items were 105.84 ± 12.61 and 45.91 ± 15.74 , respectively. The views of the students towards volunteering and organ donation were encouraging.	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low
Jameel Soqia et al	cross-sectional study	600 participants	Nil	For 62.8% of individuals who, after they passed away, decided to donate their organs because they wanted to help others. For males, the main cause of organ refusal was religious convictions; for females, main causes were lack of knowledge and religious beliefs.	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low
Webb, Gwilym et al	Survey study	1549 adult	Nil	Eighty percent of people would think about giving up all or	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low

				part of their organs. Age, race, and religion all had an impact on this support.		
Renad S. AlSubaie et al	Cross-Sectional Study	General population	Nil	Donation attitudes differed: 42.4% of respondents were willing to donate, whilst 57.6% were not. Donation reluctance was influenced by psychological barriers, health concerns, pain, and insufficient knowledge.	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low
Vanessa Stadlbauer et al	A paper-based survey	354 students	Nil	Family history had an impact on respondents' knowledge of organ donation, their strong opinion-expressing rate, and the proportion of respondents who have this knowledge conversation rather than conversations at school. Knowledge and attitudes on organ donation were also influenced by age, gender, nationality, and religion.	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low
Xiulan Chen et al	Survey study	501 vey of young	Nil	Surveyed reviled that, 15.2% knew that laws and regulations	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low

				pertaining to organ donation existed, whereas 99.2% were aware of the practice and 47.1% were eager to donate their organs.		
Mohammed Y. Alessa et al	Cross-sectional study	443 Saudi residents	Nil	Social media had an impact on participants' attitudes towards organ donation, 187 of them (96.4%) described it as a positive effect that was significantly connected with the readiness to donate organs (P=0.006), with nearly half of them (51.6%) believing that it was so.	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low
Panel Oktay Demirkiran et al	Survey study	Three hundred and seventeen	Nil	People's decisions to donate their organs are influenced by cultural and religious considerations. Our survey of Turkish respondents revealed that religious motivations are especially successful in encouraging organ donation.	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low
Harold W. Wiebe et al	Exploratory study	20 hemodialysis patients	Nil	Positive decisions regarding transplantation were correlated	Cochrane Risk of Bias 2	Include; risk of bias: low

				with higher levels of education, self-worth, decisiveness, and support; optimism and a propensity for taking risks did not. Decision-making abilities and personality traits were found to be strongly correlated.		
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