

Ethics and governance in oral health settings: Exploring different models of dentist–patient interaction

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Although the relationship between providers and receivers of health services is a critical component of the integrated approach to excellence in healthcare, it has been rarely examined in the stomatology sector. The agent-principal type of encounter between dentistry professionals and patients provide opportunities for the former to behave at the latter's expense, requiring effective governance mechanisms for alleviating the emerging agency problems and ethical concerns. Relying on the agency framework of dentist-patient interactions, we provide the descriptive accounts of patients who had undergone oral health treatments in stomatological clinics located in Eastern Europe. A purposeful sampling procedure to select cases that were rich in information and displayed high levels of heterogeneity was adopted. The study illustrates the dominant agency problems, ethical challenges and governance characteristics in each of the three identified models of dentist-patient relationship, including the dentist-centered, patient-centered and dentist-patient partnership models. It was argued that explicit efforts ought to be deployed towards the establishment of partnership models of dentist–patient interaction that might facilitate the achievement of optimal relational outcomes.

Biography

Virginia Bodolica is an Associate Professor at the American University of Sharjah (UAE) and a Visiting Faculty at the ESE Business School, Universidad de los Andes (Chile). She received her Ph. D. from HEC Montreal (Canada) and she teaches and delivers customized executive programs in the areas of strategy, governance and human resources. Her research interests are related to corporate governance issues, knowledge management practices, and relational encounters in healthcare settings. The results of her research have been published in journals such as Health Expectations, Public Health, Strategic Organization, Journal of Business Ethics, Academy of Management Annals and Strategic Management Journal.

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