

Exploring the Concerns and Practices Associated with Organ Transplantation in the Context of Muslims in Pakistan from an Anthropological Perspective

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Abstract : The human body often serves as a reference point to analyse the notions of self and society. Situating on Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu theories of embodiments, this research explores the notions around the human body and its influence on the ethical considerations in regards to organ transplantation among the Muslim communities in Pakistan. The context of Pakistan makes an intriguing case study as cadaveric organ transplantation is not in practise. Whereas living organ transplantation is commonly is practised between family members only. These contradictory practices apparently rests on the ideologies around the human body and religious beliefs as well the personal judgements and authority of healthcare professionals. This research is a year-long ethnographic study carried out as part of doctoral studies. An anthropological approach towards organ transplantation in Pakistan brought forward various socio-cultural notions around the human body and selfhood that serve as a framework around biomedical ethical issues in various societies. Further, it surface the contradictions and issues associated with organ transplantation that makes it a dilemma situated in a nexus of various socio-cultural and political factors rather seeing it as an isolated health concern. This research is a novel study on the subject of organ transplantation in the context of Pakistan but also put forward ethnographic data that could serve as a reference in other religious societies. Further, the ethnographic data bring forward experiences and stories of organ receivers, organ donors, religious leaders, healthcare professionals, and the general public, which aspire to encourage biomedical ethicists and social-scientists to consider ethnography as a research methodology and rely upon people's lived experiences while establishing policies and practices around biomedical ethical issues.

Keywords : Gender, organ transplantation, muslims, pakistan, organ donation, bioethics, culture and religion, gender

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