

UJ ACEPS Reflection Series: Health in African Philosophy



ACEPS
THE AFRICAN CENTRE
FOR EPISTEMOLOGY AND
PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE



Date: Tuesday 12th November 2024

Time: 11:00 am - 01:00 pm

Venue: Boardroom 11th Floor, UJ on Empire

Am I My Parents' Keeper? The Young in African Ethics of Geriatric Care

Abstract:

In response to questions such as whether I am my parents' keeper, this talk interrogates African ethics of geriatric care in relation to the young from an ubuntu perspective. While a sense of ubuntu as an ethic involves our duty to become persons both by self-realization and relating with other persons, the ethics of geriatric care concerns the duty to provide management and support for the mental, physical, and social wellness of the elderly. Employing ubuntu ethics, I argue that it is partly in caring for the elderly that the young become persons or realizes their personhood. I do this, first, by conceptualizing African geriatric care and ubuntu ethics. Second, I draw on an interpretation of ubuntu as self-realization to demonstrate how the young can become persons through caring for the elderly. Third, I draw on the concept of reciprocity as a feature of ubuntu to demonstrate the obligation of the young to nurture and care for the elderly in Africa. Fourth, I recommend the introduction and/or inclusion of care ethics, especially for the elderly, in African education curricula and policies such as in the Life Orientation (LO) policy document.

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