

ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION MEDICINE: RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Abstract: There are not enough solid organs available to meet the needs of patients with organ failure. Thousands of patients every year die on the waiting lists for transplantation. Yet there is currently available, underutilized, potential source of organs. Many patients die in intensive care following withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment whose organs could be used to save the lives of others. At present the majority of these organs go to waste. In this paper, I consider and evaluate a range of religious and ethical responses to improve the quality of organ transplantations available today. The responses of four world religions (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism) towards organ transplantation are considered. We argue that religious involvement in medical technologies like transplantation medicine gives to individuals the greatest chance of being able to help others with their organs after death under well-guided means. It is believed that attempts to increase patient autonomy will be realised in the light of religion and ethics.

Keywords: Religion, Ethical Response, Organ, Transplantation Medicine, Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Ethics, also described as moral philosophy, is concerned with what is good for individuals and society.² Ethics has to judge religion especially in the area of religion practicing righteousness or morality. Ethics are universal decision-making tools that may be used by a person of any religious persuasion, including atheists.³ Both religion and ethics are prescriptive but the main purpose of religion is not morality even though the latter is recommendation. The purpose of religion is worship and adoration of God or Supreme Being.

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² http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/introduction/intro_1.shtml (22/07/2019).

³ [https://pagecentertraining.psu.edu/public-relations-ethics/ethical-decision-making/yet-another-test-page/the-difference-between-ethics-and-religion/\(27/05/19\)](https://pagecentertraining.psu.edu/public-relations-ethics/ethical-decision-making/yet-another-test-page/the-difference-between-ethics-and-religion/(27/05/19)).

Dealing with ethics, religion, and organ transplantation is somehow delicate due to the fact that both religious and ethical groups sometimes defer in their opinion. We rather have to base the ethical considerations of organ transplantation on religious grounds. The main argument of this paper is that the idea of organ transfer raises both ethical and religious questions about life and death. This is because the fresher the organ, the greater chances of success in the transplant and organs from living donors are the best. However, if taking the organ, causes death, then it is wrong. The argument commonly raised is that with the exception of cases of taking spare organs such as one kidney or one eye, the donor must be brain-dead before the organ is taken. The purpose of the paper is to evaluate a range of ways to improve the number and quality of organs available from the religious and ethical dimensions.

Organ failure has over the years been one of the major medical issues causing considerable suffering and disruption in family life. Organ transplantation has therefore been one of the major medical issues attracting debates all over the world. Among several invention like the dialysis machine and artificial ventilators, organ transplantation offer the possibility of keeping alive patients who otherwise would have died.⁴ Organ transplantation has brought a great relief not only to patients but physicians and families. Transplant surgeries are one of the many advance procedures that elongates healthier lives.

Transplantation in popular minds fulfils medicine's central goals to restore function, preserve life, alleviate suffering and cure disease. Organ transplantation may be considered the miracles of twentieth century medicine and is the best therapy for terminal and irreversible organ failure.⁵ However, the increasing incidence of vital organ failure and the inadequate supply of organs leading to the crude means of harvesting and smuggling of human organs have created a wide gap between organ supply and organ demand. These events have raised many ethical/moral and social concerns regarding the harvest and supply of organs, methods of organ allocation and the use of living donors as volunteers including minors. This is not to forget about the practice of organ sale by entrepreneurs for financial gains in some parts of the world.

To better understand the situation at hand, we consider the World Health Organization's 'Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation (GODT) report of 2015 among 111 out of 194 member states. In this report, transplant activity for the 111 countries representing nearly 82% of the worldwide population shows that 126,670 solid organs (kidney, liver, lung, pancreas, small bowell) were performed worldwide. This consisted of 84,347 kidney transplants (41.8% from living donors), 27,759 liver transplants (21% from living donors), 7,023 heart transplants, 5,046 lung transplants, 2,299 pancreas transplants and 196 small bowels transplants.⁶ With the above statistics, it is clear that the transplantation of organs is on the increase. In 2012, transplant activity for 95 countries representing nearly 90% of the worldwide population stood at 106,879 for solid organ transplants. This included

⁴ Dominic, Wilkinson and Julian, Savulescu. 'Should We Allow Organ Donation Euthanasia? Alternatives for Maximizing the Number and Quality of Organs for Transplantation'. *Bioethics*, 26(1): 2012, 32–48.

⁵ Josep M. Grinyó. 'Why Is Organ Transplantation Clinically Important?' *Cold Spring Harb Perspect Medicine*, 3(6): 2013, 1-10.

⁶ 'Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation. *Organ Donation and Transplantation Activities Report 2015*. WHO, 2017, 9-11.

73,179 kidney transplants (46% from living donors), 21,602 liver transplants (15% from living donors), 5,582 heart transplants, 3,927 lung transplants, 2,362 pancreas transplants and 227 small bowels.⁷ This increase in organ transplantation –which is playing an important role in the medical field –has called for the systematic models to govern the activity. The objective of this paper is to examine the religious ethical responses to transplantation medicine to create awareness on the dangers of ill-practices surrounding transplantation medicine. This paper specifically discusses the views of major world religions like Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism in relation to organ transfer.

WHAT IS ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION?

The word ‘organ’ has its roots from the Latin *organum* which in turn comes from the Greek *ὄργανον* (*organon*), meaning (musical) ‘instrument’ or ‘organ of the body’.⁸ An organ is defined by the Center for Bioethics in Minnesota as “a mass of specialized cells and tissues that work together to perform a function in the body”.⁹ It is a self-contained group of tissues that performs a specific function in the body. The heart, liver, and stomach are examples of organs in humans and in most animals. Though organs perform important functions, a person can live without them. This is because some organs are vestigial, which means that they perform little or no function in the body. Examples of organs in humans include the integumentary (skin, hair, nails), skeletal (bones), muscular (smooth, cardiac, and skeletal muscles), circulatory (heart, arteries, veins), respiratory (lungs, diaphragm, larynx) and digestive organs (stomach, intestines, liver). Others are the urinary (kidneys, ureters, bladder), immune (lymph nodes, bone marrow, thymus), nervous (brain, spinal cord, nerves), endocrine (pituitary gland, thyroid, adrenals) and reproductive (penis, vagina, prostate, uterus).¹⁰ In many organs, Ioannis V. Yannas has observed that three extremely diverse tissues (often called tissue triad), “*epithelia*, *basement membrane*, and *stroma*,” are usually banded together in the structure of what we call organ.¹¹ Organs may be retrieved from living or dead donors, or even animals.

An organ transplant is a surgical operation where a failing or damaged organ in the human body is removed and replaced with a new one.¹² The term ‘organ transplant’ typically refers to transplants of the solid organs: heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, pancreas and intestines. Artificial and animal organs like eyes, ear, nose, skin, bladder, nerves, brain and spinal cord, skeleton, gall bladder, stomach, mouth, tongue, muscles may also serve as transplantable organs. Organ transplantation therefore is defined as the surgical removal of an organ from one individual and the placement of the organ in another individual for the purpose of improving the health of the recipient.¹³ From the above definition, organ transplantation is one of the great improvements in contemporary medicine.

There are several types of organ transplants and each varies with its surgical purposes. The following are some of the types of organ transplantation: domino transplants and split transplants. There are other categories of transplants that are less invasive and may call for specialized procedures. This includes

7 ‘Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation.’ *Organ Donation and Transplantation Activities Report* 2012. WHO, 2014, 9-11.

8 <https://biologydictionary.net/organ/> (22/07/2019).

9 Center for Bioethics. *Ethics of Organ Transplantation*. 2004. Available at: https://www.ahc.umn.edu/img/assets/26104/Organ_Transplantation.pdf. (22/07/2019).

10 <https://biologydictionary.net/organ/> (22/07/2019).

11 Ioannis V. Yannas. *Tissue and Organ Regeneration in Adults: Extension of the Paradigm to Several Organs*. New York: Springer, 2014, 2.

12 Center for Bioethics. *Ethics of Organ Transplantation*. 2004. Available at: https://www.ahc.umn.edu/img/assets/26104/Organ_Transplantation.pdf. (22/07/2019).

13 <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/11750-organ-donation-and-transplantation> (22/07/2019).

skin transplants or grafts, corneal transplants (corneas are the outer layer of the eye) and bone marrow transplants. A graft is similar to a transplant. It is the process of removing tissue from one part of a person's body (or another person's body) and surgically re-implanting it to replace or compensate for damaged tissue. Grafting is different from transplantation because it does not remove and replace an entire organ, but rather only a portion. Not all organs are transplanted.

TRANSPLANTATION MEDICINE: HISTORY AND PROCESS

Although there seems to be long significant history regarding transplantation of organs, the momentous scientific events of the 1950s are often taken as the starting point for organ transplantation. Hamilton writes that the medical and surgical records dating back to 600BC had in them traits of plastic surgery. Meanwhile, the donations of tissues for surgical purposes also appear in medieval surgical works. In such medieval works are the surgical activities of saints like Damien and Cosmas and pictures of the two engaging in leg transplant.¹⁴ During that time knowledge and concepts held about transplantation medicine seemed very scanty and 'wrong'. For instance, plastic surgery in the medieval era, especially in Italy, spread quickly and carried convictions that transplantation surgeons had obtained grafts from living donors and that when the donor died, the donated graft also died.¹⁵

Organ transplantation begins with the need to differentiate between replaceable tissues, such as blood or bone marrow and solid organs such as heart and lungs that require the death of the donor. Kidney transplantation introduced in the 1950s was the pioneer solid organ transplant to treat patients with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) in an era when renal replacement therapies were in their first steps.¹⁶ Hamilton reiterates that as physicians took steps to develop transplantation medicine in the early 1960s as clinical service was not simply a surgical one and, for that matter, limited to the attainment of technical success, multiple influences, helpful and otherwise stood in the way. Many years down the lane, transplantation technology has developed generating a raft of ethical issues.¹⁷

Organ transplantations are very complex and involve strenuous processes, and the first has to do with the Doctor's determination of the patient's medically eligible for a transplant. The eligible patient is referred to local transplant centre. The transplant centre evaluates the patient's health and mental status as well as the level of social support to see if the person is a viable candidate for an organ transplant, if the patient is a transplant candidate, a donor organ must be found. The next stage is the donor organ, either by cadaveric organs or Living donors. A person becomes a cadaveric organ donor by indicating that they would like to be an organ donor when they die.¹⁸ In some countries when a person dies and he or she has not indicated organ donation preferences, the family is asked if they would be willing to donate their relatives' organs. Living people who wish to donate their organs can donate in two ways. That is, donate one-half of a paired organ (like kidney) or donate a portion of an organ (liver or a lobe of the lung) that will still be able to function without it.

RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL RESPONSE TO ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION

It will be impossible to discuss organ transplantation without turning our attention to the ethical and theological definition of human life and death. It is important for doctors and healthcare providers to be

¹⁴ David, Hamilton. *A History of Organ Transplantation: Ancient Legends to Modern Practice*. (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012).

¹⁵ David Hamilton. *A History of Organ Transplantation: Ancient Legends to Modern Practice*. 2012, xiii.

¹⁶ Josep M. Grinyó. 'Why Is Organ Transplantation Clinically Important?' *Cold Spring Harb Perspect Medicine*, 3(6): 2013, 2.

¹⁷ David, Hamilton. *A History of Organ Transplantation: Ancient Legends to Modern Practice*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012.

¹⁸ "Ethics of Organ Transplantation". http://www.ahc.umn.edu/img/assets/26104/Organ_Transplantation.pdf (7/29/13).

knowledgeable about differentiating theological and cultural views on death and organ donations as nations are becoming more multicultural.¹⁹ Different opinions can arise depending on if the death is categorized as brain death or cease of the heartbeat. Many different major religious groups and denominations have varying views on organ donation of deceased and live bodies, depending on their ideologies. In dealing with the dignity of the human person, I to look at the views of religion and ethics. In this paper, I discuss the responses of four world religions (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism) towards organ transplantation.

Ethicist and theologians are also concerned about the maintenance of the dignity of the human person in the practice of organ transplantation. Addressing the participants of the First International Congress of the Society for Organ Sharing in 1991, Pope John Paul II stated that there are many questions of ethical, legal and social nature which need to be more deeply investigated. There are even shameful abuses which call for determined action on the part of medical association and donor societies, and especially of competent legislative bodies.²⁰ The Pope reiterated that the human body is always a personal body which cannot be treated as a merely physical or biological entity, nor can its organs and tissues ever be used as item for sale or exchange. Later in 2000, while addressing participants at the 18th International Congress of the Transplantation Society, the Pope was remarked that any procedure which tends to commercialize human organs or to consider them as items of exchange or trade must be considered morally unacceptable. This is because to use the body as an object is to violate the dignity of the human person, therefore the criteria for assigning donated organs should in no way be discriminatory (i.e.: based on age, sex, race, religion or social standing) or utilitarian (i.e. based on work capacity or social usefulness).²¹

Christianity

Christians generally support organ donation as an altruistic act and leaves the process as an individual decision. In the Church of England, organ donation is an act of Christian duty. This duty brings to the Christian a sense of commitment to humanity. The Judeo-Christian tradition holds dear the belief that God created the heavens and the earth and specifically humankind in his own image (the *imago dei*). The concept of the *imago dei* set apart human life from the rest of creation as sacred. Because of the sanctity of the human life, God has enjoined us not to share the blood of innocent human beings, being made in the image of God, and also points to the sense in which we are like and unlike God. God is the creator and transcends his creation in being, power and glory. However, there are some sense in which creation (especially humans) are like God. While God is an intelligent moral being, humans are also moral agent equip with a mind, a heart and will faculties that make it possible to make up God holiness. The Bible holds the sanctity of human life to be final and mortal. The question about the quality of life is what constitutes human values. According to Pope Pius xii,²² the issue of death, for the Christian, remains for the doctor and especially the anaesthesiologist. Although conservative Catholics occasionally associate with right to life position, with the view that accepting brain death lessens respect for those who are still living, they commonly accept the scientific criteria provided for the basis for determining death. Also, Protestants favour brain-oriented definition of death, though there is some concern about the use of the ‘brain-oriented’ definition of death. Over the years, major Christian

19 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_views_on_organ_donation\(20/05/19\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_views_on_organ_donation(20/05/19)).

20 [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3662355/\(20/05/19\)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3662355/(20/05/19)).

21 [\(19/08/2019\)](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2000/jul-sep/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20000829_transplants.html).

22 [https://books.google.com.gh/books?](https://books.google.com.gh/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Hq71BgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=christian+ethics+organ+transplantation&ots=TQOR_n923W&sig=-cqJOz_F0BowkqWdh_YSxOoKd6U(03/06/19))

[hl=en&lr=&id=Hq71BgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=christian+ethics+organ+transplantation&ots=TQOR_n923W&sig=-cqJOz_F0BowkqWdh_YSxOoKd6U\(03/06/19\)](https://books.google.com.gh/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Hq71BgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=christian+ethics+organ+transplantation&ots=TQOR_n923W&sig=-cqJOz_F0BowkqWdh_YSxOoKd6U(03/06/19)).

religious traditions have accepted the ‘brain-death’ definition and find it appropriate as a basis for procuring organs from deceased donor.

While some may share the view that organs from the deceased be routinely salvaged (i.e.: taken without any formal consent when they are needed as a social resource) on the basis that the dead body would simply be presumed to be the property of the state when it could serve a useful purpose. Others are with the view that individual right does not cease upon death. These right may be limited not only by constrains on the taking of valuable consideration but also by the duty to dispose of the bodily remains respectfully and properly.²³

The Christian belief and respect for the individual and its associated the rights do not cease at death. Obligations for respect for the wishes of the deceased and the integrity of his or her earthly remains must continue. Any approach that abandons the mode of donation in favour of viewing the cadaver as a social resource to mind for worthwhile social purposes will directly violate central tenets of Christian thought. Christians would oppose routine salvaging by the state and would be sceptical of any financial compensation for organs; they would look favourably upon public policies to make donation as easy as possible.

Islam

The majority of Islamic religious leaders accept organ donation during life (provided it does not harm the donor) and after death in order to save life. Islam with a lot of considerations identifies with the brain stem. For them, while the brain stem is still alive, all effort must be made to revive the person. This is because the brain stem is responsible for vital body functions and therefore if it is dead (even when signs of activity are still visible in the bodies organs, and if these is no hope of reviving the patient) then the patient is considered to have withdrawn from life and behaviours associated with dead –including procuring of organs –are permitted.

Most Islamic religious leaders do not accept brain death as a criterion for organ transplant. Similarly, they do not as well consider cessation of all signs of life including heart beat as a precondition for declaring death. Despite this position by Islamic religious leaders, Muslims are oftentimes uncertain about whether or not Islamic tradition considers organ donation to be forbidden. This uncertainty stems from ambiguity caused by conflicting opinions among some Islamic leaders regarding this issue. In addition, the absence of support alongside a commonly negative attitude toward organ donation and transplantation has been reflected in surveys of diverse Islamic populations. This overall negativity towards organ donation has resulted in low rates of participation in organ donation by practicing Muslims even in cases where donation would be considered permissible by religious leaders.

Muslims believe that humans do not have ownership of their body or spirit, it is considered to be a gift from God. Ethicists question whether the noble act of donating an organ outweighs the desecration of a dead body. That notwithstanding, some Muslims believe that all body parts must be present on the Day of Judgment and organ donations would interfere with that testimony. Many Ayatollahs²⁴ view organ donations differently. For example, Grand Ayatollahs Ali al-Sistani did not approve of posthumous organ donation, while Grand Ayatollahs Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei allowed donation of all organs after

²³[https://books.google.com.gh/books?](https://books.google.com.gh/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Hq7IBgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=christian+ethics+organ+transplantation&ots=TQOR_n923W&sig=-cqJOz_F0BowkqWdh_YSxOoKd6U(03/06/19).)

[hl=en&lr=&id=Hq7IBgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=christian+ethics+organ+transplantation&ots=TQOR_n923W&sig=-cqJOz_F0BowkqWdh_YSxOoKd6U\(03/06/19\).](https://books.google.com.gh/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Hq7IBgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=christian+ethics+organ+transplantation&ots=TQOR_n923W&sig=-cqJOz_F0BowkqWdh_YSxOoKd6U(03/06/19).)

²⁴ [https://donateinformation.blogspot.com/2018/08/religious-views-on-organ-donation_10.html?zx=e473235e31affcf1\(03/06/19\).](https://donateinformation.blogspot.com/2018/08/religious-views-on-organ-donation_10.html?zx=e473235e31affcf1(03/06/19).)

death as long as the body could still be recognizable. Practitioners of Shia Islam consider minor, regenerative organ donations different than major non-regenerative organs.

Some views held by Muslims are based on the *hadith* (teachings of Prophet Muhammad). For instance, the quote “Whoever helps another will be granted help from Allah in the Hereafter” has been interpreted by some Muslims in support of organ donation. Islamic code state that organ donation shall not be the outcome of compulsion, family embarrassment, social or other pressure or exploitation of financial need. The donation must not expose the donor to harm, in the case of cadaver donation. In the case of commitment to save another’s life, it is morally imperative that no organ is taken by coercion or pressure.

Buddhism

The spiritual consciousness remaining in the body after death leads to discrepancy on organ donation in the Buddhist community. Issues with defining, a diagnosis of brain stem death also provides contradictions in organ donation views in Buddhism. The Buddha is believed to have sacrificed himself by jumping into a fire in order to nourish a lost and starved villager in woods in a previous life as a rabbit. This *bodhisattva* value of compassion is also expressed through organ donation by putting another person’s wellness above one’s own. Donations made based on monetary or societal motivation are not valued by Buddhists. In Buddhist tradition, a person’s spiritual consciousness continues through the path of death and rebirth after death. It is also a basic belief in the religion that since physical organs are useless after death, donating them is an act of great compassion. On the other hand, it is believed that in order to ensure positive rebirth, the dying individual should not be disturbed with organ donation and transplant. However, organs have to be harvested right after brain death is declared in order to be useful. These considerations allow for differentiating views depending on the individual.

According to Buddhism, the choice of making the donation has to be made by the donor him/herself. It is also not clear whether or not brain death is a form of death for Buddhists. However, if brain death is considered as death, in which case one cannot make personal decisions, it may or may not be a good deed for one who died and also for the ones involved in decision making and contributing. Some Buddhists believe in the value of compassion, in which actions such practice as organ donation can be used to overcome the sufferings of life.

Buddhism generally accepts brain stem death and the irreversible ability for respiration as valid criteria for death of a human being. A living body or a dead body in Japanese is considered to be the permanent carrier of the soul. This belief has made it hard to develop unanimous agreement on brain death in Japan culture (which has a fair representation of Buddhists).

Many Buddhists in Eastern Asia adopt the Confucian taboos that are against destruction or disfiguring the human body. Because of this view, many countries in East Asia have low rates of organ donation. Because Hawai’i has a large Asian population, these cultural and religious ideals are reflected in their participation in organ donation. As a state, Hawai’i have the lowest rate of organ donations compared to the rest of the United States of America.

Tibetan Buddhists believe the spirit may remain in the body until about a week after death, therefore organ donation can be seen as interfering with the next rebirth. Pure Land Buddhism is a branch of Mahayana Buddhism that is against organ donation. They believe that the soul should be able to leave peacefully towards the path of rebirth. Since the soul takes time to depart from the physical body, they believe that the body should not be disturbed when brain death is declared. However, in countries like Korea and Taiwan, organ donation is successfully adopted.

It is to be said that Buddhism places a lot of emphasis on free organ donation. Nolan quotes the Tibetan meditation which states that ‘the masters agree that organ donation is an extremely positive action, because it stems from a genuine compassionate wish to benefit others. As long as it is truly the wish of the dying person, it will not harm in any way the consciousness that is leaving the body’.²⁵

Hinduism

Hinduism, aside the Hindu text, associated death with respiratory failure. This is to say that there is no formal resistance to death pronouncement based on brain function criteria. In Hinduism, the physical integrity of the body after death is not considered important. Hindus value reincarnation and prolonging life which allows for many individuals to agree with organ donation. Life after death is a strong belief of Hinduism and is an on-going process of rebirth; it is a perpetual circle of birth and rebirth of the soul. In this case, the physical body is insignificant. This presents the idea that the effects of this view on the concept of organ donation and transplantation in Hinduism are various as held by other Dharmic faiths.²⁶ It is important to note that with the culture debate and differences regarding organ donation and routine salvaging, some theoreticians propose markets for organs, in which those in need of organs, who are able and willing to pay, will buy a kidney from someone who would rather like to have the money than the organ. Such market, even though in some cities is illegal, can be found in India.

DISCUSSION ON RELIGIOUS ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The four religious beliefs under consideration have and continue to contribute in diverse ways to scientific discussions that have the potential to influence and change the lives of the adherents. Taking of someone’s life is strictly forbidden in all of four religions. However, they consider the support in saving someone’s life as an obligation and a demonstration of love.

As mentioned earlier, no religion forbids organ transplantation. However, there seems to be some level of similarities and differences regarding the procuring of organ, human life and death. While some religious groups may allow organ transplant as an act of piety, others rule that it is not only allowed but required.

All the four religions discussed above, except Hinduism that proposes markets for organs, show in practical terms that society is responsible for the regulation of organs. This will help ensure that donors will not be abused, exploited or coerced in any shape and form. To harvest the organ of someone, the question is at what point should we say the quality of life is so low that there is no moral obligation to preserve the finite life?

It is believed that divine love, mercy and compaction dictate that we the bearers of God’s image should reach out to care for those who are suffering for the quality of life. There is, however, no Christian

25 Robert M. Veatch and Lainie F. Ross. *Transplantation Ethics*. Georgetown University Press Washington, DC. 2015. 14.

26 [\(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_views_on_organ_donation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_views_on_organ_donation).(20/05/19).

justification for a medical officer to sustain life as long as possible at whatever cost. Christians therefore believe that organs can be harvested to save others life when the brain is no more functioning. We also need to note that while Buddhism emphasises on organ being donated freely, the rest seem not to make an emphatic statement regarding the sale of organs or it being freely donated except Hinduism.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

With the whole world benefiting from organ transplantation medicine, we need to take precaution to ensure it maximization. The goal of organ preservation is to maintain an organ outside the body in a state that is ideal for its intended application. For decades, the field of transplantation has focused on a relatively simplistic version of this goal: moving a deceased donor organ from the site of procurement to the site of transplantation with tolerable levels of injury. This paper highlights the religious concerns about the phenomenon on modern societies. It makes clear the position of religion in modern medical technologies across the globe. With recent increase in organ transplant, it is only prudent that religious bodies share their opinions on such a delicate activity like transplantation medicine.

CONCLUSION

Organ transplantation medicine has come to aid life care givers and increase life span of most people who would have die as a result of organ failure. The above discussion reveals that religious groups have a responsibility of ensuring decency in the act of donating and receiving organs. This will only ensure that the activity does not violate ethical/moral principles that guide human society.

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