

# Bioethics

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



BIOETHICS Ellison, T. (2006), Xenotransplantation–Ethics and Regulation, Xenotransplantation, 13. 6, pp. 505-9 Introduction The field of bioethics is half a century old. It is defined as the “ systematic study of human conduct in the area of life sciences and healthcare, insofar as this conduct is examined in the light of moral values and principles” (Kanniyakonil, 2007, p. 8). Xenotransplantation, on the other hand, implies “ transplantation of animal organs or tissues into humans” (Silberglitt, 2006, p. 221). This article analyzes the justification of the use of Xenotransplantation, keeping in mind the principles of Bioethics, using theory as well as statistical analysis and survey. It is premised on the fact that a number of circumstances arise when there is an immediate need to transplant tissues that have are scarce in supply and thus, poses the question if it would be right to use animal tissues in humans on those occasions.

#### Key Points of the Article

This article makes defining statements about some key issues pertaining to Xenotransplantation. They can be given as follows.

The use of Xenotransplantation on an individual depends on whether it is acceptable to him/her or not. The patient has the ultimate right to accept or refute the transplanting of non-human cells into his/ her body.

Religious beliefs of the patient are a deciding factor in deciding the opinion of a person on Xenotransplantation.

Xenotransplantation has been identified as a beneficial medical process, from a cultural perspective but people are still wary of its use owing to the side-effects known to be associated with scientific innovations.

An Analysis of the Approach with reference to the Development of Bioethics

The most important point in the field of Bioethics is its four principles, namely, Autonomy (respect of oneself and one's ability to make decisions), Beneficence (promotion of welfare of patients), Justice, and Non-Maleficence (doing no harm, i. e. reduction or avoidance of risks). The author has analyzed the concept of Xenotransplantation in view of all these objectives of Bioethics. Thus, the author has been successful in applying the correct approach to the subject as far as Bioethics is concerned. Bioethics had been the domain of historians and philosophers since its early stages. Combining bioethics with a highly scientific subject like Xenotransplantation provides the former with a whole new perspective that provides opportunity for future research. Also, studying Xenotransplantation based on the foundations of Bioethics has revealed the social and cultural side to medical innovations and technologies.

#### Analysis of the Key Points

The three key findings of this paper can be discussed in further detail as follows. The respect associated to individual freedom in our society is immense and every human being irrespective of cast or creed, gender or color, has the liberty to decide his mode of conduct, his occupation and other relevant issues pertaining to him. Thus it is only natural that an individual will have individual opinion on Xenotransplantation as well that will decide if or not it will be used on him. Family and relatives of a person may also take this decision as they have an obligation too, but this provision is debatable. It is for this reason that they must be well educated about the subject. Religion of the patient is of vital importance in deciding the use or un-use of Xenotransplantation. A research conducted on English and Australian

subjects stated that 67% of English and 82% of Australians accepted Xenotransplantation. Among these, 29% were English Catholics, 9% were Australian Catholics, and 63% were from other religions. It was observed that people who followed monotheistic religions, believed in Xenotransplantation the most. Monotheistic religions such as Islam, Christianity, and Judaism preach oneness with all creatures. Thus, they would all support this medical innovation. Some countries have accepted Xenotransplantation and some have not. Non-acceptance has been due to the Conflict between the principles of autonomy and non-maleficence. The Declaration of Helsinki states that interest of the research subject cannot be compromised for social benefit. This is the reason that some countries have not accepted this treatment strategy. However, these countries have been found to be considering not just the issue of harm caused to subject but third parties as well.

#### Inconsistencies in the Article

There are three fundamental inconsistencies in this article. The theories given in this article are not adequately related to the statistical evidence provided. There should have been some sort of statistical figures supporting the main section on the study of Xenotransplantation as per the objectives of Bioethics. Instead, the same is provided on subsidiary subject of the acceptance of Xenotransplantation based on religious beliefs. Again, some issues like the principles of bioethics are elaborated too much while some are too brief. Finally, this article should have had a section stating the precise risks and benefits connected with Xenotransplantation. Evaluating the subject based on this knowledge would have provided a greater insight.

### A General Evaluation

This article is completely in line with my views. The right to decide whether a certain mode of treatment would be used on him or not should be given to a person as it is consistent with the ideals of democracy. The larger goal of benefit was society cannot be given as an excuse to sacrifice individual safety of a person. It is also true that religion has a bearing upon the opinions, views, choices, and overall mentality of a person. However, this article could have been presented in a more organized way.

### Conclusion

It can, therefore, be concluded that the use of Xenotransplantation should always be based on individual choices and never imposed on a person. As it is a relatively new technology, people are largely ignorant on the subject. So, they must be made aware of its benefits and side-effects alike to help them take the right decision. This will ensure that a needy is not denied the benefits accruing from it and yet no one suffers from its adverse effects.

### References

- Ellison, T. (2006), Xenotransplantation – Ethics and Regulation, Xenotransplantation, 13. 6, 505-9
- Kanniyakonil, S. (2007), The Fundamentals of Bioethics. India: Oriental Institute of Research Studies.
- Silberglitt, R. S. (2006), The Global Technology Revolution 2020. Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation.