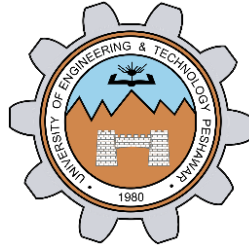


ASSIGNMENT # 02



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BSI-120 Professional Ethics

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Q1) Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development with Gilligan's criticism

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development outline a framework for understanding how individuals develop moral reasoning over time. Lawrence Kohlberg, building on Jean Piaget's work, proposed six stages of moral development organized into three levels: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. Here's an overview of each level and stage, followed by a summary of Carol Gilligan's criticism.

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development:

1. Pre-Conventional Level (typically seen in children):

Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment Orientation

Moral reasoning is based on avoiding punishment and obedience to authority. Right and wrong are determined by consequences.

Stage 2: Self-Interest Orientation

Individuals act based on self-interest and may engage in reciprocal actions (you do something for me, I do something for you).

2. Conventional Level (typically seen in adolescents and some adults):

Stage 3: Interpersonal Accord and Conformity

Morality is defined by social approval and relationships. Actions are right if they gain approval or help maintain relationships.

Stage 4: Authority and Social Order Maintaining Orientation

Moral reasoning is guided by a sense of duty to uphold laws and social rules to maintain order.

3. Post-Conventional Level (achieved by some adults):

Stage 5: Social Contract Orientation

Individuals view laws and rules as flexible and recognize the possibility of changing laws if they do not serve society's best interests.

Stage 6: Universal Ethical Principles

Moral reasoning is based on abstract principles of justice, equality, and respect for human rights, even if it means breaking laws.

Carol Gilligan's Criticism:

Carol Gilligan, a developmental psychologist(also a student of Kohlberg), critiqued Kohlberg's theory on the grounds that it did not account for gender differences in moral development. She argued that Kohlberg's stages were biased toward a justice-based, male-centered view of morality and overlooked a care-based approach that she observed in many women. Key points of her criticism include:

1.Gender Bias:

Gilligan argued that Kohlberg's research sample was predominantly male, which influenced his theory's emphasis on justice and rights over care and relationships.

2.Care-Based Morality:

According to Gilligan, women tend to focus more on relationships, empathy, and care for others, especially in moral dilemmas. This contrasts with Kohlberg's focus on justice and abstract principles, which Gilligan saw as reflective of a typically male approach.

3.Alternative Stages of Development:

Gilligan proposed an alternative model of moral development centered around the ethics of care, with three levels:

1. Orientation to Individual Survival: Focused on individual needs and self-preservation.
2. Goodness as Self-Sacrifice: Characterized by selflessness and a focus on caring for others, often at the expense of one's own needs.
3. Morality of Non-Violence: Recognizes the importance of caring for both oneself and others, aiming for non-harm to all parties involved.

Gilligan's critique highlighted the need for a more inclusive view of moral development that considers both justice and care orientations, acknowledging that moral reasoning may vary across genders and contexts.

Q2) Moral dilemma.

Definition:

Dilemmas are situations in which moral reasons come into conflict, or in which the application of moral values are problems, and one is not clear of the immediate choice or solution of the problems. Moral reasons could be rights, duties, goods or obligations.

These situations do not mean that things have gone wrong, but they only indicate the presence of moral complexity.

The three complex situations leading to moral dilemmas are:

1. **The problem of vagueness:** One is unable to distinguish between good and bad (right or wrong) principle
2. **The problem of conflicting reasons:** One is unable to choose between two good moral solutions. One has to fix priority, through knowledge or value system.
3. **The problem of disagreement:** There may be two or more solutions and none of them mandatory

Steps to Solve Dilemma:

The logical steps in confronting moral dilemma are:

1. Identification of the moral factors and reasons. The clarity to identify the relevant moral values from among duties, rights, goods and obligations is obtained (conceptual inquiry).
2. Collection of all information, data, and facts (factual inquiry) relevant to the situation.
3. Rank the moral options i.e., priority in application through value system, and also as obligatory, all right, acceptable, not acceptable, damaging, and most damaging etc.
4. Generate alternate courses of action to resolve the dilemma. Write down the main options and sub-options as a matrix or decision tree to ensure that all options are included.
5. Discuss with colleagues and obtain their perspectives, priorities, and suggestions on various alternatives.
6. Decide upon a final course of action, based on priority fixed or assumed.

Q3) Theories about right actions

1. Utilitarian Theory

Utilitarianism, developed by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill in the 19th century, evaluates laws based on their moral outcomes, aiming to maximize good. This approach involves:

- (a) Identifying available actions.
- (b) Assessing who will be affected and the resulting benefits or harms.
- (c) Choosing the action that produces the greatest good for the greatest number.

Act Utilitarianism, proposed by J.S. Mill, focuses on individual actions that generate the most overall good. In contrast, **Rule Utilitarianism**, developed by Richard Brandt, emphasizes following rules that maximize public benefit, like "do not steal."

Act Utilitarianism can justify immoral actions. For example, stealing an old computer might benefit the employee but harm the employer. Rule Utilitarianism would view this as wrong, stressing the employee's duty to act ethically. Similarly, unfairly terminating engineers for mistakes they didn't commit may seem beneficial overall but is unjust.

2. Duty Ethics

A. Duty ethics, proposed by Immanuel Kant, emphasizes that our actions should stem from obligations like honesty, fairness, gratitude, and keeping promises. Kant argued that we have duties to ourselves, such as avoiding suicide and developing our talents. Moral duties are categorical imperatives—commands we impose on ourselves and others. For example, we should be honest not just for profit but because it's our duty.

B. In contrast, John Rawls' version of duty ethics focuses on actions everyone would agree upon from an impartial standpoint. He proposed two key principles: (1) everyone is entitled to as much freedom as possible without infringing on others' rights, and (2) social and economic inequalities are justified only if they benefit everyone, especially the disadvantaged. The first principle is prioritized, as basic liberties are essential for lasting benefits.

C. W.D. Ross introduced prima facie duties, which can have exceptions. He believed these duties are intuitively obvious and can be prioritized. For example, principles like "Do not kill" carry more weight than "Do not lie." Critics argue that intuition alone is not a strong moral guide. Ross identified key aspects of Duty Ethics, including:

1. Fidelity
2. Reparation
3. Gratitude
4. Justice
5. Beneficence
6. Self-improvement
7. Non-maleficence

3. Rights Theory

Rights are entitlements that allow individuals to act or require others to act in certain ways. They serve as protective barriers against unjust interference with our moral agency. For each right, there is a corresponding duty of noninterference.

A. The Rights approach to ethics is rooted in Immanuel Kant's philosophy, which emphasizes the individual's right to self-determination. Kant argued that human dignity comes from the ability to make free choices, and using people as mere objects violates this dignity. Key rights he advocated include:

1. **The right to access the truth:** We have the right to be informed about matters that affect our choices.
2. **The right of privacy:** We have the right to believe and say what we choose in our personal lives, as long as we don't infringe on others' rights.
3. **The right not to be injured:** We have the right to avoid harm unless we knowingly accept the risk.
4. **The right to what is agreed:** We are entitled to what has been promised in contracts or agreements.

B. To determine if an action is moral, we must ask if it respects everyone's rights. Actions are deemed wrong to the extent that they violate individual rights, with more serious violations considered more wrongful. John Locke's **Rights theory** asserts that actions are right if they respect the human rights of everyone involved, emphasizing life, liberty, and property.

C. A.I. Melden's theory posits that we have a duty not to harm others' life, health, liberty, or property and also supports welfare rights for a decent life, highlighting the need for a social welfare system.

D. Human rights can be divided into liberty rights and welfare rights. Liberty rights protect individual freedom and impose duties on others not to interfere. Their key features include:

1. **Natural:** Not created by government.
2. **Universal:** Consistent across countries.
3. **Equal:** The same for everyone, regardless of background.
4. **Inalienable:** Cannot be surrendered or sold.

Welfare rights support providing benefits to those in need to ensure a decent standard of living.

E. In a free-market economy, consumers have rights that include the right to information, safety, choice, being heard, redress, and consumer education. Some rights are absolute, meaning they have no exceptions. For example, using a hang glider carelessly does not violate rights ethics, but consumers must be informed about potential dangers of products.

Rights ethics prioritizes human rights as the moral foundation, demanding respect for individual choices and acknowledging similar claims from others. This framework is crucial for establishing ethical standards in fields like engineering and other professions.

4. Virtue Theory:

Virtue ethics emphasizes character over rights or duties, focusing on virtues that are morally desirable traits. Aristotle's theory highlights the importance of finding a balance between extremes of behavior and emotion to achieve the "**golden mean.**" The following examples illustrate this concept:

Virtue	Excess	Golden Mean	Deficient
Truthfulness	Revealing all, violating tact	Necessary and sufficient communication	Secretive
Courage	Roguishness, taking excessive risks	Facing danger appropriately	Cowardice
Generosity	Wasting resources	Giving in appropriate measure	Miserly
Friendliness	Being overly effusive or angry	Balanced relationships	Bad-tempered
Environmental care	Overzealous exploitation	Working towards a green environment	Neglect
Work-life balance	Tiresome overwork	Balance of work and leisure	Laziness

MacIntyre's Virtue Theory further emphasizes actions that contribute to the common good and social welfare, focusing on virtues that promote social justice, health, and the creation of safe, useful technologies. He identifies five types of virtues essential for responsible professionalism:

- 1. Public-spirited virtues**
- 2. Proficiency virtues**
- 3. Teamwork virtues**
- 4. Self-governance virtues**
- 5. Cardinal virtues**

This approach stresses the importance of character in ethical decision-making and professional conduct.

5. Self-Realization Ethics

Self-realization ethics emphasizes that right actions are those that lead to personal fulfillment. One version of this theory defines the self through caring relationships with others and society. Another version, known as ethical egoism, focuses solely on actions that promote one's own good, without considering relationships or societal connections

6. Justice (Fairness) Theory

The justice or fairness approach to ethics is rooted in Aristotle's teachings, which state that "equals should be treated equally and unequals unequally." The central question in this approach is: How fair is an action? Does it treat everyone the same, or does it show favoritism and discrimination?

Controversies often arise because we fail to assess fairness or justice in our actions. Favoritism benefits some individuals without a valid reason for their special treatment, while discrimination unfairly burdens people who are similar to those who are not burdened. Both favoritism and discrimination are unjust and wrong.