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Socio- demographic profile of whole body donors registered with Department of Anatomy, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

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Objectives: Knowledge of gross anatomy has evolved through and continues to be dependent on the human cadaveric dissections. The aims of this study were to identify the characteristics of individuals who bequeathed to donate their body to Department of Anatomy, the source of information on bequest program and the reasons for donation.

Methods: A descriptive cross sectional study was done among all the donors registered with Department of Anatomy, University of Sri Jayewardenepura in a selected year. Data was collected by using a pre tested interviewer administered questionnaire via telephone interviews and analyzed using SPSS software.

Results: Response rate was 83.3% (145/175). Mean age was 59.7 years (SD=14.6 years). Of the participants, 99.3% were Sinhalese (n=144); 97.9% Buddhists (n=142); 66.2% married (n=96); 32.4% employed (n=47); 53.1% educated above G.C.E (O/L) (n=77) with a median income of Rs.15,000.00 (IQR=Rs. 15,000/=). Of the participants, 82.8% had decided to donate as an altruism (n=120), 68.3% had been educated about donation from non medical source (n=99) and 16.6% & 42.2% has a known person who was working in this field (n=24) & had donated (n=62) respectively. There were significantly more participants educated above O/L had got information from a medical sources (p<0.01) and had someone working in the field of medicine (p=0.02). Similarly, those having higher income had someone working in the field of medicine (p=0.01).

Conclusions: Sinhalese, Buddhists, with higher levels of education in the view of altruism registered for body donation. Level of income and education were associated with source of information that influences the decision of body donation.