

Reviewer's report

Title: The Principle of Respect for Autonomy - Concordant with the Experience of Physicians and Molecular Biologists in their Daily Work?

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Reviewer: Jacob Rendtorff

Reviewer's report:

The authors have not understood the Kemp/Rendtorff analysis of autonomy and alternatives to autonomy. Much more closer analysis of their concept of autonomy is needed in order to understand the principle of autonomy. Therefore the major theoretical argument about the superiority of the Beauchamp/Childress concept of autonomy does not really work. It is not clear why the Beauchamp/Childress concept of autonomy is superior and applicable in the clinical setting. In particular it is important to understand the role of dignity, integrity and vulnerability in relation to the Kemp/Rendtorff analysis of the principle of autonomy. Kemp and Rendtorff know very well that Beauchamp/Childress mention more than autonomy. However, it is still very obvious to their account of the human person that they only focus on autonomy. Much more deep theoretical discussion is needed in order to clarify the needed protection of the human person which is in the center of the Kemp/Rendtorff approach.

The use of the hermeneutic method is very good and it is interesting to use Ricoeur as an important representative of the hermeneutic method (p. 10). However more explanation of the concept of hermeneutic reading is needed in relation to Ricoeur.

Empirical analysis is very interesting and represents a good reflection of the different concepts of autonomy in the Kemp/Rendtorff and the Beauchamp/Childress approach. The empirical analysis presents very interesting new knowledge about the use of the principles.

I think it is an article that merits publication after some revision of the analysis of the relation between the Kemp/Rendtorff and the Beauchamp/Childress concept of autonomy. In fact the analysis of the relation between the two concepts could be more profound and thoughtful.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

Our theory is criticized in the paper so I am somewhat a part of the paper. However, I accept the views of the authors although I also think that they do not read our theory very well.