

Bioethics and Human Rights: A Perspective

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Abstract—*This paper discusses the meaning of bio-ethics and human rights. It also discusses the connection between bio-ethics and human rights with its adverse effects. It discusses the issues of bioethics such as human experimentation and euthanasia. I also discuss the importance and principles of bioethics which will effects human rights.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Bioethics explores the ethical issues which arise due to medical and life sciences research. It encompasses social, judicial, and environmental aspects which affects human beings. Medical and life sciences research leads to, etc. Bioethics is regarded as one branch of practical (or applied) ethics and that ethics is regarded as one branch of ethics and ethics is regarded as one branch of philosophy. Bioethics is concerned with questions that are related to basic values such as the rights to life and death and certain developments in life technology, medicine and health better quality of life. These researches also lead to discrimination, human rights violation and injustice. Bioethics includes both philosophical studies of the ethics of medicine and medical law, medical anthropology, medical sociology, health politics, health economics professions. Bioethics is regarded as an investigation and a study of ways through which decisions taken in science and medicine affects our lives, health, society and environment.

Human rights are regarded as rights which are given to someone who has virtue of being human.

A human right is a kind of natural right—a right that somebody has on account of his (human) nature. There is a strong relationship between bioethics and humans. Human beings must be aware of human rights so that medically they are not exploited. According to Baker says originally the principles of bioethics were regarded as a means for protecting human rights but through a historical accident bioethical principles came to be considered as fundamental. He identifies the ‘accidental divorce of bioethics and human rights’. According to Pope, ‘bioethics and human rights needs to be ‘be reunited and harmonized’. According to Salter and Jones, ‘bioethics represents itself as both expert and as having a hotline to the needs of civil society through its impartial consideration of moral concerns.’ It must also be remembered that much of bioethics has concerned itself

not with human rights in general, but rather has focused on medicine and healthcare. According to Potter, the goal of bioethics is to apply ethical thinking or “wisdom” and moral values to the dilemmas, questions and issues raised by the many developments in the fields of biological and medical science

2. ISSUES OF BIOETHICS

There are many issues of bioethics like human experimentation, euthanasia, the health care debate, etc. but we will discuss it very little. By human experimentation we mean human experimentation done on human beings. Ewan Cameron (1901-1967) was a psychiatrist, and former head of the American Psychiatric Association who conducted experiments on psychiatric patients at McGill University’s Allan Memorial Institute in the hopes of curing their mental illnesses in the 1950s and early 60s. He succeeded only in destroying the complete memories and therefore the identities of many of his patients. Many lost all memory of their children, husbands, past jobs, past life and even how to play guitar. He was never able to replace the “bad behaviour patterns” with “good ones”. His patients did not know and were never told they were taking part in experimental procedures and did not sign their consent to these. This was a wrongful act on his part. He was exploiting human rights.

By euthanasia we mean mercy or good death. Every individual has right to life so euthanasia must be avoided. There are many arguments in favour and against euthanasia. In favour we can talk about personal autonomy, not able to afford expensive treatment and in against we can take of the sanctity of life principle etc.

3. PRINCIPLES OF BIOETHICS

Four commonly accepted principles of bioethics, includes the following:

1. Principle of respect for autonomy
2. Principle of nonmaleficence
3. Principle of beneficence
4. Principle of justice

1. Respect for Autonomy- In bioethics, respect is given to the autonomy of the patient and the patient has the capacity to act intentionally. This principle represents the practice of "informed consent" in the physician/patient transaction regarding health care.
2. The principle of nonmaleficence- It reminds us that we should not intentionally create a harm or injury to the patient, either through acts of commission or omission. This principle creates a fundamental commitment on the part of health care professionals to protect their patients from harm.
3. Principle of beneficence- The good health of a particular patient is regarded as an appropriate goal of medicine, and the prevention of disease through research and the employment of vaccines are also regarded as the same goal expanded to the population at large. The duty of beneficence signifies that the physician must intervene on behalf of saving the patient's life or placing the patient in a protective environment.
4. The principle of justice- It is regarded as a strong motivation toward the reform of our health care system so that the needs of the entire population are taken into account. The demands of the principle of justice must apply at the bedside of individual patients. Medical facility should be given to each and every person.

4. CONCLUSION

We have examined the meaning of bioethics and examined only a few of the many bioethical issues in this course. Bioethics forces us to ask various questions like what kind of society and world we want? Should we build a society in which only those who can afford it get adequate medical care and level of well-being? How can we prevent inhuman medical and scientific experiments in the future and side by side must maintain commitment to scientific progress? We need to examine these questions answer.

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