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Knowledge, attitude, and factors associated with organ donation and transplantation among the students of Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

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Background and objective: End-stage organ failure is one of the major outcomes of non-communicable diseases. While organ transplantation is the most preferred treatment for end-stage organ failure, donor shortages remain a barrier. Medical students, as budding doctors, could play a crucial role in promoting organ donation, as their knowledge and attitudes can influence public perception. This study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude, and sociodemographic factors associated with knowledge and attitude regarding organ donation and transplantation among students of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 387 medical students from October 2023 to May 2025, selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire and analysed with SPSS. Knowledge was measured with 10 questions; attitude was assessed using a Likert Scale. Scores above 50% indicated adequate knowledge, and scores above 10 reflected a positive attitude. Chi-square, Fisher's Exact, and Pearson's correlation tests were used, with $p < 0.05$ considered significant. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna.

Results: Among the participants, 55.6% were female and 44.4% male. Adequate knowledge was found in 73.1%, and 65.4% showed positive attitudes. While kidney donation awareness was high, knowledge about pancreas and small intestine donation was limited. Only 9.3% were aware of medicolegal aspects of organ donation and transplantation. With respect to attitudes, only 33.1% expressed willingness to donate, with 42.6% citing lack of awareness as the primary barrier. Knowledge significantly correlated with age ($p < 0.001$) and academic batch ($p < 0.001$), while attitude was associated with batch ($p = 0.009$). A positive correlation existed between knowledge and attitude ($r = 0.149$, $p = 0.003$).

Conclusion: Most students showed adequate knowledge and positive attitudes. However, willingness to donate was limited, with lack of knowledge reported as a barrier. These findings highlight the need for structured education and awareness programs on organ donation within the medical curriculum.

Keywords: knowledge, attitude, organ donation and transplantation, medical students