



**Teheran University of Medical Sciences**

**School of Medicine**

**Title:**

**Comparative Study of Common morality  
and Its Intercultural Issues in Medical Ethics**

**A dissertation submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
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**in  
Medical Ethics**

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The title of present research is:

## **Comparative Study of Common Morality and Its Intercultural Issues in Medical Ethics**

### **Abstract**

**Introduction.** In this research, an attempt has been made to explain the concept of common morality and its relationship with cultural pluralism. Tom Beauchamp and James Childress' theory of common morality is one of the most influential theories of common morality, which is the focus of this thesis. According to this theory, some moral principles are unrelated to cultures, groups, or individuals, and all morality-committed people know them. These principles have universal validity, and their violation is unethical and hurts people's feelings.

The common morality theory has been discussed by classic philosophers, sociologists, and contemporary anthropologists. The features of this theory include morality as an apriori concept, the universal and abstract moral principles, the uncertainty of the meanings of the principles, and other issues that have been criticized.

**Aim.** This study has been done to explain the current views in philosophy, culture, and religion about common morality and examine and analyze the differences and similarities in medical ethics dilemmas to improve knowledge and find its epistemological gaps.

**Methods.** This research consists of two theoretical and field parts. The method of the theoretical part was a literature review with a semi-systematic approach using the search engines Web of Science, Proquest, Springerlink, Pubmed, and Noormagz with the keyword "common morality". The method of the field part was a content analysis of interviews with common morality experts in five academic disciplines, who were selected by available and snowball sampling methods, using two directed and conventional approaches in the naturalistic paradigm.

**Findings.** Considering the breadth and conceptual complexity of scientific literature in the field of moral philosophy, this research classified the texts into four categories: metaethics, normative ethics, applied ethics, and descriptive ethics. Since many articles dealt with the common morality concept from the social sciences standpoint, the role of historical, social (cultural), and anthropological contexts in its conceptualization was clarified. The field study findings include the two main themes of ontology and epistemology of common morality, which are extracted from  $\forall$  categories.

**Conclusion.** Morality is considered a humane and social matter, but in common morality theories, this concept has been reduced to a physical matter that does not consider individual and social characteristics. A deep understanding of competing perspectives on the concept of common morality, including universalism and particularism, modernism and postmodernism, objectivism

and relativism, and interpretivism and anti-interpretivism, leads to the evolution of perspectives and the richness of moral reasoning. Cultural similarities and differences have many historical, geographical, social, anthropological, economic, political, ethical, and legal infrastructures that are still unknown. Therefore, this study emphasizes adopting a multidisciplinary approach to the common morality concept. Considering ethical issues as a process is a way to free oneself from earlier mental attachments and occupations. However, the similarity of the reasoning process, the existence of common foundations in understanding, and the existence of single concepts in moral life prove the existence of shared moral foundations among humans.

**Keywords:** Common morality; Intercultural foundations; Medical ethics.