

1. RESEARCH ARTICLE

RELIGIÓN, CULTURA Y POLÍTICA-SOCIAL EN EL MUNDO: LA PERSPECTIVA EN TORNO AL ABORTO

RELIGION, CULTURE AND SOCIAL POLITICS IN THE WORLD: THE PERSPECTIVE AROUND ABORTION

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2. RESUMEN

Introducción: El debate existente que gira en torno a la práctica del aborto está permeado por diferentes aspectos que hacen que esta práctica se convierta en un fenómeno de alto impacto en distintas ramas de la sociedad. **Objetivos:** indagar sobre las perspectivas que se han generado sobre estos conceptos: la religión, la cultura y el ámbito político-social, esto con el fin de establecer la posición que posee la sociedad frente a la práctica o no de esta actividad. **Materiales y métodos** Se realiza una revisión integrativa de literatura en bases de datos, lectura de los contenidos en busca de argumentos que aporten a la discusión. **Resultados:** se clasifican cada uno de los artículos científicos nacionales e internacional de acuerdo con la perspectiva abordada, religión, cultura, político- social, construye un debate de acuerdo con cada punto de vista, **Discusión** De acuerdo con los hallazgos se resalta la influencia política y cultural de la iglesia en torno al aborto, de igual forma las tradiciones culturalmente adquiridas respecto al concepto de la vida. **Conclusiones** el aborto es un tema que representa una marcada polarización en los diferentes sectores de la sociedad y amplias diferencias en la interpretación del concepto mismo.

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Palabras clave: Aborto; sociedad; Cultura; religión; político; social.

3. ABSTRACT

Introduction: The existing debate around the practice of abortion is permeated by various aspects that make this practice a phenomenon of high impact in different branches of society. **Objectives:** to investigate the perspectives that have been generated on these concepts: religion, culture, and the political-social sphere, this to establish the position that society has in relation to the practice or not of this activity. **Materials and methods** an integrative literature review is carried out in databases, reading the contents in search of arguments that contribute to the discussion. **Results:** each of the national and international scientific articles is classified according to the perspective addressed, religion, culture, political-social, constructs a debate according to each point of view, **Discussion** According to the findings, the political and cultural influence of the Church on abortion is highlighted, as well as the culturally acquired traditions regarding the concept of life. **Conclusions** Abortion is an issue that represents a marked polarization among different sectors of society and wide differences in the interpretation of the concept itself.

Keywords: abortion, society, culture, religión, political, social.

INTRODUCTION

Abortion is considered one of the most controversial and sensitive issues in society. Records from both modern and ancient civilizations show that abortion has long been a topic of contention, as it confronts various perspectives stemming not only from personal experiences but also from the many contexts and academic fields that shape social coexistence. This text addresses three essential aspects of social organization: religion as a structural element of beliefs and a major source of motivation in a person's life; humanity's ongoing quest to find a deity to explain the origin and end of life; and the ethical framework that defines what is right or wrong, holy or

sinful. The concept of religion is embedded in the definition of culture, which Barrera defines as essentially representing this framework.

Based on that, certain fundamental principles have been selected as important for recognizing this practice. These are approached from religious, cultural, and socio-political perspectives. A systematic literature review will be conducted focusing on the analysis, recognition, and evaluation of different representations related to abortion, in light of policies that have been approved in Colombia aimed at reducing maternal morbidity and mortality rates.

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Throughout history, humanity has practiced abortion for various reasons and using methods that, to many today—given modern medical advancements—seem simply unbelievable. This is concerning because there are still countries and entire societies that directly and openly reject pregnancy termination, despite the fact that abortion has been practiced in every documented era and in many civilizations. It has often been viewed as criminal, sinful, heretical, satanic, unethical, and immoral. This has led not only to rejection of the practice but also of the women who choose to terminate a pregnancy. This stigma, past and present, puts many women at significant risk when they choose to undergo an abortion.

According to data provided by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), in collaboration with the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), **the leading direct cause of maternal death among adolescents is septic abortion**, which typically occurs in clandestine and unsafe environments. In 2019, the estimated number of such abortions in girls aged 15 to 19 across Latin America and the Caribbean was 876,000.

Taking into account sexual and reproductive rights, as well as current policies related to abortion, this can be interpreted as a significant step toward providing safe conditions and guarantees for women who choose to terminate a pregnancy. However, it is necessary to understand the debate surrounding this practice and the societal polarization it provokes.

It is important to analyze how the many perspectives emerging from the various spheres in which individuals operate influence the adoption of a critical and reflective stance on abortion. The goal is to affirm that forming a judgment on this issue is not solely based on personal experiences, but also on contextual factors that contribute to shaping a structural view of abortion.

There are ongoing debates from different perspectives. Recognizing the issue based on various realities—along with a historical component—allows for a better interpretation of the experiences and practices of women within the social structure. Politics, religion, and culture are essential components of the social system, defining the rules of coexistence, beliefs, and human practices. Hence, the following question arises: **What level of influence do social factors such as religion, culture, and politics have in shaping a reflective perspective on abortion?**

While history shows that the discussion on this topic has long lacked reflection in many regions, today the perspective is shifting toward recognizing women's rights over their own bodies. This necessarily introduces a variety of arguments that contrast significantly with past realities. This question seeks to explore how an individual's environment influences their stance on controversial issues, beyond their personal experiences.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

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This is a **critical literature review**, aligned with its analytical and reflective aim, focused on studying the various perspectives surrounding abortion and the ways in which religious, cultural, or socio-political aspects influence its conceptualization, adoption, and application.

In the first phase of the review, studies related to abortion as a general topic were included, regardless of their publication date or language. This approach aimed to analyze viewpoints on the subject over time. Studies focusing solely on the effectiveness of specific treatments or that delved into pharmaceutical efficacy were excluded.

An integrative search of the literature was conducted using databases such as ResearchGate, institutional repositories, Redalyc, Scielo, and

PubMed. Search terms used in both Spanish and English included: *“abortion,” “impact of abortion,” “abortion and legality,” “abortion and religion,” “abortion and society,”* depending on the database requirements and language settings. After reviewing the titles and abstracts, duplicate articles and those unrelated to the review’s objective were excluded.

Each selected work was read in detail to identify arguments relevant to the discussion in this analysis. The studies were categorized based on a shared perspective—highlighting elements from religious, cultural, or socio-political viewpoints—which were the three parameters selected for the analysis. After thorough review, **50 previously analyzed articles** were included that aligned with the themes of this study, **10 of which were in English.**

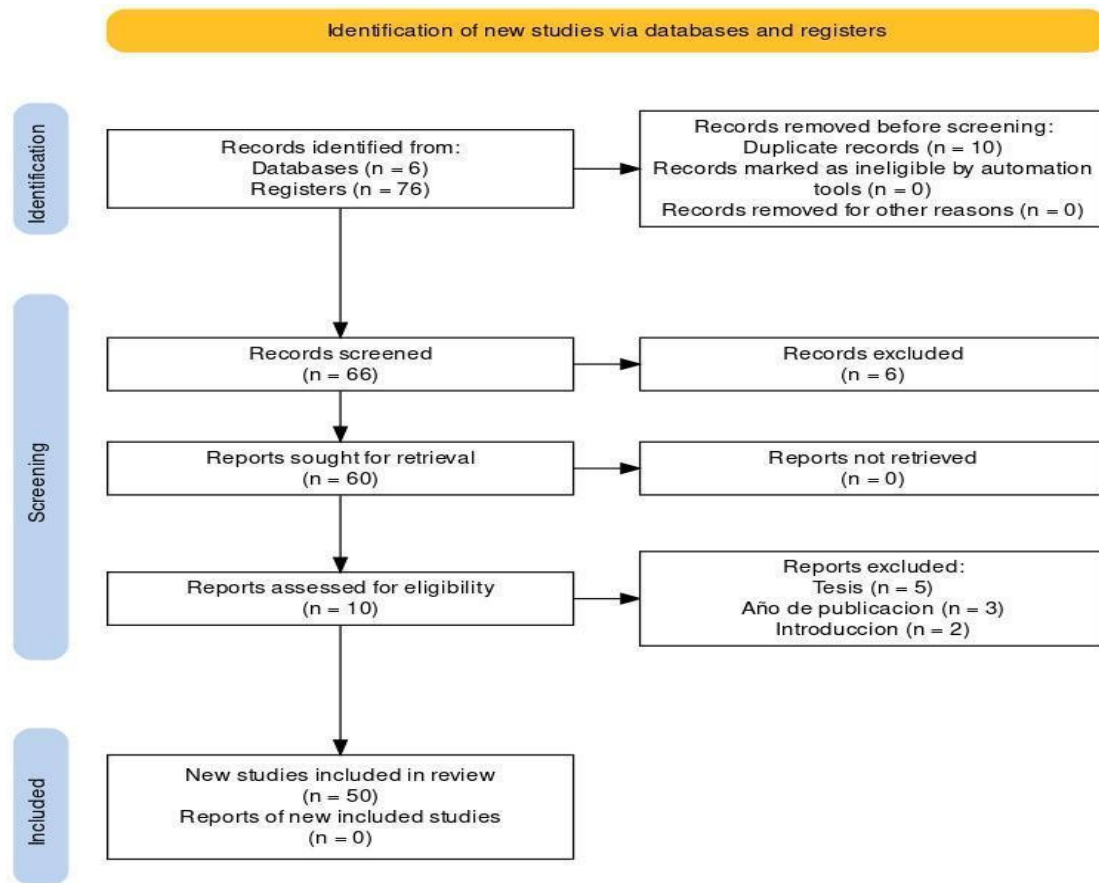


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RESULTS

Religious Perspective

Lugo presents a historical-religious perspective on abortion, noting that while it was normalized in Ancient Greece through the insertion of substances via the cervix, it was in Roman civilization that the practice began to be repressed, citing the risks to women's lives. By 200 AD, Roman society was violently punishing women who had abortions. During the Middle Ages, this repression intensified with the rise of the Church, leading women to turn to witches and midwives for abortions.

According to Jones et al., the opposition of religions—especially Christianity—to abortion is tied to historical difficulties in reaching agreements between the Catholic Church and the State. They note that in the 1980s, the Vatican launched an international ideological and political campaign against sexual and reproductive rights, placing abortion in a neglected position.

Frohwirth et al. confirm that in the U.S., many religious women disapprove of abortion. However, that disapproval does not prevent many of them from obtaining abortions at some point, revealing the doctrinal repression imposed by religious institutions on sexual and reproductive rights.

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Emerson emphasizes that worldviews act as a vital link between religion and attitudes toward abortion. Religion's influence is often underestimated, but beliefs and decisions shaped by transcendence form the core of religious attitudes on this issue.

Vera Pérez & Lugo Ortiz argue that conservative religion and politics impact traditional gender and motherhood constructs, reinforcing rejection of abortion and viewing women as symbols of reproduction, rather than victims of societal inequality.

Martín & Valdivia highlight how religion can engage adolescents by promoting ethical and moral principles about abortion. They cite the series "Catolizadas," which helps viewers reconcile spirituality with values like justice, equality, diversity, freedom, and respect for women's decisions.

Johnson explores how Catholic women, despite religious beliefs, have undergone abortions, reconciling their experiences with their spirituality.

Salles discusses the moral debate, emphasizing how abortion is judged differently on individual and social levels—whether it's morally acceptable or what public policies should support it.

Puraye, analyzing Chile's 2017 partial abortion decriminalization, illustrates the political-ideological split between the Catholic Church and feminist movements.

Cultural Perspective

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Abortion across ancestral worldviews reveals varying cultural meanings. In Bolivia's Aymara culture, "limphu" refers to the immorality of a pregnant single woman who aborts and hides the fetus. The community believed such actions caused disasters, like hail destroying crops. Girls suspected of pregnancy faced harsh punishment, including physical abuse.

In Yecapixtla, Morelos (Mexico), abortion is deeply stigmatized. Women are harshly labeled, and abortion is described using degrading metaphors. Midwives in the community reject it entirely, encouraging adoption instead and naming various unsafe methods like heavy lifting or consuming local plants.

In Colombia, abortion meaning varies by culture. The Nasa community opposes abortion, viewing it as contrary to demographic preservation amid armed conflict. Conversely, mestizo women, especially those with professional education, see abortion as viable. Among lower-income women, motherhood shapes identity, though many support abortion under certain circumstances.

Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna contrast natural law, which opposes abortion on moral grounds, with sociological schools that accept it under specific conditions.

Huber-Krum et al. argue that unclear abortion definitions, limited access, legal ignorance, and religious norms promote stigma.



Roberts et al. link intimate partner violence to abortion, citing it as a common reason women terminate pregnancies for self-protection.

Carril Berro & López Gómez show men also feel impacted by abortion, and support for reproductive rights depends on their own awareness and education.

Emerson, citing Colombian nursing students, highlights support for abortion rights, though students face backlash from patriarchal societal values and religious influence.

Cucalón finds that abortion rejection often depends on context. Some people change their views based on specific situations.

Celmira et al. assert that while cultural values can hinder legalization, legal abortion is crucial to preventing maternal mortality.

Gomes & Menezes show that cultural discourse, influenced by religious doctrine, aims to deter abortion through moral arguments like “orthothanasia.”

Ituarte & López Gómez find that adolescents in Uruguay often decide to abort before accessing healthcare, with mothers playing key roles in their decisions. Legal frameworks support safer procedures.

Bhalotra et al. note that among Muslims, abortion decisions are also influenced by gender preference, with female fetuses more often aborted.

Lamas argues that radical stances vary with perspective. Some push for total prohibition, others for decriminalization with a focus on sex education and contraceptive access.

Marván et al. acknowledge unsafe abortion as a health risk but question whether legalization alone can solve it. Religious men remain most condemning.

Morinigo & Fenner equate abortion to euthanasia, framing it as a symptom of a hedonistic, utilitarian culture that dismisses the vulnerable.

Socio-Political Perspective

In Argentina, Fernández Vázquez & Szwarc describe feminist and public health partnerships promoting medical abortion via misoprostol and counseling.

Bankole et al. identify adolescents as a high-risk group for induced abortions.

Iglesias Osoreo et al. report that most abortions in girls under 19 are incomplete, reinforcing reliance on clandestine procedures.

Deza views abortion as a public health issue tied to historical, political, and economic factors.

Bernabé-Ortiz et al. show Peru has one of the highest rates of clandestine abortions, calling for better education on contraception and safe sex.



Cameron et al. stress that restrictive laws do not deter abortions but make them unsafe.

Clarke & Mühlrad show that legalization reduces maternal morbidity, especially hemorrhaging in early pregnancy.

Gallardo & Salazar cite legal causes for abortion: medical necessity, fetal anomalies, rape, and socioeconomic hardship.

Vivar & Pauta argue legal access still falls short of empowering women, as decisions remain shaped by patriarchal control.

Ramírez & Montero call for abolishing harmful stereotypes and increasing research to create inclusive public policies.

Vázquez notes progress in Mexico and other countries like Ireland and Argentina, where abortion rights have expanded, although not without setbacks.

Elizalde & Mateo highlight how activism, such as Argentina's "Green Wave," reshaped abortion discourse, particularly among youth.

Puga & Monsalve address the counterforce: Catholic activism, particularly in Colombia, which remains a major obstacle.

Gamboa Vargas lists challenges like lack of information, access restrictions, professional secrecy violations, and the criminalization of women.

Suczhañay-Uyaguari et al. advocate decriminalization to prevent judicial punishment for sexual violence victims, a right still denied in countries like Ecuador.

Correa urges that abortion be regulated under health laws, not criminal codes, and that debates over morality should remain personal and academic, not judicial.

DISCUSSION

Religious influence has shaped abortion policies for centuries, from moral arguments to legal restrictions. However, shifts in thought—like spiritual reframing and empathetic perspectives—have emerged within religious communities.

Men's perspectives, while often overlooked, show they are emotionally affected by abortion decisions. Intimate partner violence also emerges as a contributing factor.

Culturally, attitudes vary. Some communities fiercely reject abortion, others embrace sexual and reproductive rights. Cultural meaning often intersects with education, class, and geography.

The socio-political angle brings a broader understanding of abortion as both an individual right and a public health matter. Legal frameworks can support safer outcomes, but barriers remain: unequal access, stigmatization, and weak policy implementation.



In Latin America, examples like Colombia's rulings (C-355 in 2006, C-055 in 2022) demonstrate progressive steps. However, disparities between countries—like Ecuador's strict criteria—highlight the need for broader reform.

CONCLUSIONS

From a religious viewpoint, abortion is seen as an attack on life that challenges women's sexual rights. While traditional arguments persist, some faith-based perspectives now lean toward empathy, acknowledging motherhood, gender, and personal choice.

Cultural perspectives show abortion's acceptability depends on context. Full rejection overlooks life-threatening cases; full acceptance raises moral debates. The right to choose must be weighed with appropriate regulation.

The socio-political view offers a deeper, more nuanced understanding. Decriminalization represents state acknowledgment of individual rights, but additional progress is needed in healthcare, public policy, and education.

Ethical Considerations and Conflict of Interest

According to Resolution No. 8430 of 1993 from the Ministry of Health (Colombia), this academic work presents **no risk** regarding human

experimentation, as it involves no such methods.

The literature used was **publicly accessible** and complies with national and international copyright laws. All citations follow **Vancouver referencing guidelines**.

Throughout the development of the conceptual framework and theoretical discussion, **confidentiality was maintained** concerning research participants cited in reviewed articles.

The authors **declare no conflicts of interest**.

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