Selling and Purchasing Human Organs: Should It Be Legalized?

What can be done when there is a shortage in human organ donations? Should poor people sell their organs? Should selling and purchasing human organs be legal?

Most people say that selling human organs is the best way to get an organ easily because in hospitals there are long listed names with patients those in need for an organ. However, this differences between rich people and poor people. Rich people can afford to buy an organ while poor people cannot. They also say that is a faster way for poor people to earn some money. There is an expression that says; there is no wealth without health. This saying illustrates how health is very important factor for a better financial the most precious thing in life. For these reasons, selling and purchasing human organs should not be legalized for three major reasons.

Nevertheless, critics claim that selling and buying human organs is up to an individual’s choice whether to sell an organ or not. Every person has the right to do whatever he wants with his body. In “The Ethics of Organ Selling: A Libertarian Perspective”, the author Kyriazi (2001) states, “As owners of themselves, individuals have the right to sell their organs, give them away, and even to allow themselves to be “harvested” of their organs in a productive form of suicide, for whatever reason they choose.” (Kyriazi, 2001). What the expert means is that because the body belongs to the person himself, no one can interfere with his decisions of what he will do with his body parts. For example, “a few people, on the other hand, may choose to sell an organ during their lifetime. This may seem like a radical idea, but it need not be an irrational one” (Holcberg, 2005). In other words, people with an awareness of the risks would sell their organs. Therefore, critics support the idea of selling organs on behalf of their rights based on freedom of choice.
Though it may be true that the sale and purchase of human organs is the person's choice to make, but it is not completely right. However, by selling a human organ it can interfere with his rights, dignity, and wealth. According to Wilkinson and Garrard (1996), they stated: “the relationship between the buyer and the seller is likely to be exploitative and to either cause or constitute an unacceptable commodification of the seller and/or her body” (1996). In other words, trading sometimes may be based on a fraud. For example, the seller will often lose his right on receiving the money that should be given to him. In addition, in “Kidneys for Sale”, Andre and Velasquez (1988) say that, “individuals have a right to live their lives with freedom and dignity. A market in organs would inevitably lead to abuses that would violate the freedom and dignity of individuals.” (1988). In other words, pressure sometimes forces a person in order to sell his organ and, consequently, his rights are not respected. In addition, in “Commodification and Exploitation: Arguments in favour of compensated organ donation”, it is stated that Castro (2003) states, “to sell an integral human body part is to corrupt the very meaning of human dignity.” (2003). There is no price for a human organ, or else the person will lose his dignity. Therefore, selling and buying human organs is not the right thing to do should be banned because it often demeans and exploits the seller.

Nevertheless, it is argued that the reason why people want the selling and the purchase of human organs to be legalized is because patients have to wait longer to get an organ through legal ways and it will increase the number of organs to be transplanted. By saying legal ways it is meant by adding the patient's name to the waiting list in hospitals. In “To Save Lives, Legalize Trade in Organs”, Holberg
claims that “if you were sick and needed a kidney transplant, you would soon find out that there is a waiting line and that there are 70,000 people ahead of you, 4,000 of whom will die within a year.” In other words, to get an organ legally, there are some conditions to get it, and the waiting list is one of the conditions where there are many people waiting for an organ, and the chance to get an organ is very small. In addition, in “donate life”, it is stated, “Every 10 minutes another name is added to the national organ transplant waiting list.” That means that many people in less than half an hour are added to the waiting list for an organ. Consequently, many persons in need of an organ transplantation surgery will die before every receiving an organ. Likewise, Kishore (2004) says, “In certain countries of the Eurotransplant area: Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, the Netherlands, and Slovenia, as at 1 July 2004, there were 15585 people on the waiting list.” To finish the waiting list at that time, 15585 organs are needed. Therefore, waiting list is providing a steady supply of organs is one reason for people legalizing the buying and selling of human organs.

It may be true that the patient lose his patience when he is listed on the waiting list. Nonetheless, legalizing the sale and purchase of organs may lead to organs theft. In “Eight Ethical Objections to an Organ Market… And Why They’re Wrong,” Stephanie R. Murphy (2005) says, “An organ market would encourage organ thieves. It also encourages the killing of comatose and brain dead patients to harvest their organs and make a profit.” In other words, people need money, and so by stealing organs from people, they can sell them to people in need for organs in order to gain some money. For example, “some organs are stolen whilst the person is drugged, whilst people are smuggled into countries on the pretext of employment opportunities just to be killed in order for their organs to be harvested” (Billericky).
What the author means is that people are being kidnapped in order to take their organs and sell them. In short, legalizing the black market will simply be giving official approval of crime. In addition, Barnett, Saliba, and Walker (2001) state, “although...the increased number of kidneys available for transplant would reduce the magnitude of the current insufficiency, some insufficiency would remain.” (2001). In other words, no matter what, the demand for an organ will always be higher than the supply of organs. Similarly, Barnett, Saliba, and Walker (2001) state, “There are reports of the kidnapping and murder of children and adults to “harvest” their organs.” (2001). Organs are taken from people by force or sometimes by murdering them. For these reasons, because rights are not considered by stealing people’s organs and selling them, and it will never supply all the demand for organs, a legalized system of buying and selling organs should be banned to deter crime.

Finally, some critics also claim that the sale of human organs is the best way for the poor to get a better financial life. Poor people can sell their organ to get money if they are in need of money. In “Eight Ethical Objections to an Organ Market...And Why They’re Wrong”, it is claimed that “it would help poor people by increasing the amount of options they have for money making” (Murphy, 2005). In other words, the poor can benefit from black market transactions. For example, a man sold his kidney to buy a fast food restaurant (Freeman, 2006). The poor man benefited from selling his organ by buying what he wanted. Therefore, selling organs can help the poor’s financial life in many ways.

It may be true poor people benefit from selling their organs. However, sometimes it can make their life worse that what it used to be and it causes inequality between rich and poor people. In "Medical Exploitation and Black Market Organs: Profiteering and Disparities in Global Medicine", the author Michael Shafer (2010) says that even if the person
does not receive money, they will temporarily benefit, but at the end their situation is worse than what it was before (2010). Sellers may think that what they receive will help them for the rest of their lives, but that is not always true. In addition, in “Selling Organs for Transplants”, it is quoted that Cline (n.d.) states, “In each case, it is the rich who would most benefit by moving laws into the opposite direction, not the poor.” (Cline, n.d.) In other words, laws legalizing the sale and the purchase of organs do not support poor people; it only supports rich people, and by that As a consequence, rich people can exploit poor people. Therefore, not all deals and laws support poor people; banning the sale and the purchase of organs would protect the poor.

As can be seen, Selling while selling and purchasing human organs, at first glance, may appear to be a solution to the problem facing the sick and the poor, this system would result in greater problems. A person with an organ that wants to sell his organ in order to earn money. Because of selling and purchasing human organs especially in black markets, thieves try to steal people’s organs to sell them. Furthermore, Selling being able to sell their one’s own organs does not mean that it is their one’s right to do so. In addition, Not not waiting on the waiting list and buying human organs causes inequality between rich and poor people, and sometimes it exploits poor people. To get a better financial life does not mean that poor people should sell their organs for money. Refer the reader is referred back to the expression about the relationship between wealth and health. People cannot have a good life unless they are healthy.

However, buying and not doing whatever with their organs and selling human organs is not the way to go.
Work Cited


