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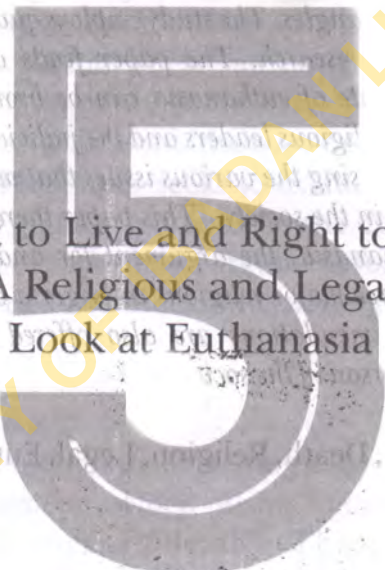
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 - Agitation for Justice in Ken Saro-Wiwa's <i>A Month and A Day</i>	18 – 37
2 – <i>Imago Dei</i> in Genesis 1:26: Anthropology and Human Life in the Context of Contemporary Nigerian Experience	38 – 58
3 - Biblical Response to Postmodern Sexual Practices in Leviticus 18:22-23 and Its Readings for the 21st Century Christians	59 – 76
4 - The Cultural Significance of <i>Ukele</i> Music in <i>Ikenge</i> Festival of the Ogume People of Delta State, Nigeria	77 – 98
5 – Right to Live and Right to Die: A Religious and Legal look at Euthanasia	99 – 120
6 - Mass Media and Reading Culture: Towards Promoting the Culture of Reading in Nigeria	121 – 139
7 - Stress and Burnout among Music Students of Lagos State University, Ojo.	140–158
8 - An Appraisal of Female Access to Land and Other Legal Title Documents in Nigeria: A Case Study of Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria	159–175
9 - The African Union (AU) and the Challenges of Leadership and Development in Africa: A Critical Appraisal	176–216

<b>10 - Maiming the Icarus Complex through Moulding Personality Psyche in Children: A Study in Children's Literature</b>	217 – 238
<b>11 - Readers' Perception of the Effects of Security Reportage in Nigerian Newspapers</b>	239 – 270
<b>12 - Artist Management in Nigeria: Issues and Perspectives in Popular Music Sector</b>	271 - 295
<b>13 - The Anti-Usury Legislation of the Covenant Code: Implication for Business Ethics in the African Socio-Economic Space</b>	296 – 326
<b>14 - English Language in Higher Education and Laboratory Phonotactics</b>	327 - 353



**Right to Live and Right to Die:  
A Religious and Legal  
Look at Euthanasia**

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## **Abstract**

*Over the years, the debates on the right to live and right to die (euthanasia) have evoked avalanche of human sentiments from scholars. Previous studies so far carried out have focused mainly on the medical, moral and psychological perspectives with little attention paid to the religio-legal dimension in the entire discourse. This is the gap in scholarship that this work intends to fill. That is, a consideration of the camps of irreconcilable proponents and opponents of euthanasia in the contemporary society from the religious and legal angles. The study employs qualitative method in carrying out this research. The paper finds out, among other things, that the rate of euthanasia can be brought to the barest minimum if both religious leaders and the judiciary take the bull by the horns in addressing the various issues that make euthanasia to become rampant in the society. This paper therefore examines the meaning of euthanasia, the argument for and against and the position of the three major religions in Nigeria and the law in the discourse. Recommendations are also offered on how to treat terminally sick person in the society.*

*Keywords: Right, Death, Religion, Legal, Euthanasia*

## **Introduction**

In the recent times, issues relating to euthanasia and its attendant controversy have generated serious debate in the academia, law and the medical circles. The raging issue has to do with how society treats its terminally sick person and the position of religions, law and medicine in addressing the subject matter. Apart from the consideration of the matter from both the religious and legal standpoints, there are other several compounding factors making the issue of

euthanasia a pressing problem in the contemporary society. The debate cuts across complex and dynamic aspects such as ethical, human rights, health, economic, spiritual, social and cultural sides of the civilized society. Euthanasia raises a number of ethical questions, some of which are similar to those relating to abortion. What is the value of life when the person is permanently incapacitated mentally and he is sustained by life-supporting machine when is under great pain and suffering, not just to the person but also to the relatives who have to shoulder the responsibility of sustaining the person when all hopes of recovery are entirely lost. The supreme question is whether euthanasia is ever justified or if life should always be preserved under any condition. The paper seeks to examine the subject of euthanasia with greater spotlight on the general overview of the definition of euthanasia, argument for and argument against the practice and their status in religions and under Nigerian Law.

### **Defining Euthanasia**

The word euthanasia etymologically comes from two Greek words '*Euthukos*', which means "good" or "well" and '*thanatos*' which means "death". Thus, discussion of euthanasia is literally a discussion of how to have a good death and avoid uselessly prolonging the dying process. Euthanasia therefore implies painless termination of the

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B.E.Oniha and O.O.Mabel. Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide as Basic Rights Under the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. Online Material. Accessed July 15, 2017.

A.O.Nwafor. Comparative Perspective in Euthanasia in Nigeria and Ethiopia. [https://llchiiot: file.wordpress.com/2011](https://llchiiot.file.wordpress.com/2011).

S.W.Kunhiyop. African Christian Ethics. Nairobi.Hippo Books. 2008.,P346.

M.C. Obi. A Critical Appraisal of Euthanasia Under Nigerian Laws, Online material Accessed on 17 July 2017.

Black H.C,Black's Law Dictionary (USA: St Paul's Minn-West Publishing Co, 1999).

Chamber 21st Century Dictionary (Cambridge:

life of a person who is suffering from an incurable, painful or distressful disease or handicaps. It can also be defined as the act or practice of causing or hastening the death of a person who suffers from an incurable or terminal disease or conditions especially a painful one, for reasons of mercy. *Chamber, 21st Century chambers Dictionary* sees euthanasia as the act or practice of ending the life of a person who is suffering from an incurable and often painful or distressing illness. From the legal point of view, euthanasia has been discussed as the taking of human life by another or with the assistance of another. Therefore, euthanasia is generally defined as the act of killing an incurably ill person out of concern and compassion for that person's suffering. It is sometimes called mercy killing, but many advocates of euthanasia define mercy killing more precisely as the ending of another's life without his or her request. It is also important to note that there are many categories of euthanasia. We have active euthanasia which entails a direct and intentional causing of the death of the terminally sick person. Passive euthanasia involves an indirect causing of the death. That is, through a withdrawal of medication or life-saving equipment. We also have voluntary and the involuntary euthanasia. The voluntary euthanasia arises at the request of the person who dies, while the involuntary euthanasia occurs when the sick person is unconscious or unable to make a choice as to either to die or live.

### **Arguments for and Arguments against Euthanasia**

As a result of the dynamic and the complex nature of euthanasia, scholars have been divided for ages on this subject matter. We have those in support of mercy killing and those against the practice. This study is not out to take

side on who is right or who is wrong. But, there is the need for us to have an understanding of the two divides that exist as far as discussion on euthanasia is concerned. With this in mind, it is important to consider the various arguments advanced by scholars for the understanding of euthanasia. Most of these arguments are passionate and deeply rooted in moral, psychological, ethical, social, economic, religious and legal considerations. Scholars who have argued for mercy killing choose utilitarianism as their basis to decide for mercy killing. Under this theory, they argue that if the death of a terminally sick person will bring greater happiness to greater number of the people, so be it. The argument itself is one sided, as it fails to take into account the opinion of the victim. The position here is that, when a man is terminally sick and the sickness has caused greater pains to the family, it will be good to allow him/her to die rather than dealing with life of hardships. Aristotle and Cicero are also of the opinion that kindness may be defined as helping those in need of it not in return of anything. That kindness is great if shown to one who is in great need. Their position is that, a terminally sick person needs help and the only help that can be offered is to help him to die to avoid incessant pains.

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Chamber 21st Century Dictionary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000.

O.Bamigbose. "Euthanasia: Another Face of Murder," vol.48 No.1. International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology. 2004. pp.112.

B.A. Omipidan "Euthanasia: The 21st Century Culture of Death." Vol.7 No.1. 2011. Nigerian Bar Journal.

S. B. Math and S.K. Chatuvedi., Euthanasia: Right to live vs right to die. IJMR. Indian Journal of Medical Research. 2012.

S.Vaknin "Euthanasia and Right to Die." <http://www.samrak.tripod.com/euthanasia.html>

Accessed on 19 July, 2017

TaraMapes. Ethical Theories on Human Euthanasia/ Mercy Killing. Assessed April ,2017.

Those on this side of the divides argue that people who have an incurable, degenerative, disabling or debilitating condition should be allowed to die in dignity. For instance, many patients in a persistent vegetative state or else in chronic illness do not want to be a burden on their family members. Euthanasia can be considered as an option. David Hume corroborating Aristotle and Cicero suggested as an alternative view of what the Divine being expects of us. God, according to Hume, established the world and hands off it. The governance of the world is left for the people he created, therefore we can navigate/change our way through the life with the use of human minds. Man can choose to die as it will preserve the bodily integrity and dignity of a terminally ill or incapacitated person. Our argument here is that people ought to choose either to live or die. Joseph Fletcher when laying credence to this argument in support of euthanasia, argues that it is wrong to say that life given by God should be respected, honoured and protected. He insists that it is a fallacy to maintain that all life is valuable and to be maintained no matter what the cost. It is pointless to continue to spend money and resources to maintain a life that would be better terminated.

Those on the other side of the divides are those that argue against euthanasia. Scholars in this category hold the view that life should be protected and should not be terminated under any circumstance. Termination of life

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B.M.Ashley and K.D.O'Rourke, *Health Care Ethics: A Theological Analysis*, (St. Louis, Missouri: The Catholic Hospital Association. In J.A.Oninmhawo. *Ethical Medical and Legal Perspective on Euthanasia*.Ibadan.Stirling- Horden Publishers (Nig). Ltd.1999.  
J.A.Oninmhawo.. *Ethical Medical and Legal Perspective on Euthanasia*.Ibadan.Stirling- Horden Publishers(Nig). Ltd. 1999. pp.48-68.  
Aristotle., *Rhetorics* in (ed.) Marvin Kohi,. *Beneficent Euthanasia*.Buffalo. New York.Prometheus Books. 1975.

either through voluntary or non voluntary means devalues human life. That is, it degrades the sanctity of human life. Scholar like Thomas Aquinas, who is against mercy killing, believes strongly that life is a gift from God. Man does not have absolute dominion or control over this gratuitous gift. We are mere stewards, not owners of our lives. The time, date and circumstances of our death can only be determined by God and no one else. Hume in his own case, does not explicitly state that we have a moral "right to die" as he argues that:

*"Just as we have rights to come or go as we choose, to read or not to read, to speak or not to speak, to worship or not worship, so we have a right, within the boundaries of our own autonomy, to live or die, as we choose. The right to die is simply the other side of the coin of the right to live".*

One other opinion against euthanasia is that in the era of declining morality and justice, there is a possibility of misusing euthanasia by family members or relatives for inheriting the property of the patient.

### **Religious perspective on euthanasia**

It is important in this study to consider euthanasia from the religious standpoint. That is, to look at euthanasia from the three major religions (Christianity, Islam and

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J.Fletcher. Moral and Medicine. Boston: Beacon Press.p.187. In J.A.Oninmhawo. 1999.Ethical Medical and Legal Perspective on Euthanasia.Ibadan.Stirling- Horden Publishers(Nig). Ltd.1960. pp.48-68.

C.E.Koop." The Right to Die: The Moral Dilemma." In Euthanasia. The Moral Issues,ed. Robert M. Bard and Stuart E.Rosnbaum. Buffalo,NY.Prothentheus Books.1989.p.69.

African Traditional Religion) in Nigeria. The legal debate on the concept of euthanasia is often beclouded by the general belief in the sanctity of human life.

Although the Bible does not address the question of euthanasia directly, nevertheless, there are passages in the Bible that expressly talk about the desire for death. For instance, in Job 3:20-21 where Job says "Why is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, to those who long for death that does not come". Every being regardless of his or her external conditions, sickness, poverty, deformity, is created in the image of God and no one has the right to dismiss it at will. According to the Jewish law, "a dying man is regarded as a living person in all respects." Active euthanasia-- causing or accelerating a death in any way is considered murder. One who is in a dying condition is regarded as a living person in all respects. The position of the Bible "Thou shall not Kill" as contained in the ten commandment should be respected. For example, if one suffers great agony and says to another, 'you see I shall not live; kill me for I am unable to withstand this affliction,' one is enjoined not to touch the patient. The import of our discussion here is that fundamentally, Christians oppose euthanasia because it simply does not fit in with core Christian theological convictions. God is the creator, not us, human life is in His hands (Job 1:21).

The Bible teaches that human beings are created in the image of God. (Gen. 1: 26) and therefore have dignity and value. Human life is sacred and should not be terminated merely because life is difficult or inconvenient. Christians in particular believe in the sanctity of human life. This is clearly stated in (Deut. 32:39) Where God said,

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R. Finigsen.. "The Report of the Dutch Committed on Euthanasia." Issues in Law and Medicine.1991.  
R.D.Bergen. 1,2 Samuel ( New American Commentary; Nashville: Broadman & Holman.1996.p282.

“See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand”. This is supported in (Psalm 139:16) that God has ordained our days and He is in control of our lives. Christians reject the attempt by the modern euthanasia movement to promote a so – called “right to die.” This act is wrong because it is tantamount to promoting suicide. Man is forbidden to murder and this includes murder of oneself. For the Christians, life is God's gift and it's to be determined by Him. God is sovereign over life; therefore, we have no mandate to end it. He does not give us a passive role-- we are called to be salt and light; we believe this means to stand for compassionate care of the dying while standing against any form of killing.

From the Islamic point of view, Muslims are against euthanasia. They believe that all human life is sacred because it is given by Allah, and that Allah chooses how long each person will live. Human beings should not interfere in this. Euthanasia and suicide are not included among the reasons for killing in Islam. For example, Quran 17: 33 says: “Do not take life, which Allah made, other than in the course of justice”. This is also supported in Quran 16:61 where we have it that Allah decides how long each of us will live. When their time comes, they cannot delay it if for a neither single hour nor can they bring forward by a single hour.

The Quranic passages quoted above express the position of Muslims to euthanasia. That is, the only death permitted is in the course of justice. When one is found

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M.J. Erickson and I.E. Bowers in *Benevolent Euthanasia*. Buffalo, New York. Prometheus Books. 1976  
M.Narimisa . Euthanasia from Islamic view. Department of Humanities, Shoucihtar Branch, Islamic Azad University, shushart, Iran.

guilty of an offence and he is judged according to Islamic Sharia law. Muslims, who assist suicide in the name of euthanasia would be failing to do their duty according to Islam and would therefore, forfeit their place in paradise. Whosoever swallows poison to kill himself, he will be in hell fire doing the same thing to himself forever (Hadith). In order to shed more light on the position of Muslims regarding euthanasia, there is the need for us to consider two main arguments against euthanasia which can be summarized in the following ways. Life is sacred therefore; euthanasia and suicide are not included among the reasons allowed for killing in Islam. Secondly, Allah decides how long each of us will live. According to Islamic teaching, life is a divine trust and cannot be terminated by any form of active, passive or voluntary intervention.

The position of two Islamic schools of thought on euthanasia is the same. The Sunni and the Shiite regard euthanasia as forbidden. They hold the view that the death of *ajal*, is under the control of Allah and no human has any say in the matter; the human cannot and should not attempt to hasten or delay the *ajal*. The Islamic position is that life belongs to Allah. It is He who gives and takes away life. No human can give or take it. Muslims are believed then that all human life is sacred because it is given by Allah. Human beings should therefore not interfere in this. The only aspect permitted in Islam is the passive euthanasia which involves the withholding, withdrawal, or refusing medical treatment when one is sure that the medication is useless and futile.

In African Traditional Religion which is the indigenous religion of Africans, it is very difficult if not impossible to separate the religion of the people from their

culture. Religion pervades every aspect of the Africans. They are deeply religious and everything is taken spiritually. This is because Africans are notoriously religious. There is always a feeling across Africa of a divine imperative that must be given, lived and honoured. For instance, among the Yoruba, like other tribes, God (Olódùmarè) is the giver of life and death. Euthanasia or suicide is not part of their culture. Even, when an African man is faced with death, rituals are performed to restore him back to life. This is premised on the high premium placed on sanctity of life. That is, life must be preserved at all cost. So, euthanasia or mercy killing is not considered as an option to end the pain of a terminally ill person. Africans believe that life is sacred. Life must be given, lived and enjoyed. Many African societies have taboos and rituals to protect the divine gift of life. Wilful murder is an abomination. Euthanasia is not considered as an option to end the pains of these weak members of the society.

### **Euthanasia from the legal perspective**

One of the fundamental human rights of people all over the world young and old, male and female, rich and poor is the access to excellent care during serious sickness. Anything short of this is an infringement on the right of such an individual. This is why it is also necessary to discuss the issue of euthanasia from the legal angle. Under the

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R.I.Adebayo .," Euthanasia in The Light of Islamic Law and Ethics".Vol.1. Journal of Nigerian Association of Arabic and Islamic Studies.2008. p.1.

W.Iyaniwura.. Law, Morality and Medicine: The Euthanasia Debate. In Global Journal of Humanities, Social Science Interdisciplinary. Vol.14, Issue 4,2014 .

J.S.Mbiti.. African Religion and Philosophy. London. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.1967. p.1.

E.B.Idowu.. Olo?du?mare?:God in Yoruba Belief.Ibadan. Longman Nigeria Plc.1962. P.28

J.K.Ayantayo.. The Sanctity of Life:

Nigerian Criminal Code applicable in the Southern Nigeria and the Penal Code that operates in the North, there is no place where the term euthanasia is mentioned specifically. For instance, when a person kills another under the Criminal Code, such a person is liable to be convicted for murder or manslaughter depending on the circumstance surrounding the death of the person. But, in another instance, if a person is killed at the request of the dead person, he too will be so liable. This is because such consent could not be accepted as a defence in either case. Therefore, what we have in the Nigerian Criminal law is that euthanasia is considered as murder without any qualification whatsoever. Though, in the Nigerian Criminal Code, causing the death of another person is a criminal act, except such killing is justified by law. That is, when a court of competent jurisdiction sentences one to death either by hanging or through any other means. Further to this is when the Criminal Code makes provision for the fact that, if any person does any act or makes any omission which hastens the death of another person who, when the act is done or the omission is made, is labouring under some disorder or disease arising from another cause, is deemed to have killed the person. This provision is also contained in the Penal Code applicable in the North.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria clearly provides for the right of every person to life and that no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life,

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J.K.Ayantayo.. The Sanctity of Life: A Religious Dogma with Moral Implications for Biomedical Practices. In (eds.) S.O.Oyetade African Culture, Modern Science and Religious Thought. Ilorin. African Centre for Religious and the Sciences.(ACRS). 2003.P424.

I.A.Dowbiggin A Merciful end: The Euthanasia Movement in Modern America. New York, Oxford.(2003)

M.C. Obi. A Critical Appraisal of Euthanasia under Nigerian Laws. Online material. Assessed on 17 July 2017

except in the execution of the sentence of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria. This provision is consistent with International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states expressly that "every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his right."

The point here is that the provisions in both the Nigerian Criminal law and the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are consistent with international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948, the American Convention on Human Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, all these instruments mentioned above provide for and guarantee right to life. From the provision of section 33 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and all other human rights instruments, it is crystal clear that, euthanasia or assisted suicide is impliedly prohibited since it involves the intentional deprivation of the life of another person which the wording of section 33(1) appear to prohibit. For a better understanding and for clarity sake, the section should not be read in isolation rather, it should be read along with sections 34 and 35. The whole reading of the sections gives us a clear picture of matters the border on the quality of life and therefore ancillary to section 33(1).

What the above suggests therefore is that no one can be deprived of his/her right to life as long as he/she is living.

The provision does not give any condition. This means that the life of a terminally ill patient should not be terminated in so far that he/she has right to human dignity and right to personal liberty simply because it is guaranteed by the Constitution.

The argument here is that, since euthanasia is rejected both from the religious and legal perspectives. That is, life must not be terminated under any condition; the question that is begging for answer is this. Is it not tantamount to wickedness, if we allow a terminally ill person with no hope of survival to continue to undergo unbearable pains when there is an alternative for him? Won't it be an act of selfishness to continue to spend money on the terminally ill person at the detriment of other members of the family? With the fact that when the person eventually dies, the statement will be "It is even better for him to go and rest." When the families know that 'killing him' is to allow him to rest, why allowing him to pass through such pains and suffering.

In Nigerian Criminal law, consent plays a vital role. The fact that a patient is terminally ill does not give the Medical Doctor or the care giver the liberty to take his life without his consent. The cries of the terminally ill who seeks assistance to die with dignity and the clamour for relief by the agonizing family members at the end of their wits have added to the debate. It was even believed that a very bad life

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M.C. Obi." Right to life and Right to Die: A Comparative Study of the Nigerian and Oregonian Laws on Euthanasia.(Thesis Submitted to Unilorin for award of LLM in Common law)p.214

B.Olugbodi.. Human Rights Practices in Nigeria. Constitutional Rights Project .1996. p.2.

See section 33 of Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended)

was worthy to be lived. It is worthy of note to state that euthanasia or 'mercy killing' is statutorily justified in some countries. But the situations in Nigeria, as we have it in many other African countries are the same from the cultural perspective. At times, people will prefer to pray for somebody in pains than to cause his death, either directly or indirectly. This is why we hear people especially among the Yoruba saying "Ikú yá ju e sìn lo" literally interpreted to mean "death is preferable to ridicule." The import of this statement is to show that on many occasions, family members, by their actions and inactions wish death for a terminally ill person. But, due to the sanctity of life which was held in high esteem in Africa, they will prefer the less blame worthy method of killing.

The intention to kill and the actual performance of the action are two legal terms that are regarded to as *Mens Rea* and *Actus Rea*. The two are elements of an offence in Criminal law. *Mens Rea* refers to a guilty mind or an evil intention. Though, there are arguments as to if *Mens Rea* (evil intention) constitutes an offence. But, other scholars are of the view that before an action is carried out, it would have been thought of or premeditated, and this makes it an offence. *Actus Reus* means to cause an act or event or state of affairs without the requisite mental element. The combination of both the *Mens Rea* and *Actus Reus* constitutes elements of an offence. This, therefore, suggests that the person must have committed the act and must have intended to commit the act where they form the ingredients of the offence. The fact that life is sacred implies that it is

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J.Fletcher."The 'Right' to live and the 'Right' to Die". In Beneficent Euthanasia,Marvin Kohi (ed.) Buffalo, New York.p.47

valuable, with inestimable worth and therefore, it should be protected and accorded its deserved dignity.

Because religious people place high premium on sanctity of life, for whatever reason therefore, it is wrong to terminate life. Murder violates God's commandment; it offends God more than any other sin. Whichever reasons or justifications that are put forward to support the practice of euthanasia, the act is tantamount to termination of life and such is immoral because it is murder. Is there any mercy, in mercy killing? Therefore, the argument that euthanasia is mercy killing cannot hold water because the act is not to show mercy to the victim but, rather to put an end to his life. It may even be argued that the pains being experienced by the sick may be a way of strengthening the faith of such person, and when it is time for God to take his life, nobody can stop Him. So, nobody should help God to terminate the life of His creature, since God has not given man the right to do so. This view is corroborated by Ebbie Smith when he writes that "God alone has the right to give and take life. He is the one who is sovereign over all existence."

Over the years, we have seen or heard of testimonies of people with terminal diseases like cancer, tuberculosis, AIDS, etc who have been miraculously healed from faith healing homes and revivals. If the lives of such people have been terminated, because of their health condition, nobody would know that they could survive it. The act of legalizing euthanasia by some scholars would be tantamount to

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O. Bamigbose and S. Akinbiyi.. Criminal Law in Nigeria.Ibadan. EvansBrothers (Nigeria Publishers) Limited.2015.pp18-19.

J.A.Oninmhawo. Ethical, Medical and Legal Perspective on Euthanasia.Ibadan.Stirling- Horden Publishers(Nig). Ltd. 1999. pp.48-68.

J.K.Ayantayo. The Sanctity of Life: A Religious Dogma with Moral Implications for Biomedical Practices. In (eds.) S. O. Oyetade African Culture, Modern Science and Religious Thought. Ilorin. African Centre for Religious and the Sciences.(ACRS).2003. P.424.

worsening the communication gap already existing between the patient and his doctor, thereby creating room for mistrust in their relationship. On the other hand, opponents of euthanasia often hold the view that it is wrong to kill a patient since he has a right to life. One reason commonly given is that a person's right to life is a precondition of having any other rights at all. It is then held that, since all other rights presuppose the right to life, if persons have any rights whatever the right to life must be the first among them. Meanwhile, the pleas of a terminally sick person for his life to be put to an end should not be taken seriously as that will be tantamount to murder to the doer. Another point that needs to be stressed here has to do with when euthanasia is carried out latently. How can one establish a case of murder in such circumstances? Also, the right to die can be argued from the stand point of attempted suicide. That is, if a patient asks a doctor to take his/her and such a doctor refuses. The patient can decide to take his/her life if he has the opportunity. On the whole, issue of euthanasia is a perennial one and the choice should be left for those involved to take side on the matter.

### **Recommendation**

\* It is therefore, recommended that government should take a bold step on how to address the unending controversy surrounding euthanasia. This is because there has not been any categorical statement whether the withdrawal of life-supporting mechanism (passive euthanasia) is a crime in Nigeria.

\* There should be a holistic reform of existing Penal laws aimed at creating an exception to deserving case for the exercise of a right to die by euthanasia and assisted suicide.

\* Serious consideration is also needed where the law in Nigeria spell out cases where the right to die is permissible. Laws and adequate provisions must be put in place to safeguard abuse. Most especially on the part of doctors and care givers. That is, the doctors and other health workers should resist any pressure coming from the family and relatives of the dying person to terminate his life. They must know that life is a gift from God. It must be protected at all cost. Their professional ethics of integrity and trust must be maintained.

\* Our courts of law must also as much as possible protect the weak, and vulnerable in our society by upholding those laws which prohibit/ or are against the taking of life of a terminally ill person.

\* Government should take an urgent, bold and a proactive step in investing in our health care system. This will help a lot in assisting the poor ones in the society that are sick to be treated with modern facilities before it gets to a level that managing it will be difficult.

### **Conclusion**

From the foregoing, what we observe is that any discussion on euthanasia is a complex one. This is because it has to do with the sanctity of human life. The right to euthanasia is not consistent with the right to life. It is therefore tantamount to wickedness of unimaginable proportion to keep alive a person who has little or no hope of survival in excruciating pain and anguish. One other important point to add, at this juncture, is the fact that not all forms of euthanasia are considered a criminal act. An example is the case of Okonkwo.

**Endnote**

B.E.Oniha and O.O.Mabel . Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide as Basic

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