

Introduction cells as well as other organs



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\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

\n \t

1. [Introduction](#) \n \t

2. [Thesis](#) \n \t

3. [Antithesis](#) \n \t

4. [Synthesis](#) \n \t

5. [Conclusion](#) \n \t

6. [References](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

Introduction

No one can negate the fact that medical research is in deed very important in the field of medicine. It generally represents various types of researches like applied, transactional or basic research that are usually carried out with a main aim of supporting knowledge present in the field of medicine.

Conducting medical research may involve use of animals, simulations on computers and experiments conducted with cells as well as other organs and tissues.

However, the most common type of research involves use of animals since they have been used for many years. This is due to the fact that some animals are similar to human beings in several ways and therefore they can be used effectively to conduct some of the necessary steps and procedures in medicine. However, the practice has raised considerable debate about the correctness of using animals for medical research due to moral and ethical implications of the same. Some people feel that use of animals should be

banned while others feel that the practice ought to continue. Therefore, this paper shall critically analyze the question whether animals should be used for medical research.

Thesis

As much as it is a controversial topic, there are many reasons that support the use of animals in medical research. To begin with, benefits that the human fraternity has benefited with due to use of animals in research need no further emphasis. The research has accomplished much in the scientific field since scientists have been using animals to test their theories and alter the same in accordance to the results obtained. No one can actually stand and declare that they have not benefited from animal research and if not so, people closely related to them may have reaped a lot of benefits from the same. A lot of the vaccines and the antibiotics that are being used currently have resulted from the animal research. The practice can be termed as a life saver because many lives are saved every day by the practice. Scientists use animals to test new medications as well as new treatment procedures like surgery since many animals are almost like human beings and respond to medicine and other forms treatments in similar ways.

It is therefore possible to use animals while testing the dangers and the toxicity of new drugs and by so doing; it is possible to protect human beings from the dangers that can emanate from the use of such drugs. Anyone who can figure out the dangers of using medicine without testing the reaction of the same cannot possibly oppose the use of animals in medical research.

The main reason of the practice is to ensure the safety of human beings in all circumstances which is equally important as preserving life. Human life is

very important and should be preserved at all costs. Medical research not only allows treatment procedures to be carried out, but it also enables researchers to come up with vaccines that are used for prevention purposes.

Disease prevention is very important because were it not for vaccines that have been developed, many lives would have been wiped out by the diseases that are present in the world. A study of history indicates that before current developments in the medical field, some disease outbreaks used to cause death to a very large group of people in a population. That causes big loses in every country as human resource is an important asset of each and every country. In addition, it has been possible to develop vaccines that have helped to eradicate some dangerous diseases like small pox and measles in some countries. Apart from the innumerable benefits of the practice, animals that are used for the practice are treated with dignity to avoid violating their rights.

According to the studies of National Institutes of Health (n. d.), Congress and Public Health Service has contributed greatly to ensure that animals used for research are treated in a humane way. They have set laws and regulations as well as the necessary policies to safeguard animals. For instance, there is always a guide that stipulates the type of environment that each and every animal requires as well as the type of the care necessary. It therefore does not make much sense to say that use of animals in research is unethical as there are measures which are already established to prevent any unethical treatment (Prate, 2002).

Antithesis

On the other hand, use of animals for medical research is not only hurtful but also not necessary.

However, it is important to note that the fact that it is not necessary means that there are other alternatives of conducting medical research and does not negate the fact that human life is important and should be protected at all costs. Although the alternative methods may not give the same results as animal tests, there is a high possibility that with some developments the same can become beneficial and eliminate the trouble of using animals. If more research was carried, cell culture studies and computers can be used effectively although the results may not be as reliable as results of animal studies. Animals like human beings feel pain and therefore, given that there are a wide range of procedures carried in medical research, they are exposed to so much pain.

Although it is possible to minimize pain by use of anesthesia, scientists are always reluctant to do so because they argue that it can interfere with the results. As much as there are some guidelines that are given to make sure that animals used for testing are treated in a humane way, exposing them to so much pain is the main disadvantage of the practice identified by the animal advocates as studies of Algor (2010) indicate. Apart from pain, procedures used in animal research are dangerous and pose great risk to animals. For instance, it is true that, animals are used to test new medicines before they are released into the market. Some of these medicines end up harming the animals as they may contain dangerous side effects.

On the same note, since animals are used even in testing cosmetics, studies of Algae (2010) illustrate that rabbits used to test the effects of the cosmetics and other skin products are usually killed after the research. Animals are also used to test the effect of corrosive chemicals and acids. During these painful tests, animals are not given any pain relief for the same reason of avoiding any interference with the results.

Further studies illustrate that the Environmental Protection Agency requires that pesticides be tested first on dogs before they are released in to the market. No one would want to imagine the suffering such animals go through when being forced to inhale dangerous poisonous chemicals. Various inhuman tests carried out on animals may be beyond the scope of this paper but the truth is, there being other alternatives, there is no reason why animals should be exposed to such cruelty. According to Algae (2010), about fifty thousand animals die every year due to problems encountered in the process of medical research.

A lot of the researches conducted are a clear indication that even if it is not all procedures in medical research that lead to death, the fact is there are many which claim the life of animals. For instance, one company that manufactures food for pets kills many more in the process of production while testing the effectiveness of different types of food. All animals are important ranging from dogs, cats, donkeys and rats to mention just a few and ought to be protected and treated with dignity.

Bent on that, it is clear why the use of animals in medical research should be banned as it is not morally appropriate.

Synthesis

It is true that human race benefits greatly from the use of animals in the medical research. It is also true that the practice is inappropriate because it harms and kills the animals. Therefore, it is a practice that is beneficial to human beings while being destructive to animals.

It is important to take care of human life and on the other hand, it is still important to ensure the well fare of animals since they are living things and deserve to be treated as such. At this point no one would disagree with the fact that animals should only be used for medical research as the last option. In addition, even at such a point important measures ought to be put in place to prevent any inhuman treatment as well as minimizing the severity of the consequences. Research conducted indicates that some products like cosmetics and household products need not to be tested on animals since there are other alternatives.

Moreover, some people have understood the dangers of animal testing and as a result, some centers like Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to animal Testing have been opened. It is a center that was opened with a main aim of developing new methods that can replace animal testing. Although it is a costly project because it involves use of new methods and old methods simultaneously to ensure that the results are consistence, various organizations as well as the government should ensure that enough funds are available to help the center achieve its goal and vision of finding alternative means of testing. As much as possible, it is important to use other methods of testing which are inclusive of in-vitro tests, human clinical tests and the computer software. Human clinical tests make use of human

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beings to conduct various experiments in a clinical set up. While used appropriately, the alternative tests can successfully give almost or similar results and by so doing, the life of animals will be saved and also the life of human beings.

It is important to point out that some alternatives like the use of animal cells, organs, tissues and other parts are not appropriate because even if they spare the animal a lot of pain, an animal must be killed in order to obtain such internal organs. If all the alternatives fail to work and the only option is to use animals, then it is necessary to employ appropriate measures to ensure that animals are prevented from much suffering. It is true that anesthesia may interfere with results but what would prevent scientists to undertake research and search for better methods of pain relief that may not interfere with their results. If it was possible for the same scientists to discover better forms of pain relief to be used while treating human beings, is it also not possible to develop pain reliefs for animals which cannot interfere with other procedures involved? In addition, studies of Prate (2002) illustrate that allowing experimentation does not mean that all tests should be carried out even those that are appropriate. On the same note, the same study explains that although the researcher was using mice for the study, it was not possible to continue with all the tests since some would have exposed the poor animals to unnecessary stress and pain. It is therefore possible to allow only appropriate tests that cannot cause pain and result to other unfavorable conditions. It is time the government and other stakeholders take the issue of using animals for testing seriously.

If there are laws that safeguard animals from maltreatment by other member members of the public, there should be rules and laws to safe guard the animals from being destroyed during medical research. It does not make any sense to take action against people who kill animals on the roads and at the same times continue to kill more animals in the laboratory. Since animals are not like human beings who can refuse to be tested, it is only the human species that can help solve the problem.

It is not only the authorities that should control unnecessary animal testing but also the general public. For instance, what would happen if all of us refused to buy products that have manufactured by the companies that use animal testing? All of us have a duty and a responsibility of preventing inhumane as well as unnecessary killing of animals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to mention that the question can be answered differently in different perspectives. For instance, use of utilitarian ethical theories disqualifies the fact that animal research exposes the animal to pain since in such a perspective, the correctness of an action is dependent on the benefits of the same (Paul & Paul, 2001).

Similarly, another person may argue that protesting against killing animals in research is inappropriate because human beings kill animals for other purposes like to obtain meat. Being aware of the perspectives that have been used, this paper has tried not only to use all the perspectives, but also to put together different approaches without being so much focused on any.

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