



Factors That Affect the Attitudes of the Bolivian Population in Spain With Regard to Organ Donation for Transplant

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ABSTRACT

Background. The Bolivian population is an emerging Latin American immigrant group in Spain, several of whom have been transplanted or are awaiting transplant. We aimed to assess attitudes toward organ donation among Bolivians currently residing in Spain.

Method. The population screened was born in Bolivia but living in Spain, stratified by gender and age. The appraisal tool used was a questionnaire that assesses attitudes toward organ donation for transplant (“PCID-DTO Ríos”). Support from immigration associations in Spain was needed for advice on locations of potential respondents. Survey participation was anonymized and the questionnaire was self-administered. Verbal consent was obtained before participation.

Results. There were 206 respondents: 49% ($n = 101$) in favor of donating their organs after death; 21% ($n = 44$) against donation; and 30% ($n = 61$) undecided. Their attitudes were found to be associated with level of education ($P = .008$), previous experience with donation and transplant ($P = .011$), concern regarding mutilation after donation ($P = .002$), knowing the attitude of their religion toward transplant ($P = .001$), the opinion of their partner ($P < .001$), and the possibility of needing a future transplant ($P = .050$). In the multivariate study, the main factor was having a partner in favor of organ donation (odds ratio = 16.129; $P = .003$).

Conclusion. Attitudes toward organ donation among Bolivians residing in Spain are far more negative compared with rest of the Spanish population, due to various factors.

ORGAN transplantation is a fully acceptable therapy, limited mainly by the shortage of organs available [1]. To increase the availability of organs, it will be necessary to take action on several levels, both within organizations and by raising awareness in society. Immigration has increased greatly in Western Europe given the greater level of economic development in those countries. This development is having repercussions in the world of transplantation; consequently, most Western European countries are experiencing a considerable increase in the number of non-native-born patients on the transplant waiting list, and requests for organs from non-native families also being

considered [2–5]. In Spain, this notable increase in the foreign population is creating a new social and demographic realities. The Latin American population shares important cultural, religious, and linguistic similarities with Spain, which makes their integration into Spanish society much easier. The Bolivian population is an emerging Latin American immigrant group in Spain. Currently, after the

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Ecuadorian population, Bolivians comprise one of the larger immigrant groups in Spain, and several have been transplanted or are awaiting transplantation. Our objective was to characterize the attitudes toward organ donation among Bolivians currently living in Spain.

METHODS

Population Screened

The cohort studied consisted of those born in Bolivia but residing in Spain. To obtain an approximate number for this population, the latest census was used as a reference, which identifies the legal population of non-native residents, including those born in Latin American countries. According to the census, there are 11,311 legal resident Bolivians living in Spain. In addition, Spain has a large number of illegal residents from Bolivia, and thus various immigration organizations were consulted to estimate the size of this group. The total number of Bolivians living in Spain is estimated at 231,000.

Inclusion Criteria

The population studied was >15 years old, and stratified by gender and age.

Appraisal Tool

Attitude was assessed using a validated questionnaire of attitude toward Organ Donation and Transplantation (PCID-DTO Ríos: A Questionnaire by the International Collaborative Donor Project About Organ Donation and Transplantation [Proyecto Colaborativo Internacional Donante sobre Donación y Trasplante de Organos], developed by Dr. Ríos). [6–8]. This questionnaire includes questions for subscales or validated factors in the Spanish population, with a total explained variance of 63.203% and a Cronbach's α reliability coefficient of 0.834.

Fieldwork Research

Participants were surveyed according to the stratification. The aforementioned support from immigration associations in Spain was needed to advise on the location of potential respondents. Study participation was anonymized and self-administered. Verbal consent was obtained prior to participation.

Statistics

A descriptive statistic was performed, and Student's *t* test, chi-square test, Fisher's exact test, and logistic regression analysis were applied.

RESULTS

Attitude Toward Donation of One's Own Solid Organs

A total of 206 respondents were included in the study. Forty-nine percent ($n = 101$) were in favor of donating their own organs after death, 21% ($n = 44$) were against donation, and 30% ($n = 61$) were undecided.

Factors Affecting Attitude Toward Organ Donation

Among the sociopersonal variables, level of education was found to stand out, so those with a university education showed a more favorable attitude without education (57%

vs 28%; $P = .008$) (Table 1). In the group of variables related to attitudes toward organ donation and transplantation, those with previous experience with the issue had a more favorable attitude (67% vs 45%; $P = .011$), as did those who considered the possibility of future transplant versus those who had not (57% vs 39%; $P = .050$). Among the social interaction and pro-social variables, those with a more favorable attitude toward organ donation of a family member also had it toward donation of own cadaveric organs (64% vs 38%; $P = .003$). In addition, there was greater acceptance of donation among respondents who knew that their partners are in favor of donation compared with those against (85% vs 20%; $P < .001$). With regard to religious variables, those whose professed doctrine favors donation and transplant would also accept organ cadaveric donation compared with those whose religion did not accept this idea (59% vs 0%; $P = .001$). Finally, among the variables related to attitude toward the body, the relationship between those who considered possible mutilation of the body after donation vs those who did not was also questioned, with the former group displaying a more positive attitude toward donation (66% vs 33%; $P = .002$).

Multivariate Analysis

In the multivariate study, it remained as an independent variable to have a partner who favors organ donation (odds ratio [OR] = 16.129; $P = .003$).

DISCUSSION

Bolivia is a Latin American country with a low economic development. Ethnically, the population is a mixture of the initial Spanish settlers and indigenous populations. Currently, Bolivia has a donation rate of <10 donors per cadaver per million population (pmp). This is due to 2 fundamental reasons: first, the high number of family refusals; and, second, the failure to detect brain death [1]. Our study data have shown that the attitude toward donation among Latin Americans residing in Spain is worse than that reported in the native Spanish population. This is illustrated by the population data reported by our group [9] using the same questionnaire, which showed that 63% of the native Spanish population is in favor of deceased organ donation, compared with 49% observed in the presented study. In Spain, the Bolivian population is young, with the mean age of our respondents being 30 years. This means that, in Bolivia, attitudes would be even less favorable because of the higher rate of older people, who tend to be less aware of issues related to organ donation and transplantation. Furthermore, in Spain, this is an exclusive population group within emigrant Latin Americans, due to the high costs associated with relocation, and this is reflected in the fact that 15% of respondents reported having completed university education. All of this leads us to believe that attitudes would be worse in the countries of origin of Latin

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