

BIOETHICS

THE VALUES OF LIFE IN THE AGE OF ADVANCING BIOSCIENCES

This book, *Bioethics, the Values of Life in the Age of Advancing Biosciences*, addresses ethical issues and practices on the advances of biosciences. It focuses on the need for balancing between moral demands of what ought to be in life and modern developments in the fields of biotechnology, biomedicine, environmental sciences and healthcare practices. It presents the justifications of acting morally, the place of ethics in the age of advancing science, the history, scope and approaches of bioethics. It also offers a comparative account of traditional theories of ethics, and briefly highlights ethical teachings of major religious traditions, with certain details about the scope and principles of the Islamic ethics. The book uses descriptive and comparative approaches and presents bioethical debates on genetically modified food, tissue engineering, environmental ethics, concerns of sharing body parties of organs and tissues, contraception and the moral predicaments of preventing the initiation of life, prolife and prochoice moral debates on abortion, infertility treatment and the ethics of parenthood, as well as the sanctity of life in the face of clinical trials.



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Introduction

Scientific practices in the field of biosciences have recently made an observable advances that are designed to improve the efficiency of production techniques in the areas of agriculture and farming, environmental and plant sciences, as well as medical and healthcare practices. These advances are generally observable in three major fields that are biotechnology, biomedicine and environmental sciences. Biotechnological breakthroughs are driven by the aim of enhancing food security, climate change and energy shortages, while environmental sciences are designed to assist us to cope with the challenges of economic development and industries without damaging the ecosystem and its biodiversity. Biomedical advances are driven by the aim of having scientific and laboratory researches that support diagnosis and treatment of disease in terms of screening, test of biological samples, analysing data and statistics in different setting of healthcare facilities. No doubt that these advances in biosciences have greatly contributed to improve life in many ways, yet these advances have raised some real and potential ethical concerns. For instance, in biomedical practices like tissue engineering, stem cell research and clinical trials, human body has to some extent been treated like other products of laboratory tests, and thus lost its traditional status of being a sanctified entity, a God given one, that should be handled according to traditional values of blessedness and inviolability. Hence, besides the concerns about the *sanctity* of the human body, issues of *safety*, as well as *dignity* and *honour* are also raised in the face of modern scientific advances in the field of biosciences. Likewise, biotechnological practices like genetic modification of organism (GMO), have raised serious ethical concerns about the nutritious *quality* of genetically altered food, as well as

long term health implications of genetically modified products. Scientific advances in this field are generally commendable, but the moral implications of certain practices of modern advances are seriously questioned.

This book, *Bioethics: The Values of Life in the Age of Advancing Biosciences*, uses comparative and analytical methods, and highlights the search for principles, practices and guidelines of bioethics. Discussions in this work form the second volume of the author's earlier book titled *Bioethics: A Comparative Study of its Concepts, Issues and Approaches*, published in (1st edition) 2015, and (2nd edition) 2018, IIUM Press, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. As reflected in its title, the latter addresses the concepts, issues and approaches of this field, while the current volume focuses on the search for bioethical principles, guidelines and practices of this field. Apart from the introduction and the conclusion, this book consists of wide spectrum of subjects and topics such as justifications of acting morally, the ethics of life in the age of advancing bioscience, philosophical and clinical schools of the science of survival, the scope and principles of Islamic bioethics, the *shari'ah*; the source of legally binding bioethical code, altered quantity vs. organic quality in genetically modified organism, the dilemma of environmental ethics between preservation of life and the development of life, ethical concerns of sharing body parts, moral predicaments of preventing the initiation of life, prolife and prochoice moral debates on terminating growing life, the moral dilemma of taking life, infertility treatment and the ethics of parenthood, and the sanctity of life in the face of clinical trials.

My appreciation is, above all, due to Almighty, Allah (*s. w. t.*), the Creator of everyone and everything, for His grace and guidance in all times, particularly during the course of this humble work. I would like to record here my appreciation and

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Finally, may the Almighty, Allah (*s. w. t.*), accept this work as a humble contribution to the field of knowledge, and forgive me for all my shortcomings.

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