

# Ethical issues related to reproduction



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Ethical Issues Related to Reproduction Ethical issues Abstract The current developments in the medical technology combined with the declining influence of religious morality in the community have made the church encounter different issues associating to life and death, which were additionally nonexistent in the past or were of comparatively associated with varying happenings, in our traditions. It is vital to handle these matters, and provide some outline in relation with the laws of the scriptures.

It is not our concern to address these matters profoundly, but to offer sufficient foundation for the ethical decision-making. It has been defined that about 10-15 percent of married couples in the world are infertile, an extra 10 percent have few children than they expected. Childlessness is a burden to most people and couples currently. Nothing could be done to correct or cure infertility in the past, but in the modern days, there are even more other alternatives than needed because of the advances in medical technology.

However, there are moral and ethical repercussions embedded in these processes, which makes these practices undesirable. Introduction Assisted reproduction (ARTs) is one way of having children without necessarily engaging in intercourse. Many individuals who opt for ARTs because of infertility and other approaches of curing their infertility have become futile. Some individuals with no fertility challenges choose ARTs to reduce the risk of transmitting some genetic turmoil. However, many scholars have taken different sides on the usefulness of the approach.

Some encourages its use with minimum reservation, stressing on the gains they provide the infertile couples and woman who desire to reproduce

without a partner of the opposite sex. Those supporting ARTs claim that the community ought to respect personal decisions concerning reproductive issues, referring to the official and ethical rules of individual dependency and lack of proofs that ARTs leads to substantial damage (Scott, 2000). Those opposing have demonstrated concerns on some given aspects or effects of these technologies.

They are worried that too much application of ARTs in the society would result to children being products of manufacturers as per the parent's condition, instead of distinct individuals to be adopted and loved unconditionally. On the other hand, the process is too costly implying that the approach will only help the rich because they can afford such expenses, while the poor will remain with the problem. In addition, the method is still undergoing investigation hence, it is not clear whether the ARTs processes are entirely safe for both the mother and the offspring or not.

Connection between reproductive cancers and hormones are known, but women taking these procedures have not been assessed to analyze their risk to these dangers (Wennerholm et. al, 2000). The world has entered into a new age where babies can scientifically be developed in a Petri dish using the sperm of a man and the egg of a woman, then the ensuing embryo transferred to a second woman's womb for gestation. By the application of fertility drugs and regular inspection, the embryo can develop in to a full baby that can then be given back to the parents who initiated the process, i. e. he persons who donated the sperm and the egg for the procedure. This is what surrogacy is all about. Starting with the idea of creating the child in a test tube and transferring to the womb is in itself shocking as much as ethics

are concerned. Infertile couples consider this the best method of having children, but the natural birth and baby development are not followed. Children ought to develop naturally and seek to inherit the genes of its parents, but in this case, the baby has genes from three different people. The other thing is the issue whereby a woman requests another woman womb at a cost.

Individuals paying medical costs for a third party purportedly carrying their child, and who may at last refuse to give out the baby, engage in unethical ways (Storey, 2011). Sperm and egg donations also have some ethical issues in that both donors have some rights as pertaining to their donations. The clients have a right to be updated on the disadvantages their sperm or egg has with the likely complications that may result in case someone decides to purchase them. Ethically, that is not an acceptable practice as babies should develop naturally in their initial stages without being investigated for defects and other complications.

On the other hand, sperm and egg banks are highly selective as to who should donate them. For instance, in California Cryobank accepts only graduate donors from some universities. The procedure of the reproduction should not have such selection procedures. In contrast, those banks that do not have restrictions may allow someone to donate several times, which the children being created because of purchasing the sperm may come from one individual hence, resulting to related babies.

The difference between ultra selective donor banks and those, which cater for the population that is more “ normal,” put up some ethical issues. Ethical

dilemmas surrounding surrogate parenting Surrogate parenting has many dilemmas especially regarding the relationship and ownership of the baby. The most common is the conflict of interest among the commissioning parents and the surrogate mother. Under this condition, it should be clear as to who should have full rights of the baby. Screening the concerned couples for proper identification of the surrogate mother should be carried out to reduce some of the dilemmas.

Another dilemma may result when the surrogate mother feels that she is being exploited by the couple and not being well compensated. In such a case, she may end up refusing to let go of the baby and instead seek a court injunction. In addition, the traditional and cultural variances existing in the society has some complications regarding this form of bringing up the children. Women who volunteer as surrogate mothers are considered not complete by other cultures and this need to be resolved because it can affect the development of the child later in life (Storey, 2011).

A family is usually made up of father, mother, and the children. However, in this case, the children have different parents attached to them. This makes the definition of a family not to be inclusive as we have a third person claiming and having links to the child. A child in a family definition has only one biological mother and one biological father. Because both mothers have a linkage to the child, it leaves room for the definition of the family to include such exceptional cases when defining a family (Storey, 2011). B. elective abortion Selective abortion is moral because the multiple surviving embryos may cause more harm to the mother before and after birth. For instance, the conception of such embryos may compete themselves for the reduced

requirements provided by the mother, leading to retarded development since they would not get enough. In case, all the embryos are left to live, the society should be able to cater for all their needs especially helping the mother and the family in financial terms to raise all the children at a go.

The society should also provide basic amenities such as specific training schools for the mental retarded, and support them as much as they can (Bouchard et. al, 1995). Those with defects should be provided with aiding machines or tools that can enable them move from one place to another. For those who are willing, they should also volunteer to take up the responsibility of medical expenses and other requirements prescribed by the healthcare officers. c. Ethical issues surrounding abortion Abortion, for many years, has been illegal in most countries, but nowadays people are fighting for it to be legal.

However, in religious beliefs, any form of terminating human life is murder, regardless of whether it is a fetus, infant, or purportedly minor members of the society like the handicapped and the old. Abortion is murder, and it breaches the sacredness of God's given life. Christians believe that life starts at conception and God alone has the right to take it. Nevertheless, pro-choice supporters claim that restricting abortion raises the occurrences of unsafe abortion, since the accessibility of professional abortion can minimize such cases.

Sometimes, those incidences result to maternal mortality. The ethical discussion concerning abortion normally rotates on matters of whether the fetus can be given any rights especially the right to life and whether the

woman has some rights over her body. In some places, abortion is only allowed if the life of the mother is in danger, or if the fetus is deformed (Bouchard et. al, 1995). Conclusion Reproduction starts with the interaction between the opposite sexes, after which embryos can develop.

Modern technologies have reduced the challenges of childlessness through the various inventions, although some individuals still do not appreciate the God-given life, ending up killing others through abortion. Abortion is of two types: direct abortion is never morally accepted while the indirect abortion, which occurs due to some unavoidable events, is allowed as a way of saving the mother. The pro-life argue from the Christian point of view and have to follow the doctrines, for it is the foundation of their living. Any form of birth control is, therefore, unacceptable as it leads to depriving someone life and is morally wrong in the society.

Illegal abortion is also extremely risky as it may endanger the life of the mother, as well. References: Bouchard L, Renaud M, Kremp O, Dallaire L. (1995). Selective abortion: a new moral order? Consensus and debate in the medical community. *International Journal of Health Service*, 25 (1) 65-84. Scott, G. (2000). Ethical Issues and Assisted Reproductive Technology: *Human Reproduction*. 15, (1) 944-948. Storey, G. (2011). Ethical Problems Surrounding Surrogate Motherhood. Retrieved on June 16, 2011, from <<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/2000/7/00.07.05.x.html>>