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Motivational and Educational Campaigns May Enhance the Attitude of Blood Donors Swiftly

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Blood donation is a process in which person voluntarily donate his blood which can be provided to other needy persons. Blood donation is dependent on many factors like Beliefs, attitudes and motivations. So, the study of these factors is vital for the continuation of the blood from the blood donors and to motivate the non-donors to start donating blood. A decline in blood supply has been seen in the developed countries where donors are voluntary non-remunerated (Hupfer *et al.*, 2005). In the developing countries, blood donations are mostly involuntary and mostly relatives, friends and workmates of patients donate it. Therefore the problem to store the blood still persists (WHO, 2004). Due to the oil wealth in Gulf States, the health service has improved extensively and with very rapid modernization from few decades. Highly specialized services are provided by the hospitals of these countries in various fields of surgery like open heart surgery, Transplant surgery in which blood is required in high quantities and hematology/oncology. Locally blood donators have taken the place of imported blood donator in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from the last three decades. Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) in Saudi Arabia is a blood banking system in which blood banks perform the whole function like the recruitment of donors, testing donated blood for infective agents, storage and issuance of components (Packed RBCs, fresh frozen plasma, platelet concentrate, cryoprecipitate and filtered products). There are two main sources of blood donation which includes involuntary donors (mainly relatives, friends and workmates of patients) and voluntary donors. The number of voluntary donors is increasing rapidly due to effective efficiency by various blood banks. Incessant efforts should be made to meet the increasing clinical needs for different blood derivatives (Boulware *et al.*, 2002). To access the attitude and motivations of blood donors, many research investigations has been carried out in this connection in many countries (Allain *et al.*, 2004). Masser *et al.* (2008) investigated various factors that manipulate the people's motivation towards blood donation and these factors include the organizational, psychological, physiological and demographic factors. Many incentives have been offered to the donors such as free medical testing like cholesterol and Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) screening, blood credit (McMahon and Byrne, 2008) and economic incentives that include lottery or raffle tickets and tickets to events (Glynn *et al.*, 2003). Schlumpf *et al.* (2007) stated that convenience and satisfaction donation time and location of the donors were also the supplement factors that may enhance the blood donation. Gader *et al.* (2011) conducted a research to probe the attitudes, beliefs and motivations of Saudis for blood donation. They concluded that 90% of the respondent showed positive attitude toward blood donation and 91% took it as religious obligation. Many of them object the importation of blood from abroad and thought that there was no compensation for the blood donors while 67% did not mind coming themselves to the donor center to give blood. The basic reasons for not giving blood were fear, lack of time, underweight, age and health fitness. Whyte (1999) claimed that trend of blood delivery has been transferred from imported to local blood donators. 71% voluntary donors with a small percentage (29%) of non-voluntary donors were

existing in the Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, it has been described that religious beliefs are also a major constraint for 20.3% of the population in blood donation or transfusion. So, it is obvious that religious beliefs have a potential to positively or negatively affect the blood contribution (Rosengart *et al.*, 1997). Another Nigerian study informed that 41% of donors are encouraged by certificates (Olaiya *et al.*, 2004). Hosain *et al.* (1997) claimed that survey among Dhaka University students showed that 93% of the respondents objected to money incentives. Sang (2006) indicated that payment against blood donation has prohibited in UK, the Netherlands, Australia, Brazil, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, Austria and Switzerland while payment is allowed by law in USA and Germany. In Austria, Norway, Switzerland, UK and Japan rewards to manage loss of time and journey are presented, while people are also offered the token gifts in form of movie tickets in Austria. Previous studies also proved the positive correlation of voluntary donations with secondary school education (Olaiya *et al.*, 2004).

For efficient blood donation assessment of blood collection area and comfort of the donor are also the major factors so it should be sure by the donor organizers to remove any source of discomfort to prospective donors (Okpara, 1989). Many types of compensation offered in developed and developing countries may restore the declination of voluntary donors but have some disadvantages like attraction of risky donors specially drug users and establishment of interest of donors tied with their need for money rather than regular donations. A Spanish study revealed that awareness programs are effective to motivate the blood donation and it could also be effective in changing the thoughts of the particular group that is strictly against the blood donation (Suarez *et al.*, 2004). There is a need to brag the favorable attitude toward blood donation and building the loyalty of voluntary blood donors through well-planned donor education programs. Donor agencies should take some serious attempts to lessen the myths, fears and wrong concepts about dangers of donating blood. Concisely motivational/education campaigns and donor's comfort from all prospects may enhance the attitude of blood donation swiftly.

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