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Pro-choice Abortion Rights

One of the most controversial topics that are part of today's society is abortion and people are on either side of the debate. Abortion is the termination of unwanted pregnancy as a result of which the embryo/fetus is removed from the body before it further develops. Currently, there are two sides to the controversy i.e., pro-life and pro-choice. Pro-life criminalizes abortion while pro-choice is associated with the freedom to abort pregnancy for women. The debate over abortion is still prevalent in the United States. This shows the incompetency of the law to provide a secure foundation for women. Not having the right to abortion essentially affects a woman's freedom and also exposes her to immense health risks such as mental and physical strain. Standard laws must be in place that consider the various issues associated with women. Abortion should be legalized across all the states as it leads to the mental/physical well-being of women and acts as a shield against criminal activities that might be part of society.

The process of pregnancy is often a difficult one and women might not be ready to face such a responsibility due to unwanted pregnancy; therefore, abortion provides essential support. Women undergoing unwanted pregnancies may have to suffer from various mental issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress which further aggravate the matter and make them vulnerable physically. Reardon argues about the mental health consequences of abortion in her paper titled "The abortion and mental health controversy". The lack of health facilities can be debilitating for women especially when they do not have the right to decide regarding abortion (Reardon).

Furthermore, as any state might not have the laws to support abortion, there would be no way to find a suitable facility to have the procedure done to terminate a pregnancy. As pregnancy brings the responsibility of another life that must be supported with resources and finances, some people with unstable lifestyles may find it even more difficult to continue with such a burden. This overloads women with more pressure that may be too hard for them to bear. Bentele and others in their paper “Rewinding Roe v. Wade: Understanding the accelerated adoption of state-level restrictive abortion legislation” argue about the famous abortion case and highlight the importance of having abortion rights for women. The case involved Roe’s request to demand abortion rights to terminate a life-threatening pregnancy. As highlighted by the authors, “for now Roe v. Wade may be the ‘law of the land,’ but so are the hundreds of state-level abortion restrictions that have significantly reduced the accessibility of abortion services for some women” (Bentele et al) With a lack of healthcare and rehab facilities that support this exact purpose, women eventually have to suffer and it takes a toll on their minds and bodies making them unable to function properly. Abortion does not remain just a matter of physical and mental well-being but also is associated with the essential rights for women that are part of democracy today.

One of the most fundamental reasons for the legalization of abortion is that it promotes access to basic rights for women. Even though women now have a much higher status in society compared to before with the provision of equal rights, abortion, and its choice is still considered debatable. By taking away the element of choice from women, many of the fundamental rights that they have are also violated such as the elimination of discrimination against them. Women, just as men, have certain rights that are exclusively for them and reproductive rights are the most essential ones. As women are the subject when it comes to pregnancy and bearing the burden of

a fetus, their choice and rights are above all in this matter. Jaffe discusses in the paper titled “Legal battles over abortion heat up in the USA” the various positions held by people within the United States. According to the author, anti-abortion laws can lead to a lack of funding for the same and can make it difficult for women to exercise their rights on the matter (Jaffe). Removing the element of choice for women hinders their ability to express their opinion on the matter and this goes against the definition of any democratic state in the world. Not only does the lack of choice for women makes society unjust but at the same time, it creates a major barrier to the development of a democratic state. While the development of a democratic state is one of the concepts of concern, hidden aspects such as the rise in crimes are another issue that is associated with the criminalization of abortion.

The criminalization of abortion overshadows the notion related to the ethical aspects of pregnancy. While pregnancy may be a consensual option that is pursued, there are cases where pregnancy might be forced and is a result of cruelty against women within society. This includes harassment, rape, and even violence that makes it difficult for women to continue the pregnancy. Essentially, the right to abortion being taken away gives males the opportunity to control the situation as they want and in the end, women are left to suffer in silence. Cahn highlights the ethical aspects of pregnancy and abortion and supports women for the pro-choice approach in the paper “Exploring Ethics: An Introductory Anthology”. The author believes that the unborn child has no right to use their mother’s body which justifies the action of aborting a child before it is born (Cahn). Furthermore, the matter is escalated even more as there might be no exceptions even in cases where the mother’s life might be at an elevated risk. Women who are forced into such situations may not have the right resources or the right health to handle pregnancy and may have no alternative option but to abort the child as it is a matter of their survival. Pregnancies

develop into life and death situations for women and taking away the right to abortion exposes them to societal pressure, norms, and trials. This further aggravates the matter and leads to a traumatic situation. This is not the entire picture and there are even greater issues that the state might be exposed to by criminalizing abortion.

Lack of abortion rights might force women to pursue unfair means to get aborted and can lead to a rise in crimes within society. Abortion requires careful examination and procedures conducted by a specialist healthcare professional. However, with the criminalization of abortion, no expert would have the right to perform such a procedure on women. As a consequence, there is a higher chance that people with a lack of expertise might be willing to perform such procedures. There would eventually be an increase in the number of centers that work illegally around the country as abortion might be inevitable in certain situations. It not only adds extra risk to the lives of women but also promotes malpractices within the state. The paper by Haddad and Nour titled “Unsafe Abortion: Unnecessary Maternal Mortality” focuses on the dangers that women are exposed to when dealing with unsafe abortion practices. As highlighted by Haddad & Nour, “Deaths associated with abortion are much more frequent in countries with highly restrictive laws (34 deaths per 100,000 childbirths) than in countries with less restrictive laws (1 death or less per 100,000 childbirths).” Furthermore, as there is a lack of credibility of these people performing the abortion, it can open gateways towards organ trafficking where women might be exposed to further such tortures. The possibilities of causing damage to women are endless and it all initiates from not giving them one of the fundamental rights. However, there exists another side of the debate that also presents a certain argument against abortion that also have to be considered.

One of the most compelling arguments that exist against abortion is that the procedure is considered to be synonymous with murder. The topic of personhood often comes into play and it is one of the hindrances that are applied when dealing with the legalization of abortion. As a fetus is often considered to be a living thing, denying it the right to life is thought of as murder. There exists an extensive debate on the matter and whether or not the fetus has a status of a living thing. There are certain definitions on the basis of which personhood might be established. Firstly, embryos and fetuses have no status until they are present within the mother's womb. As a result of this, the US census does not count them as living things and that is why termination of a pregnancy is not the same as the termination of a baby. One of the major factors that are a characteristic of humans is the ability to feel the sensation of pain. Belluck, in the article titled "Complex Science at Issue in Politics of Fetal Pain", discusses the various views about the status of a fetus and whether it is immune to pain or not. According to a review by Britain's Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "most neuroscientists believe that the cortex is necessary for pain perception." (Belluck) As the time of the development of the cortex is from 26 weeks onwards, the abortions that do take place before this period ensures that the fetus is unable to feel pain. However, the problem of lack of standard rules applied across the state is a concerning one and there have to be specific rules established to handle the issue of abortion.

Establishing standard laws linked to abortion is the key to securing essential rights for women and provides a multitude of benefits overall. Developing a cohesive definition linked to how a fetus can be judged based on its maturity level is the primary step that has to be followed as it can justify the actions taken by women or healthcare experts. Secondly, as pregnancy and its outcomes can be predicted such as the health of the child, any issues that might be present can be rectified at the earliest. For example, children who are born with Down Syndrome or other

conditions may have to be treated and rehabilitated, which places an extra burden on the resources. If these issues can be identified in advance due to advanced medical technology, then abortion rights must follow to ensure that the correct decisions can be made. As the cost of healthcare within the United States is already very high, unexpected problems during pregnancy can aggravate the matter even further. The authors Rodgers and others have highlighted another dimension of how there are costs associated with abortion that are often overlooked. In their paper titled “The macroeconomics of abortion”, the authors highlight that children who are the result of unwanted pregnancy and born into low-income families might develop a criminal mindset. This impacts the overall crime rates as these children are often deprived of the essential resources within society (Rodgers et.al.). It also leads to an increased element of discrimination and can be very difficult to manage. Lastly, mismanagement of abortion by those with a lack of expertise can be mitigated. Society can face an overall improvement not just on this front but in many other areas as well such as better healthcare, better management of resources, and others.

The legalization of abortion is a complex and controversial issue and the various states across the United States are still divided on the stance they want to take. While the case that is made against pro-choice is often highlighted, many of the factors that can lead to problematic outcomes are left hidden. Abortion minimizes the possibility that women may suffer from unforeseen health issues linked to pregnancy. Also, women can have safe procedures performed that can be better for their well-being. Establishing cohesive laws all around the country can reduce irregular practices that lead to criminal activities within the state and such affairs can be managed much more effectively. The courts and other regulatory authorities have to come together to decide the fate of the topic and ensure that discrepancies can be eliminated. Further

research can be conducted on the various outcomes of pregnancy to identify the complexities that are part of each of these factors and how these can be eliminated or even mitigated

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