

Buddhist value-guided organ procurement organization:

From compassionate giving to altruism

HUI-LING LAI¹, CHUAN-HSIU TSAI^{2*}, MING-CHE LEE^{3,4,5}, MING-HUI SHIH⁶

¹Department of Nursing, Wan Fang Hospital, Taipei Medical University, Taiwan ²Department of Nursing, Tzu Chi University, Taiwan ³Department of Surgery, Shuang Ho Hospital, Taipei Medical University, Taiwan ⁴Department of Surgery, School of Medicine, College of Medicine, Taipei Medical University, Taiwan ⁵Research Center for Organ Transplantation, Taipei Medical University, Taiwan ⁶Department of Nursing, Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, Taiwan

Introduction: Organ transplantation is an effective way to save life, but it relies upon a supply of donated organs. Not all potential organ donations are considered religiously acceptable, however, and the reasons for donation have been regarded as significant in determining the overall donation rates. This study examines the involvement of a Buddhist religious organization with a particular focus on its efforts to promote organ donation in Taiwan. We aimed to investigate how the organization's value-based activities reflect broader themes of lives and choices, as well as the dynamics of give and take inherent in altruism and organ procurement.

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Method

- The research employed a qualitative analysis of the organization's doctrinal basis, its outreach and educational programs related to organ donation, and its practical implementation of these initiatives. Data were gathered from organizational records, interviews with key figures, and public opinion reports on organ donation. The study also incorporated theoretical frameworks on altruism from the fields of sociology and religious studies to contextualize the organization's efforts within broader discourses on organ procurement.



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Results

- The findings reveal that the Buddhist religious organization has played a pivotal role in the development of social welfare relief system in Taiwan, particularly through its engagement with issues surrounding life and death. By advocating for organ donation, the organization has fostered a culture of altruism, emphasizing the interplay of giving and receiving as central to Buddhist teachings. The concept of "range donation," which encompasses body, organ, and tissue donations for various purposes, has been effectively promoted, leading to more favorable public attitudes towards organ donation and a better understanding of its significance in saving lives.



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Conclusion

- The Buddhist religious organization's approach to organ donation is a compelling example of how religious entities can engage with modern societal challenges, intertwining themes of lives and choices with the ethics of give and take. Through its efforts, the organization not only contributes to alleviating the misconception of organs donation but also offers a nuanced perspective on altruism that enriches the ethical and moral dimensions of Buddhism. This integration of religious principles with social activism presents a viable pathway for the modernization of religious practices and the promotion of compassionate choices in contemporary society.



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