

Current discourses to Abortion in Ireland

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April 2013

BA Honours General Arts

Dublin Business School of Arts

Abstract

This research was designed to examine the current social and political discourses around abortion in Ireland. The History of Ireland was examined as well as many Court cases around abortion leading up to modern day Ireland with more recent cases in the News. Different view points and attitudes were explored, as well as interviews being carried out in order to get different aspects on the public's view of abortion and the influence religion and/or the government have on people. This dissertation compares and contrasts cases throughout history with modern day attitudes and looks at whether there has been or will be any change in peoples discourses.

Table of Contents

<u>Abstract</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Acknowledgements</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Introduction</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Literature Review</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Methodology</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Results</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>Discussion</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>References</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>Appendix A</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Appendix B</u>	<u>47</u>

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Siobain O'Donnell for her continuous support, help and guidance, as without it this dissertation would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the participants who contributed to my findings by agreeing to be interviewed. My friends and family were also hugely supportive during the time I spent on this work and contributed different areas of knowledge to help produce the end product.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Abortion is the removal of the embryo or foetus from the uterus in order to terminate a pregnancy.

Abortion is legal in some countries but the limits on abortion differ in many countries depending on how many weeks pregnant the woman is, the conditions of her pregnancy, whether it be rape, threat to her or the child's life or a child just does not fit with the woman's life plan. Abortion became a criminal offence in Ireland under the Offences Against the Person Act in 1861 under sections 58 and 59, making it an offence for 'every woman being with child, who with intent to procure her own miscarriage shall unlawfully administer to herself any poison or other noxious thing or shall unlawfully use any instrument or other means whatsoever with the like intent, and whomsoever, with intent to procure the miscarriage of any woman, whether she be or be not with child, shall unlawfully administer to her or cause to be taken by her any poison or other noxious thing, or shall unlawfully use any instrument or other means whatsoever with the like intent, shall be guilty of felony, and being convicted thereof shall be liable to be kept in penal servitude for life.' (Charleton, McDermot and Bolger, 1999. 107)

This investigation will seek to discover the different attitudes and opinions surrounding abortion in Ireland. It will do this by investigating how Ireland's history may have influenced abortion being illegal. Despite the law being in place long before Ireland gained her independence from Britain, when they were able to have their own constitution they held on

to this law as it agreed with the Catholic religion. Ireland's constitution will be a salient focus here, to illustrate how it has changed very little from years ago and so may not fit in with a contemporary world. The investigation will also examine people's attitudes to abortion through protests and campaigns in reference to referendums and the controversy around the Aurora Abortion boat, the Belfast abortion clinic and the death of Savita Halappanavar.

Three people will be interviewed using a qualitative form of research in order to get first-hand accounts of people's opinions. One person will be interviewed who supports Pro-Life, one who supports Pro-Choice and finally a journalist to examine the media's perspective and how contemporary campaigns may have implemented their view on abortion. This investigation aims to assess what the issues around abortion are and compare them with the past to see if there is a correlation or whether new developments affect people's attitudes. The investigation shall remain completely unbiased throughout in order to give an honest impartial widespread view on what current attitudes towards abortion in Ireland are like.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

From the years 1534 to 1691 Britain brought in a plantation policy whereby it settled thousands of English and Scottish non-Catholic people into Ireland in order to make the Irish take on British norms and values and decrease their Catholic culture. However, this led to sectarianism and conflict in Ireland. Catholics faced a lot of discrimination in Ireland during these times. In 1613 Catholics were overthrown in parliament and by the end of the 1600s they were banned completely from parliament and the English minorities controlled the power. Penal laws came in which caused limitations for Catholics politically, religiously and economically (The 'Irish Identity', 2013). In 1607 Irish Catholics were not allowed in public offices or to serve in the armed forces as they were forbidden to hold firearms.

They were also prohibited to be a Member of Parliament. Up until 1793 Catholics were not allowed to vote or attend Trinity College Dublin and professions in the legal sector were only open to Protestants until 1829. A Property Act came in which stopped Catholics being able to bequeath their land to their eldest child after they died. Instead it had to be spread out equally amongst all children meaning each would receive a very small amount of land. However, if the eldest child converted to Protestantism then they would be able to become the only tenant of the estate but they could under no circumstances convert back to Catholicism (Bamber, 2001). Catholics were banned from adopting orphans and teaching until 1782 and could only own one horse worth no more than five pounds. Catholic churches were rarely allowed to be built, but if they were it was to be of wood and not stone.

From 1771 Catholics began to seek emancipation and Relief Acts. These took place in 1778 and 1793. Ireland became part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland under the Act of Union in 1800 and so the Irish Parliament was abolished. Catholic emancipation came into effect in 1829 where they gained some rights back. Irish Catholics aimed to make Ireland free from Britain and faced a great deal of violence and struggles trying to achieve it (Doherty and O’Riordan, 2013). In 1916 the Easter Rising took place organised by the Irish Republican Brotherhood. This showed the seriousness of Irish Republicanism in reference to politics and how they wanted to be free from Britain. After the War of Independence in 1922 twenty six of Ireland’s counties became an independent Irish Free State, however, six counties in the north remained part of the United Kingdom, these were County Derry, Antrim, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Armagh and Down. Independence led to the Catholics in Ireland wanting to bring back a greater sense of Irish nationality and to separate them completely from Britain. For example in World War Two Ireland remained neutral as it did not want to follow or support Britain into war. In 1937 De Valera who was head of government in the Fianna Fail party introduced the Constitution which reinforced republicanism in Ireland and changed Ireland’s title from the Irish Free- State to Eire. The Irish state was made to recognise the importance of a family unit and the Catholic Church. The Irish language was brought in as a compulsory subject to schools in order to gain back a sense of identity amongst the Catholic population. The government began supporting Catholicism in Ireland by abolishing the Oath of Allegiance to the British monarchy. In 1938 Ireland's government signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty which certified that Ireland was a self-governing country within the British Commonwealth of nations (Fianna Fail,2013). Ports at Berehaven, Cobh and Lough Swilly were returned to Ireland’s control as well as British troops being removed from Ireland’s

facilities in order to ensure that the Irish could control their own affairs and future. The government promoted many forms of Irish culture to help give people a sense of identity and belonging. So, Irish sports such as the Gaelic Athletic Association were promoted as well as the Irish language, music, and Catholicism (Breene, 2013).

The Catholic religion spread the message of Pro-life by looking at the sacrament of life and its sacredness. However, despite the church's teachings from 1926 to 1974 many illegal back street

abortions took place with fifty eight recorded prosecutions. Article 58 and 59 state that the killing of an unborn child and assistance in killing an unborn child is illegal and can lead to life imprisonment. Thus being the law, meant that in 1956 ' Nurse Cadell was convicted of attempting to induce a miscarriage and sentenced to death, a sentence which was later commuted to life

imprisonment.' (McCarthy, 1992). If a woman found herself pregnant outside of wedlock from the 18th to the 20th century she would often be sent to a Magdalene laundry in order to rehabilitate her, however, many laundries became punitive and prison like and this led to more girls having abortions in secret in order to freely continue their life in society. This also helped hide the evidence of what was seen as her disgrace to the community at the time. In 1966-67 England's abortion laws were liberalised under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Bill and the 1967 Abortion Act. 'The 1967 Abortion Act did not set out a time limit for abortions, However the Infant Life Preservation Act of 1929 which aimed to protect a pregnancy over 28 weeks as being capable of being born alive, did provide the relevant legislature ' (Brien and Fairbairn, 1996, 41). From the years 1980 to 2011 over 150,000 women from the Republic of Ireland have travelled abroad for abortions, 'at least 152,061

women living in Ireland have travelled to England and Wales to access safe abortion services' (IFPA,2013).

In 1982 people in Ireland called for a referendum which debated the right to life of the unborn

child with due regard to the right of life of the mother. By 1983 Article 40.3.3 of the Constitution

was changed to 'the state acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the

equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right' (Kelly,1994,790). Hereby recognising that the

mother has the same equal rights to life as her child does. In 1986 the High Court saw that the amount of information available on obtaining an abortion undermined the right to a child's

life and so contradicted Article 40.3.3. This was affirmed by the court in 1988 and confirmed

Justice Hamilton's decision to reduce information available to women on abortion. In 1991

the European Court of Justice prohibited information being given to people in Ireland on

where and how to get an abortion as Ireland was not financially linked to the clinics. In 1991

when Ireland signed the Treaty on European Union it made sure that in doing so its strict

abortion law would be unaffected and just because in other countries of the European Union

abortion was permissible it did not mean that the same would apply in Ireland. 'People in

Ireland were becoming more Pro- abortion over the years as in 1983 only 37% of women

agreed that a woman who decides she does not want a child can abort it, but by 1984 this

statistic had risen to 54% in favour' (Brien and Fairbairn,1996, 41).

During 1992 a fourteen year old girl was raped and travelled to England to get an abortion, however, before she did her father rang the guards in Ireland to check if they wanted any DNA evidence from the foetus to be kept for the court case. However, the Gardai were shocked to hear she was having an abortion and so reported it to the Attorney General who sought an injunction and flew her back to Ireland where Justice Costello granted an injunction banning the girl from travelling to England for 9 months. The family appealed to the Supreme Court and this became known as the X Case.

The majority in the court found that if the pregnancy was a risk to the mother's life then a termination would be lawful and as the girl had threatened to commit suicide if she was to continue with the pregnancy then her life was at risk and so the Injunction was lifted by the court. Pro-Life campaigns such as Youth Defence rallied in April, June and October of 1992 as many felt that any girl would claim they were suicidal in order to have freedom to travel to the United Kingdom, 'Both Aristotle and the Christian philosophers have regarded justice as the highest human virtue...the people gave themselves the constitution to promote the common good, with due observance of prudence, justice and charity. So that dignity and freedom of an individual might be assured' (Charleton, McDermot and Bolger, 1999, 523). In this time though many pro-choice activists were disobeying the law and handing out leaflets on information on abortion and obtaining it. In November 1992 a referendum to bring in a provision of abortion in Ireland was rejected by a 64% majority, however, two other referenda were passed which changed Article 40.3.3 which protected the mother's right to travel and allowed her access to information on abortion abroad. 'The amended constitution does not confer a new right to an abortion outside of Ireland. It merely prevents injunctions against travelling for that purpose' Charleton, McDermot and Bolger, 1999, 526). Pro-choice groups

had been around from the late 1970s, where women demanded contraception and abortion, ‘Thousands of women travel every year from Ireland to England for abortions, small groups of Pro-choice activists continue to hold campaign meetings, and the counter anti-abortion groups remain highly visible, well financed and apparently permanently mobilised’ (Bacik, 2004, 110).

In 1995 the referendum was passed allowing information on abortion to be accessed in Ireland,

however, appointments were not allowed to be made for people. By 1997 another young girl was

raped, she was aged 13 and wanted an abortion in England. She was in the care of the Health Board who supported her but her parents were not accepting of this and tried to prevent her from going by bringing around an injunction. This became known as the C case. However Mr Justice Geoghegan claimed she should have the right to travel as she was suicidal. Pro-life campaigners were furious over the result of this and some claimed abortion ‘implies a moral deficiency in women who, it appears are unable to understand that acceptance of a pregnancy has a higher moral value than a woman’s other, selfish concerns...the unborn child is a human life from the moment of conception’ (Boyle, 1997, 39).

By 1999 the Irish government published green papers which outlined several approaches to abortion in Ireland, this looked at constitutional and legislative changes and looked into banning abortion entirely. The summer of 2000 an all-party Oireachtas Committee invited representatives from medical professions, interest groups, faith groups and interested parties and organisations to talk to them about issues and try and find a way forward on the abortion

issue. This received over 100,000 submissions. However, different views from Labour, Fine Gael and Fianna Fail resulted in no consensus being met. Fine Gael wanted to look at ways of reducing the number of Crisis pregnancies. The Labour party agreed with Fine Gael but wanted to keep medical intervention in looking after the mother's life whilst keeping within the constitutional guidelines. Fianna Fail also agreed with the Labour party's ideas but wanted a combination of referendum and legislation to allow for current medical practice excluding suicide. A crisis Pregnancy Agency was developed in 2001 which provided information, contraception and support such as counselling and medical services, such as 'positive options' to people about sex and pregnancies and aimed to give women other options instead of abortion. 28% of women in Ireland experience a crisis pregnancy and 23% of men, due to being too young, unmarried, relationship difficulties or un-approving families. 15% of women get an abortion, 6% miscarry, 1% have a still birth, 75% give birth and either become lone parents, dual parents or have the child adopted and 3% at the time of the report were still pregnant. (Positive Options, 2004)

In October 2001 the Taoiseach looked into holding a referendum that allowed abortion in Ireland where a woman's life was at risk from the pregnancy but not due to suicide. In 2002 this referendum went ahead and suggested removing suicide from being a ground for abortion. It looked at adding a new article in the constitution that saw the unborn in the womb should be protected in the same provisions as protecting a human life. This new article stated that anyone who helped a woman have an abortion would be given twelve years imprisonment. This amendment was narrowly defeated with 50.42% against and 49.58% for it, the most rural areas of Ireland were mainly in favour of it, whereas urban areas voted against it, (Workers Solidarity Movement, 2002). In 2001 a boat from the Netherlands came

to the coast of Ireland and offered abortions for women, which would take place on the boat at sea in order not to break any law in Ireland. The boat was known as 'Women on Waves' and was greeted by many pro-choice activists. 300 Irish women contacted the boat for an abortion. The boat, however, did not have enough abortion pills on board and so gave the women information on obtaining an abortion abroad, (Women on Waves, 2013). Many Pro-life campaigners were in fury over this and protested and campaigned for them to leave. On one Pro-life website it states 'Women on Waves was formed to kill babies by abortion worldwide. Please help us expose their evil agenda by using this site (www.prolife.com) to warn friends and relatives about abortion', (Finn,2012).

In 2006 a 17 year old girl in Ireland was pregnant but was told her child would not live as its brain was damaged. She was told she was not allowed to travel to England by the Irish republics health service, despite this, it was finally ruled that the court had no grounds or statutory rights to prevent this woman from travelling due to the changes made in 1992. 'Jon O'Brien, president of Catholics for a Free Choice, said:

'Right-thinking people around the world will welcome the decision today that allows a young woman to finally exercise her right to choose and have control over her own body. However, the case highlights-not for the first time that something is very wrong in Ireland when it comes to women's rights. What should have been a straightforward private process between Miss D and her doctors has instead evolved into a media circus involving the press, the courts and various government agencies. The genesis of this saga clearly lies with the refusal of several governments to legislate on a series of amendments to the Irish constitution, starting in 1983. Rather than resolve the situation, they have instead created a hypocritical world in which Irish women are forced to go abroad to deal with a health issue that rightly should be

addressed in their home country with proper support, compassion and understanding. Importantly, the constitutional amendments have not done an iota to reduce the need for abortion or address the real life situations that women face.’ (Abortion Review, 2007). Pro Life activists were worried during these times that abortion would be legalised and so they ‘decided that their best strategy was to campaign for a constitutional amendment which would both copper fasten the legal ban on abortions in Ireland to the highest law of the land and also make a positive statement about Irish people’s commitment to the right of life as well as the constitutional relationship of two classes of people, the born and the unborn’ (Spreng, 2004, 87).

In 2010 the A, B and C Case was looked at where three women took a case against Ireland's government to the European Court of Human Rights and saw how the state had failed to provide for an abortion in circumstances where the mother’s life was at risk. However, it was argued that it is not the courts place to address abortion in general or look at certain aspects that affect certain applicants. Michelle Harte suffered from cancer and had to terminate her pregnancy due to health risks. As abortion is illegal in Ireland she had to travel to the United Kingdom to receive one. This was very stressful for her and she claimed to having felt weak and nauseous. She could not receive treatment for her cancer whilst pregnant and so in order to protect her life abortion was necessary (Lambe,2010). However, the Life Institute claim that an abortion is not necessary to treat cancer and women are never denied medical treatment for any condition in pregnancy.

In 2012 the first private abortion clinic opened in Belfast called the Marie Stopes Clinic. This offers abortions for women up to nine weeks pregnant in situations where their life, mental or

physical health is at risk. This clinics will be closely checked to make sure they do not terminate later pregnancies (Horgan, 2012). This caused mass controversy with protesters arriving before ten in the morning from fifty different groups such as Precious Life, Life and UK life and by noon there were 300 peaceful protesters outside the building on Great Victoria street in Belfast. They had placards and posters with slogans such as 'keep Ireland abortion free', 'Ulster says no to abortion' as well as photographs of unborn fetuses. Many of the protesters took part in prayers and hymns. Stopes and Mc Nell claimed they were aware of the law and culture and were not offering on demand abortion but a choice for those in need (Moriarty, 2012). 'The decision to terminate a pregnancy is a difficult one for many women, often made more problematic by the raging political controversy that surrounds the issue' (Lips, 2008, 344). There was also a surprisingly large amount of people in favour of the clinic. On the 29th of September 2012 there was a march for Choice in order to bring abortion into Ireland as well as reproductive and women's rights. Several thousand attended the march as they felt Ireland needed to do more in order to look after women whose lives were at risk. <http://feministire.wordpress.com/> shows pictures of protesters with signs that say 'woman not incubator' and showing the choice side of the argument with 'against abortion? Don't have one'. Other signs are shown to make people think that without abortion child birth is forced on parents by the government; 'My mother chose to have me, I'm glad society didn't force me on her'.

On the 28th of October 2012 Savita Halappanavar died in Galway. She was of Indian origin and had

a threatened miscarriage when she was seventeen weeks pregnant but Irish doctors were not able to remove the foetus as there was still a heartbeat and she developed septicaemia and

multiple Organ failure. She was too weak to travel and tried to argue with the courts that she was not Catholic or Irish and so their law of abortion should not affect her. Any doctor who would help her though could have risked life imprisonment. Her death led to much fury in Ireland; an estimated 2000 people protested outside Leinster house, whilst another 200 people took part in a candle lit vigil in Cork in favour of abortion after Savita's death, (France- Presse,2012).

It would appear twenty years on from the X Case people are still trying to legalise abortion. However, many women throughout the years have died from pregnancy but as this was an international case it caused controversy. The Catholic Church, however claimed that the woman died from septicaemia and not the pregnancy and that Ireland helps people even if it results in the death of a foetus. 3000 Pro-life supporters from Mayo Life Network and Mayo Youth Defence marched in Castlebar to make sure Enda Kenny kept his Pro-life promise that Fine Gael made in 2011. Ms Roughneen claimed that 'there is no appetite amongst the Irish people for abortion legislation and moreover, all the evidence shows that there is no medical need for abortion in our hospitals' (Life Institute,2012).

The Minister of Health James Reilly reviewed the case and it became apparent that if the amendment had gone ahead when it was put forward in 1992, for abortion to be available in the case where there was substantial risk to a mothers life, Mrs Halappanavar would not have died. However, the catholic church states that 'where a seriously ill pregnant woman needs medical treatment which may put the life of her baby at risk, such treatments are ethically permissible provided every effort has been made to save the life of both the mother and her baby.' (Fr. Conway O.P, 2012)

Irish Catholic Bishops felt that the right to life is a moral issue and society should protect the vulnerable and defenceless life of a mother and unborn child as they are sacred. They feel that abortion is a hugely immoral act under all circumstances, (Drumm and Long, 2012). During 2008 Catholic Bishops in Northern Ireland made it clear how opposed they were towards British Members of Parliaments attempts in extending the Abortion Act of 1967 to Northern Ireland. They were supported by Pro-life rallies who gathered outside Stormont on the 18th of October 2008 urging people to recognise the rights of an unborn child, (Long and Tynan, 2008). 'We are witnessing the forces of the Catholic Church moving in on political debate, taking sides on it and using the resources of the Catholic Church to advance those sides' (Hug. 1999, 153). Support still maintains on the side of the Catholic Church in Ireland even today, as on the 19th of January 2013 over 25,000 people attended the Pro-life rally in Dublin. They called themselves 'Unite for Life' (The Loais Nationalist', 2013). This was to show their opposition towards the government's commitment to legislate and introduce regulations that would allow abortion if there was a real or substantial risk to a woman's life, including suicide. It would appear in Ireland that the Catholic Church is hugely influential on people's lives and they decide what is and is not morally acceptable. 'The Catholic Church took the position, as it usually did on constitutional amendments, that although Irish voters should vote in accordance with their own consciences, it was the obligation of the church to inform the consciences of good Catholics on matters of faith and morals' (Finnegan and Wiles, 2005, 216). The Archbishop of Dublin held prayers for the child in the womb in St Andrews Church in Westland Row. However, there are still people in Ireland who want abortion legalised as Pro-Choice groups gathered during the rally with over 200 demonstrators, including a new pro-choice group called 'Abortion rights campaign' (The Loais Nationalist', 2013).

Throughout history though it is noted that many people who supported any form of abortion would be denounced from the altar as it is seen as a gravely mortal sin by the Church.

Cardinal Burke claimed that 'as long as he continues to support legislation which fosters abortion or other intrinsic evils, then he should be refused Holy Communion', (News, 2013).

This shows the importance of the abortion issue to the Church in Ireland, however there have been several other incidents of this happening which are not recorded.

Interestingly, despite all Ireland has gone through trying to get independence and to keep its country Catholic, some may feel that the abortion laws are not due to religion. In Spain during the

1940s, General Franco enforced Catholic teachings known as re-Christianisation in order to control aspects of society; 'Spanish national renewal, as in Ireland, required a wide range of preventative measures. Divorce, abortion and non-religious marriage were banned' (Ferriter, 2009, 119). Yet in order to show that Spain had moved on since this era, despite having a much larger Catholic population than Ireland, on the 5th of July 2010 abortion during the first fourteen weeks of pregnancy was legalised. Before this it was allowed in incidents where there were risks to mental health, rape, defects or malformations. The peoples party disagreed with the change in the law as did members of civil society such as Pro-Life campaigns, the Catholic church and members of the Institute for family policies, the majority though voted 'Yes' on abortion with 184 votes in favour and 158 against (Reproductive Health matters, 2010).

Italy is also a heavily Catholic country and home to the Pope yet abortion during the first ninety days of pregnancy was legalised here in May 1978. Abortion here is offered for free to

people with health, economic or social issues (AngloInfo, 2013). Italians were clearly in favour of this as it became legal but many people were unhappy over this at the time and still show their anger today as on the 13/5/12, nuns, priests and ordinary citizens gathered in protest with banners over the abortion laws, (Craggs,2012). Due to other Catholic countries allowing abortion as well as Belfast in the North it could be seen that Ireland's republic wants to remain separate and different from Britain and so holds on to the teachings of the Catholic Church by not bringing it in. However, on the counter argument the British government in 2012 asked to review reducing the number of week's pregnancy to twelve weeks, given the evidence found recently on life chances of surviving premature birth. Pro-life activists see this as a step in their favour.

Methodology

During the previous chapter it is clear that there are many discourses towards abortion in Ireland based on many secondary sources. This led to providing a good framework for research questions in order to establish some primary research. This section aims to look at what form of research was carried out, what approach/design was taken and what limitations and issues with validity were encountered.

The aim of the research was to examine the current social and political ideologies and discourses surrounding abortion in Ireland. The form of research used was Qualitative through interviews with a member from Pro-Choice, Pro-Life and a member of the media. 'Qualitative researchers generally recognise the central role of the researcher in the research process as a direct influence on the participant and on the interpretation of data to create a particular construction influenced by their own perspective and biases' (Coolican,2004,225). The aim was to ask all three participants the same questions in order to measure accuracy and avoid being biased. Their responses were recorded so that further analysis could take place after the interview. The purpose of these interviews was to determine whether people in Ireland are Pro or Anti-abortion based on religious, moral or ethical reasons or if there were underlying factors that affected people's opinions.

The data collection method used in the Literature review was Secondary research from books, websites, news articles and reports. The next stage of collecting data was through Primary research with open ended questions in an interview format. This enabled participants to give their own answer and provide a deeper insight into the public's attitude towards abortion. The

data was then analysed by 'Thematic Content Analysis'. Interviews were recorded and analysed into themes relevant to the research question. 'More generally, however, content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings' (Patton, 2002, 453).

The questions asked were;

1. Do you believe the public feel abortion should be legalised in Ireland?

- Here the view point of the interviewee was examined in terms of their thoughts on how the public feel politically and under what circumstances they may feel abortion is acceptable as well as the outcome of what could happen if it was legalised, for example, would people using it as a form of contraception.

2. Does religion impact the public's view at all?

- This question aimed to find whether their view was based on religious reasons or whether religion has nothing to do with an abortion and was it about the quality not sanctity of a woman's life.

3. Do you feel Ireland is among the safest countries in which to be pregnant in?

- This question referred to women who may be seriously ill and cannot terminate the pregnancy despite the fact that both she and the child may be in danger, as well as women who have been raped and the trauma may cause problems to their mental health.

4. Do you think Ireland's government provides enough support for crisis pregnancies?

- This question was linked with the previous one, in terms that many women and girls who get pregnant do not want the child and is counselling enough if they are aware that their child has been adopted and is living elsewhere. It aims to see if the interviewee feels the

government could do/provide more for them.

There were some limitations during this investigation in reference to time in order to make it a thoroughly accurate study. Also the sample of only three people being interviewed to give an opinion on different aspects of abortion was quite small. If more people from each section were interviewed it may be possible that inside the one group different opinions would give a much broader idea of different beliefs.

The validity and reliability was affected due to the quality of the research; the questions may have been leading or biased and so the interviewees may feel pressurised to answer in a certain way. Those interviewed may have given an answer but it could have been interpreted differently or incorrectly, portraying an answer that they did not intend. 'Lack of standardisation, both within and between persons, will inflate error variance and decrease the chance of obtaining true differences', (Cook and Campbell, 1979, 43). Reliability is based on re-testing and having a larger amount of participants however due to cost effective reasons as well as time restrictions, this approach was impractical and would not have allowed for such in-depth research into the participants answers.

Ethical guidelines were followed at all times. The interview was kept completely anonymous in order to maintain confidentiality. The interviewee was aware of what the interview was for and what it was about by signing a informed consent form (see Appendix A) before entering into an agreement. This stated what the investigation was on, the purpose of it and the measures of confidentiality. Questions were selected and asked in a sensitive manner. The interviewee was kept comfortable at all times and was allowed to leave at any point that

she/he felt otherwise. The Belmont Principals were followed. The first is “Respect for persons”; this meant that a person must consent before giving the interviewer information. The second is “Beneficence”; this meant that the investigation must have been beneficial and not harmful to the person or society. Finally the third one is “Justice”; this meant that the people involved in the interview would be treated fairly. (Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1979)

The procedure of this investigation was to organise interviews with a member from each of the following sectors; Pro-Choice, Pro-Life and Journalism. The interviews took place wherever was most convenient for the person being interviewed and consisted of the four questions (See Appendix B). Each interview lasted for a duration of 20 to 30 minutes. Once the interviews had taken place they were carefully listened to and transcribed so that themes and opinions could be identified clearly from them.

Interviews with a member of a Pro-Choice organisation called 'Choice Ireland' and a Journalist were obtained. However, after many weeks consisting of several emails, phone calls and face to face attempts to secure an interview with Pro-life organisations/ Churches/ Nuns/ activists, it became apparent that enlisting an interview with a Pro-life member was not possible. The only alternative was to use Pro-life, Life Institute and Priests for Life websites to help gain data from them in order to answer the questions designed for the interview and aim to find the main themes inside the answers.

Overall, this chapter looks at how the investigation was carried out, what questions were used and what limitations and precautions were taken in order to maintain the reliability and

validity of the results gained whilst maintaining an ethical approach as well as looking at what procedure was used for the interview.

Results

From the research and interviews carried out qualitative data was retrieved that had many themes and ideologies about the current social and political discourses with abortion in Ireland. This section intends to outline the different findings from the participants.

The first question asked whether or not the participant or their organisation believed that the public wanted abortion legalised in Ireland. Pro-Choice claimed that people are accepting of others getting an abortion, however in recent years people are beginning to see the need for it to be legalised in Ireland in order to give a woman choice, instead of women having to go through the stress of travelling to another country for it.

”I think Irish people would never seek to stop a woman having an abortion, but they've never been that keen on the idea of legislation or revisiting that debate, since we have what they would see as a perfectly sensible solution; women can travel, so women have access to abortion we don't have to legalise it here...I think in the last number of years this has actually changed, we've had a number of events that have shown us that actually the situation is not okay in... April last year an incredible group of women called 'make termination available for medical reasons came forward and told their stories...these are women who travelled abroad to terminate their pregnancies and these are women who talked about the horrific strain it placed on them to leave the country, to travel anywhere there's difficulties for hospitals transferring medical records to the hospitals in the United Kingdom...We're seeing abortion drugs being smuggled into the country by post...I don't think anyone likes where that's going- abortions without medical help...I think there's been a shift in the discourse...we cant just ignore it any more, and that's been a huge change...it's their right to choose and we should support them regardless of that choice and not interfere’.

The Journalist view was similar to the Pro-Choice's view in that the public feel abortion should be legalised but differed in the fact that people would be more accepting if it was bought in for medical reasons and not just based on choice. The Journalist also felt it would take years and excessive debate before it would be legalised.

‘ I find the public would agree after some debate, for a limited form of abortion to be legalised- but to bring in safe abortion which is obtained in Britain and elsewhere then no...One of the great things about Ireland is, we cannot get anything without first changing our constitution...by the time they vote on anything they are well informed...I think they're open to abortion in the case of rape and in the case of incest...but I think we will have it in limited form within a year and after much serious discussion and debate...having said that I think it will be 20 or 30 years before we have safe, legal abortion in Ireland.’

The Pro-Life Campaign expressed a very different opinion to the other participants as it claimed that the public would not want anything that would harm the right to life even in the case of medical emergencies, and that many people pride themselves in being from Ireland as it is safer for unborn babies due to the lack of abortion, and that less people are travelling to Countries for abortions and those that have deeply regret it. 'In the Millward Brown opinion polls published today an attempt was made to differentiate between life-saving medical interventions in pregnancy and induced abortion (where the sole aim is to terminate the life of the child), It is clear from the results that a sizeable majority supports legal protection for the unborn child (Simons, 2013) ... British Department of Health shows a further reduction in the number of Irish women travelling to Britain for abortions (Pro-Life Campaign, 2011)...2011, 4,149 Irish women travelled to Britain for abortions down from 4,402 in

2010...38% decline since the high of 6,673 Irish abortions in 2001... HSE/ Crisis pregnancy programs shows an increase in the number of women expressing abortion regret.' (Pro-Life Campaign, 2012)

The second question enquired as to whether the Participant or their organisation felt that religion impacted peoples view on abortion. Pro-Choice claimed that the Church hugely influences the Irish government, but due to the amount of Church scandal that has been in the news people are turning away from it more and realising that the country needs to progress.

‘The Church was a hugely powerful force in Ireland up until recently, during hearings on abortion legislation there was a whole session devoted to religious organisations and how they felt about it, I couldn't imagine that happening in other countries where churches would get that level of sway...I think there's been report after report on institutional and religious abuse and clerical sex abuse and most recently with the Magdelene reports, I think their authority to speak on these issues is waning...we've had our first opinion poll where the majority were pro-Choice...we've had very many people in favour in cases where a women's life is in jeopardy, so I think because the Church is resisting even this very incremental legislation, I think that people are seeing how out of step maybe they are with reality and their seen as having a lack of compassion,...So they are defiantly being listened to less and we are becoming more secular.’

The Journalist again agreed with pro-Choice's idea that the Churches influence on people has declined and the population in Ireland are ready for laws to move forward, however, ideologies given from the Church still remain and effect peoples' lives, but there could well be a shift in the discourse under certain circumstances.

‘The Catholic Church has crumbled from within...The church has gone. The influence is still with us mainly on the issue of abortion being murder...We would not say we support abortion, which is sensible, you'd just say it's necessary...and that it qualifies under strict circumstances where a mother's life is in danger, we haven't got as far as to a mother's health being in danger but we're talking about it- so it's all starting’.

A Pro-Life organisation called ‘Priests for Life’ do not state directly whether or not religion influences people but the message they themselves have about abortion has religious elements in and they find people are against murder whether they are religious or not and abortion is murder. ‘We hear for example, that it is impossible or unwise to legislate mortality, this is simply untrue...abortion too should be forbidden because it is wrong, that is harmful to persons, abortion is killing of an innocent human being, people of all religions and of no religion agree that it is wrong to take the life of an innocent. This is a matter having to do with the ordering of a just society...Pre born is human not based on religion but on a scientific fact’. (Kucera,2013)

The third question asked was whether or not the participant or organisation felt that Ireland was among the safest countries in which to be pregnant. Pro-Choice found that Ireland's medical care is very good, however, more clarity should be given for doctors in terms of how to treat a pregnant woman who has other complications.

‘We do have phenomenally good medical care in this country...At the moment we're pretty high up in the maternal mortality statistics, but we count our maternal mortalities differently though, e.g. in the U.K if a woman dies in a car crash while pregnant, that counts as a maternal mortality rate...our maternal mortality rate is probably not quite as good as it

seems...there's a huge lack of clarity and protection for doctors and this is impacting on women's medical care...While we're safe and the care is clinically very good, I think the attitude towards women that has given rise to abortion and Magdelene laundries, that attitude is still in the maternity system...We need to make it more women centred and give doctors an awful lot more clarity in terms of when they can and can't intervene when a woman's life is in jeopardy.'

The Journalist claimed that Ireland was not one of the safest countries in which to be pregnant, as shown by people travelling to England with their problems.

'We don't know if Ireland is safe or not as all our problems are sent to England...No, it's not the safest country in the world, it might be a nicer place because we go gaga about babies, providing we're not over worked/ understaffed otherwise no, it's a load of nonsense.'

The Pro-Life Campaign would disagree with the other participant views by stating that Ireland is one of the safest countries in the world due to not having abortion here as doctors have enough guidelines to deal with issues surrounding pregnant women. 'As the latest world health organisation report on trends in maternal mortality shows, out of 171 countries, Ireland is constantly in top 5 in safety for women in pregnancy over the past 25 years...safer for women in pregnancy than places like Britain and the U.S where abortion is available on demand...the government should set about reassuring the public on Ireland's outstanding record of care in protecting women during pregnancy (Simons, 2013)... Women in pregnancy receive the medical care needed to safeguard their lives, when there is any possibility at all we can preserve the life of the baby we will do so (Kinsella, 2013)...What the European Court specifically required was clarity on how women can obtain necessary medical treatment their

lives are in danger during pregnancy, such medical treatment is pre-existing under Irish law.' (Simons, 2012)

The fourth and final question looked at whether the participant or their organisation believed that the government provided enough support for crisis pregnancies. Pro-Choice claimed that Ireland used to provide good services but cut back in the recession and lack of regulations are in place for these services, so unqualified people are counselling women giving them false information. There are many different examples of crisis pregnancies that are not catered for by services in Ireland, and so Pro-Choice felt more should be done in Ireland to change this. 'We used to have a crisis pregnancy agency which was a state funded semi-independent organisation that provided crisis pregnancy information and prevention but that organisation in the recession meant that budget cuts were absorbed back into the HSE and not the crisis pregnancy program, and that for me sends a very clear message about the priorities that has for women...the Irish government has consistently failed to regulate crisis pregnancy meetings...there's no registration/name system, there's no guarantee of standards... that's something we need to address to make sure the information people get is accurate and supportive and that there's not agencies out there that seek to manipulate women...some pregnancies become crisis for other reasons, there's a dramatic increase in domestic violence when women become pregnant...we don't support women whose pregnancies become crisis as a threat to their health because of the legislation...legally doctors can't support women in these situations all they can do is give them a number for a place in England...Women hurt offer counselling agencies which come from anti-choice perspectives, women need support after an abortion and not to be judged.'

The Journalist viewpoint differed from Pro-Choice by finding that Ireland provides great help for crisis pregnancies and prevention of it, and that even the government is beginning to realise that change is needed in Ireland. 'There's been massive advances there, mainly as a reaction to abortion...you turn on the tele and see advertisements for crisis pregnancies and contraception...for contraception it took the government until the 1980s, once they legalised it they saw they had to educate people about it and so set up crisis pregnancy counselling agencies with rape crisis centres...Fine Gael are on a learning curve...the best way to everything is education.'

The Pro-Life view point on this matter is similar to the Pro-Choice one in that despite offering many services, Ireland need more regulations in crisis pregnancy organisations. 'Particularly scandalous is the evidence from a number of Irish family planning association clinics, an affiliate organisation of the IPPF that women were advised to conceal their abortions from their own doctors ...They also raise very serious questions about lax governance in the agencies, since the Health Service Executive (HSE) are themselves implicated in the failure of proper governance of crisis pregnancy agencies, they are part of the problem and obviously cannot be allowed to supervise in the investigation' (Pro-Life Campaign, (2012), however Pro-Life feel that not all Crisis Pregnancy Agencies have been giving false information and that some are very useful for women. 'Life pregnancy care and Cura, the crisis pregnancy service run by Irish Catholic Bishops are both funded and recognised as legitimate by the CPA and also advertise under the same category' (White, 2009).

Overall, the results show that Pro-Choice have many similarities in answers with the

Journalist, however, the Journalist appears to take into account the Pro-Life's view point also. The Pro-Choice seem to take into account the life and emotions of the woman, where as the Pro-life seem to focus on the potential life of the foetus, this made their viewpoints vary and were somewhat interesting. In terms of the public wanting abortion legalised, Pro-Choice claim that they do want it legalised as it would be less stressful than travelling to England, the Journalist claimed that the public would want it under strict circumstances, however, Pro-Life found that the public would not want it as it would be harmful to innocent beings. In reference to whether religion impacts people's view on abortion, Pro-Choice and the Journalist found that although the Church may be very influential over the government it has little impact in peoples' lives any more due to the amount of scandal that is coming out about it and the idea that we are living in a far more secular society. The Pro-Life viewpoint here found that regardless of religion people do not agree to murder and that is the main thing that impacts their decision on abortion. Looking at whether or not Ireland is among the safest countries in which to be pregnant, Pro-Choice and the Journalist had similar views again that it was not one of the safest countries as people had to travel abroad to deal with pregnancy issues and that doctors needed clearer guidelines to follow. The Pro-Life's argument here was that Ireland was safer due to not having abortion legalised meaning that the life of the unborn is more protected. Finally, when looking at whether Ireland's government provides enough support for Crisis pregnancies, it would appear that all participants formed a type of consensus with their answer by stating that it should do more and be regulated but with greater education and intervention; checking that the information provided is correct, then it could be very beneficial for women.

Discussion

The aim of this investigation was to examine the current social and political discourses that surround the issue of abortion in Ireland. It can be seen from the results that the Church has a great influence over laws that are made in Ireland and that the government needs more control over Crisis Pregnancy Centres. Many feel that abortion should be legalised due to medical reasons in order to make Ireland a safer place to be pregnant. Others see that it is not necessary to have an abortion when dealing with medical issues, as preservation of life is the most vital element. The aim of this chapter will be to identify themes that have been reviewed in relation to the data gathered in both the Literature Review and the Results section.

The literature review looked at many different aspects of Irish society that were mentioned during the interview. The Literature review showed how doctors have a sense of fear when dealing with Pregnant patients as if they damage the foetus at all it can mean imprisonment and so this impedes their decisions. In 1956 'Nurse Cadell was convicted of attempting to induce a miscarriage and sentenced to death, a sentence which was later commuted to life imprisonment', (McCarthy, 1992). The Pro-Choice participant also agreed with this by stating that 'because we have the eighth amendment, and because there is such a really criminal statute; the 1860 Offences Against the Person Act, this worries doctors, we're talking about horrific penalties, its one of the most serious offences you can commit-is to help a woman terminate her pregnancy...there's a huge lack of clarity and protection for doctors and this is impacting on women's medical care'. However, despite this law Pro-Life websites claim that doctors do not need to fear pregnant patients as they do not need to terminate a child in order to save anyone with any form of medical issue, ' There is nothing in ethics or law that

prevents doctors from intervening in such a situation to induce delivery in order to complete a miscarriage' (Pro-Life Campaign, 2013). This also was evident in the case of Savita Halapanavar, was seventeen weeks pregnant when she was at risk of miscarriage, however, the foetus was not removed due to there being a heartbeat and this led to septicaemia. The Pro-Choice participant showed that these really highlighted the need for a change in Ireland's abortion laws; 'we've had a number of events that's shown us that actually the situation is not okay- the most high profile of these cases was the Savita Halapanavar case, which was a really tragic situation for a young mother. A young woman was denied termination she requested and lost her life'. The Journalist also found that this case highlighted the need for attention in Ireland's medical sector by saying that 'as we now know in the Savita case the staff were given notice when she first arrived that she had blood poisoning- but they were too over worked or incompetent to immediately take action to take actual blood tests but they didn't'. Pro-Life, however see that Savita's case was not due to her being pregnant, 'It is deplorable that those who want to see abortion available here are exploiting Mrs Halapanavar's tragic death, when the medical council guidelines are very clear that all necessary medical treatment must be given to a woman in pregnancy' (Pro-Life Campaign, 2012).

The Magdalene Laundries where women were sent for rehabilitation purposes if they were pregnant outside of marriage, were also examined in the interviews. Recent reports have emerged in the news, detailing the conditions in the laundries, which according to the Pro-Choice participant, causes people to believe that the Church should have less power. 'I think there's been report after report on institutional and religious abuse and clerical sex abuse and most recently with the Magdalene reports, I think their authority to speak on these issues is

waning'. Pro-Life campaigns see that abortion is wrong, however they focus little on intercourse outside marriage or the laundries.

Brien and Fairbairn suggested that people were becoming more in favour of abortion in Ireland, 'People in Ireland were becoming more Pro- abortion over the years as in 1983 only 37% of women agreed that a woman who decides she does not want a child can abort it, but by 1984 this statistic had risen to 54% in favour' (Brien and Fairbairn,1996, 41). This was also recognised by the Pro-Choice participant who claimed that 'we've only recently had our first opinion poll where the majority were Pro-Choice with 60% of people saying it's a woman's right to choose. The Journalist also claimed people were moving towards the idea of abortion, however, only in a limited form 'I think they're open to abortion in the case of rape and in the case of incest, but even at that it's such a big step in this country'. Pro-Life disagreed with this view though by finding that 'In the Millward Brown opinion polls published today an attempt was made to differentiate between life-saving medical interventions in pregnancy and induced abortion (where the sole aim is to terminate the life of the child), It is clear from the results that a sizeable majority supports legal protection for the unborn child' (Simons, 2013).

The X case was also looked at which involved a young girl who was raped and wanted an abortion. The court found that if her life was at risk she would be allowed one and as she was suicidal she was allowed to go ahead with it. This led to a great deal of controversy throughout the Irish population. Pro-Choice spoke of this in the interview by saying 'a story like the X case for example; huge numbers of people were massively supportive of that girls decision to terminate her pregnancy'. However, Pro-Life completely disagreed that there

should be any form of support for this case at all, 'Any legislation based on the X case would mean that for the first time members of the Oireachtas would be sanctioning the taking of innocent human life. Not only would legislation based on the X case put the right to life of unborn at risk, it would also potentially put women's lives at risk' (Simons, 2013). 'Guidelines based on a best practice in Irish medical care Ireland are a better- more informed, less risky alternative to legislation based on the flawed X case'.(Kinsella,2013)

The Literature Review looked with regard to the peoples right to travel; 'The amended constitution does not confer a new right to an abortion outside of Ireland. It merely prevents injunctions against travelling for that purpose' (Charleton, McDermot and Bolger, 1999, 526)... 'Thousands of women travel every year from Ireland to England for abortions' (Bacik, 2004, 110). In the Interview the Pro-Choice Participant saw this as a form of scapegoat for the Irish government as they do not need to deal with the issue of abortion, instead they leave the issue for England to deal with and then the women have to face a traumatic return back to Ireland; 'Since we have, what they would see as a perfectly sensible solution- women can travel, so women have access to abortion we don't have to legalise it here...for these women, difficulties in carrying their remains of their babies back into Ireland'. However, Pro-Life saw it as unnecessary as less people are travelling abroad for abortions which means less people want them as in '2011, 4,149 Irish women travelled to Britain for abortions down from 4,402 in 2010...38% decline since the high of 6,673 Irish abortions in 2001... HSE/ Crisis pregnancy programs shows an increase in the number of women expressing abortion regret.' (Pro-Life Campaign, 2012). The Journalist, however agreed saying that due to this right to travel, it prevents the government from taking action by stating that 'we don't know if Ireland is safe or not as all our problems have been sent to England'.

The literature review also explored the impact of the Catholic Church in Ireland, 'We are witnessing the forces of the Catholic Church moving in on political debate, taking sides on it and using the resources of the Catholic Church to advance those sides' (Hug. 1999, 153). It noted that many laws that are made are passed with the agreement of the Church; 'The Catholic Church took the position, as it usually did on constitutional amendments, that, although Irish voters should vote in accordance with their own consciences, it was the obligation of the church to inform the consciences of good Catholics on matters of faith and morals' (Finnegan and Wiles, 2005, 216). However, the Pro-Choice participant found that the Church has always been a very influential force on society as she stated that 'the Church was a hugely powerful force in Ireland up until recently, they still try to wield that force, particularly in this debate, I think because the Church and religion have been such a central part in Irish life, e.g. Priests reading letters from the Bishops condemning abortion, it very much stops people speaking up and out'. The Journalist seemed to see that the Church has lost all influence over society; 'the Catholic church has crumbled from within, no adult would go to a priest for confession about anything- about stealing a Mars bar, they're certainly not going to talk to a priest about sexual things. The church has gone. The influence is still with us mainly on the issue of abortion being murder'. Pro-Life however, did not look at the church, although they have similar ideologies to the church that abortion is murder, they want to apply to a wider sector of society and not just the religious.

The Literature review mentioned people being denounced from the Alter throughout history for going against the church, 'as long as he continues to support legislation which fosters abortion or other intrinsic evils, then he should be refused Holy Communion',(News, 2013).

The Pro-Choice participant also looked at this by stating 'I was talking to an activist there, who was involved in the 2002 referendum campaign as a Pro-Choice campaigner and she was in the 1992 one as well, and she was denounced from the Church by name for campaigning for divorce and abortion, this is more the power the church wills more so than the religion'. The Journalist also showed evidence to this happening within the Church; 'In 1971 when we went to Belfast looking for contraceptives I was denounced from the Alter by certain Priests, my name was read off the alter in Sligo'. This shows how strongly the church wants the congregation to abide by its laws.

The Literature Review looked at the Pope and how despite living in Italy a Catholic Country abortion is still legalised there. During the interviews the power of the Pope was mentioned. The Journalist claimed that 'after the Pope's visit in 1980, we never addressed abortion directly', the Pro-Choice participant found that 'there's much less of a sense that the church are moral guardians of the state...they're so out of step with our society'. However in reference to the new Pope, Pro-Life believe it is a beneficial factor for society, 'I pray that Pope Francis I inspires, not only Catholics, but people of all faiths to promote and defend the culture of life' (Johnson, 2013). Despite these ideas many believe the Pope holds on to the same ideologies as the old Pope in reference to abortion, homosexual marriage and so on and so many believe there will be little change due to this.

The results show that despite all the changes through history with different abortion cases, the influence of the church and turning people away from it, the changes in support for abortion and recently with the change in Pope, it may be seen that very little has changed over the last twenty years as the religion and laws remain the same and abortion still has not been legalised in Ireland.

However, these results are based on the opinions of a limited number of participants and only websites being used for the Pro-life participant, as well as a limited time frame to carry out the investigation. Although, the qualitative data allowed a far deeper insight into the reasoning behind the participants answers and as it was recorded it allowed them to speak freely without having to stop whilst their answers were transcribed.

The study showed that there are many social and political discourses surrounding abortion in Ireland. These are made up of religious factors, whereby the Church influences the governments decisions and Lack of regulation inside Crisis Pregnancy centres. According to some people there is also a lack of medical expertise when dealing with pregnant women and more guidelines should be available for doctors. Many people feel England is left to deal with Ireland's crisis pregnancy problems. From looking at the results it is possible that in the future abortion could be legalised but in a limited form for medical purposes only in order to prevent another tragedy such as that which happened to Savita. However, with the Pope declaring little change with the law and Ireland remaining a predominantly Catholic country this is unlikely. Further research would benefit this study as it would allow developing discourses in Ireland around abortion to be looked at, to determine whether the change in attitudes on abortion increases. It would also enable a more reliant view on the majorities thoughts of abortion legislation and what the government could do to improve crisis pregnancy situations in Ireland.

Overall, many interesting situations were looked at in the Literature Review which were debated in the thesis. It is possible that there is other underlying factors around the abortion

issue in Ireland that were not picked up on. Further research would allow for this. This investigation has been extremely interesting and has shown unexpected answers regarding peoples attitudes towards abortion and the Churches influence in Ireland. What has been found from this investigation though, is that even if abortion was legalised in Ireland many discourses would remain around it, and it is likely that whole new discourses would emerge from this. However, it is clear that although the 21st century of modern Ireland is aware of complexities of human rights issues, it is hard to shake off the culture and the embedded religious values of centuries. The Ireland of today is shaping the Ireland of the future which is looking very likely to be a secular society.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Cara Doherty and I am in my final year at Dublin Business School. I am doing my thesis on the current social and political discourses on abortion in Ireland. I am seeking to find the public's perspective on abortion and so I intend to interview three people; one with a Pro-Choice perspective, one with a Pro-Life perspective and a journalist from the media. I intend to record these interviews, this will enable me to compare and contrast different views afterwards in order to get a rounded view of people's ideologies towards abortion.

If you agree to be interviewed then it will remain completely anonymous and you can withdraw from the interview if you feel uncomfortable at any time. I would be ever so grateful to you for taking time out of your busy schedule to help me.

Thank You Cara Doherty

I here by agree and understand the information above, and agree to participate in this research.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix B

Interview Guideline

The questions asked were;

1. Do you believe the public feel abortion should be legalised in Ireland?

- Here the view point of the interviewee was examined in terms of their thoughts on how the public feel politically and under what circumstances they may feel abortion is acceptable as well as the outcome of what could happen if it was legalised, for example, would people using it as a form of contraception.

2. Does religion impact the public's view at all?

- This question aimed to find whether their view was based on religious reasons or whether religion has nothing to do with an abortion and was it about the quality not sanctity of a woman's life.

3. Do you feel Ireland is among the safest countries in which to be pregnant in?

- This question referred to women who may be seriously ill and cannot terminate the pregnancy despite the fact that both she and the child may be in danger, as well as women who have been raped and the trauma may cause problems to their mental health.

4. Do you think Ireland's government provides enough support for crisis pregnancies?

- This question was linked with the previous one, in terms that many women and girls who get pregnant do not want the child and is counselling enough if they are aware that their child has been adopted and is living elsewhere. It aims to see if the interviewee feels the government could do/provide more for them.