

Understanding the genetic enhancement of embryo health issues

Posted on September 21, 2018

Introduction

The symbolic interactionism perspective emphasizes that health issues are social constructions. Thus, health problems or conditions have no objective since health conditions are considered an issue if they are defined by the people in society. Therefore, the symbolic perspective has assisted in studying the interactions between patients and healthcare professionals. Symbolic interactionism relies on symbolic interpretations people make and use in the process of social interactions (Knöbl, 2010). Thus, this sociological perspective discusses society by addressing the subjective meaning that individuals inflict on behaviors, objects, and events. Sociological perspectives have been used to understand health and health care. Health is defined as a condition where an individual's physical and mental conditions are good, and the person is socially well. The paper focuses on the use of symbolic interactionism to understand the concept of genetic enhancement of embryos. A concept is a scientific approach that allows gene editing procedures that aim to prevent individuals from passing a health problem to their children (Behringer et al., 2014). The procedure has not yet been approved; thus, it's under research. Therefore, the genetic enhancement of embryos allows medical practitioners to manipulate embryos, human eggs, and sperm to eliminate any medical threat that they might pass to their children (Behringer et al., 2014). Since symbolic interactionism views health as social constructions, then it helps us understand the genetic enhancement of embryo health problems. Therefore, I am going to discuss how we can use the sociological perspective of symbolic interactionism to understand the genetic enhancement of embryo health issues.

Genetic Enhancement of Embryo

The genetic enhancement of embryos is a scientific approach that helps in manipulating embryos, human eggs, and sperm to prevent genetic diseases (Behringer et al., 2014). This is a medical discovery that could save lives, but it, at the same time, goes against the societal view of childbirth. The genetic enhancement of embryos can be viewed as an ethical and moral medical intervention that aims to address the issue of children's immortality within society. Therefore, the genetic enhancement of embryos is a process that can refer to the creation of genetically engineered children (Vogel, 2015).

Therefore, the main symbol in this discussion is "engineered children." The genetic enhancement of embryos is not a biological issue, and it also requires societal views to make society subjectively

accept it as a good health discovery. The process helps in preventing the transmission of genetic diseases. Since there are scientific advancements, top societal views are advancing through symbolic interactions. Thus, the method is risky scientifically and socially, yet it can be to save children's lives. Symbolic interactionism is an appropriate sociological perspective that can help understand and raise rational debate about the genetic enhancement of embryos (Abrutyn, 2013). Therefore, we will view the genetic engineering method as subjective rather than as an objective issue within society. This will help influence societal views and perceptions about genetic concepts. In social constructions, perceptions matter more than reality. Therefore, through symbolic interactionism, it is easy to understand the interaction between people due to their general nature of thinking. Thus, communication and interaction between people within society regarding genetics will improve how they interpret the genetic enhancement of embryo concepts (Behringer et al., 2014). This will change how they perceive the process.

Symbolic interactionism will help in putting the genetic enhancement of embryos in society as a subjective rather than an objective concept. The people within the society perceive and interpret things without considering their reality. This will create a crucial background for the basis of interaction, which is then a communication process. The symbol describes an object or an event, thus helping mediate and trigger a reaction. This directs a person's perception of interpreting the meaning of the described symbol that provides the basis for interaction. Therefore, through interaction, every person involved in a communication process will be able to recognize and interpret the intentions of the other within the communication process (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2017). The integration of the concept of genetic enhancement of embryos into society will require interaction and a communicative process. Thus, the societal view of genetic engineering will improve due to social constructions.

Due to symbolic interactionism, society will be able to view the genetic enhancement of embryos as a significant event in medicine and may assist in reducing genetic diseases (Boudon, 1987). Also, people view it as a chance to save children's lives through a biological method and prevent genetic illnesses that children may inherit from their parents. Furthermore, interactionism will help introduce the symbol of genetic engineering in society and provide information on its importance.

Conclusion

The symbolic interactionism perspective discusses society by addressing the subjective meaning that individuals inflict and impose on behaviors, objects, and events. Thus, communication and interaction between people within society regarding genetics will improve how they interpret the genetic enhancement of embryo concepts.

References

Abrutyn, S. (2013). Teaching sociological theory for a new century: Contending with the time crunch. *The American Sociologist*, 44(2), 132-154.

Behringer, R. R., Gertsenstein, M., Nagy, K. V., & Nagy, A. (2014). *Manipulating the mouse embryo: a laboratory manual*. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press.

Boudon, R. (1987). The individualistic tradition in sociology. *The Micro-Macro Link*, 45-70.

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/feb/14/major-report-prepares-ground-for-genetic-modification-of-human-embryos>

Knöbl, W. (2010). Path dependency and civilizational analysis: Methodological challenges and theoretical tasks. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 13(1), 83-97.

Ritzer, G., & Stepnisky, J. (2017). *Modern sociological theory*. SAGE Publications.

Sample, I. (2017). Major report prepares ground for genetic modification of human embryos. *The Guardian*. Retrieved 1 February 2018, from

Vogel, G. (2015). Embryo engineering alarm.