

Scientific Contribution

**Considering the central ideas of the ethics of care
in N. Noddings' *Caring : A Feminine Approach to Ethics &
Moral Education***

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Abstract :

The purpose of this paper is to examine N. Noddings' central ideas regarding the ethics of care. Noddings defines the core sense of care as engrossment toward those with whom the caretaker is emotionally attached, and she encourages caregivers to act not according to moral reasoning and principles, but according to personal existential decisions. She also rejects the concept of universalizability of moral values. However, caring in itself is not necessarily morally good. To evaluate the act of caring as morally good or moderate, caregivers must have another frame of reference outside of caring. Therefore, one must employ the notion of universalizability to maintain a frame of reference with which one can then examine the value of caregiving acts. I argue that these incongruences in her theory stem from her rejection of the concept of universalizability of moral values, along with her rejection of principles and rules as the major guides to ethical behavior.

Keywords : Nel Noddings, caring, engrossment, universalizability, emotion, rationality

Introduction

Caring,¹ N. Noddings' representative work on her theory of care, has captivated many readers in Japan and has been reprinted numerous times. Her books and articles have been introduced in various forms.² Noddings' thinking, which emphasizes subjective sentiment over objective and universal principles, has had a

significant impact not only in her field (i.e., education), but also on those attempting to bring original values into the field of nursing care.³ Yet, her theory of care also raises problems related to the recommended actions and the value judgments upon which these actions are based, and these issues cannot be overlooked.

Noddings considers engrossment,⁴ which is related to an emotional feeling of oneness with another person, to be the essence of care. This position holds that resolution of problems arising in specific circumstances cannot and must not be handled by applying abstract principles and rules. This ignores the mediation of values and principles accepted and shared between people, and instead places weight on the decisions made by individuals.

When examining shared values and principles, the rationality and legitimacy of decisions is usually questioned. The concept of universalizability plays an important role in such instances. Noddings acknowledges that when ethicists insist on universalizability, they argue that “it must be the case that, if under conditions X you are required to do A, then under sufficiently similar conditions, I too am required to do A.”⁵ However, Noddings believes that it is rare for the various conditions included in 2 different ethical encounters to be similar enough for one to declare that what I must do is the same as what you must do.⁶ On these grounds, she does not attempt to incorporate the concept of universalizability into the discussion of moral value judgments. Having brushed aside all moral principles and rules, Noddings then develops her own theory of care.

However, is it really true that there are hardly any similarities between our moral and ethical acts, and that situations close enough to compare are rare? Is it impossible to identify similarities, commonalities, and acceptable norms in the actions of individuals who have distinct characteristics and are placed in distinct situations, as they make promises and strive to behave in an honest manner? It is questionable whether this can be claimed to be an inarguable truth.

The ideal of care set forward by Noddings, based on the concept

of engrossment, deserves fair assessment when taken at the most basic level as essential aspects of care. However, her strong assertions of individuality and her focus on the subjective and emotional dimensions arising from engrossment raise concerns because they are developed in tandem with the rejection of shared values, principles, and the universalizability needed to discuss these issues.

Based on the above, this paper will discuss Noddings' definition of care, her thoughts about universalizability, and the caregiving acts she discusses through examples, as presented⁷ in her book *Caring*. Lastly, this paper will address the methodological drawbacks and underpinnings identified in Noddings' theory of care.

I. Noddings' View of Care and Caring

"Care," as discussed by Noddings, strongly emphasizes the specific psychological dimensions of independent subjects in their relations with other people. Based on dictionary definitions, she states that "care' is a state of mental suffering or of engrossment: to care is to be in a burdened mental state, one of anxiety, fear, or solicitude about something or someone."⁸

Finding the source of care within intimate relations between people, Noddings describes care as follows: "When we see the other's reality as a possibility for us, we must act to eliminate the intolerable, to reduce the pain, to fill the need, to actualize the dream. When I am in this sort relationship with another, when the other's reality becomes a real possibility for me, I care."⁹ Thus, a state of care comes into existence when one is in a state of anxiety or concern toward a thing or person, the desire to do something about it arises, and one takes on the problem as if it were one's own.

In responding to Noddings' claim, some have argued that if what she calls emotional attachment is at the core of care, then it is also possible that negative emotions, such as anger or envy, might also

be present.¹⁰ Following Noddings' description, however, caring finds its perspective in the practice and form of relations between the caregiver and the cared-for. In this vision of caring, Noddings stresses "A receptive-intuitive mode which, ... , allows us to receive the object, to put ourselves quietly into its presence,"¹¹ "receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness."¹² Furthermore, Noddings also draws on Buber to say that "The freedom, creativity, and spontaneous disclosure of the cared-for that manifest themselves under the nurture of the one-caring complete the relation."¹³ The cared-for thus also play an important role in caring.

II. Universalizability

1) What should be prioritized

According to Noddings, the enunciation of moral good and evil is made possible not by facts or principles, but by the caring attitude.¹⁴ The thinking is that good or evil is elicited as a function of the bilateral, mutual recognition between the caregiver (one-caring) and the cared-for. Yet, this does not mean that anything seen as good for the caregiver and the cared-for is fine and acceptable. According to Noddings, while the manner of relating to the other person and mutual recognition between the one-caring and the cared-for is a prerequisite of care, the care in question cannot necessarily be positively evaluated on that basis alone. Consider, for example, the physical needs of a patient who has just undergone digestive surgery and wants to drink water. The patient's desire for water and the caregiver's desire to give the patient water may align, but if the postoperative patient is given water, it may mean the end of their life. Thus, the method of providing care as it relates to fulfilling the patient's needs should be decided based on medical appropriateness and permissibility. This is also true for ethical and moral value judgments about care. One cannot immediately judge the act of performing euthanasia on an individual to be good simply because one has managed to grasp the sentiment of the individual wanting to be euthanized. There is

a need for a framework with a basis that is accepted by the majority of society to which that individual belongs, and that framework requires some degree of universality and objectivity. Yet, Noddings from the outset rejects universalizability as a condition for examining such moral values. Behind her argument lies the strong conviction that subjective relationships should be placed before assessments of the objective value of caregiving acts. What is important for Noddings is the caregiver's "moral attitude or longing for goodness,"¹⁵ "heightening moral perception and sensitivity,"¹⁶ or "acting not by fixed rule but by affection and regard."¹⁷ This emphasizes moral attitude, the longing for goodness, emotion, and sentiment. Noddings' thinking, as expressed here, is even easier to understand when seen in light of the feminine ethic,¹⁸ which she equates with the ethics of care. Men, or fathers, aspire for universal justice, arrange principles hierarchically, and try to derive logical conclusions. According to Noddings, however, "It is not the case, certainly, that women cannot arrange principles hierarchically and derive conclusions logically. It is more likely that we see this process as peripheral to, or even alien to, many problems of moral action."¹⁹ Citing the example of "Appropriate punishment for one who has committed a particular crime,"²⁰ Noddings states that "The traditional approach, that of the father, is to ask under what principle the case falls. But the mother may wish to ask more about the culprit and his victims. She may begin by thinking, "What if this were my child?"... The first moves immediately to abstraction where its thinking can take place clearly and logically in isolation from the complicating factors of particular persons, places, and circumstances; the second moves to concretization where its feeling can be modified by the introduction of facts, the feelings of others, and personal histories."²¹ Noddings then argues that, "Faced with a hypothetical moral dilemma, women often ask for more information... They want more information, I think, in order to form a picture. Ideally they need to talk to the participants, to see their eyes and facial expressions, to size up the whole situation.

Moral decisions are, after all, made in situations; they are qualitatively different from the solution of geometry problems.”²² Furthermore, women can and actually do attribute reasons to their actions, but these reasons are likely to be oriented toward emotion, desire, impressions, and the woman’s own individual sense of ideals, rather than universal principle and its application.²³ Noting that these individual ideals include “Maintenance of the caring relation,”²⁴ Noddings states that “We act ... to protect or enhance the welfare of the cared-for.”²⁵ Noddings then warns that, “One of the greatest dangers to caring may be premature switching to a rational-objective mode... If rational-objective thinking is to be put in the service of caring, we must at the right moments turn it away from the abstract toward which it tends and back to the concrete.”²⁶ Taking this a step further, she presents the view that “What I will do is subordinate to my commitment to do something,”²⁷ and shifts the emphasis from the abstract to the concrete and from objective, empirical correctness of action to ways of being involved. Following her ideal of “maintenance of the caring relation” over the empirical correctness or appropriateness of action, *Caring* presents a view that emphasizes engrossment in relationships, and as Noddings writes, “Moral statements cannot be justified in the way that statements of fact can be justified... They are derived not from facts or principles but from the caring attitude.”²⁸

2) The Concept of Universalizability and Noddings’ Response

Moral action has been said to involve factors related to the attitude of sincerely facing the other person, the so-called moral good, as well as empirical and objective elements related to whether or not the specific action taken toward the other person is correct.²⁹ Noddings, who prioritizes subjective ways of relating to others in taking action (i.e., moral good), states her views on universalizability as a basis for judging the correctness of moral action as follows:

“Our efforts must, then, be directed to the maintenance of

conditions that will permit caring to flourish. Along with the rejection of the principles and rules as the major guide to ethical behavior, I shall also reject the notion of universalizability. Many of those writing and thinking about ethics insist that any ethical judgment –must be universalizable; that is, it must be the case that, if under conditions X you are required to do A, then under sufficiently similar conditions, I too am required to do A. I shall reject this emphatically. First, my attention is not on judgment and not on the particular acts we perform but on how we meet the other morally. Second, in recognition of the feminine approach to meeting the other morally—our instance on caring for the other—I shall want to preserve the uniqueness of human encounters. Since so much depends on the subjective experience of those involved in ethical encounters, conditions are rarely “sufficiently similar” for me to declare that you must do what I must do.”³⁰

Thus, with respect to the issue of universalizability, Noddings emphasizes her original view that it is extremely rare for conditions in situations to be similar enough to declare that you must do the same thing that I must do. Each individual is placed in a unique situation. In caring, relations with the cared-for are also unique to each situation. Therefore, the concept of universalizability, which assumes that conditions are similar and in the context of which one can speak of shared values, takes for instance the declaration that “promises should be kept” and tries to apply it to all cases with similar conditions; however, Noddings holds that this idea itself is mistaken. She explains her reservations as follows: “In order to accept the principle[the principle of universalizability], we should have to establish that human predicaments exhibit sufficient sameness, and this we cannot do without abstracting away from concrete situations those qualities that seem to reveal the sameness. In doing this, we often lose the very qualities or factors that gave rise to the moral question in the situation.”³¹

One might define universalizability by borrowing the words of Uchii, who wrote that “universalizability means that when the

same conditions are present, the same value judgments must be made.”³²

Noddings argues that “in ethical encounters, conditions are rarely ‘sufficiently similar’ for me to declare that you must do what I must do,” meaning that there is no state in which the requirements for universalizability that assume that “One’s reason for performing a certain action in certain circumstances must be a reason for *anyone* to perform the same action in relevantly similar circumstances,”³³ may be questioned. The reason given by Noddings is that, “In order to accept the principle, we should have to establish that human predicaments exhibit sufficient sameness, and this we cannot do without abstracting away from concrete situations those qualities that seem to reveal the sameness.”³⁴ Arguing that similar situations—which represent the condition that must be met to speak of the principle or rule of moral behavior—do not exist, she discards “universalizability.” Addressing Noddings’ comments that “In order to accept the principle, we should have to establish that human predicaments exhibit sufficient sameness, and this we cannot do without abstracting away from concrete situations those qualities that seem to reveal the sameness,” Kuhse suggests that Noddings may be confusing generality and universality.³⁵ Generality is normally used as an antonym of specificity, and Noddings’ writing often takes the meaning of generality used in that sense to explain universality. Thus, Kuhse’s suggestion that she has confused universality and generality may have some merit. The reason is that universal is a word for that which is plural, like the word “human” in the statements “Socrates is human” or “Cleopatra is human,” and furthermore does not necessarily exclude the specific conditions and detailed articles inherent to Socrates or Cleopatra.

However, here the point is not to advance an argument about the usage of words, but rather to examine whether similar situations, which are the premise for discussing the principles of moral action, are present.

- (1) A forgets his lunch money, and borrows 500 yen from classmate B, saying that he will repay it later.
- (2) A' loses his lunch money and borrows 1000 yen from B', who is in the same club, saying that he will repay it later.
- (3) C loses her notebook, and to study for next week's test she borrows notes from D, the student next to her, promising to return them the following day.
- (4) C' misses class due to illness, and to study for a test in 2 weeks, borrows notes from her old friend and classmate D', promising to return them the day after tomorrow.

A and A' borrowed money for lunch, and C and C' borrowed notes to study for a test, and each situation is somewhat different. A borrowed money despite concerns about B's finances and amount of pocket money, while A' knew that, to the more wealthy B', 1000 yen was just a trifling sum; yet, both were nonetheless grateful for their classmate's kindness and intended to repay the money the following day as promised. C kept in mind that if she did not keep her promise, it would affect D's ability to study for the test. C', on the other hand, knew that D' was blessed with an amazing memory and did not even need the notes, yet was still sincerely moved by the generosity of D'. Both C and C' intend to keep their promise as planned. In these 4 cases, the similarities in circumstances are evident, and this is a condition for discussing the principles and rules of moral action.

Noddings says that without isolating the special characteristics that are thought to demonstrate sameness from the concrete situations, it is not possible to establish sameness. Yet, there is no explanation whatsoever of what kind of situations she has in mind. Because this is a major point in her main assertion, the burden of proof would normally fall strongly on her as the presenter. If we assume that what Noddings means is "simply sameness or similarity in terms of 'apperception' or 'consciousness in general'," then it is not impossible to understand that statement. In that case, the specific attributes of a male or female, or A or C, disappear. It

would certainly be possible to simply discuss A, B, A', or B' in the complete abstract as conscious entities, by removing the individual circumstances they are placed in. Yet, even without putting things on such an abstract level, it is possible to identify similarities. In the examples of A and C and their promises, even without disregarding the separate conditions of the individual situations, specific qualities, and the history of the friendships, it is clear that a situation whereby "Something was borrowed during a moment of hardship with the promise that it would be returned, and an attempt was made to return or repay as promised" was in effect. Thus, in identifying the similar situations, i.e., a premise for discussing the principles of moral action, the individual situations did not pose an obstacle. The issue of similarity in making promises is not simply one that was reduced or abstracted to the level of conscious entities. The presence or lack of consciousness, response of human entities, and human identity emerge as essential problems when declaring brain death, recognizing a vegetative state, or diagnosing dementia, but are not such pressing concerns when considering the act of making a promise.

The similarity of situations can be gauged without altering the essential nature of the situation in question. Therefore, it is probably not accurate to reject universalizability on the grounds that similar circumstances per se do not exist to fulfill the condition of universalizability needed to examine principles and rules.

According to the idea of universalizability with respect to action, "Reasons cannot be specific to particular individuals. If R is a valid reason for *me* to do action A, then it must also be a valid reason for *anyone* to do A in the same circumstances. Reasons are, by the very nature, reasons for anyone." ³⁶

That is, if a person who makes a false promise that they will repay something, even though they cannot repay it, believes that their own actions are rationally justified, they must accept that all other people who make such false promises to return something may all similarly be justified in their actions. Yet, if one considers

the consequences of these false promises, this is not rational. The demand for rationality serves as an unspoken premise at our very core. Consequently, the rational demand to avoid undesirable results goes together with the condition of universalizability, and the fulfillment of promises is demanded equally of all people. The rules of civil society, such as thou shalt not kill and thou shalt not lie, all have the same kind of reasons for existence.

Can it then be argued that our ideals about the spirit of altruism and engrossment in care have a legitimacy based on universalizability and rationality? As we have seen so far, the argument that “I have a legitimate reason to pursue my own interests above all else, and all other people similarly have a legitimate reason to pursue their own interests above all else” fulfills the conditions of universalizability, and at the same time, asserting that one’s own interests come first—while inconsistent with the ideals of care that similarly respect both one’s own interests and the interests of others—cannot be regarded as irrational.³⁷

In the context of a discussion that takes the principle of universalizability and rationality as conditions, it is problematic to try to deal with approaches that emphasize treating the interests of others in the same manner as one’s own interests, or an approach to care that emphasizes engrossment for the sake of others’ interests in the same manner that one examines the rules that “promises must be kept” and “one must not lie.”

Noddings denies universalizability and rejects universal principles as a guide to ethical action. It is not impossible to understand such statements from the perspective of an ideal reality that has transcended civic virtue. But can principles and rules really be rejected so easily?

Universal principles are originally meant to guide ethical action, and could very likely be regarded as forming the basis of individuals’ position as members in a community. As living organisms, we are all subject to the universal limitation that we will die, and we must accept that. The principles of civic life that

include “thou shalt not kill” and “thou shalt not lie” are universal values that are also deeply tied to the maintenance of civic life and the maintenance of our identities as citizens. As citizens, we are required to accept principles and rules, and must accept these in order to be members of a community. To what extent is it necessary for care to reject these rules in the name of engrossment?

While the rules of civic society are accepted as rules, and are accepted based on universalizability and rationality, care can be seen as a form of ideals that aims to recover that which is left behind by these rules, in order to immerse oneself in supporting a person who is suffering, and engage in mutual aid.

Altruism, and care based on engrossment in the interests of those one is close to or related to, might be called an ideal, and needless to say it does not come into being based on the logic of universalizability. Ideals and virtues lie outside the context of conditions for universalizability. Yet, even so, Noddings seems to go too far in refusing to engage at all with universalizability.

Viewing responses rich in human emotion as the true source of ethical behavior, Noddings pronounces the abandonment of universalizability, and factors out principles and rules as a guide to ethical behavior. She then goes on to argue that, “There is ... a fundamental universality in our ethic, as there must be to escape relativism... The caring attitude, that attitude which expresses our earliest memories of being cared for and our growing store of memories of both caring and being cared for, is universally accessible... Since caring and the commitment to sustain it form the universal heart of the ethic, we must establish a convincing and comprehensive picture of caring at the outset.”³⁸ This point lacks consistency with Noddings’ arguments thus far, and one must be careful when interpreting it. Noddings lacked attentiveness in allowing gaps in the style of discourse and context between her critique of universalizability based on an interpretation of “sameness,” and her enunciation of the caring attitude and ethical care orientation. Let us provisionally accept Noddings’ ideas about the caring attitude expressed here as her ideal vision of how to

relate to situations.

Succinctly put, what Noddings means by the words “caring attitude” is the mode of involvement of a person engaged in moral action. In common terms, this is a matter of whether one is seriously involved or halfheartedly involved with someone else.

III. Specific Case Examples: Situations and Options

If the universalization of moral values is underestimated, then which of the many possibilities for action will be chosen in reality? This can be clarified from the case examples Noddings provides.

A parent who makes up an illness to allow her child to skip school

—This involves a son who stays home from school—

The school is run using state funds, and absence is not permitted for any reason other than illness or death. As a rule, absences are punished with after-school detention. However, if the school learns that the student was sick, no punishment is meted out, which is convenient both for the school and the parents, whose children will not receive punishment. Thus, as caregivers, parents will unashamedly lie.³⁹

About this case, Noddings writes that, “I may choose to lie regularly in order to meet my son as one-caring rather than as one conforming to principles. I do not attempt to justify my behavior on the grounds that absence rule is foolish and unfair, because my behavior is not primarily constrained by rules. I do not need that excuse,”⁴⁰ and, “I can brush off the whole debate as foolishness and remain faithful to the ideal of one-caring.”⁴¹

Being engrossed and doing things assumed to be good for one’s child is Noddings’ ideal. The main thrust of Noddings’ argument is that “it is foolish to say that lying is bad, I will follow my own ideas and feelings.” However, this has a bearing on only the parties involved and comes out of engrossment. It, thereby, deviates from

the requirements of universalization, and does not provide for a discussion of morality. On the face, Noddings does not say that all parents and children should lie in such situations. If she were to assert that this applies to all parents and children, this would fulfill the condition of universalizability necessary to examine the legitimacy of a moral statement, and mark the initial entry into the category of moral statements. Then the question would be whether some validity could be found in this statement, and normally this would be the beginning of an empirical discussion of ethics. Noddings' position on care, however, is that we cannot or will not ask what a person should do if placed in a similar situation.

Pablo Casals' younger brother Enriqu  and their mother

When he was young, Pablo Casals' brother Enriqu  was faced with the possibility that he would have to fight the Spanish army. When he confessed to his mother that he was disgusted by the prospect of killing someone or being killed himself, she advised him, "Then run away."⁴²

This is the example that Noddings introduces in *Caring*   after that of the parent who allows her child to skip school by lying about an illness. Noddings affirms the mother's statement, "Then run away." This is only to be expected given her privileging of the subjective, which emphasizes emotion and sentimental thoughts. However, whether or not the mother's statement qualifies as a moral statement here presents another problem. If the mother's statement has only her own child in mind and says "run away" out of pity for her own son, then this statement fails to fulfill the conditions of universalizability that we have discussed above, and from the outset does not represent a moral statement. Yet, if the statement means that all children, including one's own, should run away in such situations, then it would fulfill the condition of universalizability. If after considering various conditions, this

statement relates to whether all children should fight or run away, then it does not simply meet the conditions of universalizability, but could even be regarded as a statement of empirical validity. Noddings' position, however, does not allow such a discussion to emerge, because she refuses to consider universalizability by saying that the one-caring has only one option when the person they love is placed in danger.⁴³

IV. Methodological Drawbacks of Noddings' Theory of Care

The methodological drawbacks of Noddings' theory of care become clear when examined in light of actual examples. It is difficult to affirm Noddings' views on the 2 cases described above from a moral standpoint that assesses right or wrong.

In the case of the **“Parent who makes up an illness to allow her child to skip school,”** the reason for the absence is inconvenient for the school, but important enough to the individual to permit an absence. Because the parent faces the child as one-caring and focuses solely on the fact that taking a day off is good for the child, the discussion ends without any consideration of other reasons or conditions. Usually, a discussion of morality would extend the idea that something was important enough to allow the individual to take the day off similar to other children, and question the stance to be taken. However, Noddings is not interested in asking such questions, and even if she were, her style of argument, as seen above, does not extend to examining the morality of a specific action.

In the citation from the story of **“Pablo Casals' younger brother Enriqu  and their mother,”** Noddings writes that, “In arguing from principles, one often suppresses the basic feeling or longing that prompts the justification. One is led to suppose that reason produces the decision. This is the ultimate and tragic dishonesty.”⁴⁴ She insists that in order to avoid dishonesty, we should look toward emotion, longing, fear, hope, and the like.

According to Noddings' view of the one-caring, “we are not

primarily interested in judging but, rather, in heightening moral perception and sensitivity,”⁴⁵ and caring means “What I will do is subordinate to my commitment to do something.”⁴⁶ In short, because this way of thinking privileges the subjective factors of moral action, Noddings’ view creates a framework that puts decisions based on subjectivity first, before considering the objective and empirical factors in moral action. Noddings explains that it is crucial for the one-caring to be engrossed in accepting specific other people (i.e., people whom they are close to or related to), and within the relations with these people the one-caring have a dialogue with themselves, and at times determine the next step based on their own discretion. Thus, Noddings raises the action of mothers who killed their own thalidomide babies with poison, and saying, “While traditional values are often conserved, ... the ultimate locus of right and wrong is shifted to an internal examination of predecision considerations and acts... The locus of ultimate decisions concerning true-false and right-wrong is in the internal dialogue of the one-caring,”⁴⁷ places value on the mother’s subjective dimensions. Because value is placed on decisions that follow from the mother’s feelings, the murder of the thalidomide baby that results from the mother’s action is affirmed.

While the acts of caring affirmed by Noddings emphasize the desires of the individual who is the object of care, the path of thought that would consider how people should act under similar circumstances is completely missing. Sincere relations with the cared-for person, engrossment, and the goodness of a subjective attitude form the basis of action in this way of thinking. Yet, it is not possible to make claims about the value of specific and substantial action—which is the aim of sincere relations and engrossment—without considering universalizability. Because, as stated above, moral action must be judged from 2 sides: in terms of commitment that requires facing the other person sincerely, and in terms of empirical and objective questions of whether or not the specific action taken toward the other person is correct. The problem with Noddings’ argument about care is that, based on a

mistaken interpretation of the universalizability of moral action, she makes subjective factors the basis for judgments about the validity and objective correctness of care.

Conclusion

As symbolized by the definition of engrossment, the characteristics of Noddings' view on care place an emphasis on the emotional ties between the one-caring and the cared-for, and a respect for individuality that undervalues principles and rules.

It is completely natural that people who want to heed the complaints of individuals and provide care that lends weight to the situations and feelings of individuals should be drawn to this view. A respect for individuality itself should certainly not be rejected. However, this view lacks sufficient persuasiveness because it cannot comprehend the meaning that principles and rules have for individual actions taken in real life.

Care is made up of both subjective factors of feeling for the other person, and objective factors of what action to take in physical and social contexts. However, in terms of specific action, these subjective and objective factors are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and the particular does not necessarily rule out the universal.

Based on this understanding, the question of how a person or issue should be approached and handled should be at the core of our conception of care.

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Notes

- 1 Nel Noddings, *Caring, A Feminine Approach to Ethics & Moral*

Education (1984), University of California Press.

2 See, for example, Miho Murata, "Caring theory of Noddings", in H.Nakano et al.(eds.): *Caring Today---Beyond the Boundary of Ethics, Education, Nursing and Welfare* (2006), Kouyousyobou, pp.

90-102 ;Rieko Mihara, "Ethics of care and clinical ethics", *Clinical Ethics* 3 (2004),pp.101-118.

3 See, for example, F.Yasutaka, "Caring in nursing education", *Quality of Nursing*,Vol,7 no.1 (2001), pp.17-22; M. Miyawaki," Are nurses giving enough care that patients want ?",*Quality of Nursing*,Vol,9 no.12 (2003), pp.4-8.

4 Nel Noddings, *op.cit.*, p.9.

5 *Ibid.*,p5.

6 *Ibid.*,p5.

7 While Noddings occasionally mentions the concept of universalizability in works written after 1984's *Caring leading up to Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy* (2002), she makes no comments about it worthy of special note.

8 Nel Noddings, *Caring, A Feminine Approach to Ethics & Moral Education* (1984), p.9.

9 *Ibid.*, p.14.

10 See ,Peter Allmark, " Can there be an ethics of care ?", *Journal of Medical Ethics* 21(1995),pp.19-24.

11 Nel Noddings、 *op.cit.*, p.34.

12 *Ibid.*, p.2.

13 *Ibid.*, p.74.

14 *Ibid.*, p.94.

15 *Ibid.*, p.2.

16 *Ibid.*, p.90.

17 *Ibid.*, p.24.

18 *Ibid.*, p.90.

19 *Ibid.*, p.2.

20 *Ibid.*, p.36.

21 *Ibid.*, pp.36-37.

22 *Ibid.*, p.96.

23 *Ibid.*, p.3.

24 *Ibid.*, p.85.

25 *Ibid.*, p.24.

26 *Ibid.*, p.26.

27 *Ibid.*, p.36.

28 *Ibid.*, p.94.

29 See W.K. Frankena, *Thinking about Morality* (1980). The University of Michigan Press, pp.41-71.

30 Nel Noddings, *op.cit.*, p.5.

31 *Ibid.*, p.85.

32 Soshichi Uchii, *Law of Freedom and Logic of Interests* (1988),

Minerubashobou, p.206.

33 Richard Norman, *The Moral Philosophers: An Introduction to Ethics*, 2nd edn(1998), Oxford Univ. Press, p.86.

34 Nel Noddings, *op.cit.*, p.85.

35 Kuhse: *Caring: Nurses, Women and Ethics* (1997), Blackwell, p.126.

36 Richard Norman, *op.cit.*, p.79.

37 *Ibid.*, p183.

38 Nel Noddings, *op.cit.*, pp.5-6.

39 *Ibid.*, pp.56-57.

40 *Ibid.*, p.57.

41 *Ibid.*, p.57.

42 *Ibid.*, p.57.

43 *Ibid.*, p.57.

44 *Ibid.*, p.57.

45 *Ibid.*, p.90.

46 *Ibid.*, p.36.

47 *Ibid.*, p.108.