

Support for Voluntary and Nonvoluntary Euthanasia: What Roles Do Conditions of Suffering and the Identity of the Terminally Ill Play?

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Abstract

This study investigated the level of support for voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia under three conditions of suffering (pain; debilitated nature of the body; burden on the family) experienced by oneself, a significant other, and a person in general. The sample consisted of 1,897 Thai adults (719 males, 1,178 females) who voluntarily filled in the study's questionnaire. Initial multivariate analysis of variance indicated significant group (oneself, significant other, person in general) differences in level of support for voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia and under the three conditions of suffering. Multigroup path analysis conducted on the posited euthanasia model showed that the three conditions of suffering exerted differential direct and indirect influences on the support of voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia as a function of the identity of the person for whom euthanasia was being considered. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords

mercy killing, voluntary euthanasia, conditions of suffering

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