Collaborative Learning Discussion 1

Initial post

Case Study: Abusive Workplace Behavior

Suppose a computer practitioner has never been exposed to ACM or BSC. In that case, when they are on a team with a culture of shaming, they will probably think it's a personal problem or bad team atmosphere, but ACM has made it clear that this is a violation of its guidelines, not just style.

The ACM makes it clear that computer professionals should use their skills to improve the lives and environments of others, not only in the abstract human community but also in their surroundings(ACM, 2018). The BSC is more specific in this regard, and Max's attitude towards female members violates clause 1-c as "conduct your professional activities without discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, nationality, colour, race, ethnic origin, religion, age or disability, or of any other condition or requirement." (BSC, 2015).

Max, in this case, used his leadership position to create a very negative impact on the work environment of female employees, which was very detrimental to their growth. In response to this situation, the BSC clause 4-e refers to “encourage and support fellow members in their professional development” (BSC, 2015), and ACM emphasizes that this creates an unfair work environment (ACM, 2018).

ACM considers removing her from authorship and team appearances to be disrespectful of her work of Diane; BSC could take it as damaging to her reputation, in violation of Section 2-f (BSC, 2015).

Anderson believes that the most critical function of the protocol is to help computer professionals make appropriate decisions (Anderson, R., Johnson, D., Gotterbarn, D., & Perrolle, J. 1993), but how many people believe that a product produced in a hostile work environment is positive for the public?

Reference

ACM Ethics. (2018). ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. [online] Available at: https://ethics.acm.org/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2023].

BCS (2015). *BCS, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR IT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BCS MEMBERS*. [online] Available at: https://www.bcs.org/media/2211/bcs-code-of-conduct.pdf.

Anderson, R., Johnson, D., Gotterbarn, D., & Perrolle, J. (1993). Using the new ACM code of ethics in decision making*. Communications of the ACM, 36(2), 98–107.*

Summary Post

People always say, "With great power comes great responsibility." It is very suited to modern computing. Especially as AI starts to take ground from the traditional human domain, new ethical dilemmas are rapidly growing. Public society can benefit from advanced technology and suffer because of misuse. We could ask what the appropriate principle is for a relevant person in such a system that could impact the public.

ACM and BCS consider public interest the highest priority target and declare it as the first clause (ACM, 2018 & BCS, 2015). Other parts include privacy, security, fairness, and responsible use of technology. However, these codes could be an abstract principle to inspire people but lack details in practice (Green, 2021), and in many cases, what action could be taken depending on individual perspective. On the other hand, data protection and privacy have relevant laws to guide people/organizations. For example, GDPR in Europe has had a massive impact on the IT field and has resulted in improving privacy and data protection (Li, H., Yu, L. and He, W., 2019).

Ethics in computing is a complex and evolving field that requires a deep understanding of technology's moral and ethical implications. It is essential that technology developers, policymakers, and users consider the ethical implications of technology and work together to ensure that it is used to benefit society and advance the greater good.

Reference

ACM Ethics. (2018). ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

BCS (2015). BCS, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR IT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BCS MEMBERS.

Green, B., 2021. The contestation of tech ethics: A sociotechnical approach to technology ethics in practice. Journal of Social Computing, 2(3), pp.209-225.

Li, H., Yu, L. and He, W., 2019. The impact of GDPR on global technology development. Journal of Global Information Technology Management, 22(1), pp.1-6.

Peer response to Zihaad Khan's Initial Post

Hi Zihaad, thanks for your excellent post discussing technology on Automated Active Response Weaponry.

This case is a typical dilemma when there is a conflict between professionals and the ethics of an engineer. Every day, a similar case could happen everywhere, like software engineers involved in collecting user data, facial recognition, and automated weapon.

When company Q was involved in developing the automated active response weaponry system, it cared about functionality without ethical consideration. However, technology is not just applied to functions, and it also should include the context of use (Albrechtslund, 2007). ACM (item 1.1) and BCS (item 1.a) consider the public the highest priority (BCS, 2022) (ACM, 2018).

The engineers' action, in this case, to resign to protect the system development and disclose information to the public could violate the contract or employee code. Still, ACM and BCS have indicated you can judge and take action based on your judgement, but you could take the sequence it brings. It remains me, Edward Snowden. He rather is wanted by the U.S. than disclose that people's privacy could be threatened by the government's global surveillance project(Board, 2014). IT professionals how to determine what action they should take in a similar case. It depends on what is 'good' they define in their mind. Let IT stakeholders to attend the ethics seminar could be a good point (John, 2018).

Reference

BCS. (2022) The Chartered Institute for IT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BCS MEMBERS

ACM Ethics. (2018) ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

Albrechtslund, A., 2007. Ethics and technology design. *Ethics and information technology*, 9, pp.63-72.

Board, T.E. (2014). Opinion | *Edward Snowden, Whistle-Blower.* The New York Times. [online] 1 Jan. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/02/opinion/edward-snowden-whistle-blower.html.

John, M., 2018. *Ethics vs morality* | BCS. [online] Available at: https://www.bcs.org/articles-opinion-and-research/ethics-vs-morality/.

Peer response to Jonathan Callaghan's Initial Post

Thank you for your insightful post, Jonathan. I agree with your point. The application of machine learning can lead to censorship and discrimination. As more organisations adopt AI or machine learning in their operations, system designers need to be aware of the potential for harm. Most machine learning algorithms are trained on historical data sets, which can easily be impacted by biases and inaccuracies in the data (Zliobaite, 2015). Therefore, it's crucial for IT professionals to not only consider the benefits of a system, but also to assess and minimise any potential risks. The ACM highlights the importance of avoiding harm in its ethical guidelines (ACM, 2020), and the BCS emphasises the need to understand relevant legislation (BSC, 2018). In addition, IT professionals have a duty not to withhold or misrepresent information about the performance of products, systems or services, in line with the BCS principle of transparency (BSC, 2018). However, in the case, user never been received message about limitation of system, or system how to determine maliscious content.

In some cases, organizations have been known to use feedback mechanisms to manipulate machine learning results, often without proper human supervision. This raises concerns about the reliability and fairness of the outcomes. The ACM highlights the importance of ensuring the security of resources against misuse in its ethical guidelines (ACM, 2020), and the risks associated with using AI to generate patterns that could result in discrimination and censorship should not be ignored. As new technology is introduced, risk assessments are crucial to understand the potential impacts and ensure responsible use (Sutrop, 2019). It's important to note that AI may not always be 100% trustworthy, and proper oversight is necessary to mitigate any potential harm.

Reference

ACM Ethics. (2018). ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. [online] Available at: https://ethics.acm.org/ [Accessed 30 Jan. 2023].

BCS (2015). BCS, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR IT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BCS MEMBERS.

Zliobaite, I., 2015. A survey on measuring indirect discrimination in machine learning. arXiv preprint arXiv:1511.00148.

Sutrop, M., 2019. Should we trust artificial intelligence?. Trames, 23(4), pp.499-522.