

ABSTRACT

The disparity between blood supply and demand is a grave concern for the healthcare sector globally, including South Africa. According to the South African National Blood Services for example, less than 1% of South Africans are regular blood donors; yet an estimated eight out of ten people will need blood during their lives. These facts draw attention to the exigent need for incessant recruitment of new blood donors and the retention of existing blood donors to meet the demand for blood in South Africa. A good source of donors can be the millennials, who are large in size and can easily influence and mobilise their peers through their high social media presence and engagements. The factors that would however influence millennials' blood donation attitudes and intention is yet to be studied.

Studies have assessed blood donation awareness, attitudes and motivations. While these psychological factors provide some explanation of blood donation, there is limited knowledge on the driving roles of social media marketing and social factors. Also limited are insights into the behavioural outcomes of attitudes toward blood donation, especially among a large, but fickle consumer segment like the millennials. This study therefore had three main objectives: 1) to examine the impact of social media marketing in terms of communications posted on its various platforms on awareness, perceptions, motivations, peers, family, attitudes and behavioural intention to donate blood, 2) to assess the extent to which some psychological and social factors impact on millennials' attitude towards blood donation. 3) to examine the extent to which the attitude influences millennials' behavioural intention to donate blood. To achieve these objectives, a conceptual model was developed guided by the social cognitive theory which posits that learning occurs in a social environment with some mutual interactions, the Health Belief Model suggesting psychological drivers of health-related behaviour and the Theory of Planned Behaviour suggesting the relationship between attitude and behavioural intention.