

# Awareness of Eye Donation in an Urban Population in Aurangabad, Maharashtra

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## Research Article

**Abstract: Purpose:** To assess the awareness of eye donation and willingness to pledge the eyes for donation in urban population in Aurangabad district, Maharashtra. **Methods:** Study was carried out from January 2013 to July 2013. Total of 2205 subjects ages 15 years and above representative of urban population of Aurangabad were interviewed regarding awareness of eye donation and willingness to pledge eyes for eye donation. Participants were selected by door to door survey and from the patients coming to the hospital. **Results:** Percentage of awareness of eye donation is more in male i. e. (86.1%) as compared to (72.2%) in female. Significantly less awareness of eye donation was found in illiterate subjects i.e. (28.5%) as compared to (87%) in educated individuals. Subjects between the age groups 15-30 years were found to have most awareness about eye donation (84.1%). Willingness to pledge eyes for eye donation was found more in educated subjects (87.3%). Willingness to pledge eyes for donation was found significantly lower in female i. e. (6.1%) and in males it was (21.3%) **Conclusion:** The data show that although the awareness of eye donation is high very few of them are willing to pledge eyes for donation. The result of the study indicates that more strategies have to be developed especially to target illiterate individuals.

**Key words:** Awareness, eye donation, population based study.

## Introduction

Corneal disease account for a significant proportion of vision impairment in developing countries. Although corneal blindness can be very well prevented by various preventive measures, visual rehabilitation by corneal transplantation remains the major treatment for restoring sight for those who already have corneal blindness. The number of corneal transplantations done is far less than the actual requirement .this is largely due to inadequate number of cornea collection. This study assessed awareness of eye donation and willingness to pledge eyes in urban population of Aurangabad, Maharashtra.

## Method

A structured questionnaire was administered by trained field workers. Awareness was defined as having heard of eye donation. Knowledge was defined as having some understanding about eye donation. Only the subjects who were of eye donation were asked about their willingness to pledge eyes for donation. This is a

population based study conducted to assess awareness and willingness to pledge eyes for donation considering age, gender and education.

**Table 1:** Effect of age gender and education on awareness of eye donation

|                                       | Total | Awareness (%) |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| <b>Age groups(years)</b>              |       |               |
| 15 -30                                | 1129  | 949(84.1)     |
| 30-50                                 | 857   | 663 (77.3)    |
| 50-70                                 | 219   | 148 (67.5)    |
| <b>Gender</b>                         |       |               |
| Male                                  | 1205  | 1038(86.1)    |
| Female                                | 1000  | 722(72.2)     |
| <b>Education</b>                      |       |               |
| I-Illiterate                          | 63    | 18(28.5)      |
| II-1 <sup>st</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> | 57    | 26(45.6)      |
| III-6 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> | 543   | 373(65)       |
| IV-10 <sup>th</sup> –graduate         | 1542  | 1343(87)      |

**Table 2:** Effect of age, gender and education on willingness to pledge eyes for eye donation

|                                     | Total | Willingness (%) |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| <b>Age in years</b>                 |       |                 |
| 15-30                               | 949   | 299(21.3)       |
| 30 -50                              | 663   | 130(19.6)       |
| 50-70                               | 148   | 37(25)          |
| <b>Gender</b>                       |       |                 |
| Male                                | 1038  | 222(21.3)       |
| Female                              | 722   | 45(6.5)         |
| <b>Education</b>                    |       |                 |
| I-Illiterate                        | 18    | 5(25)           |
| II-1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> | 21    | 7(33.3)         |
| VI <sup>th</sup> -X <sup>th</sup>   | 403   | 279(69.3)       |
| Xth –graduate                       | 1376  | 1197(87.3)      |

**Table 3:** Responses of 1706 subjects who had awareness of eye donation

| Response  | No. of Responses (%) |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>What is the donated eye used for?</b>            |                      |
| To replace another eye                              | 900 (52.7)           |
| To replace a part of another eye                    | 255(14.9)            |
| To replace the cornea of another eye                | 225(13.1)            |
| Don't know  | 326(19.1)            |
| <b>How did you come to know about eye donation?</b> |                      |
| Doctor  | 90(5.2)              |
| Family member needing                               | 65(3.8)              |
| <b>Corneal transplantation</b>                      |                      |
| TV, Magazine or other media                         | 1551(90)             |

## Results

A total of 2205 subjects were interviewed. Data analyzed for 1760 subjects of which 1038 were males and 722 were females. Maximum awareness was found among age groups 15-30 years i.e. 84.1% Awareness was more in males (86.1%) as compared to females (72.2%). More the literacy more was the awareness of eye donation i.e. (87%). Percentage of willingness to pledge eyes for donation was found to be more in males (21.3%) than in females (6.2%)

## Discussion

Corneal transplantation is the most effective treatment in restoration of sight to those who are blind from corneal diseases. Procurement of corneas is dependant to the willingness of people to pledge their eyes for donation and relatives willing to honour that pledge upon the death of the person. Data from our study suggest that though people are aware about eye donation only few are willing to pledge their eyes for eye donation. Additional efforts are needed to increase the awareness of eye donation in the community and more number of people should be motivated to pledge their eyes or eye donation. Alternate strategies should be developed to create awareness among illiterate people.

## References

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