Socio-Cultural Barriers to Voluntary Blood Donation for Obstetric Use in a Rural Nigerian Village

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Abstract

Availability of blood for transfusion is of utmost importance in the fight against maternal morbidity and mortality. This study was conducted to identify the socio-demographic characteristics and reasons of persons declining voluntary blood donation. Patients’ relatives declining blood donation in rural Ebonyi State were randomly recruited and interviewed using standardised questionnaire after obtaining informed consent from each of them. Responses were ranked according to frequency of positive respondents. Illiteracy was prevalent among the population: over 76% had no formal education. ‘Not being strong enough’ and ‘not having enough blood’ were the two major reasons for declining blood donation, while loss of manhood/libido and exposure of blood to witchcraft were the other reasons given. Respondents’ level of awareness of HIV/AIDS was appreciable. Socio-cultural barriers to voluntary blood donation exist in predominantly illiterate rural communities of the country. Most of the reasons given were based on misconception, misinformation and ignorance about the effect and safety of blood donation. (Afr J Reprod Health 2005; 9[3]:72-76)

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References