

Knowledge and Attitude Regarding Organ Donation among Degree College Students: A Descriptive Study

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Abstract: ***Background:** Organ transplantation can save the lives of people with organ failure, yet donor organs remain scarce worldwide. In India, annual demand is estimated at about 500,000 organs, while only 2%–3% of this need is met. Understanding the barriers is essential for planning educational interventions that dispel myths and promote positive attitudes toward donation. **Aim:** To assess knowledge and attitude regarding organ donation among degree college students. **Methods:** A descriptive study was conducted among 100 students at a Government Degree College Paloura, Jammu, selected through purposive sampling. Formal permission and written informed consent were obtained. The tool was validated by seven nursing experts, with reliability of KR-20 = 0.72 for the knowledge questionnaire and Cronbach's alpha = 0.76 for the attitude scale. Data were collected using sociodemographic data, a self-structured questionnaire, and a Likert scale. Analysis was done using SPSS 20.0, with $p < 0.05$ considered significant. **Results:** Most students (85%) had moderate knowledge, 3% adequate knowledge, and 12% inadequate knowledge. Regarding attitude, 64% were moderately positive, 20% highly positive, 15% neutral, and 1% negative. A strong, statistically significant positive correlation was found between knowledge and attitude scores ($r = 0.83$, $p = 0.01$), indicating that greater knowledge is associated with a more positive attitude. **Conclusion:** Continued awareness programmes and educational interventions are needed to improve students' knowledge and attitudes and to encourage active participation, including registration through digital platforms.*

Keywords: Organ donation, tissues, transplantation, knowledge, attitude

1. Introduction

An organ is a collection of tissues that forms a structural and functional unit specialized to perform a particular function, such as the heart, kidneys, and lungs. Organs are essential for the survival and reproduction of the human body. They perform specific functions and work together as organ systems to carry out the body's various physiological processes. When an organ becomes damaged or fails, it may no longer be able to meet the body's requirements. Organ failure can occur suddenly and may be caused by injury, illness, or medical complications. It is often difficult to prevent and may become a medical emergency when it occurs. Organ donation is the life-saving act of providing a healthy tissue or organ to replace a damaged organ in an individual with organ failure.

There is a worldwide shortage of donor organs compared with the demand for transplantation. According to the Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation (GODT), approximately 173,727 organ transplants were reported across 92 countries in 2024, with more than 50% performed in the Americas and Europe. Worldwide, there were 47,180 deceased donors, while 668,160 patients were on transplant waiting lists, and 31,853 patients died while awaiting transplantation.[1]

In India, data from the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO) and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, indicate that an estimated 300,000 or more patients are on organ transplant waiting lists at any given time, with at least 20 deaths occurring daily due to the shortage of available organs. The annual demand is estimated at approximately 500,000

organs, whereas only about 2%–3% of this demand is currently met. Through transplantation, the lives of patients with irreversible organ failure and chronic diseases can be prolonged or saved. [2,3,4]

Studies have found that medical students generally hold a favourable attitude toward organ donation, whereas non-medical students may have less favourable attitudes. Various myths, misconceptions, and cultural beliefs prevalent in society may influence their attitudes and decisions regarding organ donation, and distrust in the healthcare system may further discourage individuals from pledging their organs.[5] There is therefore a need to increase awareness about organ donation among non-medical students. Understanding the extent of these barriers is crucial for planning effective educational interventions that dispel myths, address misconceptions, and promote a positive attitude toward organ donation.

Organ donation can save lives, but the gap between the number of people who need organs and the number of organs donated remains wide. Young adults, especially college students, can help close this gap, since they are open to new information and can influence their families and peers. This study therefore sought to find out how much degree college students know about organ donation, what attitude they hold toward it, whether the two are related, and whether they differ across demographic variables. Therefore, a study was needed to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding organ donation among degree college students.

2. Literature Survey

Organ donation is one of humanity's noblest acts. Although it is a personal decision, the process has legal, medical, ethical, organizational, and social implications. Technical advances in recent years have improved donation rates and the feasibility of transplantation. Organ donation is a life-saving process that enables individuals with chronic illnesses and irreversible organ failure to have their lives saved through transplantation.

Globally, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over 130,000 solid organ transplants are performed each year, yet this meets only about 10% of the worldwide need.[6]

In India, more than 4.8 lakh people have registered their pledge to donate organs through Aadhaar-linked digital platforms under the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) system since late 2023, marking a significant moment in public involvement. India also achieved a milestone of roughly 20,000 to 20,138 organ transplants in 2024, the highest ever recorded in a single year, according to the NOTTO Annual Report. This represents a 6.5% increase over the previous year and a fourfold rise from 4,990 transplants in 2013, reflecting the country's rapid progress in transplantation services. India ranks third globally in the total number of organ transplants, behind only the United States and China, and holds the first position worldwide in living-donor transplants, highlighting the willingness of families and individuals to donate organs while alive. [7,8]

Deceased organ donation, however, remains a major challenge in India. Deceased-donor transplants rose from 837 in 2013 to 3,526 in 2025, but this progress is still far below the requirement. A significant gap persists, with over 3 lakh patients on waiting lists and a low deceased-donation rate of 0.34 to 0.8 per million population. [9,10]

Health officials believe India still has considerable potential to increase deceased organ donation and transplantation. With nearly 1.7 lakh road traffic fatalities annually, many suitable organs could save thousands of lives if awareness, consent, and retrieval systems continue to improve.[11] However, persistent socio-cultural misconceptions, myths, religious hesitations, and a heavy reliance on private facilities over public healthcare limit progress, along with a lack of public education about brain death and post-death donation.

Healthcare experts emphasize that strengthening public awareness, improving hospital-based organ retrieval programmes, and encouraging timely family consent will be crucial to minimizing the gap between organ demand and availability. This study therefore emphasizes the need for greater student participation, dispelling myths and misconceptions, and encouraging students to take the initiative in organ donation.

3. Objectives

- 1) To assess the knowledge and attitude regarding organ donation among students of a Government degree college in Jammu.
- 2) To determine the relationship between knowledge and attitude scores regarding organ donation among the students.
- 3) To find the association of knowledge and attitude scores with selected demographic variables among the students.

4. Operational Definitions

- 1) **Assess:** to evaluate the level of knowledge and attitude of students regarding organ donation.
- 2) **Knowledge:** the accuracy of the students' responses to the structured questionnaire on organ donation, expressed as a knowledge score.
- 3) **Attitude:** the students' feelings, beliefs and opinions regarding organ donation, measured on a Likert scale and categorised as positive, neutral or negative.
- 4) **Degree college students:** students enrolled in undergraduate programmes at the selected Government degree college in Jammu.
- 5) **Organ donation:** the voluntary process of giving a healthy organ or tissue from one person (living or deceased) to another, to save or improve the recipient's life.

5. Methodology/Approach

A quantitative approach with a descriptive survey design was used to assess knowledge and attitude regarding organ donation among 100 undergraduate students of Government Degree College, Paloura, Jammu. The population comprised the degree college students of the selected college. Participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling. Formal permission was obtained from the college, and written informed consent was obtained from each participant.

Data were collected using three tools: a sociodemographic proforma, a structured knowledge questionnaire, and a Likert attitude scale. The tools were validated by seven nursing experts. Reliability was acceptable, with KR-20 = 0.72 for the knowledge questionnaire and Cronbach's alpha = 0.76 for the attitude scale. A pilot study was conducted in March 2025 on 10 students at a Degree College in Jammu, and the study was found feasible, with no major problems. The main data collection was carried out in April 2025.

Knowledge scores were categorised as inadequate (0-10), moderate (11-20) and adequate (21-30). Attitude scores were categorised as negative (20-40), neutral (41-60), moderately positive (61-80) and highly positive (81-100). The inclusion criteria were students who were enrolled in an undergraduate programme at the college, present on the day of data collection, willing to participate with written informed consent, and able to read and understand English.

Data were analysed using SPSS version 20.0. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, SD, median, mode and range) were used to describe the data. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to find the relationship between knowledge and attitude (Section IV), and the chi-

square test was used to find the association with sociodemographic variables (Section V). A p value < 0.05 was considered significant.

6. Results

Section I: Description of Demographic Variables of Students

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of the participants' socio-demographic variables, which provide background information about the study sample. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of degree college students according to their demographic variables, N=100

Characteristics	Socio-demographic variables		
	Content	f	%
Age(years)	17-19	42	42%
	20-22	38	38%
	23-24	20	20%
Gender	Male	49	49%
	Female	51	51%
Field of study	Arts	22	22%
	Medical	11	11%
	Non-medical	35	35%
	Commerce	32	32%
Semester of study	1-3	30	30%
	4-6	42	42%
	7-8	28	28%
Marital Status	Single	82	82%

Religion	Married	15	15%
	Separated	3	3%
	Hinduism	30	30%
	Muslim	65	65%
Socio-economic status	Others	5	5%
	Below 15000	19	19%
	15000-30000	70	70%
Mothers education	Above 30000	11	11%
	Matriculation	64	64%
	Higher secondary	20	20%
	Graduation	10	10%
Fathers education	Post-graduation	6	6%
	Matriculation	35	35%
	Higher secondary	20	20%
	Graduation	20	20%
Area of residence	Post-graduation	25	25%
	Urban area	45	45%
	Subarea	15	15%
Have you heard about organ donation	Rural area	40	40%
	Yes	69	69%
If yes: Source of information	No	31	31%
	TV/Radio	2	2%
	Social-media	7	2%
	Newspaper	38	38%
	Academics	7	7%
	Family/Friends	7	7%
	Hospital	2	2%
	Religious institution	6	6%

Section II: Description of level of knowledge regarding the organ donation among degree college students

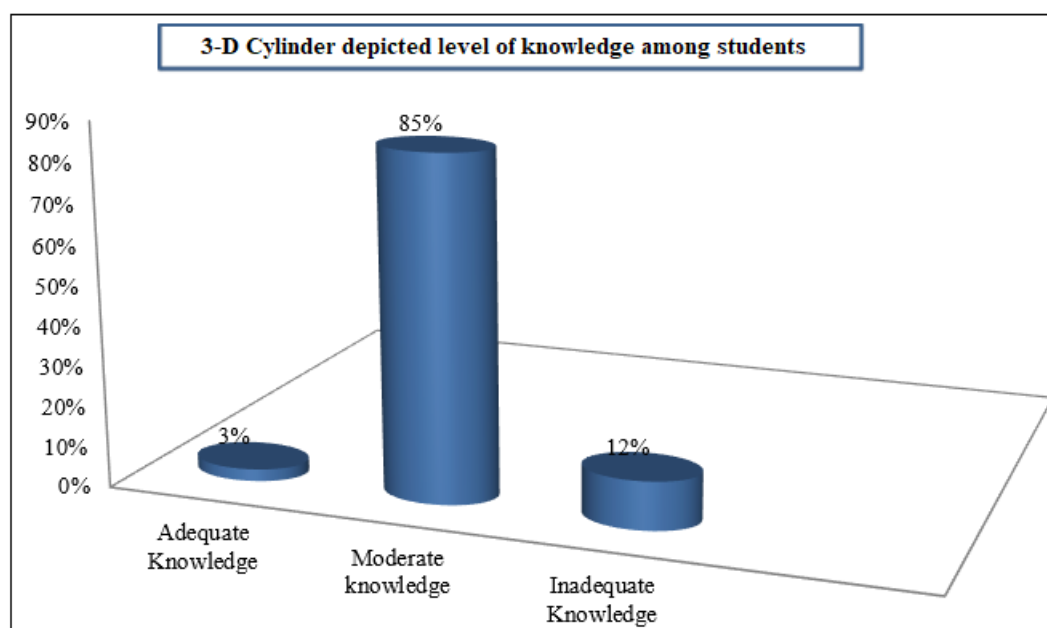


Figure 1: Three-dimensional cylinder diagram showing the distribution of knowledge levels regarding organ donation among degree college students

Figure 1 presents the distribution of knowledge levels regarding organ donation among degree college students. Most students (85%) had moderate knowledge, followed by

12% with inadequate knowledge, while the remaining 3% had adequate knowledge.

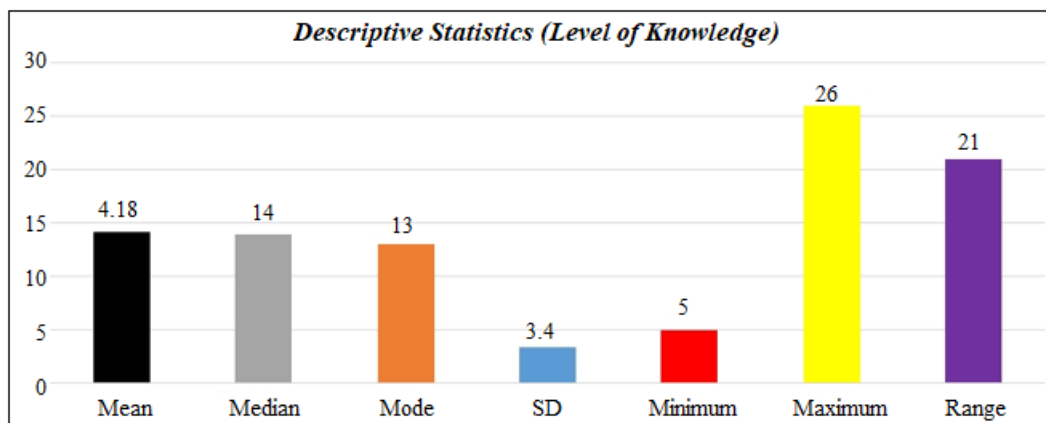


Figure 2: Bar diagram showing the descriptive statistics of knowledge scores among degree college students

Figure 2 presents the descriptive statistics of knowledge scores regarding organ donation among degree college students. The mean $\pm$ SD was 14.18 ± 3.4 , with a mode of 13, a median of 14, a minimum of 5, a maximum of 26, and a range of 21.

Section III: Description of the Level of Attitude Regarding Organ Donation Among Degree College Students

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of the level of attitude regarding organ donation among degree college students (N = 100)

Level of attitude (score range)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Negative attitude (20-40)	1	1%
Neutral attitude (41-60)	15	15%
Moderately positive attitude (61-80)	64	64%
Highly positive attitude (81-100)	20	20%
Total	100	100

Table 2 presents the distribution of the level of attitude regarding organ donation among degree college students. Most participants (64%) had a moderately positive attitude, followed by 20% with a highly positive attitude and 15% with a neutral attitude. The fewest participants (1%) had a negative attitude. Overall, 84% of the students had a positive attitude toward organ donation.

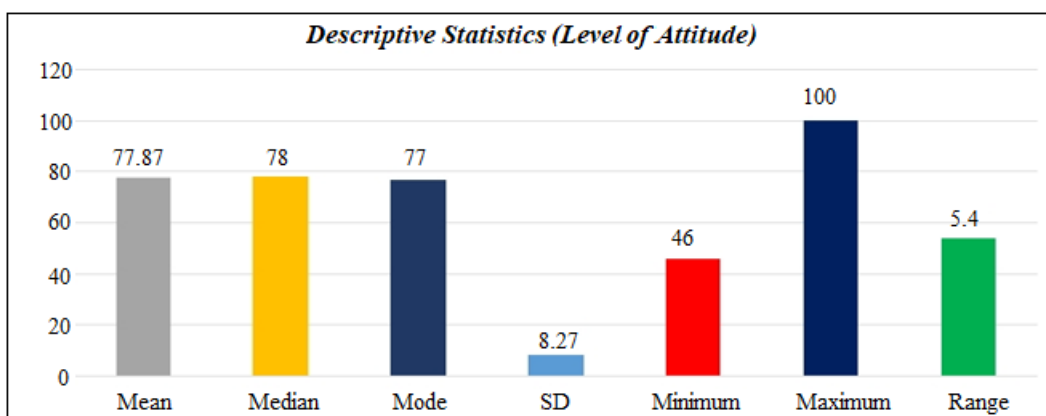


Figure 3: Bar diagram showing the descriptive statistics of attitude scores regarding organ donation among degree college students

Figure 3 presents the descriptive statistics of attitude scores regarding organ donation among degree college students. The mean $\pm$ SD was 77.87 ± 8.27 , with a mode of 77, a median of 78, a minimum of 46, a maximum of 100, and a range of 54.

Section IV: Description of the relationship between knowledge and attitude scores regarding organ donation among Degree College students.

Table 3: Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) showing the relationship between knowledge and attitude scores

regarding organ donation among degree college students (N = 100)

Variables	r value	p value	Inference
Knowledge and Attitude scores	r = 0.83	0.001	Significant*

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 3 shows a strong, statistically significant positive linear correlation between knowledge and attitude scores ($r = 0.83$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). This implies that greater knowledge of organ donation among degree college students is associated with a more positive attitude toward it.

Section V: Description of the Association of Knowledge and Attitude Scores with Selected Socio-demographic Variables Regarding Organ Donation Among Degree College Students

The present study revealed a significant association between knowledge scores and the demographic variables of age ($p = 0.02$) and semester of study ($p = 0.001$). Attitude scores were also significantly associated with age ($p < 0.001$) and semester of study ($p = 0.001$). Knowledge was higher among students aged 20-22 years who were in the 7th-8th semester, while a more positive attitude toward organ donation was seen among students aged 20-22 years who were in the 4th-6th semester. However, no significant association was found with gender, field of study, marital status, religion, socio-economic status, or parental education.

7. Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to its objectives and compares them with the findings of other studies. The study aimed to assess the level of knowledge and attitude regarding organ donation among degree college students, to determine the relationship between knowledge and attitude, and to identify the association of knowledge and attitude with selected demographic variables.

Section I: Findings Related to Demographic Variables of Degree College Students

The present study examined organ donation awareness among degree college students, and the socio-demographic profile of the 100 participants provides important context for interpreting the findings.

Most respondents were young, with 42% in the 17-19 years age group and 38% aged 20-22, and the sample was nearly evenly divided between females (51%) and males (49%). This is a relevant population for awareness work, since young adults are at an age when attitudes towards donation are still forming and can be shaped by education. In contrast, Alhalafi AH. et al. (2024), in their study on knowledge and attitude toward organ donation and transplantation among the adult population in Bisha, Saudi Arabia, included 417 respondents with a mean age of 35.5 ± 12 years, of whom 66.2% (276) were males and 33.8% (141) were females. Over half of their respondents were married (54%) and most had a university education (60.9%), whereas 82% of the present sample were single and all were degree college students. These differences in age, gender distribution and marital status should be kept in mind when comparing the findings of the two studies.

The largest proportion of students came from the non-medical stream (35%), followed by commerce (32%) and arts (22%), while only 11% were from the medical field. This suggests that most participants had no formal exposure to health-related subjects, and so their knowledge was likely to depend on informal sources rather than academic training. Most students were single (82%), and 65% were Muslim, which reflects the religious composition of the study area. Religion is often linked with beliefs about the body and donation, so these findings should be interpreted with that in mind.

In terms of family background, 70% belonged to the middle-income group (₹15,000-30,000), and mothers' education was mostly at the matriculation level (64%), whereas fathers' education was more varied, with 25% being post-graduates. Residence was spread across urban (45%), rural (40%) and semi-urban (15%) areas, indicating that the sample included students with different levels of access to health information.

A majority of the students (69%) had heard about organ donation, but 31% had never heard of it, which shows a considerable gap in awareness. Newspapers were the most common source of information (38%), while social media, academics and family/friends contributed 7% each, religious institutions 6%, and TV/radio and hospitals 2% each. Mass media, taken together, was therefore the dominant source (47% of the total sample), while health institutions contributed very little. This is consistent with Abdullah et al. (2024), who also found mass media to be the primary source of information (29%). The proportion in the present study is higher, which may be due to differences in the study population or in how the source categories were defined.

The same study reported that willingness to donate was mainly motivated by the desire to save lives (71.7%), while fear of health complications was the main deterrent (56.6%) (Alhalafi AH. et al., 2024).[12] Although the present findings relate to awareness rather than willingness, they point to a similar need: since students rely mostly on the media, and hospitals and academic institutions play a small role, awareness programs should address both the life-saving value of donation and common fears about its health effects. The low contribution of hospitals (2%) and the modest contribution of academics (7%) suggest that colleges and health facilities could be better used for structured education on organ donation.

In summary, the demographic profile shows a young, largely non-medical student population with a notable awareness gap and a strong dependence on mass media. These findings support the use of media-based campaigns, together with college-level educational programs, to improve understanding of and attitudes toward organ donation among youth.

Section II: Findings Related to Knowledge Regarding Organ Donation

The present study found that most students (85%) had moderately knowledge of organ donation, 12% had inadequate knowledge, and only 3% had adequate knowledge, with a mean knowledge score of 14.18 ± 3.4 . This shows that although most students know something about organ donation, very few have a thorough understanding of it.

A similar pattern was reported by Somaili et al. (2022), who surveyed 1,019 participants and found that the largest group (48.4%) had a moderate level of knowledge. They also noted that younger age and being a student were linked to higher knowledge, which fits with the young student sample of the present study. The proportion with moderate knowledge is higher in our study (85% vs. 48.4%), which may be due to differences in the sample, the knowledge, tool, or the score cut-offs used to define each level.[13]

Somya P and NR. (2023) found that knowledge varied with educational background. Medical students were better informed about brain death (98.5% vs. 69% among other students), but non-medical students were more likely to know that all the listed organs could be donated (67.5% vs. 53.5%), and more of them believed that organs cannot be sold (54% vs. 34%). This is relevant to the present study, where only 11% of students were from the medical stream. It suggests that gaps are likely in specific areas such as brain death and the legal aspects of donation, and that these gaps may be larger in non-medical students.[14]

Overall, the findings indicate that knowledge of organ donation among degree college students is moderate rather than adequate. Awareness programs and college curricula should therefore include the medical, legal and ethical aspects of donation, with special attention to non-medical students.

Section III: Findings Related to Attitude Regarding Organ Donation

Most students had a favourable attitude towards organ donation: 84% were positive (64% moderately and 20% highly), 15% were neutral, and only 1% was negative. The mean attitude score was 77.87 ± 8.27 , close to the median (78) and mode (77), which indicates a fairly even spread of scores. The neutral group may be uncertain or lack information.

This is comparable with Shireen et al. (2018), who found that 79% of students had a positive attitude although only 4.5% had good knowledge. Similarly, in the present study attitude was more favourable (84% positive) than knowledge (3% adequate), suggesting that goodwill needs to be backed by education to lead to informed decisions.[15] Kose et al. (2015) reported that 71.7% of students favoured donating their own organs, mainly to help others, while those with negative views feared loss of bodily integrity. Support was lower for donating a relative's organs (44.1%) or a homeless person's organs (51.7%), showing that attitudes can change with the situation.[16]

In conclusion, students in this study have a generally positive attitude towards organ donation, but awareness programs should still address misconceptions and fears, such as concerns about bodily integrity, so that favourable attitudes are strengthened and acted on.

Section IV: Findings Related to Relationship between Knowledge and Attitude score

The present study found a strong, statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge and attitude scores ($r = 0.83$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that students with greater knowledge of organ donation tend to hold more favourable attitudes toward it.

The direction of this finding is consistent with Poreddi et al. (2016), who also reported a significant positive correlation between the two variables, though a much weaker one ($r = 0.265$, $p < 0.001$). The difference in strength may reflect differences in the study population, sample size or measurement tools.[17] Chen et al. (2024) studied nursing students before and after their clinical internship ($n = 435$

and $n = 323$ respectively). Knowledge scores stayed almost unchanged (7.17 vs 7.22). Attitude scores and willingness to donate both fell significantly after the internship. Their path analysis showed that knowledge had a positive effect on attitude, and that attitude in turn influenced willingness. In other words, knowledge shaped willingness mainly through attitude. Attitudes toward death and fear of death were also related to willingness.[18]

Taken together, these studies support the view that attitude is the link between knowing about organ donation and being willing to donate. Because the present study is cross-sectional and correlational, it shows an association, not a cause-and-effect relationship.

Section V: Association between Knowledge and Attitude score with sociodemographic Variables

The present study found that knowledge level was significantly associated with age ($p = 0.02$) and semester of study ($p = 0.001$). Attitude was also significantly associated with age ($p < 0.001$) and semester of study ($p = 0.001$). Gender, field of study, marital status, religion, socio-economic status and parental education showed no significant association with either score.

These findings partly agree with earlier work. Bekele et al. (2021), studying patient companions, found that sex, place of residence, education and attitude were associated with good knowledge in univariate analysis. Only sex remained significant in the multiple logistic regression model. For favourable attitude, place of residence, more than one source of information, religion, education and knowledge were significant in univariate analysis. After adjustment, only having more than one source of information and education remained significant. Their results suggest that exposure to information and education matter more for attitude than most background characteristics. This fits with the present finding that semester of study, a proxy for educational exposure, was associated with both scores.[20]

Somaili et al. (2022) reported that younger age and being a student were linked to a positive attitude, while gender, education level, residence and monthly income were not. This matches the present study's finding for age and the lack of association with gender.[13]

Overall, the evidence suggests that age and educational exposure shape knowledge and attitude toward organ donation more consistently than gender, religion or socio-economic status. This supports including organ donation education in the college curriculum, especially in the early semesters.

8. Conclusion

The study concludes that most degree college students have a moderate level of knowledge and a moderately positive attitude toward organ donation. Knowledge and attitude were strongly and positively correlated ($r = 0.83$, $p < 0.001$), which suggests that students who know more about organ donation tend to view it more favourably. Both scores were significantly associated with age and semester of study, but

not with gender, field of study, marital status, religion, socio-economic status or parental education.

These findings suggest that awareness programmes could help strengthen students' attitudes toward organ donation. Educational institutions, health organisations and media platforms should work together to improve students' knowledge, dispel myths and encourage voluntary participation in donation campaigns. Such programmes may be most useful early in the course, since knowledge and attitude were lower in the earlier semesters.

9. Future Scope and Recommendations

- Replicate this study with a larger and more diverse sample, including different colleges, regions and courses, to validate and generalise the findings.
- Conduct interventional studies such as pre-test/post-test or controlled designs, to assess how structured teaching programmes affect students' knowledge and attitude toward organ donation.
- Explore donation behaviour and the factors that turn a positive attitude into actual pledge registration.
- Organise structured awareness programmes, seminars and workshops, with particular focus on younger students and those in early semesters, who had lower knowledge and attitude scores.
- Collaborate with government agencies, NGOs and hospitals to hold awareness weeks, pledge campaigns and motivational talks.
- Set up easy pledge registration, such as a campus counter or an online platform, for students willing to register as donors.
- Use interactive methods such as debates, role plays, and sessions with donor families or transplant recipients to strengthen already positive attitudes.
- Since newspapers were the main information source in this study, use mass media and social media campaigns to share accurate, encouraging messages about organ donation with young people.
- Closing the gap between organ demand and supply will depend on developments such as advanced organ preservation, xenotransplantation, artificial organs, AI and digital infrastructure.

10. Limitations of the Study

- Only 100 students took part, which limits statistical power and generalisability.
- The sample came from one government degree college, so students from other institutions, regions, courses or age groups may differ in knowledge and attitude.
- The study did not assess actual pledge registration or the factors that turn a positive attitude into action.
- Personal experience with transplantation, family discussion, and fears or myths about donation were not examined in depth.
- The study did not test whether awareness programmes improve knowledge or attitude, so the recommendations rest on inference.

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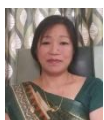
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