



# The Rationality of Ethics: Teleological Theory reconciled in the context of Abortion

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## Abstract

This paper sought to argue about the notion of abortion, and its immorality within a society. Viewed teleologically, human behaviour such as committing abortion, may be designated as being moral or immoral according to the goals clearly established by a person and reasons given. Teleologic theory thus proposes that the ethical decision for carrying out an abortion focusses on the outcome of the abortion and its outcome on society. Realizing a goal and what one is doing is required and is an adequate condition to consider moral action without bearing in mind any transitional action taken to arrive at a particular objective. The article also seeks to reveal the importance of the biblical view of life as gift emanating from a Creator God. The author places emphasis on the ethical values deemed to be appropriate for Christians based on Holy Scripture relating to life and death issues. The themes for this paper were addressed by the researcher as follows: The immorality on abortion, some reasons given for abortion, the right to abortion, the unborn baby has a right to life, the unwanted pregnancy, Church views on abortion, society's view on abortion and what is considered to be right or wrong, ethical and unethical in having an abortion.

**Keywords:** Church, ethics, teleology, reconcile, abortion and pregnancy.

## Introduction

In this paper the author sought to argue about abortion as an immoral act in our society, furthermore, a definition on the notion abortion is provided and the author also dwells more on the issue of whether or not a foetus is a 'human being' or not. The researcher provides various reasons as to why some people choose to have an abortion instead of giving birth. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the arguments from those who are against abortion and their reasons, as well as how people defend themselves when perpetrating abortion and the explanations they may give. The researcher also seeks to answer the questions that surrounded the issue of abortion from a church perspective. The researcher also considers what society should do about the issue of abortion and also other themes that are related to this sensitive topic are briefly covered.

## The immorality on Abortion

Firstly the researcher defines the act of abortion as the ending of a pregnancy by removal or expulsion of an embryo or foetus before it can survive outside the uterus. Most people use medicine or surgery to remove the embryo or foetus and placenta from the uterus. This procedure is from time to time done by a licensed health care professional or the person involved themselves. Messerli makes us pay attention to the pains some women experience after abortion, when he states "...women who have had an abortion, goes through emotional hurt, in their lives as the result of the abortion" (Briasoulis, Agarwal & Messerli, 2012). He further points out that ending a pregnancy is another type of homicide that dehumanizes the value of human life (Briasoulis, Agarwal & Messerli, 2012).



Teleology is an important aspects in ethics systems. It is an explanation of a phenomenon in terms of the purpose it may serve rather than of the cause by which it arises. "Teleology" is a term that emanates from the ancient Greek words *telos* meaning "end" and *logos* when something is viewed scientifically. Aristotle. This supposed that a principle must be well-thought-out in four ways including the material, formal, efficient and final. (Ross, 1998). Thus one embracing a philosophy of teleology views the purpose in ends rather than in any stated causes, making the consequence the actual, or "final" cause. When one then views things in teleologically, they explain actions by the results they produce. Concerning abortions, teleologic theory proposes that the ethical decision would focus on the outcome of the abortion and its effect on society in general. Utilitarianism, is a sub-component of the teleological slant, and it suggests that if the outcome has value for everyone, then it must be good (Bonde et al., 2013)

Deontology also referred to as the "ethics of duty" holds a theory of duty and moral obligation. So deontological ethics by means of contrast supports the idea that specific duties define ethical behavior so that a person can do no less and be minimalistic, and still be acting correctly (Sahakian, 1974). The line between right and wrong is thin. Teleological ethics is maximalist as it identifies goals toward which people should aspire and accepts different degrees of right and wrong. Deontological ethics revolves around the issue of rightness or wrongness of actions, while teleological ethics deals with determining the goodness or badness of actions taken by people. (Lake, 1986).

Many people choose to prematurely terminate a pregnancy for a variety of reasons and abortion has been practiced in all cultures throughout history. Medical advances, and changing social norms in modern society have made it a more accessible and acceptable option than the earlier generations. Some do it for selfish reasons, for some the timing of a pregnancy was wrong, parents cannot afford to raise another child, or the pregnancy is socially unacceptable.

At this point I believe it is important to establish whether the foetus is a human being or cells before we move further. Messerli argues that after conception you have a real human being waiting to be born into the world and I agree with him from the biblical point of view in Jeremiah 1:5 we read "before I formed you in the womb I knew you before you were born to set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (NIV). This scripture supports the argument that the foetus is a human being because from conception God had appointed Jeremiah and even had plans for his future. Therefore abortion or terminating a pregnancy is a form of killing or is morally wrong because it wipes out the life of a potentially valuable human being.

On the other hand, some people suggest that abortion or terminating a pregnancy is not killing or murder because the foetus has not yet developed to become a human being. Kahse and Singer (1985: 704) stated that the baby is not a person, it has no rights and cannot suffer. Furthermore they continued to argue that a foetus is not a human being or a person but rather it is a human object. That means it can be terminated any time if the person that carrying it want to terminate due to her reasons. Moreover, Montgomery (1997:401) stated that the foetus is legally not a person and has no rights throughout the 40 or more weeks of pregnancy, except for one right after 24 weeks for protection from termination of pregnancy.

It is of course not only in Christianity where abortion is condemned, Hinduism and other faiths have equal reservation.

Hindu sacred texts are expressed quite clearly in regard of abortion, associating it with the worst sins that a Hindu believer can commit. These texts plus the doctrine concerning karma and reincarnation law, substantiate intransigent attitude of Hinduism towards abortion. Regarding Buddhism,



traditional embryology and the principle of nonviolence, reached the level of life mode, are the ones that determine an attitude similar to Hindu. (Constantin, 2010).

Whether the foetus is a human being or not, abortion poses serious health risks for women and they sometimes lose their fertility. Very often the decision to terminate a pregnancy is taken by young adults who are not mature enough and also lack experiences in life to make a good decision. Hendricks argues that even if the foetus is not a person, abortion is immoral, giving a foetus fetal alcohol syndrome is immoral and that if this is so, then killing the foetus is immoral (Hendricks, 2018). Furthermore he argued that abortion (in most cases) amounts to killing the foetus, this means that abortion (in most cases) is immoral.

### **Some reasons for abortions**

Abortion is very common in this world; many people have different reasons for abortion or terminating pregnancy. The majority of people are faced with unplanned pregnancies every year and it is estimated that 6 out of 10 decide to abort their unplanned pregnancies. However, some people abort their pregnancies for health reasons, some of which are discussed below.

### **The destructive impact on the life of a pregnant woman**

It is believed that if pregnancy occurs at the wrong time it can have a lifelong impact on the life of the pregnant woman who may battle to raise the child and earn a living. Many young girls become mothers before they reach adulthood and some do not even reach grade 12 at school and become dropouts. College girls who become young mothers found it difficult to finish their matric along with their peers. Single employed women who become impregnated by unemployed boyfriends earn very little and are not supported at all by the father of the child. Often, their careers are interrupted because bearing a child affects their earning ability and it becomes very difficult for them to raise their children alone. Because of this reason a young woman might decide to terminate the pregnancy and focus on her life and future. Coleman (2011) argues that women that undergo abortion have severe mental anguish.

### **Financial Constraints**

The finances one has can be a vital impact when considering terminating pregnancy because of the high cost associated with pregnancy, a birth and/or the costs of raising a child. Therefore those who earn enough money to live independently may not want to overburden themselves by having an unplanned pregnancy because they might not be able to support their newborn babies. An unplanned pregnancy places a huge financial burden on a woman who simply cannot afford to raise a child alone. The majority of women do not have medical care and this becomes a burden during their pregnancy because they have to visit antenatal clinics to ensure the health of the unborn child. If there is no money to visit hospitals for proper medical checkups during the pregnancy this may have a higher risk and complications may arise during the birth and the early childhood of the baby can also be constrained by lack of funds to support the mother in rearing her child.

### **Relationship problems**

There are many reasons that could cause a bad relationship between the boyfriend and the girlfriend that is pregnant that can lead to the abortion of an unborn baby. This can be one of the major causes for aborting an unborn baby. Some women with unplanned pregnancies are not in committed relationships and others do not stay with their partners which leads to an abortion being considered. Some women might think that they would raise their child as a single mother



but it is risky for many of them to take on the big responsibility to raise their children alone without the support of their partners. Such scenarios may result in an abortion. Sometimes problems in a relationship can become overwhelming. Some people feel let down and cannot deal with things faced on their own and felt and they may feel very isolated and aggrieved. Such women may perceive that they have no future and feel desperate as they see no future with their partner and it forces them to end the pregnancy.

One of the causes of abortion is an abusive relationship, in which many women experience physical abuse by their partner. Physical abuse occurs when physical force is used against one in a way that injures or endangers one. Physical assault is a crime, whether it occurs inside or outside of a family. This has often led to the majority of women to make drastic decisions and many often terminate their pregnancies which were the result of poor treatment by an abusive partner. Many women experience sexual abuse and it results in an unplanned pregnancy. In any situation in which a person is forced to participate in unwanted, unsafe, or humiliating sexual activity, sexual abuse exists. Forced into sex, even by a spouse or intimate partner with whom one also has consensual sex, is often an act of viciousness and domestic violence. Furthermore, people whose partners are abusive are at a higher risk of being seriously injured or they may even be killed.

Lowen (2017) argued that there is logic behind why women choose abortion, furthermore he argues that for some women, ending unwanted pregnancy is the only choice they have because people have choices even if a person chooses not to choose (Lowen, 2017). According to Lowen (2017), some women choose abortion because of the subsequent undesirable effect on the mother's life, and this could be that a pregnancy happened at the wrong time. He also stresses that the mother might not be economically independent and there is no feasibility for her to raise the child, and she also draws our attention that in some cases the mother might not be in a committed relationship with the father of the child and does not want to raise the child alone. For many abortion is an acceptable option (Sisson & Kimport, 2017).

### **Health issues**

In the book of Exodus 20: 13, God spoke about not committing murder of every sort, therefore abortion is to commit murder that is condemned by God. Conducting of abortion, has led to the feeling that everyone that is committing it and it can be superficial, painful or just a mere discomfort for the person who has the abortion. The level of discomfort can depend on the medications one obtains, how far into a pregnancy one is, and how much cramping and pain one may experience. For most people, it feels like a strong period of cramps. These include abdominal pain and cramping, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Abortion also carries the risk of significant complications such as bleeding, infection, and damage to organs. Problems such as damage to the uterus and cervical injury may cause severe future childbearing and pregnancy negative outcomes for example infertility, ectopic pregnancy, spontaneous abortion and stillbirth; complications of pregnancy risk of breast cancer; mental health disorders; and premature death. The very often negative psychological costs of abortion may lead to a psychiatric disorder called a post-abortion syndrome (Coleman, 2011).

In some instances abortion is conducted when the pregnancy is done in a fallopian tube and it poses more risks for the person who is pregnant. In this case abortion is done for the purpose of saving the life of the person by sacrificing the pregnancy regardless of the person wanting to be pregnant or not. There is a stigma attached to many women who undergo abortions which has been shown to have negative effects on a woman's physical and mental health, and also on the public health of the society (Link & Phelan, 2006),



## **The right to abort**

It has been argued that women have the right to abort their pregnancies; according to the Holmes and Peterson (1982) women have the fundamental moral right to make decision about their choices about their bodies. It is also argued that women's rights include the right of making decisions as to whether to keep a pregnancy or abort it (Sheldon, 2016). Furthermore it continues that women should be viewed as a person, not just a vessel that carries a foetus; it says that women have bodily rights and human rights. It is their view that "banning abortion puts women at risk by forcing them to use illegal abortionists" (Holmes & Peterson 1982).

The World Health Organization (2011) estimated that of the 21.6 million unsafe abortion that took place globally in 2008, 21.2 million occurred in "developing" regions. Those who are in support of abortion says if women are not allowed to have an abortion it deprives them their right, they argue that a woman has the right to decide what she can bear and what she cannot bear with her body meaning that they have a freedom to do what they want about their bodies (Aiken et al., 2016). They continue to argue that abortion is an important element of women's rights as they are more affected by abortion than men and mostly so when there are debates about abortion. According to the debate on the right to abort a pregnancy, women should be given free access to abortion in or order to achieve full political, social, and economic equality with men (Sheldon, 2016; Major et al., 2009).

## **The unborn baby has the right to live**

Permissive abortion is now recognized within the legal systems of many advanced modern societies and is accepted within the practice of modern medicine (Noonan, 1970). Those who support abortion argue that the unborn baby has not yet developed to be a human being and therefore can be terminated within few weeks however science helps us to understand that when the male and female germ cell unite with another it fertilized cell which is the start of a new life. According to scientists the beginning of the life of a human being starts at conception, but there are many people come with different theories on exactly when human life starts or when an embryo becomes a person. To some people, they believe that life starts at the first heartbeat of the baby or the time the embryo is planted in the mother's uterus. However, the baby has life within the first three weeks after conception and most abortions are performed after three weeks of conception.

It is very wrong for others to claim that a foetus is not a person but just cells, we understand that it grows and develops and also contains all the genetic material needed to develop into a unique personality. Therefore if we have established that a foetus is a human being and every human being is valuable before the sight of God, then we can establish that abortion is like murder and therefore an immoral act. Most Christians or those who are against abortion believe that the only time to take the life of an unborn child or abort a pregnancy is to save the life of his or her mother, or so to prevent both mother and child from dying (Allanson, 2007).

One of the reasons those who are against abortion would allow abortion is the health of the unborn child. In this modern-day and era with the advancement of technology, a series of tests can be conducted in the womb. If these tests reveal that the baby is handicapped and has a serious illness before the child is born it is considered suitable to abort the foetus. We understand that some of these illnesses might be so serious that the baby would have little chance of survival. Others might not be life-threatening but may have a serious impact on the child's health and its "quality of life". In such cases, some parents decide to abort the child to prevent future suffering. They might take this decision after much consideration and out of genuine love.



In this regard, we need to understand that human beings are different from other creatures and have a soul. Since God is the Creator of all things including unborn babies we, therefore, have no right to take the life of an unborn child. In the book of Psalm the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter says that “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1). The Bible teaches us that we are created in God’s image, and He created each one according to His divine purpose, it is not up to us to decide who may live and who may die. To terminate an unborn life because it is not perfect is to assume God’s role.

One classical example in the Old Testament Bible is God warned human beings not to murder their fellow human beings: “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). Killing defenseless children is an abomination in the sight of God (Jeremiah 32:35, Psalm 94:6-10). The great amounts of abortions are performed with other motives, and these motives contradict what the Bible says. Some reasons we see devalue the well-being of the foetus and that only the mother’s life is valuable in this context. For some reason most women think their life would be destroyed if they get a child before they finish their education, some think they already have enough children, others consider themselves too young, or their economic situation is too difficult to cope with another child or a first child. These are serious issues that we need to look into to arrive at a solution. Women who find themselves in this dire situation indeed need help, however in such cases, abortion is never a legitimate solution. Viewed from a Christian perspective, human beings cannot decide about the life of another person. Only God can, as Christians, we know that human life has infinite worth, no matter whether a child is handicapped or disabled.

To support the above argument Christian Action strongly suggests that the unborn baby is a human being (Christian Action.org, n.d). Humans are not bodies with souls; rather, a human being is a "dependent, vitality-given unit, for which the term psychosomatic entity might be appropriate" (Brueggemann, 1977:453). Furthermore, all human beings are a living soul. Therefore, from its creation in the mother’s womb, the baby already develops into a human in the early days. The Christian Action group disputes the notion that abortion can be done up to 12 weeks because they believe that all body systems of the baby are at work the moment the baby is conceived (Christian Action.org, n.d). According to Christian Action abortion is expensive and not economically feasible. Help should be given to the women who seek to abort a child because it is not the solution. There are so many protections available in the market and if they are not ready to have babies, women and men must protect themselves from getting the woman pregnant or better still abstain from sex until they are ready and preferably married.

### **The unwanted pregnancy**

Due to the large range in possibilities of unwanted pregnancies, possible foetal health problems and the inability to support a child, abortion must be accessible to women who feel that they are not ready to be mothers. They continue to argue that everyone has a basic fundamental right to do anything with their body. One of the things pointed out by supporters of abortion is that the legal and professional abortion reduces women's injury or even death from illegal backstreet abortions. They argue that women who are unable to have an abortion may become unemployed and live below the poverty line or can become victims of domestic violence (Emerson, 2007). They say if the woman was raped she has to decide whether to keep the child or abort the pregnancy. They believe this can cause her to live a stressful life that can lead to depression or suicidal attempts. The supporters also argue that abortion is not murder because it performed before a foetus developed into a human being. A foetus does not become real human being until it is physically delivered from the mother’s womb according to them (Williams, 1982).



## Church view on abortion

It is believed that abortion is not just a secular problem but a religious problem as well, it happens in our churches. The same people who are in churches on Sunday are the same people who are at clinics on Monday to terminate their pregnancies. The church needs to acknowledge that this development is very sad and after acknowledging this sad immoral act, the church needs to help to find a solution to this sad reality.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) placed a statement on their webpage on the topic of abortion which argues:

God loves each human life from the instant of his or her conception and entrusts this gift to the protection of a mother and father. Abortion ends the life of a child and offends God. It also deeply wounds the men and women involved.

There is a moral code of values that drives a decision to seek an abortion but it is the actual abortion itself which needs to be prevented since the consequences of the act serve to harm both women and men. Theologically, an unwanted teen pregnancy does not validate abortion, and this is irrespective of any financial or social consequences to which arise. If a mother's life is in danger or if there has been incest, one may agree that this might be a teleological viewpoint because it is the health and well-being of the mother which motivates the decision-making to proceed to conduct the abortion (Williams, 1982; Miroiu, 1994).

The church has been addressing social ills but has not given much attention to the issue of abortion in the current global context. Many Christian churches are helping individuals and communities deal with issues that are confronting them on a daily basis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of these are brokenness, depression, domestic violence, and other illness related issues plaguing the world. Most churches have soup kitchens to feed the hungry, they collect clothes for the poor and the needy, and they also help the homeless. These and many more are ministries the church is involved in daily. The sad thing is that many pastors and priests have withdrawn from using the pulpit to discuss abortion and they have remained silent in the pulpit. As a result, of their silence, they have allowed a moral issue to become defined as a political human rights issue.

The ministers should give strong ministerial support to women and their partners to take the right decisions about the pregnancy. One of the duties of the church is to give a moral support to people that are faced by terrible and painful life challenges such as divorce, grief, and death. The church dedicates time, talent, and resources to help people who are facing life threatening issues to recover but have paid little or no attention to those who are challenged with the abortion decision. Most women do not see the church as a place to go for help with pregnancy or abortion decisions, however the church is the safest place to talk about abortion options such as parenting, abortion, and adoption. This is the biggest challenge for the church- to face abortion head-on. The church must hold fast to the biblical view codes of conduct that are recorded on the Old Testament and in the New Testament books of the Holy Bible. The church should be prepared to provide emotional and spiritual support to women who would choose to keep their child as a result of an unplanned pregnancy. The church is the source of love and built upon love, therefore she must embrace all the children, planned as well as unplanned.

The church has to show the members that abortion is not the best way to go and it is an immoral act. The church should let the people know and remind them that the it is a loving and caring community of God that is connected to every member of the community (Nicolaidis, 2010) to help them make a good decision and to support them after the decision has been made. The church



should open its doors and establish pregnancy centers to help women who are facing a dilemma with their pregnancies and who have no where else to go for support.

It is believed that when a Christian woman gets pregnant out of wedlock she gets terrified as to how this will affect her life and what will happen if her parents find out, and she also gets worried about what will happen if her pastor or youth pastor finds out. Many churches would handle this situation better than a woman would assume churches would. Churches should not shame them or kick women out if they get pregnant out of wedlock. Churches should rise to the challenge and do a great job of supporting the women but most often they are not certain as to how the church would deal with this difficult issue.

Church's mutual belief is that abortion is seriously wrong at every stage. At the very least, early abortion was seen as attacking a being with human destiny created in the image of God (*Imago Dei*), being prepared by God to receive an immortal soul. Jeremiah 1:5 advises us: "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you". Modern science has proven that the life of human begins at the conception, however, this has not changed the Church's constant teaching against abortion, but has underscored how important and reasonable it is, by confirming that the life of each individual of the human begins with the earliest embryo. The official position of the Roman Catholic Church on abortion is that under any circumstances, including abortion to save the life of the mother should be prohibited. This may be viewed as harsh by some churches however.

### **Society's view on abortion**

Those who oppose abortion in all circumstances believe that the best way to reduce the number of abortions is to make it illegal. They believe that by making abortion illegal means that abortion will cease to exist on the earth. They hold this view despite verifiable proof that women continue to have abortions in nations where it is banned. The illegal and unsafe abortion will often result in a terrible tragedy. This will damage many women, their families, and whole communities, but it doesn't have any impact on reducing abortion.

Some people suggest that in doing abortion less is necessary and by far the better approach to end abortion. The first approach in bringing this idea into the light is to reduce the occurrence of unintended pregnancy. Studies suggest that half of the pregnancies that we witness are unintended, and even that, half of them end up in abortion (Holmes & Peterson, 1981). It is suggested that unintended pregnancy could be reduced significantly if we all show true commitment to extensive sexual education that includes medically accurate information about abstinence and contraception. We need insurance coverage and public funding for family planning services; greater access to emergency contraception which prevents pregnancy and does not cause abortion and programmes that can curb domestic violence and sexual abuse. Clearly, women who can avoid unintended pregnancy do not have to make the difficult decision of whether to have an abortion or not.

When a woman finds herself with an unexpected pregnancy, one of the positive ways to reduce abortion is to ensure that she has the means to raise a child in a healthy and safe way should she wish to do so. By providing low-income for young women with genuine education and career opportunities, health care, child care, housing, services for disabled children, and other basic supports, many would have the resources they need to fulfill the serious obligations that parenting brings (Williams, 1982). What is needed is good leadership and people who are committed to the vision of a society in which all women would have information and means necessary to prevent unintended pregnancies, to deliver their babies and to raise their children with safety, stability, and dignity.



## What is right or wrong in doing abortion

As early as the 13th century, St. Thomas Aquinas made wide-ranging use of Aristotle's thought, including his theory that the rational human soul is not present in the first few weeks of pregnancy. But he also excluded abortion as being gravely wrong at every stage. He stated that it is a sin against nature and God, to discard God's gift of a new life. Thomas Aquinas' natural law argues humans should seek to discern moral principles by their God-given reason, he goes on to say that humans are responsible for all the choices they make.

Thomas Aquinas's opinion on the moral status of the embryo or fetus and the act of abortion. His discussion of sin, morality, and murder indicates his views on the development of life within the womb. These sections show that Aquinas believed in the progression of life from a "vegetable"-like, unanimated state to an animal life and finally to a human, animated state. *Summa Theologica* offers no defense of abortion as a permissible act at any stage in the pregnancy, but it does specify that once the fetus has become animated (when he believed ensoulment of the living human being took place), it is homicide to kill it. This measure of ensoulment or delayed hominization (the belief that the embryo or fetus was not a human life with a soul until a particular event after conception) is typically equated with the stage at which quickening took place—defined by Aristotle as forty days for boys and eighty days after conception for girls. (Brind'Amour, 2007).

We learn from Aquinas that good habits compel one to act in a good manner and this enables them to perform just actions. God has inscribed natural law in us and our conscience would tell us that human life is important has to be preserved no matter what stage it is (Kretzschmar, 2004:93). Natural law helps us to know what is good and what is bad. Kant reminds us that inherent in human beings was an awareness of the moral law, and the moral law wants us to respect every human being (Nicolaidis, 2014). We also learn from Kant that certain actions are simply wrong even if they provide some material benefit (Kretzschmar, 2004:97). According to our studies on the Teleological approach to ethics, it deals with the goals or the consequences of certain actions whether they are good or bad. In this regard if a pregnant woman wishes to for example, abort the pregnancy and further her education the teleological approach says her end goal determines whether the action is good or bad but not the action itself.

According to Jeremy Bentham and his utility principle, this has placed humankind under the governance of two essential natures of pain and pleasure, these two elements determine what we ought to do and what we shall do (Bentham, 2016). Based on the issue of abortion, a pregnant woman is the only person who should make the decision on what would bring pain or pleasure before she can execute her plans. The weakness in this moral decision making is the difficulty of envisaging consequences which are very difficult to know from the beginning. The majority of people choose abortion because they want to pursue their education, but end up been school dropouts, while others may choose abortion with the hope that they will give birth later and eventually they may end up childless.

In our studies regarding virtue ethics, we are told that someone with good character is determined by the motives that drive the action of that person. When someone can stand against evil and temptation this can be determined as someone with a strong character. In virtue ethics the question we ask is "Is this what a good person would do? (Kretzschmar et al., 2009:168). Would a good person destroy the life of the unborn child which God has planted in her womb? Is it morally right to reject the gift of God?



## Conclusion

This article focused on the theology of ethics relating to the issue of abortion. It also focused both on what is right and wrong in doing abortion based on the reasons that drive a person to do it. It is our responsibility as human being to accept the gift of God and to be thankful for His kindness. We are obliged to love the gift that God has given to us. The number of couples out there who cannot have their own child because of medical conditions are too numerous to count. Those who do not want their babies because of one reason or the other can put them up for adoption or send them to motherless baby homes. Nomsa (Pseudonym) said she aborted three pregnancies in her young days because she was not ready to become a mother; she said she wanted to further her education. When she married and settled with her husband she could not have a child for her husband, she is now over 63 years now and does not have any child. She has regretted her action of aborting three different pregnancies and in her local community she has been stigmatized as barren woman.

This article above sought to explain the notion of abortion, and it also stressed some of the reasons of why some people had an abortion. Abortion is not an option and there are many ways to protect someone from an unwanted pregnancy. It is our moral obligation to keep the pregnancies and love children. The Christian churches cannot ignore the issue of abortion but should continue speaking up against it based on Holy Scripture. It not only tempts and harms their members, but also does grave harm to all involved in it if issues such as abortion are simply sidelined. The core category of ethical theory in terms of which the article has been analysed regarding abortion is teleological ethics. Beneficence and non-maleficence are required and the key argument of the article is that it is morally and ethically unacceptable to perform an action of abortion in the quest of a good end, when one fully understands that the action will also likely bring about some bad results. It is important to guard oneself against doing the wrong thing that can lead one to a dead-end. Christians need to approach the issue of abortion with a strict and critical examination, and especially serious introspection based on their faith and church teachings.

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