

Blood donation in times of crisis: Changes in Willingness to Donate Blood Among UAE Adults During COVID-19 Pandemic.

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INTRODUCTION

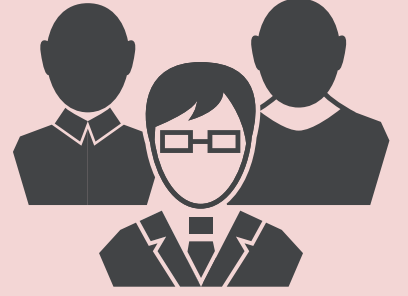
- ❖ The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to worldwide changes in the blood donation process, causing healthcare sectors to face difficulties in maintaining an adequate blood supply due to changes in blood donation patterns. [1][2]
- ❖ Therefore, measuring the community's willingness to donate blood during the COVID-19 pandemic will help healthcare sectors predict a potential problem in blood supply.

AIM

To assess the change in the willingness to donate blood during the COVID-19 pandemic, among UAE blood donors, aged 18 and above. Furthermore, we also aim to determine their motives and their level of awareness that might be a factor affecting their willingness for blood donation.

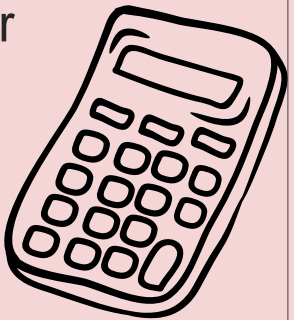
METHODS

- ❖ A cross-sectional study was conducted which included 562 participants.



- ❖ The online questionnaire included 31 multiple-choice questions (MCQs) divided into 4 sections:- 9 (demographics), 6 (Frequency & Attitudes), 8 (Willingness), and 8 (Knowledge).

- ❖ Data was analyzed using SPSS 28.
- ❖ T-test, chi-square test and further other measures of central tendency frequency were used to analyze data.
 - ❖ A p-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

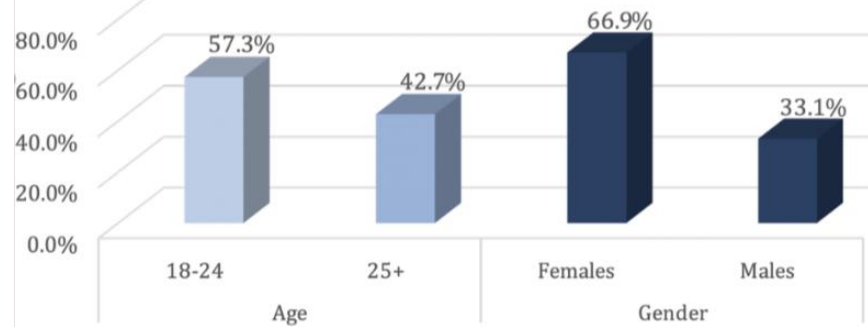


RESULTS

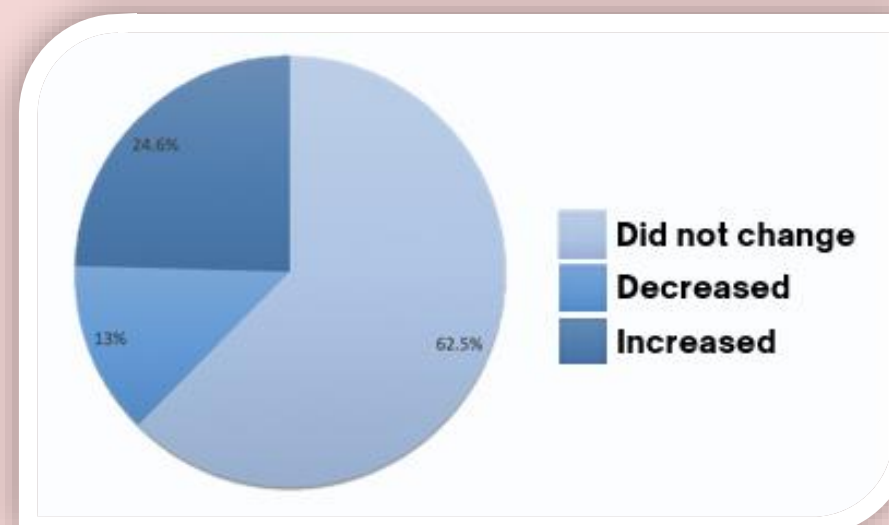
- ❖ Despite no significant change in the willingness of people to donate blood, blood donation agencies in the UAE have reported a reduction in blood donation rates during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Participants who thought that receiving regular invitations would increase their willingness were 2.19 times more likely to report an increase in the willingness to donate blood (OR = 2.19, CI [1.164.11], p-value 0.01).

Demographics

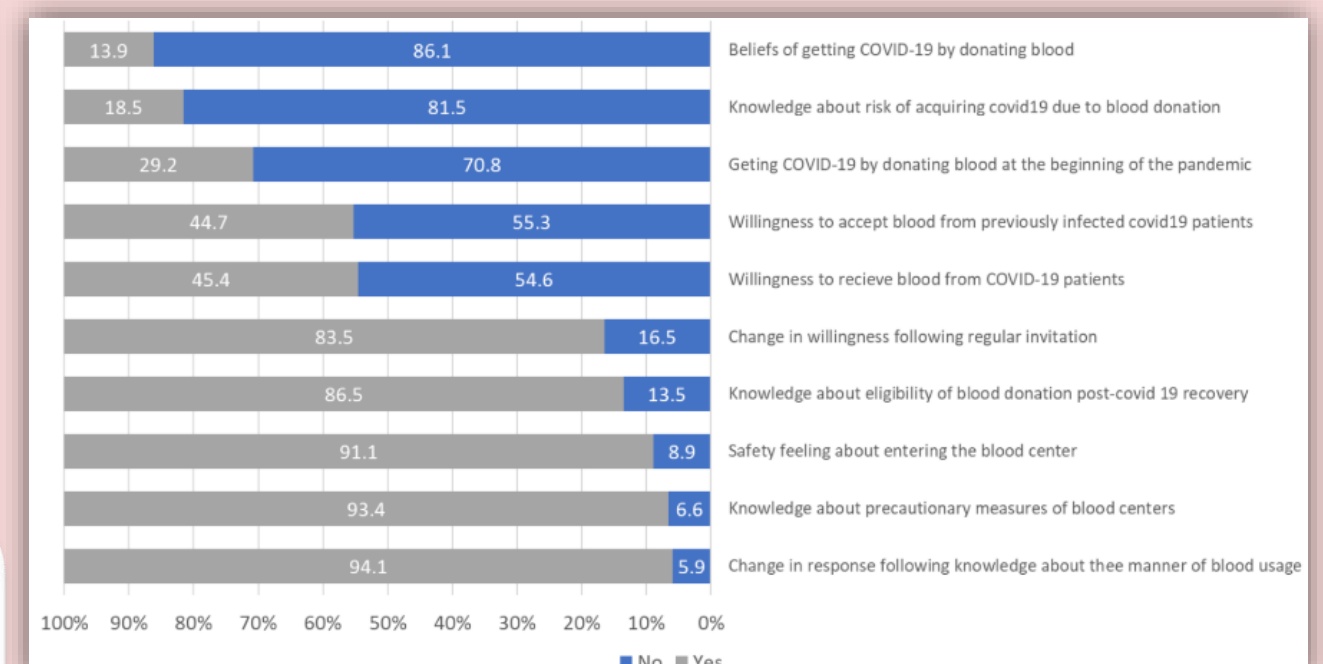
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS BY DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS



Changes in Willingness to Donate Blood During COVID-19

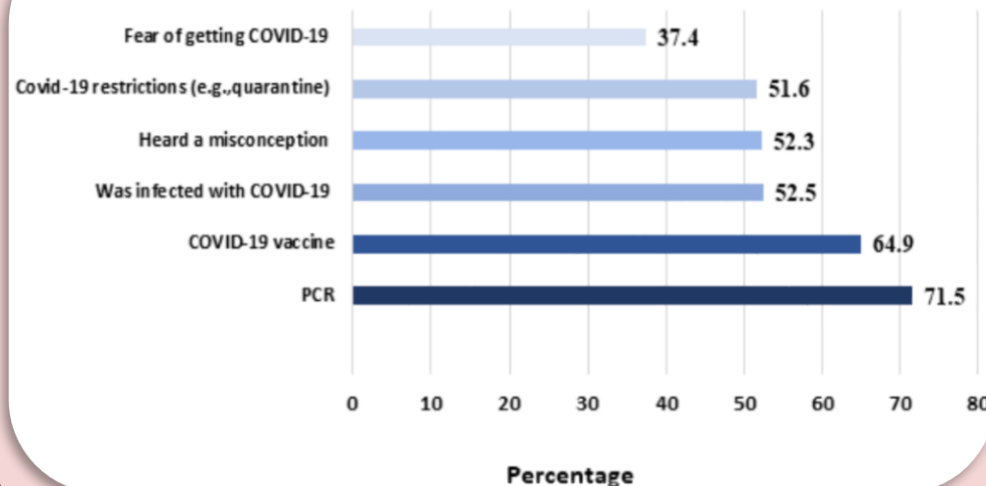


Knowledge of blood donation related to COVID-19 infection

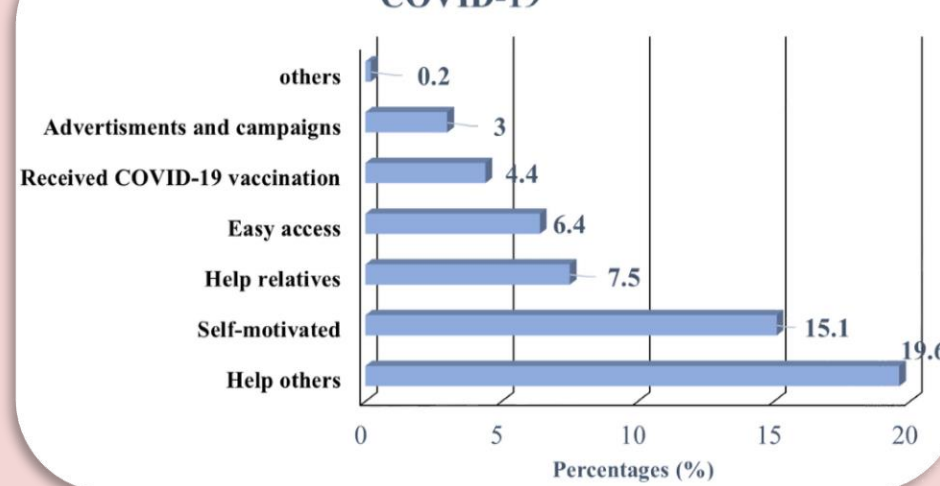


Factors contributing to change in willingness

Reasons for Abstinence from Blood Donation



Increase in willingness to donate blood during COVID-19



DISCUSSION

- ❖ In line with data from a large multi-study in the MENA region, our study reports a decrease in blood donation rates during COVID-19 ranging from 26-50%. [3]
- ❖ Fear of getting COVID-19 was one of the most important risk factors that lead to decreased blood donation in our study, in KSA, and the whole MENA region. [3][4]
- ❖ A significant association between the willingness to donate blood and receiving invitations from blood centers (p-value = 0.03) was found.

CONCLUSION

- ❖ Despite no significant change in the willingness of the UAE community to donate blood during COVID-19, there has been a decrease in the reported blood donation rate according to blood donation agencies and studies in the MENA region.
- ❖ To improve willingness, we suggest providing reassurance about safety and addressing misconceptions, as well as offering mobile donation sites and sending regular invitations.

REFERENCES

