

The Incompleteness of Using Imperfect Duties to Solve the Over-Demandingness Problem in Kantian Ethics

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Received: 2024/07/31 | Accepted: 2024/07/03

Abstract

Original Research



The over-demandingness objection to ethical theories is a famous objection that has been popularized in recent decades, since Singer's famous paper in 1972. This objection says that intuitively an ethical theory shouldn't demand too much of its complaints. Even though most of the discussions have been about demandingness in utilitarianism, in recent years this objection has been raised regarding Kantian ethics. Some scholars have tried to show that Kant's ethics will not be demanding by proposing the division of perfect and imperfect duties in Kant's moral theory and using the concept of "latitude" that Kant proposed to explain imperfect duties. In this paper, we explain and examine this solution and show that this solution firstly makes Kant's ethics over-permissive. Secondly, it does not solve the problem of over-demandingness in Kant's ethics in general, because the most demanding part of Kant's ethics lies in perfect duties.

Keywords

Overdemandingness, perfect duties, imperfect duties, Kantian ethics.

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▣ Abbasnejad, I. (2024). The Inadequacy of Imperfect Duties in Addressing Overdemandingness in Kantian Ethics. *Journal of Ethical Studies*, 1(2), 49-68. doi: 10.22091/jes.2024.10825.1010

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