

Abortion in comparative study of religions

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ABSTRACT: Abortion has always been considered as a weapon to get rid of unwanted pregnancy while the religions have taken it to be a negative strategy to play with God. The challenges of modernity and the authority for freedom to adopt abortion have stood against the doctrine of religion insisting on the survival of the alive being represented as fetus. Different interpretations expressed for abortion in religions show that abortion is the same as killing a person who has no defense for its own life. Taken as a two-edged sword, abortion plays a dual role in societies, one for baby and the other for the mother. Religions have taken the logical stance of keeping the baby, yet unwanted, to support the human rights for even the imprisoned one. This research reveals the logics of all religions to ban abortion while comparing the foundations of anti-abortion arguments of different religions.

Keywords: abortion, women, religion, baby, health

INTRODUCTION

Family and training children are two main parts of each society during human life and are regarded as a focus which holds ethical, religious and social values for generations from time to time. Abortion is considered to be one of the obsessions for researchers. Since women are half of the society and according to youth of Iran's population, attitude change about women in family, late marriage, absence of parents for long hours of day, effect of legal limits for insanitary abortion, have caused danger for social psychological and physical health of women and wrong analysis against them. Regardingly, preventing abortion is an important legal and religious issue being regarded in legal systems for long time is criticized by all religions, for instance Islam forbids abortion and has considered some punishments for one who commits this sin. According to the belief of Members of the Roman Catholic Church fetus is a total human from the moment of conception and hold the right to life so that abortion is faulty. It is mentioned in Didakhe that "do not kill baby by abortion".

Some feminists have utterly accepted this social issue and believe in its unconditional permissibility. Most men force their wives to abort their babies in order to evade from responsibility. Tendency for a life without any commitment has caused abortion to be a social problem. On the other hand, there are some who respect fetus as a full-fledged human so forbid abortion and recognize keeping the fetus as a duty. At last there are some moderates who permit for abortion in under some certain conditions which is called therapeutic abortion. Feminists believe that preserving mothers life as a full-fledged human is preferred over fetus life as a potential human which lacks personality and individuality any time before birth. Accordingly feminists recognize abortion as a right an end to mother's pregnancy of physical dependence of fetus to mother.

Question

According to recent studies, abortion has experienced a significant growth through several countries. Abortion in Iran is illegal which is committed hidden by non-experts in insanitary conditions. Regardingly offering a precise and complete statistic of it is hardly possible. The only available official statistic of health ministry goes back to 16 years ago. There are about 80 thousands abortions per year in Iran and unfortunately cause hundreds of women. More than hundred general and slight consequences are recognized related to abortion. Slight consequences are minor infections, bleeding, fever, chronic abdominal pain, gastrointestinal disorders, vomit, allergy and many other adverse effects which will end to infertility and often death. Meanwhile, it is to be mentioned that there are some severe psychological effects which will company her for lifetime mostly for religious people. Abortion has always been regarded by religious and legal systems especially by those which respect human's life. Since Islam has recognized some rights for fetus –some referred by the article in hand- it is concluded that abortion is criticized by Islam and seeks punishments

There are several definitions for abortion and some are mentioned below:
Deliberately driving out the fruitage of fertility before the definite time.

Driving the fruitage of fertility out of uterus while it is not able to live out of uterus.

Driving out the fruitage of fertility before the twentieth week of pregnancy.

Self-excision of pregnancy from the first day of menstruation to twentieth week (paad,1973...)

The article in hand has studied reasons of abortion being forbidden through different religions regarding human dignity and human rights, types of abortion, how religions permit it and finally their similarities and differences. Since abortion is criticized through religions, the research in hand analyzes religious deterrents such as the punishment and comparatively assesses the results.

The importance and necessity of research

Abortion is one the important social problem which can cause other problems. It is not a only a health issue but also a social one which through several societies so that will threat family's and society's health. Large number of children, gender, family disorders, frequent unwanted pregnancies, illicit relationships and lack of precise training and knowledge about methods of contraception provide a field for abortion. According to Islamic resources especially Quran, steps of fetus formation are Sperm,coagulum, Modhqe, izam, and Soul inspiration.

Sperm: from creation until 20th day

Coagulum: from 20th day to 40th day

Modhqe: from 40th day to 60th day.

The word "alaqa" in Arabic is used for three meanings: leech, Anything Hanging and clot. Leech can take out a cup of blood of human or any animal each time. Sperm in uterus sticks like a leech and feed from blood (Najafi...). Also it is mentioned that in the forming step of sperm, a material called Heparin is discharged so that blood is not coagulated and remains proper to feed (Paknejad,1982...).

The Word "modhqe" means chewed and ready food and in medicine language is used for fetus which is shaped as a chewed meat from third week of pregnancy (Mostafavi,1992...).

Izam is used for fetus from 60th day to 80th day, from 80th to 100th there is complete fetus without spirit and from 100th day there the complete fetus with soul. The next step of fetus growth is Olqa in which sperm cells are gathered like a berry without a certain shape as a thrombus which is called morula in medicine terms. Olqawill change to something like chewed meat which is called Modhqa. At this step fetus gradually will be shaped as a piece of chewed meat without the organs be distinct. After this step some fetuses come to complete shape and continue growth steps, however some remain monstrous and will be aborted . In terms of criminal law, abortion is driving the fetus out before the definite time in a way that it is not able to live, the beginning of fetus life is the time of maintenance of sperm in the uterus and mother's pregnancy and its end is the moment before baby's birth. The word "haml" is literally the fetus is mother's uterus, in terms of medicine it is used for after 7th month until birth. Therefore if at this step of growth, the life of livable existence in the uterus be cut, the act is called abortion. According to the meanings of words fetus and "haml" and content of law articles, abortion is defined as forthcoming: committing any intentional or unintentional criminal act about pregnant woman providing that it leads to stop of fetus growth or disclaimer of its life. According to mentioned definition the legal criterion of distinction of abortion of fetus and that of "haml" is surveyed under two separate titles: Dispose of embryonic life and dispose of livable life.

Era of livable life is supported by legislator. According to sentence of article 200 of "Diat" law, fetus abortion before appearance of its soul, does not lead to atonement, atonement and Dia allocated for abortion after reincarnation. Article 91 of "Ta'zir" law stipulate that if the pregnant woman visit doctor or midwife for abortion and the doctor administrates abortion intention and consciously, he is the one who should pay the "dia". And if the fetus holds its soul he should be retaliated. Through international field fetus and the mother are regarded certainly which is accepted by several countries such as Iran. Paragraph 5 of Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights it is mentioned that execution sentence will not be performed for persons under 18 years old and pregnant women.

Beginning of the supported life by legislator is after completion of fetal life and from the time of reincarnation until fetus birth which is customary known from 7th month until the day of birth .

Paragraph a of article 2 of Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam has mentioned that " Life is a God-given gift and the right to life is guaranteed to every human being. It is the duty of individuals, societies and states to safeguard this right against any violation, and it is prohibited to take away life except for a shari'ah prescribed reason." Accordingly Islamic republic of Iran has regarded this approach in its current rules so that in second principle of the constitution law, human dignity and his freedom is regarded mentioning its joint with responsibility before God and his Material and spiritual life is referred by principle 22 of same law. In the other words human's life is respected and no one can be excluded from his right to life.

Fetus rights

Regarding fetus rights, forthcoming ones are to be mentioned:

Incumbency of alimony for pregnant woman during a certain period after divorce or husband's death: if a pregnant woman gets divorce her husband must pay her alimony until baby's birth. If her husband dies should wait for marriage until giving birth to her baby. (Amini,2009...).

Fetus's inheritance: the fetus inherits from its testator providing that it has been existed during the death. It is not necessary to hold soul but only existence of the sperm in the uterus is enough. Also the fetus holds civil rights providing it is born alive .

Postponing penalties for mother until giving birth: if the pregnant woman should be punished for committing any kind of crimes the punishment should postponed until fetus birth in order to keep it safe (Amini,2009,...).

Maintain physical health of mother: Islam cares vastly about health of pregnant woman.

Preservation of fetus life: considering penalties for abortion represents the importance of fetus life as there are different "dia"s for abortion in different steps (Verseti and Amini,2009....)

Fetus financial rights such as accuracy of testament for fetus, devotion for fetus and "Hiba" for fetus: fetus can inherit if the sperm exists during the testator's death and is born alive even if it dies immediately after birth (Verseti and Amini,2009....).

Fundamental questions of research

Do different religions forbid abortion as respect to human dignity?

Do different religions forbid abortion as respect to human rights?

Do religions permit punishment for abortion?

Is the punishment for abortion identical in all religions?

RESEARCH METHOD

The method in the article in hand is library method of content analysis. For gathering data library method is used regarding related texts and resources and taking notes of religious texts of holy books (Quran, Torah, Gospel and Avesta).

Answering fundamental questions of the research

Do different religions forbid abortion as respect to human dignity?

Abortions is not permitted due to respect for human dignity and recognizing it as a human, as it is referred to forthcoming parts of holy texts: in Quran suraTakvir, verse 8 and 9, SuraAn'amverse 151, Sura Haj verse 5(Table 1), in Talmud forth section (Table 4), in Gospel forth section (table 5) and in Avesta (Table 7). In verse 151 of suraAn'am, killing children for fear of hunger is proscribed. The word "Pauperism" means insolvency and lack of money for life's costs. Killing children fearing hunger had been a common practice through ignorant Arabs due to their starving lands. They killed their children not to watch their hunger and poverty. Accordingly the mentioned verse have prescribed them from doing so and says that: Do not kill your children out of poverty; We will provide for you and them. In verses 8 and 9 of suraTakvir and verse 5 of sura Haj burying girls alive is proscribed. The word "Maw'uda" means the girl who is buried alive. This tradition goes back to Arab burying their alive girls fearing shame. And her fathers are responsible for her death however as a Widening and innuendo she is asked instead of the guilty person.

In the Jewish Bible, according to data available at table 4, if a woman is in the middle of labor and a part of baby's head is out, lives of both are equally valued. And if the fetus is a result of adultery and the Adulteress is virgin, abortion is not allowed however if the Adulteress is a married woman the fetus must be aborted and the mother will be punished.

Catholic Church has utterly forbid abortion since first century AD. Roman Catholic Church recognizes fetus as a human from the beginning by rejecting all opponent interpretations and considers any act for abortion a big sin which is punished by ostracism.

Catholics have accepted abortion only for saving mother's life according to dual result rule. That is to say the doctor can act to save mother's life even it ends to abortion. Protestants have accepted catholic opinion and recognize the fetus as an existence holding body and soul from the moment of Conception. They believe that if the fetus is a result of rape or incest abortion is permitted.

Avesta (the holy book of Zoroastrians) stipulates that if a man commits coition to a girl either she is under her parents orders or not, and makes her pregnant and the girl inform him about the pregnancy he should hold for her costs until baby is born and if the man refuse to do so he is punished for hurting the baby. And if the girl informs

the man and he guides him to midwife to get a cure in order to abort the fetus and she does so and the fetus is aborted the three of them are to be punished.

Do different religions forbid abortion as respect to human rights?

Human rights are equal and inalienable rights of humans and so the fetus is a potential or actual human, killing him/her is forbidden. As it is mentioned in Quran suraMa'idaverse 32: "whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely." The first and the most important right of the fetus is the right to life. In terms of Islamic law, saving fetus life is as obligatory as saving the others' and killing fetus is forbidden except for some limited exceptions. There are heavy punishments considered for those who disrespect this importance.

Do religions permit punishment for abortion?

According to data available in table 2, in Muslims holy book, Quran, suraAn'am, verse 151, killing children for fear of poverty and hunger is forbidden. In Jewish holy book, Talmud, it is mentioned that if the fetus is result of adultery and the adulteress is virgin, abortion is not allowed (table 4). In Christians holy book, Gospel, it is said that the fetus is a human from the moment of conception and any act for abortion is big sin which is punished by ostracism (table 6).

Is the punishment for abortion identical in all religions?

Punishment for abortion is not identical in all religions. According to data in tables below the difference is referred distinctly. As it is seen in table 2, in Islam abortion's punishment before reincarnation is different from that after. For instance dia for abortion of sperm is 1% of complete dia and fetus dia while it is in 40th day is 2% of complete dia, 4% in 80th day and after reincarnation if it is a boy dia is complete and if it is girl, dia is half of complete dia.

As mentioned in table 3, in Judaism although abortion is forbidden the administrator is not retaliated. In Christianity abortion is forbidden disregarding in which step is the fetus and the administrator is punished (table 6). Zoroastrianism considers abortion as an unforgivable sin (table 7).

According to table 4, Christian church has utterly forbid abortion from the first century AD. Roman Catholic Church recognizes fetus as a human from the beginning by rejecting all opponent interpretations and considers any act for abortion a big sin which is punished by ostracism.

Catholics have accepted abortion only for saving mother's life according to dual result rule. That is to say the doctor can act to save mother's life even it ends to abortion. Protestants have accepted Catholic opinion and recognize the fetus as an existence holding body and soul from the moment of Conception. According to Table 5, if the fetus is a result of rape or incest, abortion is permitted.

Table1.

Subject	verse no	number	Sura name	
He created and began the creation of man from clay	و بدء خلق الانسان من طين	7	32	Sajde 1
Then He made his posterity out of the extract of a liquid disdained	ثم جعل نسله من سلاله من ماء مهين	8	32	Sajde 2
Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We enveloped him into another creation. So lessed is Allah, the best of creators.	ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ	14	23	Mu'menun 3

CONCLUSION

Abortion as an undeniable fact in current societies has caused some irreparable damages which reveal the importance of reviewing and analysis of this problem. According to presented results and answers to fundamental questions of the research, abortion through religions is surveyed from four aspects which are: respecting human dignity, respecting human rights, permitting punishment for abortion and similarity of punishments through different religions. The religions do not allow for abortion due respect for human dignity and regarding human rights, as respect for right to life fetus is a potential or actual human and abortion is not permitted, killing it is forbidden and the punishments are not identical through different religions.

Table 2.

Subject	verse no	Number	Sura name	
then ,we bring you out as a child	giving birth	5	22	Haj 1
do not kill your children out of overt; We will provide for you and them	injunction of killing children	151	6	An'am 2
and when the girl [who was] buried alive is asked, For what sin she was killed	injunction of burying girls alive	8-9	81	Takvir 3

Table3.

Options abortion	permission for abortion	Forbidding
In case of danger For woman during the labor	fetus is in the uterus	its head is out of uterus
Abortion when fetus is resulted by adultery	if adulteress is married	if adulteress is virgin

Table 4.

Options	permission for abortion	forbidding abortion
Catholic		from the moment of conception
Protestants		from the moment of conception
Orthodox		from the moment of conception

Table 5.

Options	permitted	forbidden
Aborting the fetus resulted by rape	permitted	
Aborting the fetus resulted by incest	permitted	

Table6.

Options	forgivable act	unforgiveable act
Abortion		abortion is unforgiveable

REFERENCES

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Danaei M.(), civil law ,Qum,Saeidnovin Makaremshirazi,() the message of Quran,Qum, Matbouat Hadaf,v1, discharged without additional hazard to the health of the mother. (cited by Nathanson 1979, pp. 179–180)

For Warren, however, the key difference between abortion and infanticide is that the human fetus resides within the woman and so violates her rights to freedom, happiness, and self-determination. If, somehow, removal of the human being in utero could take place without killing, killing would not be permissible, just as it is not permissible after birth (Warren 1973, p. 267).

happiness, or freedom and the rights of potential persons, the rights of persons prevail. The right of a woman to an abortion always outweighs whatever right to live ascribed to a human fetus, even a fully developed one (Warren 1973, p. 264).

In sum, Warren's criteria seem to legitimate much more than abortion. The senile elderly, newborns, and the mentally ill can get in the way of a "real" person's perceived freedom and happiness. On Warren's account, it would follow then that any person would be justified in killing any "potential person" whenever the existence of the potential person (e.g., a mentally handicapped teenager) got in the way of an actual person's

Jonathan E. Brockopp, Eich T. 2008. Muslim Medical Ethics: From Theory to Practice, Univ of South Carolina Press

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One way to defend abortion is to defend infanticide, the intentional killing of a baby after birth. If it can be shown that personhood begins sometime after birth, it will be all the more evident that personhood does not begin prior to birth, and so abortion is not morally wrong. One of the first and most widely disseminated defenses of this view was offered by Michael Tooley's article "Abortion and Infanticide" in which he argues for the moral permissibility of abortion throughout pregnancy and infanticide, up to a week after the child is born. At least among modern philosophers, Tooley broke new ground, but others eventually followed him, lengthening the time for justifiable infanticide to a month after birth (Singer 2000, p. 163) or longer. Singer writes, perception of his or her health, happiness, or freedom. (Important questions should also be raised here about the authentic meaning of "happiness" and "freedom" (see Spitzer 2000)).

Soleimani H. 1367. a criminal evidence, Aybat January, , Hmlnamh sky, No. 9

Spitzer R. 2000. Healing the Culture: A Commonsense Philosophy of Happiness, Freedom, and Life Issues. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

The College affirms that the resolution of such conflict (between woman and fetus) by inducing abortion in no way implies that the physician has an adversary relationship towards the fetus and therefore, the physician does not view the destruction of the fetus as the primary purpose of abortion. The College consequently recognizes a continuing obligation on the part of the physician towards the survival of a possibly viable fetus where this can be

The interest view of personhood holds that: "if nothing at all can possibly matter to a being, then that being has no interests. Its interests therefore cannot be considered, and so the being lacks moral status" (Steinbock 1992, p. 15). It is, according to this view, a necessary condition for the right to life that a person have had conscious desires of some kind. A person is a being capable of valuing its own existence (Harris 1999, pp. 303, 307; Harris and Holm 2003, p. 116). Modifying arguments first given by Donald Marquis in his article "Why Abortion is Immoral," and the most sophisticated advocate for this view, is David Boonin who argues that killing you or me is wrong because it thwarts our desires, especially the (present, dispositional, and ideal) desire to have a futurelike-ours (2003, p. 125).

Warren MA. 1973. The Personhood Argument in Favor of Abortion. In [Reprint] Louis P. Pojman (Ed.), Life and Death: A Reader in Moral Problems (pp. 261-267). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co. 2000.