

# A Qualitative Study of Identifying Factors which Contribute and Non-Contribute to Voluntary Blood Donation through Focus Group Discussions

**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this study was to identify the factors which contribute and non-contribute to voluntary blood donation through focus group discussions (FGD). The study was conducted in four localities in Vellore district, Tamilnadu, India. There were 36 participants in total; nine per each discussion were participated. The blood donors were selected from the available donor list from the blood banks and donor's club in the district. The non-donors were selected in the community those who never agree to donate blood. The educational qualifications of each subject in either group are from higher secondary to bachelor degree level. The group of participants is guided by a moderator through a questionnaire, who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst themselves. The participants

## INTRODUCTION

Blood donation is a civilized, a noble gesture and a divine act that serves a humanitarian cause. Blood transfusion saves lives and improves health, but many patients requiring transfusion do not have timely access to safe blood (WHO, 2012). Every component of blood can be used and it plays an important role in saving the lives of different individuals in the community. Modern science has not invented a true substitute for blood and blood products. Artificial blood is still not equivalent to blood in terms of efficiency, not cost effective and not easily available for clinical use across the world.

Recruitment and retention of new blood donors is an important task for blood bank personnel to attain self-sufficiency of blood and blood products. Blood banks urge everyone to respond to the needs of patients so that they can increase the stock and able to meet the demand of patients across the country. To meet the entire blood need of a country we have to establish a transfusion service which totally depends on voluntary blood donors since it is considered to be the safest source (Siromani, Molly, Daniel et al., 2012).

A focus group is an organized discussion – though structured in a flexible way – of between 6 and 12

There were four Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted, among Voluntary Blood Donors and non-blood donors to study the contributing and non-contributing factors towards blood donation in four localities in Vellore district, Tamilnadu, India. There were 36 participants in total; nine per each discussion were participated. The blood donors were selected from the available donor list from the blood banks and donor's club in the district. The non-donors were selected in the community those who never agree to donate blood. The educational qualifications of each subject in either group are from higher secondary to bachelor degree level. The group of participants is guided by a moderator through a questionnaire, who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst themselves. The participants

didn't go through any fear, compulsion or threat to participate in this discussion. The authors gave them choice that their participation in the discussion is purely voluntary and non – participation of the study would not harm or affect them in any manner. The discussions were conducted in a separate place with a closed room and the whole sessions were recorded with their permission. The discussions were conducted in Tamil - local language and later the verbatim translations were done into English.

## RESULTS

This discussion ended up with many ideas, suggestions, motivation techniques and commitments to voluntary blood donation. Blood donors are donating blood because they want to help others. A few donors suggested that blood banks should aim to improve their techniques, so that bleeding a donor in a blood bank becomes just as fast as it would be if they went to a blood donation camp. The majority of the donors said, they are donating blood to save an ill person (Ilona, Laimute, Aurelija et al., 2006). Two donors brought an issue saying that they waited long time to donate, but two other donors had finished blood donation within one a ld

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- vi. Authorized letters of recommendation should be given by the particular blood banks to patients' relatives so that they can bring more blood donors from the institutions.
- vii. Steps should be taken to reduce the waiting time of blood donors because long waiting times affect their planned schedules.
- viii. Blood donors should be treated by blood bank staff with respect since they are the life savers of many.

A discussion with non-donors ended up turning over many myths

The reason for rejection of blood donors should be made known to the individual in order to create awareness among non-donors. Non-blood donors expressed that elders, relatives did not allow them to donate blood, because of the likely consequences such as weakness and pain. The groups thought that political personalities, celebrities and sports personalities could be the role models for future voluntary blood donation campaigns to mitigate and overcome the myths and misconceptions. This would help to provide awareness among non-donors, their relatives and family members. Non-blood donors felt that they had not been requested to donate and they believed that no one would volunteer to donate blood for others unless they are called to do so. Blood banks should train the camp organizers to go to many places to create awareness and request people to donate blood. Direct participation of blood bank staff in meeting non-donors at their localities would help them to adopt this noble cause in near future.

### REFERENCES

Belda Suárez, I.M., Fernandez Montoya, A., Rodriguez Fernandez, A., Lopez Berrio, A., & Cillero-Penuela, M. (2004). How regular

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