

AN ETHICO-RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE OF SUICIDE

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Abstract

The issue of suicide is prevalent in every society and can also be traced back to antiquity. This study looks at the issue of suicide from two perspectives: the ethical and religious perspectives. Suicide is said to be death caused by harming oneself with the willingness to die. The debate on the rightness or wrongness of this action has spanned different epochs, and some perceptions see nothing wrong with such action when carried out for certain reasons, while others feel that life itself has an intrinsic value and since we don't give life, we do not have the right to take it; in other words, the emphasis on the sanctity of life. This study employs the method of qualitative analysis. From an ethical standpoint, suicide was analysed using the principle of respect for life, the theological position, the principle of autonomy, the principle of duty to others, and the utilitarian position. Whereas, from the perspective of religion, we examined suicide using Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and other religions. The study exposes that Mosaic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and the ethical positions of respect for life and theological position and the principle of duty to others, which are based on the idea that humans are created in God's image and that humans have intrinsic worth, have a more pronounced position against suicide. Whereas the Eastern religions feature beliefs in reincarnation and rebirth. The study posits that the principle of autonomy and utilitarian positions are clear about conditions that could permit suicide. Also, it is clear that some religions hold the view that suicide is a reflection of an underlying mental illness. As a result, some religions have softened their stance on suicidal behaviour's impact on the afterlife.

Keywords: Suicide, ethics, and religion

Introduction

It is generally agreed that man has a heavy moral obligation to respect the sanctity of human life. Some philosophers have argued that man does not have the inherent right to take his own life on this basis. A counterargument was that because man was given the gift of life, he should be allowed to choose to end it if he decides that living is pointless. This might be the result of a serious illness or general discontent. These advocates give a range of reasons, some in support of suicide and others against it. Several philosophers play pivotal roles (Obasola & Omomia, 2014).

It is not overstated to assert that the issue of suicide has given rise to contentious and intense debates, with some preferring to promote it for specific reasons while others spoke out vigorously against it. It is important to consider the moral stance of the two opposing camps when we weigh the merits of their arguments. That's why we wanted to know whether man has the liberty to do anything, even end his own life, thanks to his free moral agency. Questions like, "Is there any point to living when it seems all hope is lost? " and "Is there any glimmer of hope in such seemingly hopeless situations as in the case of suffering a terminal and incurable disease?" seem to have plagued man for a very long time. It's very uncommon for people to feel that they've lost touch with what makes life worth living, leading them to contemplate suicide as a viable means of putting an end to their anguish. Therefore, one can reasonably wonder whether it is acceptable for a person to take their own life (Ogar & Asira, cited in Amaobi, 2019).

The practise of philosophy has long been misinterpreted as an exercise in wishful thinking or a vocation in which an individual's capacity for abstraction is valued more than their ability to apply their knowledge to real-world problems. It would be a mistake to ignore the range of philosophical reactions to ideas like euthanasia, utopia, and the matter at hand: suicide. These ideas are the bedrock upon which a society is built. From the Enlightenment until the present day, the concept of suicide has been a significant source of concern for society at large. Numerous writings and scientific studies have provided their perspectives on whether or not this is a morally acceptable option. Many philosophical theses have been written both in favour of and against the practise of suicide (Abhinshyam, 2021).

Religion is often regarded as one of the most influential disciplines in academia capable of serving as a moral authority. The discussion of morality places a heavy burden on the disciplines of religion, philosophy, and philosophy of religion. It's possible that other fields aren't obligated to bring up moral issues. When a religion asserts its authority based on the Bible, philosophers of religion and philosophy step in to counter. Philosophy and the philosophy of religion, on the other hand, might be seen as either sceptics or investigators of the religious truth claims made by various faiths (Omomia, 2017). Philosophy and the philosophy of religion serve as epistemic sleuths, digging into the veracity of any religious claim to biblical authority or revelation. In other words, most people agree that religion should be held accountable for giving ethical guidelines. And

although philosophers and theologians may disagree on the genesis, rightness, and wrongness of these moral rules, they both use the necessary methods to investigate them. Suicide is seen differently by the many common moral rules, which are essentially religious laws and mores/norms (mostly traditions or taboos) (Omomia, 2017).

Methodology

This study employs the method of qualitative analysis. Hence, the issue of suicide was analysed from the standpoint of ethics and religion.

Concept of Suicide

Most people agree that suicide is when someone intentionally causes their own death. When a person intentionally inflicts injury on oneself with the goal of ending their life, regardless of whether or not they really succeed in doing so, we call this a suicide attempt. It is a major public health problem when people engage in suicidal thoughts, plans, and acts. But Turecki et al. (2019) classified and clarified the vocabulary of suicide with many comprehensive definitions, such as the definition of suicide being a lethal self-injurious act with some indication of desire to die. A suicide attempt is defined as any action taken with the possible intention of causing self-injury and the death of the perpetrator.

Rational and Irrational Suicide

Suicide rationality concerns revolve with determining whether or not the act would be beneficial in the long run, taking into account both the good and bad outcomes of the suicide attempt. This evaluation will focus heavily on how the suicide affected others around the deceased, including the victim's family and friends. Both Brandt (1980) and Glover (1990) look at how suicide affects others around the suicidal person, such their loved ones. Acute anxiety and depression distort cognition, making the future look gloomier than it really is; this is an individual aspect. Brandt labels suicidal acts motivated by intense emotional pain or despair as illogical, suggesting that they are immoral (Brandt, 1980). According to him, under such situations, there is a strong likelihood that things may turn around for the better, therefore the individual would be missing out on something of value by choosing to terminate their life prematurely. Death from an incurable disease is often cited as an acceptable excuse for suicide. The reasoning for this is that the costs of the person's continued suffering and loss of dignity exceed any benefits that may be derived from preventing the suicide (Brandt 1980; Beauchamp 1993). But many would disagree with this since they believe that human life has worth regardless of how much pain it causes us. Ethicists are divided on whether or not it is morally permissible to intervene when an otherwise sane person seeks death for reasons like these (Brandt, 1980).

Ethics and Religion

Religion, like ethics, Omorege (1993) argues, is concerned with the morality of human activity, and both ethics and religion assume human freedom and responsibility. But religion's primary

focus is not on morality; rather, the immediate purpose of religion is worship, adoration via ceremonies, prayers, etc.

He further states that;

“Religion deals with morality only indirectly as a necessary condition for true worship; but not as its primary concern. But the direct object of ethics is morality. Some people associate morality so closely with religion that they think that there can be no morality without religion. Some theologians have claimed that morality is inseparable from religion. But the fact that many people who profess no religious beliefs and belong to no religion do have a high sense of morality and live exemplary lives of high moral standard shows that this claim is false. It is not necessary to be religious or to belong to any religion in order to be moral (Omorebe, 1993, p.7).”

He goes on to say that he believes many individuals of different faiths lead immoral lives, whereas many others who don't identify with any religion lead virtuous ones. Religion is essentially a worldview that offers incentives for upholding moral standards by promising recompense for doing the right thing and retribution for doing the wrong thing. However, morality does not rely on or rest on any one religious belief system. Hence, he noted that;

“It is based on man's nature as a rational and social being. In fact morality is the judge of religion; any religion that preaches or encourages immoral actions reveals as a false religion or at least it shows itself ipso facto to be under an illusion. Morality is the yardstick with which true religion is distinguished from false religion, and true religion actions from false religious actions. If anybody claims that God commanded him to perform an action that is immoral, he reveals himself to be under an illusion, for God can never command or demand anything that is immoral (Omorebe, 1993, p.8).”

Philosophy and Suicide

Some ancient and contemporary philosophers and thinkers have condemned suicide while others have accepted it. Philosophy, ethics, theism, metaphysics, and religion are all used to describe their perspectives. Some people with philosophical outlooks seem to have legitimised suicide by citing a variety of reasons. Stoics, Jains, Taoists, and Buddhists are only a few examples of these mystical thinkers. The idea that they are philosophically inclined is widely held. Different philosophers' degrees of approval or disapproval were primarily dictated by their respective views on suicide. Obasola and Omomia (2014) identify some of these people as empiricists, while others place them in the moralist, theist, or philosophical theologian camps. Empiricists like David Hume, for instance, neither advocated nor discouraged suicide. As theists, Locke and Hobbes were totally against suicide. Psychologists and social theorists like Freud, Rousseau, and James were concerned

more with the underlying causes of suicide than the act itself. Although not necessarily theists, legal thinkers like Hegel, Montesquieu, and Locke saw suicide as an affront to national principles or norms. Finally, many moral philosophers have spoken out against suicide. This includes Aristotle, Kant, Spinoza, St. Augustine, Aquinas, and others. The purpose of this article is to try to analyse the ethical viewpoints on the topic of suicide. The New World Encyclopaedia (2013:5) explained the motivation behind this thought experiment. It maintained that "certain questions about suicide seem to fall at least partially outside the domain of science," and that suicide has been the subject of philosophical inquiry in the West at least as far back as Plato's time. As far back as Seneca's time, philosophical considerations of suicide are claimed to have been at the forefront of public discourse. He is often considered to be a preeminent suicide philosopher. Suicide, he felt, had both rational and moral justifications, as he said, "Living is not the good, but living well." Furthering this point, he said that "the dirtiest death is preferable to the daintiest slavery" (New World Encyclopaedia, 2013:5). This may explain why some of the greatest thinkers have conflicting views on the topic of suicide. Kant saw suicide as a moral philosophical problem because of the difficulties it presented. Plato, on his part, emphasised situations in which suicide was or was not abnormal. Spinoza's view was that the will to stay alive was the highest and most important of all values. He reasoned that this proved suicide to be morally repugnant and illogical. Most philosophers who have argued against suicide have done so on the grounds that it represents the height of irrationality and evil, egotism, bad precedent, mental illness, and pathology. Obasola and Omomia (2014) explain that this is why the topic has always stirred up strong feelings among people.

Ethical positions on suicide

The philosopher Tom Beauchamp (1993) divides factors in the ethical analysis of suicide into five categories: those involving the principle of respect for life, the theological position, the principle of autonomy, the principle of duty to others and the utilitarian position.

Respect for life and the theological position

Ethical systems that uphold the inherent value and worth of every individual life have made the principle of respect for life a cornerstone premise. Since suicide entails the deliberate and pre-emptive termination of one's own life, it is often seen as ethically objectionable. All human life is sacred and should be safeguarded, say those who uphold the respect for life idea. Self-murder is morally repugnant in their eyes because it devalues the precious gift of life. Furthermore, the respect for life principle recognises that people may find meaning, purpose, and enjoyment in life despite adverse conditions. Suicide advocates say the act negates any future hope for personal development, healing, or satisfaction.

Human life, according to the concept of respect for human life, has inherent worth and should be treated with dignity and honour (Beauchamp 1993: p. 85). As the deliberate termination of one's own life, suicide is seen morally reprehensible. However, Baelz (1980) brings up the issue that

killing is generally considered as ethically justified in specific cases, such as self-defense. As a corollary, suicide may be an acceptable deviation from the concept of respect for life in some circumstances, such as when a person is chronically sick and faces an agonising death. "Each suicide represents both an individual tragedy and a loss to society," as stated in the National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England (Department of Health, 2002, p. 8), which could be argued to describe the rationale for a suicide prevention strategy in terms of the principle of respect for life. The theological stance is connected to the value Christians place on human life. Christians believe that God is the creator, making suicide an affront to God (Baelz, 1980).

Suicide and the Principle of Autonomy

According to Beauchamp (1993: p. 84), the concept of autonomy states, "an obligation to respect the decision-making capacities of autonomous persons by not limiting their liberty to effect their choices." The legal notion of mental capacity is now defined in a manner consistent with what he describes as the ability to make independent judgements. An individual must have the "ability to grasp, appreciate the significance of, form relevant intentions and not be controlled by either internal or external forces that the person cannot resist," according to his writing. Therefore, there is a tight relationship between one's cognitive abilities and the notion of individual freedom. For those who are unable to make choices on their own, the autonomy principle's defence of suicide as morally permissible is irrelevant. To let a person who lacks decision-making ability to end their own life is seen as ethically unacceptable by many. If mental incapacity is just transitory, the affected individual may rethink ending their life once they recover full mental faculties. David Hume argued that suicide is a noble deed in his seminal essay *Of Suicide* (Hume c. 1755), which originally came from the writings of old Greek philosophers. Autonomy and practicality are central to Hume's thesis. Hume discusses many reasons why an individual would contemplate suicide and concludes that there are times when doing so would be beneficial to the person, their loved ones, and society as a whole. If a spy is arrested and doesn't want to reveal any state secrets, he could take his own life. If the spy did not commit himself, Hume says, he would be miserable for the rest of his life. For Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), a person who commits suicide for the greater good feels "the weight of society is... brought to bear [on him] to lead him to destroy himself (Durkheim 1897; 2005 reprint: p. 178)." In this case, "the sacrifice is imposed for social ends," meaning that it is accepted and even encouraged by the larger community. A possible illustration of this is the self-immolation of Jan Palach in communist Czechoslovakia during the 'Prague Spring' riots of 1968 (O'Connor, 2009).

Duty to others

Deontological ethics or Kantian ethics, for example, concentrate on the idea of obligation to others. These moral stances stress the fundamental moral obligations everyone has to others, regardless of the costs. Those who have a rightful claim on a person's care and assistance may see suicide as wrong since it constitutes a violation of that responsibility.

Battin (1996) notes that duty to others is another factor in support of suicide prevention. Paternalistic interference is typically immoral, in her opinion, if a person makes a reasonable decision to terminate their life and there is no harm in that person's liberty. However, there are circumstances in which involvement is acceptable because of a responsibility to others (p. 143). A guy with a severe terminal disease plan to commit suicide, but his religiously observant wife would not let it. Short-term action would be warranted in this case to evaluate the guy for mental illness and ambivalence, and to give therapy and counselling if necessary. This demonstrates that a rational, autonomous individual may benefit from a second round of short-term paternalistic intervention even if there is no obligation to others or any history of ambivalence or mental illness, but when it is conceivable that the individual's state of mind has changed.

It is important to note, however, that the ethical stance on suicide, especially in regards to one's obligation to others, may vary widely among ethical frameworks and views. When considering suicide and ethical responsibilities, it is also important to consider the unique circumstances of each person and the intricacies of their mental health.

The utilitarian position

The utilitarian view on suicide is nuanced since it depends on the particular facts and consequences at hand. Utilitarianism is a consequentialist ethical theory that contends the morality of an activity should be determined not by one's own set of personal moral standards, but rather by the extent to which it benefits society as a whole. A utilitarian would weigh the benefits and drawbacks of suicide for both individuals and society as a whole while debating the issue. Consideration would be given to issues including why the person committed suicide, how it affected their own sense of well-being and happiness, and how it affected others around them. If suicide results in a net gain in overall pleasure or a reduction in overall suffering, then it may be ethically justifiable. If someone is terminally sick and in excruciating pain, suicide may be considered as a method to alleviate their suffering and improve their quality of life.

One of the most important utilitarian philosophers of the 19th century, John Stuart Mill, argued that after an initial effort to determine the reason of suicide, further measures to prevent suicide are never acceptable. Mill writes that we "are justified in temporarily intervening in order to ensure that a person is acting intentionally with adequate knowledge of the consequences of the action," but that once this is done, the individual should be free to do as they choose (Mill, 1859). According to Beauchamp (1993), Mill believed that the only justifiable use of force was to protect others from danger. Mill thought that '[an individual's] independence is, by right, total,' although he would tolerate remonstrance with the person or an effort to convince them not to kill themselves. The preservation of individual autonomy and liberty should be primary societal goals. However, it is unclear whether Mill would approve of an intervention that lasted only a few hours, consisted of a few words with a person about to jump off a bridge, or involved detention under the Mental Health Act with police assistance and an assessment and support over the course of several days or weeks. As Appelby (2001) points out, many suicides may be attributed to untreated mental illness, which

was not the case during Mill's lifetime. Furthermore, from his vantage point, a person who is suicidal cannot be having any second thoughts.

Utilitarians must, however, take into account the wider repercussions of suicide, particularly its effect on the survivors. Those left behind by a suicide victim may feel immense regret and sorrow for their loved one's decision. Suicide may have far-reaching consequences for society as a whole, including increased anxiety, social isolation, and decreased output. Therefore, the possible advantages to the person should be weighed against the potential damages to others and society in a utilitarian study of suicide. Understanding the morality of suicide is a delicate and nuanced task that calls both empathy and careful evaluation of each person's unique set of circumstances.

Religion and Suicide

When people turn to religion, they are able to alter their disturbed pre-learned ideas and aspirations and arrive at a new understanding that is more in tune with their current state of mind. As a result, religion is an excellent tool for facilitating personal growth and healing in the wake of traumatic experiences (Hajiyousouf & Bulut, 2022). According to Pack (2005), individuals may benefit from religions in general by using it to make sense of their difficult, traumatic, or otherwise stressful life situations. Many individuals find relief from anxiety and improved mental health via their religious beliefs, which help them make sense of the world around them.

The research would look at religion and suicide from a broad viewpoint, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and other faiths. An in-depth understanding of the many religious stances on suicide may be gleaned from how different communities view suicide.

Christianity and Suicide

Christian belief is considered an Abrahamic one. The sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not Kill" (Exodus 20:13), is central. It is crucial to highlight that the opposition to suicide from the perspective of being an unforgivable sin cannot readily be linked to the scriptures, despite the fact that the viewpoint of most of the early church fathers tends to be significantly oriented to this passage. It might be argued that the Bible is ambiguous on the subject of suicide and committing suicide. The sanctity of life was the foundation of the reasoning of early church leaders like St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, who were staunch opponents of suicide. To be clear, the Hebrew verb "ratsah" is employed in the context of the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," in the Hebrew Torah. The word's English translation, "murder," makes it apparent that it means "to commit murder" (Dignitas, 2013). Saint Augustine's views, as presented in the first book of his "City of God" trilogy, chapter twenty, are at odds with the original Hebrew text of the sixth commandment. St. Augustine, on his part, saw a universal ban on suicide in the sixth commandment (Dignitas, 2013). Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas were in agreement. He made an effort to defend the case against suicide. There were three pillars supporting his argument. For starters, "suicide was contrary to natural self-love," (Dignitas, 2013:3) it hurts the community of which we are a member, and (most importantly) it disobeys God, who gave us life

in the first place, by removing his authority to determine when we should die. Through the Middle Ages, particularly, the view represented by Aquinas became mainstream, and thus contributed to the criminalization of suicide.

Islam and Suicide

As stated in Surah 4:29 and 30 of the Holy Quran, "do not kill or destroy yourself," suicide is explicitly forbidden. Suicide is called self-murder (qatlalnafs) in the Quran, and it is strictly forbidden; the religion even forbids people from longing for death (Shah and Chandia, 2010). Prophetic traditions within Islam not only respect life (Shomali, 2008), but also ban suicide and consign the suicidal person to an everlasting punishment consisting of continuous repeats of the suicidal act (AlHarrasi, et al., 2016). Similar to the Christian Bible, the Qur'an is interpreted differently by diverse nations, regions, and religious groups with a preponderance of Muslims (Pritchard and Amanullah, 2007). While studies are small, they all point to a correlation between Islam and reduced suicide rates.

Several verses in the Holy Quran make it clear that killing one another or oneself is forbidden for Muslims; for example, Muslims were instructed to guard their souls and not end them because "it is given by the Creator and it shall be taken by Him," so it is not up to people to make such decisions or take such drastic measures. Don't steal from each other, but instead engage in honest commerce. Don't become violent with one another or with yourself. Allah will surely show you mercy at all times. Noble Qur'an, 4:29 (1984). Issa (2019) also listed a number of factors that contribute to people falling into certain categories, including a lack of belief in God's mercy, a lack of religiosity, an inability to bear or accept adversity, the commission of sinful acts, and a refusal to accept one's destined path in life.

As Glen puts it:

It is pertinent from the foregoing to state unequivocally that, the Qu'aran explicitly forbids suicide, and sees it as the gravest sin. This, it sees as more serious than the homicide. The premise is that, Muslims believe that each individual has his or her "Kismet" or destiny, which is pre-ordained by God and must not be defied (Glen, 2003).

In conclusion, it's important to highlight the widespread belief in Islam that a suicide victim would be denied entry to heaven. In addition to this, the second penalty will be to redo the deed by which he committed suicide and landed in hell. However, the Imams may choose to emulate the Prophet by not offering the usual prayers for the suicide.

Hinduism and Suicide

The Hindu faith has several facets and a wide range of doctrines (Teo et al., 2021). Suicide is seen as counterproductive to the welfare of society in Hinduism (Lakhan, 2008). Protecting against suicide (Nelson et al., 2012) is the obligation to one's family, community, and

the cosmos that the notion of Dharma imparts. Even though suicide might be considered a "bad death" where the person is reincarnated to a lower level of existence where they will experience suffering or have an animal life (Leach 2006), Hindu philosophy believes that death leads to rebirth through reincarnation, which might lead to more permissive views towards suicide.

The Hindu notion of dharma is also essential to their outlooks on death and the afterlife. Dharma is the code of ethics by which people should live. According to Juthani (2004), those who follow dharma feel a deep obligation to their loved ones, their community, and the greater cosmos. Dharma's foundation is altruism, and it places a premium on treating people with respect. Hinduism, like many other faiths, places a high value on the sanctity of human life. The ultimate dharma for a Hindu is the practise of nonviolence and love for all living things (Juthani, 1998).

Taking one's own life to avoid pain is not acceptable according to Hindu teachings (Leach, 2006), despite the fact that the Hindu texts are mostly agnostic on the topic of suicide (Colucci & Martin, 2008). According to Hindu belief, there is such a thing as a "good death" and a "bad death." The Hindu who dies a decent death has lived a long and fruitful life, has excellent mental health, and has had enough time to say goodbye to loved ones and settle any unfinished business. Thus, one should not dread death so long as it is a nice death. If someone dies unexpectedly, they may not be ready spiritually to go on to the next life (Graham et al., 2012). The death that follows is a tragic one. According to certain Hindus, those who choose to end their lives by suicide would have a more difficult time in the hereafter, and they may even be reborn as a lower animal form (Leach, 2006).

In the Hindu faith and culture, suicide is tolerated under specific conditions. The Hindu faith allows for the practise of *pryopavea*, or voluntary fasting death (Mannan, 1989). A religious adherent who is dying and unable to practise selfhygiene is allowed to practise *pryopavea*. It is important to publicly announce a *pryopavea* in order to set it apart from other forms of suicide (Mannan, 1989). Also incorporated in Hindu traditions is the practise of *Sati*, in which a woman deliberately causes her own death by setting herself on fire on her husband's funeral pyre (Adityanjee, 1983; Mannan, 1989). Reports of women being burned to death continue to surface, even though *Sati* has been outlawed in India (Kumar, 2003).

Buddhism and Suicide

The Buddhist perspective on suicide is based on how it contributes to this underlying suffering. Suicide, according to Buddhists, is an expression of pain brought on by a desire to cease being (Disayavanish & Disayavanish, 2007). However, Buddhists do not believe that suicide ends suffering because "human beings cannot avoid suffering by taking their own life...the fruit of that act is rebirth in the woeful planes of existence, and hence further suffering endlessly" (Disayavanish & Disayavanish, 2007). As suicide is seen as the intentional death of a sentient creature in Buddhism, it is strongly discouraged (Lizardi & Gearing, 2010). Unpreparedness for the next world and a disruption of one's karma are the results of such behaviour (Leach, 2006). In

the end, Buddhists want to alleviate their followers' pain, and suicide thoughts and actions are seen as counterproductive to that goal.

Judaism and Suicide

According to Jewish law, suicide is considered a kind of murder since it involves the intentional killing of oneself. A person has no right to injure or kill himself, according to Jewish teaching (Bailey and Stein 1995; Schwartz and Kaplan 1992). Jewish law, in contrast to traditional Catholic teaching, does not see the fifth commandment's "Thou shalt not kill" as prohibiting suicide. Rather, the prohibition of suicide stems from a prioritisation of protecting human life above personal autonomy (Jacobs 1995). However, there are suicides throughout Jewish history that are not only celebrated, but also justified by focusing on the larger good. Samson, for instance, has been seen as a martyr for his people (Shoenfeld and Strous, 2008), making him the archetypal Jewish hero. Hundreds of Jewish men, women, and children, collectively known as the Zealots, committed mass suicide rather than be captured and enslaved by the Romans at the end of the historical Battle of Masada (Ngo, 2014). This event is seen as symbolic of the ongoing Jewish fight for freedom. Furthermore, Jewish teachings see suicide as having an eternal repercussion. The soul suffers greatly since it has nowhere to go when a person commits suicide (Kaplan and Schoenberg 1988). Since the body has been destroyed, the soul has no way to go back in, but it also cannot go to any of the other soul worlds since its time hasn't come yet. Someone who thinks they can get out of a bad position by killing themselves can end themselves in a far worse one. Thus, although it is possible to find solutions to issues in this lifetime, there are ultimately no more chances to do so after death, just repercussions. Suicide victims, according to traditional Jewish thinking, are not entitled to the rites of passage associated with death, including burial and blessings (Kaplan & Schoenberg 1988).

Conclusion

When examined, the beliefs of the world's major religions pertaining to suicide show a number of significant parallels and similarities. It is common practise to accord a high level of significance to human life, and the act of taking one's own life is generally seen as a breach of this basic value. From an ethical standpoint, suicide was analysed using the principle of respect for life, the theological position, the principle of autonomy, the principle of duty to others, and the utilitarian position. Whereas, from the perspective of religion, we examined suicide using Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and other religions. The study exposes that Mosaic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and the ethical positions of respect for life and theological position and the principle of duty to others, which are based on the idea that humans are created in God's image and that humans have intrinsic worth, have a more pronounced position against suicide. Whereas the Eastern religions feature beliefs in reincarnation and rebirth. The study posits that the principle of autonomy and utilitarian positions are clear about conditions that could permit suicide. Also, it is clear that some religions hold the view that suicide is a reflection of an underlying mental illness.

As a result, some religions have softened their stance on suicidal behaviour's impact on the afterlife.

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