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Title: Attitudes, Awareness and Knowledge Levels of Turkish Adult Population Toward Organ Donation: Nationwide Survey Study

Reviewer's code: 02520900

Comment

There is a continued disparity between the supply and demand for organs across countries with an established infrastructure to facilitate transplantation. This has led to development of different strategies to bridge this gap to ensure people do not die waiting for organ transplantation. One of the most topical discussions in global organ procurement is the relative merits of an opt-out system for organ donation (termed “presumed or deemed consent”) versus the opt-in system (termed “explicit consent”) to increase organ donor rates. However, before this task can be managed a general population assessment about attitude and awareness about brain-dead/donation/transplantation should be done. In-line with this topic Akbulut et al. conducted a very interesting study of the Turkish population. The authors performed a nationwide survey with 3000 adults (age ≥ 18 ys.), encompassing 26 different regions of Turkey. Among the participants of the study only 1.5% had personal experience about transplantation. While 87.9% would accept an organ transplantation, 88.3% would deny organ donation. The majority of the would accept a donation to a relative, only 26.8% would consider unrelated postmortem donation. While 47.2% supposed to have appropriate information about brain death, 85.2% would refuse donation in case of brain dead in one of their relatives. The main reason for refusal were, it would be too early to talk about organ donation and second the body integrity after death. The authors concluded that governmental programs in term of information are required to convince the population about brain-death concept and donation.

Response

The reviewer made such a nice introduction to the organ donation perspective that we enjoyed reading and learned a lot. That's why we are honored to thank him. Indeed, organ donation still remains an important problem in underdeveloped or developing countries. In addition, although developed, we believe that cultural and religious factors have an impact on organ donation decisions in countries such as Japan and Korea. In a survey studies conducted in Turkey, although cultural and belief factors have been suggested to be relatively less effective

on the organ donation decision, we actually think that cultural factors are very effective on the organ donation decision. However, these results were unfortunately not reflected in the surveys.

Question

The manuscript is well written, the introduction provides an excellent overview about the actual literature, the results are presented clear and discussed and compared adequately with other studies. There is only one minor comment: The author should add a paragraph about the development of postmortem organ donation in Turkey in the recent 20 years. While the rate of organ donation in 2000 was 0.5/1.000.000 this rate increased to 7.5/1.000.000 in 2018. What happened or what was modified in order that the donation rate increased 15-fold! Probably this can be presented as an outlook at the end of the discussion, what should be done or improve in the future in order to increase organ donation.

Response

A few sentences were added to the discussion section based on your very valuable findings. We would like to specify that the development of mass media, the development of communication between societies and the increase of the education level of the public have been much more effective than the legal legislation and the Mufti giving the fatwa.

With Best Wishes

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