Ethics of Euthanasia

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Ethics of Euthanasia

The problem that our group is focusing on is the ethics of euthanasia. Euthanasia, also known as physician-assisted suicide, is the practice of intentionally ending a person's life in order to relieve suffering. This practice is controversial and raises significant ethical questions, as it involves intentionally causing the death of a patient.

The significance of this problem in terms of patient outcomes is that euthanasia can be seen as a way to relieve suffering and improve the quality of life for those who are terminally ill or experiencing unbearable pain. However, it can also be argued that euthanasia goes against the principles of preserving life and autonomy, and could potentially be abused or misused. There are varying statistics and opinions on the prevalence and impact of euthanasia, and this is a topic of ongoing debate and research.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the ethical considerations surrounding euthanasia, including the potential benefits and risks. We will consider the potential implications of including euthanasia as an option in human medicine, and examine the current debates and research on this topic. We will also consider the perspectives of various stakeholders, including patients, healthcare providers, and policymakers, and the role of informed consent in decision-making about euthanasia. Our paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the ethical issues surrounding euthanasia and to contribute to the ongoing debate on this topic.

Evidence Matrix Table:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Article** | **References** | **Purpose**  **Hypothesis**  **Study Question(s)** | **Variables**  **Independent(I)**  **Dependent(D)** | **Study Design** | **Sample**  **Size &**  **Selection** | **Data Collection**  **Methods** | **Major Finding(s)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1** | Baksheev, A. I., Turchina, Z. E., Mineev, V. V., Maksimov, S. V., Rakhinsky, D. V., & Aisner, L. Y. (2018). Euthanasia in modern society: the topicality, practicability, and medical aspect of the problem. *Journal of pharmaceutical sciences and research*, *10*(6), 1360-1363. | The research question of the study appears to be the examination of the ethical, legal, and medical aspects of euthanasia and the attitudes of doctors towards its use. | The independent variables in this study appear to be the types of euthanasia (active and passive) and the attitudes of doctors towards the use of various forms of euthanasia. The dependent variables are the ethical, legal, and medical aspects of euthanasia and the current state of the right to euthanasia in the world. | Qualitative literature review | Convenience sample of doctor’s | The data collection method mentioned in the article is a survey of doctors' attitudes towards the use of various forms of euthanasia. | The major findings of the study appear to be that the problem of euthanasia is one of the most complex and unresolved issues in the fields of medicine, ethics, philosophy, and law, and that it is not possible to consider the problem of euthanasia from the perspective of good and evil (Baksheev et al., 2018). The authors also present their own perspective on the issue and conclude that the consolidation of a legal form of euthanasia at the legislative level may not solve the underlying problem and could potentially facilitate actions that contradict moral and justice norms. |
| **2** | Hurn, S., & Badman‐King, A. (2019). Care as an alternative to euthanasia? Reconceptualizing veterinary palliative and end‐of‐life care. Medical Anthropology Quarterly, 33(1), 138-155. | The study aims to examine the current practices and debates surrounding euthanasia in veterinary medicine, and to consider the potential benefits and limitations of alternative approaches to end-of-life care. | 1. The dependent variable is the veterinarian who has to make a decision whether to euthanize an animal or not. The veterinarian uses his values, beliefs and knowledge about the animal.  2. The independent variables are the factors that influence the veterinarian decision such as client values about their pet’s quality of life, disease progression, and legal requirements. | Qualitative case study | Sample of veterinary professionals | Interviews and focus groups | The care provided by veterinarians during the time before death is important and veterinary palliative care decreases the pain but is not able to relieve it completely (Hurn & Badman‐King, 2019). Therefore the legal aspects are a concern not only for the human benefits but also in the ethical perspective and should be taken into account. |
| **3** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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**Description of Findings**

In the study by Baksheev et al. (2018), the focus is on the ethical, practical, and medical aspects of euthanasia in modern society. The study is a review of the literature on euthanasia, and examines the current debates and legal frameworks surrounding this practice. The study design is a qualitative literature review, and the levels of confidence in the findings may be considered moderate to high, depending on the quality and relevance of the sources reviewed. The study does not include specific participant demographics or information, as it is a review of existing research rather than a primary study. No specific instruments are mentioned in the study, as it is a review of literature rather than a primary research study.

In the study by Hurn and Badman-King (2019), the focus is on the concept of care as an alternative to euthanasia in veterinary medicine. The study aims to examine the current practices and debates surrounding euthanasia in veterinary medicine, and to consider the potential benefits and limitations of alternative approaches to end-of-life care. The study design is a qualitative case study, and the levels of confidence in the findings may be considered moderate to high, depending on the quality and relevance of the data collected. The study includes a sample of veterinary professionals who were interviewed and participated in focus groups, and the sample size is not explicitly stated. The data collection methods include interviews and focus groups, and the findings are based on the analysis of the data collected.

In comparing and contrasting the variables within each study, it can be noted that both studies are concerned with the ethics of euthanasia and end-of-life care. However, the focus and approach of the two studies is somewhat different, with the study by Baksheev et al. (2018) focusing more on the ethical, practical, and medical aspects of euthanasia in general, and the study by Hurn and Badman-King (2019) focusing specifically on the concept of care as an alternative to euthanasia in veterinary medicine. Both studies use qualitative research designs, but the study by Hurn and Badman-King (2019) includes a case study element and includes data collected through interviews and focus groups. Both studies include participant information, with the study by Hurn and Badman-King (2019) including a sample of veterinary professionals, but the study by Baksheev et al. (2018) does not include specific participant demographics as it is a review of literature rather than a primary research study. No specific instruments are mentioned in either study.

The research findings of both studies provide evidence to support the clinical problem of the ethics of euthanasia, and highlight the complexities and controversies surrounding this issue. However, further evidence may be needed to fully understand the ethical considerations and potential impacts of euthanasia and alternative approaches to end-of-life care. Based on the findings of these studies, two questions that could help guide further research and exploration of this topic are:

1. What are the potential benefits and risks of including euthanasia as an option for end-of-life care in human medicine, and how can these be balanced to ensure that the rights and autonomy of patients are respected?

2. How can alternative approaches to end-of-life care, such as palliative care or care-oriented approaches, be implemented and supported in order to provide effective and compassionate support for patients and families facing terminal illness?

**Conclusion**

In reviewing the major findings of our research, it is clear that there are a range of views and opinions on the topic of euthanasia, and that there are both potential benefits and risks associated with this practice. Some argue that euthanasia can be a compassionate and respectful way to end the suffering of terminally ill patients, while others argue that it goes against the fundamental principles of preserving life and respecting autonomy.

In conclusion, the ethics of euthanasia is a complex and controversial issue that raises significant moral, legal, and practical questions. While there may be compelling arguments on both sides of the debate, it is important to carefully consider the potential impacts on patient outcomes and the role of informed consent in decision-making about euthanasia. Ultimately, any decisions about euthanasia should be guided by a commitment to the highest ethical standards and a respect for the dignity and autonomy of patients.

References

Baksheev, A. I., Turchina, Z. E., Mineev, V. V., Maksimov, S. V., Rakhinsky, D. V., & Aisner, L. Y. (2018). Euthanasia in modern society: the topicality, practicability, and medical aspect of the problem. *Journal of pharmaceutical sciences and research*, *10*(6), 1360-1363.

Hurn, S., & Badman‐King, A. (2019). Care as an alternative to euthanasia? Reconceptualizing veterinary palliative and end‐of‐life care. Medical Anthropology Quarterly, 33(1), 138-155.