



“KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE & PRACTICE STUDY OF EYE DONATION AMONG PATIENTS ATTENDING TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL, NANDYAL: A CROSS-SECTION STUDY”.

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**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To Assess the awareness & perception on eye donation among the patients who are attending ophthalmology Outpatient department (OPD) **Materials And Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among the patients attending ophthalmology OPD at santhiram medical college & general hospital. A pre-structured, pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect responses on demographic details, knowledge of cornea donation & willingness to pledge for eye donation from the participants of this study. **Results:** A Hospital based study including 500 participants were part of this survey. Out of which 63% were male & 37% were female. 396 (79.2%) were aware about eye donation. The willingness to donate was only 97 (19.4%). Most common reason for unwillingness was found to be religious belief (31.5%). **Conclusion:** Although approximately 57% have relatively fair knowledge, only 19.4% are willing to donate. Year of study was highly correlated with knowledge when demographics were taken into consideration.

**KEYWORDS :** Eye donation, Awareness, Corneal blindness, willingness

**INTRODUCTION**

Corneal disorders are largely responsible for visual impairment and blindness. Corneal transplantation is the most economical way to alleviate corneal blindness and restore vision. To address the needs of corneal transplants, India's corneal procurement rate is still low and inadequate.<sup>1,2</sup> It would need public willingness and motivation to give corneas to close this gap. Studies have been done to identify the benefits and drawbacks of corneal procurement to comprehend this necessity<sup>3,4</sup>.

Reasons for considering or not considering corneal donation vary widely around the world.<sup>5-7</sup> Due to demographic skewness based on nation, religion, and race/ethnicity, generalization is not feasible. Here, we evaluated the knowledge and readiness to donate corneas of a small sample of Indian rural population. This demographic is special because of my choice of subjects, rural and age predominantly of 51-60 years which is perfect for fostering a favorable attitude among rural families regarding corneal donation and teaching the concept of organ and tissue donation thus reducing one of the major factors of unwillingness (religious belief & social stigma followed by objection from family). Examining their understanding will also yield baseline data to comprehend donation and develop measures to increase donation desire and maybe generate abundant corneal donors.

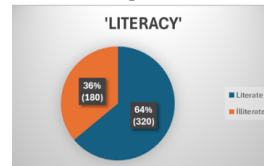
**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The pre-structured & pre-tested questionnaire comprising of 3 parts were used in this cross-sectional study. First demographic data is collected, followed by question to gather knowledge about details of eye donation & third part includes questions to assess willingness to pledge for donation. The study aimed to include all the patients of age >20years attending ophthalmology OPD at santhiram medical college & general hospital.

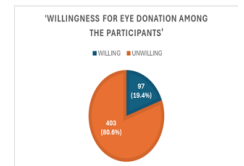
Participants were guaranteed that their privacy and confidentiality would be upheld. Our institutional review board granted us the ethical permission to carry out the study. Numbers and percentages are used to describe the research population's demographics.

**RESULTS**

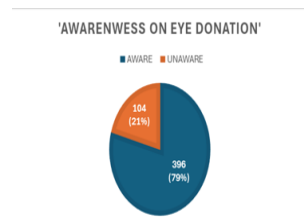
From a total of 500 participants, 63% of them are male & 37% are female of total participants. Of these 64% are literate & 36% are illiterate. Most of them were Hindu (56%) followed by Muslim (39%) and a small percentage Christianity (5%). Most of the subjects found to be aware about eye donation through local campaigns of health workers followed by newspapers & multimedia. Participants those were willing to pledge for donation account for only about 97 (19.4%) of which 40 (41.24%) are literate and 57 (58.8%) were illiterate. Among the 299 participants who were aware but not willing to pledge for donation, the reason for unwillingness was found to be religious belief in 137 (45.8%), objection from family in 94 (31.5%) and personal reasons in 68 (22.7%).



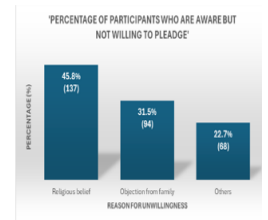
**Graph-1:** Literacy among participants



**Graph-2:** Willingness to ledge



**Graph-3:** Awareness on eye donation among participants



**Graph-4:** Aware but unwillingness to pledge

S.N	QUESTIONNAIRE	MAJORITY OF RESPONSES in %
1.	Age of the participant?	51-60 years (41%)
2.	Gender of the participant?	Male (63%)
3.	Literacy among the participants?	Literate (64%)
4.	Have you heard about EYE DONATION?	YES (79.2%)
5.	How did you got to know about eye donation?	Health workers (36%) Newspapers (29%)

6.	Who can donate eyes?	Anyone irrespective of age (38%)
7.	Who cannot donate eyes?	Those with infectious diseases like HIV, HCV, Septicemia (37%)
8.	Is the whole eye removed for donation?	YES (52%)
9.	Within in what time should the eyes be donated after death to maintain its quality?	Do not know (41%)
10.	Where can we register for eye donation?	Eye hospital (34%)
11.	Are all the cornea's collected suitable for transplantation?	May be (43%)
12.	How many patients are benefited through eye donation made by one donor?	TWO (53%)
13.	Is family's consent essential for eye donation?	YES (71%)
14.	Do you know of anyone who has donated eyes after death?	NO (63%)
15.	Will you pledge to donate your eyes after death?	YES (19.4%)
16.	If YES, would you inform your family regarding your wish to donate?	YES (92% out of willing)
17.	Why don't you want to donate your eyes?	Religious belief (31.5% of those who are aware but not willing)

## DISCUSSION

Visual impairments are a major factor impacting someone's quality of life and have an impact on one's physical, emotional, social, and economic well-being. 39 million of the estimated 1.285 billion visually impaired individuals worldwide are classified as blind. Considering that 80 percent of known visual impairments are potentially curable or preventable, these numbers are shocking. Corneal transplants seem to offer our best chance of correcting this issue, but efforts to address it are still hampered by a global lack of suitable donors.

Visual impairment can be effectively addressed with a corneal transplant in circumstances when blindness, a condition in which an individual lacks visual sense, is caused by corneal disorders or trauma that can induce corneal scarring.<sup>4</sup> Despite advancements, donor corneas are still in short supply. This shortage has been linked to a number of factors, including sociodemographic barriers,<sup>7,9</sup> inadequate knowledge & awareness,<sup>9,10</sup> religious beliefs,<sup>7,10</sup> lack of access to healthcare<sup>11,12</sup>, and a failure to properly educate donors about the corneal donation process.

According to Krishnaiah S et al<sup>13</sup>, 30.7% of this group has awareness on eye donation, but only 0.1% had made an oath to donate eye. considerably lower in those subjects who are Christians, illiterate, and older than 70 years. The primary source of information on eye donation was the media. 32.9% of people who knew about eye donation were willing to donate their eyes.

## CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis, we concluded that the majority of patients visiting our outpatient department (OPD) were from rural areas, with a higher percentage of literate participants than illiterate ones. Newspapers and local campaigns are the main sources of information for participants who are aware of eye donation. Remarkably, those with higher levels of literacy than individuals with lower levels of literacy are shown to be less ready to donate, with religious beliefs being the most common excuse, followed by objections from family and other

sources.

Regardless of the literacy rate, my study participants are not well-informed, and even less so are motivated to donate. Based on this study, we came to the conclusion that stronger health initiatives should be supported in outreached areas and that raising awareness via social media might significantly alter the current trend.

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