Introduction of bioethics and its necessity in Bangladesh

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Bioethics is the understanding of rights, responsibilities, justices and moral interaction in living beings. It includes medical ethics, environmental ethics, legal ethics, business ethics and ethics in human rights & politics. Since its inception in 1970, the field has grown exponentially in its scope and importance. Many hospitals now employing bioethics experts to guide on such issues as allocation of scarce resources, how to care for terminally ill patients and dilemmas of doctors facing everyday for advancement of new technology. There are at over 95% of U.S. hospitals has ethics committees for helping physicians, nurses and families on bioethical issues on a case-by-case basis at present. Thus today bioethics is not only a reasoned discourse but a matter of crisis management.

Bangladesh is a pluralistic society with a wonderful diversity of values and ethical ideals. But poverty, natural calamities, lack of proper and substantial education and rapidly advancing technology people are forced to deal with one crisis after another. In a result bio-ethical decision, sanctity of life is deemed to be less important than the quality of life.

Corruption, nepotism, selfishness, misconduct and malpractice are becoming the common phenomena in Bangladesh. It gives the impression that we don't able to tell which values need to be employed when and which ethical dilemmas need our most immediate attention in our society. Thus implementation of bioethics is needed urgently in Bangladesh to make the country peace and prosperity.

Bioethics in Bangladesh

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This presentation aims at showing i) poverty level, ii) environmental pollution level, iii) outdated education system, and iv) inadequate health services for over (estimated) 14 crore people in Bangladesh, in order to evaluate the possibility of bioethics practice and research within the country, and also to find the reasons why bioethics activities have not yet found ground here by. Bioethics is a multidisciplinary approach to evaluating bioethical issues. Thus, the main reason for a meager presence of bioethics activities in this country is the education system, which is not multidisciplinary enough to encourage bioethics activities. Apathy among the academicians and professionals in the absence of a national education policy is causing full implementation of a multidisciplinary system impossible. Consequently, students and professionals educated in the present system are generally disinterested in other disciplines. There are bioethical issues present in Bangladesh, e.g., indirect coercion and absence of informed consent in the field of population control, exploitation of people in the name of treatment of infertility, environmental pollution in the absence of law enforcement, exploitation of people by health insurance companies, unethical practices by care-givers in the health sector, etc. In conclusion it is stated that Bangladesh is an untrodden and rich ground for a bioethicist to do research on many relevant issues present in the country. The need for a National Bioethics Association to be formed by academicians and professionals, and a National Bioethics Commission to be formed by the government of Bangladesh has also been emphasized.