Problem with Organ Sale, Trade, and Donation

Name

Institution
According to Shafran, Kodish & Tzakis (2014), “the advent of organ donation heralded a new era in medicine. It allowed medicine to open a new frontier of medical possibilities that implied better health care and a solution to some of the disorders and diseases that had plagued man for years and that lacked pharmaceutical solutions or remedies.” Organ donation refers to the medical procedures that allow a patient to donate a healthy and functional human organ to a patient that needs such an organ to sustain life. This happens through organ harvesting, for example for those people involved in accidents or those that are incapacitated. However, there has to be informed consent from the patient or the donor. If the illness incapacitates the donor for example, the consent of the guardian or close relative(s) is sought before such organ transplant procedure is initiated.

Organ donation is a noble medical course of action. In fact, sometimes it is the only course of action that doctors or physicians can recommend to patients. As a result, this has led to a high demand for organs. This demand outstrips the supply of such organs into the medical field by far leading to many people put on queues waiting for organs. Additionally, the other challenge facing the organ donation process in the field of medicine is compatibility of these organs to patients (Danavitch et al., 2013). This is biologically determined. The body is made up of an elaborate immune system that fights any foreign particles in the body (pathogens); this is the body's mechanism for fighting bacteria and other harmful or disease-causing organisms. Unfortunately, this can extend to some of the organs that are transplanted into the body. Once the immunity identifies the organ as foreign, it rejects it and produces the immune cells to fight this organ and thus it cannot be useful to the ailing patient. “Organ rejection has led to the scarcity of organ donors and also specific organs compatible with specific patients” (Hench, Jones & Fenn, 2012). There is fear of organ donation among the overwhelming majority of the members of the
society; this has contributed to the exacerbation of the scarcity of these organs in medical centers in the United States. This is especially worse among the healthy young men and women in the country; they are the most targeted because of the strength and vitality (quality) of their organs.

Cohen (2012) posits that “scarcity breeds increased demand; increased demand, on the other hand, breeds exchange value.” This means that the value of these organs is massively high. This has led to the development and thriving of the organ sale and organ trade black market. This is the illegal acquiring and sale of organs to specific patients who need them and can afford to pay the black market fees. The rich people who need organ transplants and are way behind the waiting lists as their health conditions deteriorate opt to use the black market way to obtain such transplants. The organ black market needs to maintain the supply of organs, and the rate of willing organ donation is miniscule compared to the demand (Cohen, 2012). This has led to the development and spread of the human trafficking menace. This is a massive problem for the security of the members of the society and a major challenge to the law enforcement departments in the United States and around the world as well.

Human trafficking is, therefore, a major result of the high demand of organ sale and trading. It has thrived in the high demand and thus premium pricing of these organs in the black market. Human trafficking is a huge crime against human decency and human rights. The organ trafficking syndicates seize innocent men and women without their will and harvest their organs for sale. This is sometimes done in the cruelest and gruesome ways imaginable and without medical counsel (Shafran, Kodish & Tzakis, 2014). The result is untold and excruciating suffering of these victims so that other people, rich people, can have a life? Where is law enforcement in all this?
A major part of this problem is that these crimes are being perpetrated by some of the wealthiest individuals in society. This means that these crime syndicates is sophisticated and well-resourced in terms of finances and other equipment or personnel they need to keep such syndicates running right under the noses of the authorities. The other issue is that these syndicates is targeting people from the third world countries and some of the impoverished regions of the world. In these areas, they can easily buy their way out through bribery and brutality (Shafran, Kodish & Tzakis, 2014). They can collude with corrupt local leaders to allow them to run their rings of trafficking of humans and the harvesting of organs in exchange for money; after all, they are not short of money! This has led to the establishment of international cartels and syndicates that specialize in human trafficking or rather organ trafficking. The black market organ sale trade has therefore become a massive challenge to law enforcement and the authorities as it is on an upward trajectory (Cohen, 2012). They exploit the poverty and the difficult conditions of the people in Africa, Asia, South America and some parts of East and Southern Asia to lure young and healthy men and to their traps. They are trafficked to the organ demand areas across the world, and they are killed off for organs akin the dissembling of a car of its parts. A solution is needed fast.

The challenge facing the fight against black market organ sale and trade or human trafficking is that there is still a massive and strong demand for organs. For as long as such demand exists, the hopes of eliminating this barbaric trade from our midst are a pipe dream. “As a result, the solution should be sustainable and address all the reasons that create the demand in the first place” (Hench, Jones & Fenn, 2012). Attaining self-sufficiency through the legal and humane approaches will help in cooling the demand and thus rendering these black market organ sales and trade useless. The value of such organs will plummet, and the market can then be
eliminated. Consequently, the solution lies with a concerted approach with the science or medical community working hand in hand with law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and around the world.

The approach of using deceased donor organs has been touted as the best approach. These are the patients that have suffered deaths accidents, or in wars. These can then be used, with consent from their families or relatives, to donate organs for use in these medical procedures or organ transplants (Capron, 2014). This means that the efforts by the medical facilities in coordination with the research agencies and other stakeholders in the health care sector have to come up with elaborate ways to harvest or obtain these organs in time to ensure viability and thus their utility in organ donation procedures. This will involve prompt responses to accident sites as well as serving in wars as well. “The major challenge with this approach is the moral or legal issue” (Cohen, 2012). For example, it is time-consuming to try and receive the consent of the deceased relatives of parents when some of the organs need to be preserved immediately to prevent damage (Capron, 2014). As a result, a legal platform has to be created to allow for such a process. Additionally, the government should legalize and regulate the sale of organs. This will allow the natural process of demand and supply to occur with medically-informed consent among the transacting parties. This will limit the abuse of the organ donation, sale, and trade.

Streamlining the process of using the deceased organs for organ donations will increase the number of organs available to waiting patients massively. It will create a system where the patients do not have to die on the waiting list waiting for an organ transplant. It will increase their chances of receiving organ transplants markedly. This will get people to trust the medical
system and trust that it can work for them. Consequently, this will at least limit the number of people turning to the organs black markets to a minimum. Additionally, the campaign against the organ smuggling and human trafficking needs both a legal framework and the support of the law enforcement to flush out these cartels and ensure that there is enough deterrence to committing such crimes within the U.S. society and across the world as well. A combination of the above approaches will, as a result, be effective in addressing this challenge.
References

