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Euthanasia

Euthanasia is a topic that has raised more controversy than a debate since many people from all backgrounds and professions have come up with many facts that either dispute or support this practice. Some questions that come to the fore is whether a disabled person could make a decision to end his life when he is still in a rational state of mind (Vaughn 45). But the biggest question has been, is a disabled person still rational? The society's opinions of a disabled person, whether they are rational or they are irrational divided (Birnbacher, 350).

Psychologists have argued that a disabled person is capable of making rational decisions about suicide and any other man-made beliefs. Putting the disability case aside, the society is able to determine and analyze whether a decision was rational or not (Singer, 123). The issue of euthanasia will not go away anytime soon. Voluntary euthanasia is derived from Greek words where 'eu' means good while 'thanatos' means death (Birnbacher, 351).

It is divided into three categories; active euthanasia where the healthcare workers actively end the patient's life legally. Passive euthanasia is allowing the patient to die naturally without seeking any medical intervention whatsoever, for instance, a terminally ill patient is allowed to die without providing them with medicine that can prolong their life. This is also called suicide by proxy while assisted suicide is actively assisting a patient to access means of committing suicide. Active euthanasia is the most controversial and it is legalized in some countries such as Holland while in some countries like the UK it is a criminal offense.

In the countries where euthanasia is legalized, euthanasia proponents support the patients' right to self-determination. A patient has a right to end his/her suffering. If a patient will eventually die, it is only fair to assist him/her get rid of the suffering because it gives them relief (Birnbacher, 350). Some incurable conditions are so painful that the more the patient continues to live, the more his/her relatives suffer anguish, agony, and torment. Euthanasia puts an end to suffering for both the patient and his close family members and friends. Secondly, euthanasia helps

a patient to die with dignity (Köhler, et al. 552). The proponents of euthanasia argue that it is morally wrong to force a person who is tired of living to keep on living a life that he/she is a burden to himself/herself and to the people around them (especially the disabled). At the same time, if a patient does not want to look miserable when the terminal disease is in the latter stages and the body is weak and wasted away, they may choose to end his life and die with his/her natural beauty as he was before the ailment (Köhler, et al. 553). Other advocates of euthanasia claim that it is the most humane way of ending a human or an animal life instead of other draconian means such as using firearms or blunt objects. Euthanasia is a sure method of ensuring that the patient does not feel pain, and the patient chooses that day he would want to die, meaning that he/she would have kept his/her affairs in order.

The opponents of euthanasia have their concerns, which are also justifiable. They argue that it goes against ethics. They claim that no one has a right to take their life, or the life of another person. Mercy killing, despite its good intentions, goes against this ethical foundation of humanity. Secondly, it violates the physicians' oath (Birnbacher, 352). The singular responsibility of healthcare workers is to keep others healthy and save lives. Euthanasia is the opposite of this oath. It allows the doctors to end life instead of rendering physiological and psychological care for patients. The anti-euthanasia proponents also argue that encouraging euthanasia will have the ripple effect of encouraging others to do the same (Köhler, et al. 549).

According to psychologists, the family members of euthanasia victims are prone to advocate mercy killing on themselves and their close family members.

The topic of euthanasia remains controversial, with some countries confusing the citizens by enacting laws that are considered as outright contradiction. For instance, in England, suicide is not illegal but assisting a person to commit suicide is. Whichever the side has more weighty issues, euthanasia is an open debate and the proponents and the anti-euthanasia activists should listen to each other all the time.

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