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Deontology, ubuntu and doctor-patient relationship

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Abstract

This thesis critically discusses ubuntu together with Kantian moral theory of deontology. Its principal aim is to examine which between these moral accounts presents us a most plausible grounding of the doctor-patient relationship. In order to accomplish this aim, the thesis asked the following question: Can there be a plausible and adequate moral theory which recognizes the interests, considerations and other factors in the doctor-patient relationship and which at the same time is consistent with a rich notion of the self? It is argued that deontology underpinned doctor-patient relationship is at some level deficient and problematic because it (a) excludes relevant interests in the treatment of the patient, and (b) has an atomistic view of persons which is a mistaken view and picture of the self. In contrast, ubuntu underpinned doctor-patient relationship is based on the possibility of taking into account all the interests (meaning it considers the interests of the family, for example), considerations (it considers persons as relational) and other factors (mental capacity is not global, but relative in the doctor-patient relationship) and that it is consistent with a rich view of the self. Therefore, these deficiencies in a deontology underpinned doctor-patient relationship are the ones that an ubuntu underpinned doctor-patient relationship does not suffer from.