

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to reflect on the problem of corruption (nepotism) in the public sector using African moral thought. I will specifically be investigating the relationship between the moral theory of ubuntu and nepotism. This research will use Thaddeus Metz's interpretation of ubuntu as a moral theory that prizes certain social relationships as intrinsically valuable, to pursue the moral status of nepotism. In the dominant legal and moral discourse, nepotism is considered to be obviously immoral, and as an instance of corruption. In this research, I will be exploring the relationship between ubuntu and nepotism, I will be specifically considering whether nepotism is immoral, and counts as an instance of corruption in African moral thought. In the final analysis, I seek to extend the conversation about partiality in moral philosophy to consider whether nepotism is a plausible or acceptable form of partiality. I will conclude by noting that Ubuntu considers nepotism to be a wrong form of partiality, which can be characterized as an instance of corruption.

Keywords

African thought – Impartiality – Nepotism – Partiality – Relational ethics – Ubuntu