

* Ethical Frameworks and Theories *

1. Deontological Ethics

- > Definition - also known as duty-based ethics, is a moral theory that judges the rightness or wrongness of an action based on whether it aligns with a set of rules or duties, regardless of the consequences. It emphasizes the inherent rightness or wrongness of actions, rather than their outcomes.
- > Core Idea - 1. Focus on Duty and Rules - centers on the idea that certain actions are morally obligatory, regardless of their consequences.
- 2. Emphasis on Intentions - often considers the intentions behind an action as crucial to its moral evaluation
 - 3. Universalizability - propose that moral rules should be universalizable, meaning they should apply to everyone in similar situations
4. Rejection of Consequentialism - contrasts with consequentialism, which judges the morality of an action based on its outcomes
- > Focus - on whether actions are inherently right or wrong, based on adherence to moral rules and duties, rather than their consequences.
- * Duty-based: emphasizes the importance of fulfilling duties & obligations
 - * Rule-based: moral rules and principles are central to determining the rightness or wrongness of actions
 - * Intention over consequences: moral worth of an action is determined by the intention behind it, not the outcome.
- > Example - 1. The Ten Commandments - set of rules that dictate moral behavior
- 2. Golden Rule - emphasizes treating others as you would like to be treated
 - 3. Paying Taxes - is considered a duty, regardless of one's personal feelings about government or how money is spent
 - 4. Keeping Promises - a promise, once made, is seen as a commitment that should be honored, regardless of the potential consequence of keeping it.
- > Strengths - clear moral guidelines, promoting fairness and emphasizing human dignity
- 1. Clear Moral Guidelines
 - 2. Emphasis on Fairness and Human Rights
 - 3. Respect for Intentions and Motivations

- 1. Avoids Subjectivity and Uncertainty
- 2. May Align with Intuition
- 3. Promotes Integrity and Accountability
- 4. Weakness - it can be rigid, potentially leading to morally problematic outcomes in specific situations.
- 1. Potential for Aversion
- 2. Inability to consider Consequence
- 3. Difficulty in Handling Moral Conflicts
- 1. Potential for Supernatural Rules to Override Personal Morality

Teleological Ethics

- > Definition - also known as consequentialism, is a moral philosophy that determines the rightness or wrongness of an action based on its consequences or outcomes. This contrasts with deontological ethics, which focuses on duties and rules, regardless of the consequences.
- > Core Idea - 1. Focus on Ends - derived from the Greek word 'telos' meaning "end" or "goal" emphasize the purpose or outcome of an action as the primary determinant of its morality.
 - 2. Consequentialism - the idea that the morality of an action is judged solely by its consequences.
- > Focus - on the outcomes or consequences of actions to determine their morality.
 - 1. Outcomes - prioritizes the results of actions
 - 2. Goal-oriented - measures actions in terms of their contribution to achieving a specific end or purpose.
 - 3. Consequentialism - the morality of an action is determined by its consequences.
- > Example - 1. Deterrence - punishing criminals to discourage future crime.
 - 2. Utilitarianism - focuses on maximizing overall happiness or well-being.
 - 3. Business Decisions - involve prioritizing actions that lead to increased profits.
 - 4. Lying to Protect Someone - as a positive outcome (protecting someone) justifies the act of lying.
- > Strengths - 1. Focus on consequences
 - 2. Practicality
 - 3. Promotes Social Good
 - 4. Flexibility and Adaptability
- > Outcomes - 1. Difficulty Predicting
 - 2. Potential for Justifying Immoral Actions
 - 3. Relativism
 - 4. Ignoring Intentions.
- > Weaknesses - 1. Difficulty Predicting
 - 2. Potential for Justifying Immoral Actions
 - 3. Relativism
 - 4. Ignoring Intentions.

Universalism

Definition: Ethical principles for computing are context-dependent (cultural, social, individual), not absolute.

Core idea: No universal ethical truths; it tech. ethics vary by group/context.

Example: Data privacy norms differ globally (e.g., individualistic vs. communal societies).

Strengths: Culture sensitivity, adaptability, contextual nuance.

Weaknesses: Lacks universal standards, potential to justify harm, difficult adjudication.

RELATIVISM

Definition: Ethical principles for computing apply to everyone, everywhere.

Core idea: (No universal eth) Core moral truths about tech are universally binding, regardless of culture.

Examples: Algorithms should universally be fair and non-discriminatory.

Strengths: Global standards, protects against harm, clear guidance, accountability.

Weaknesses: Risk of cultural imposition, difficult to achieve consensus, potential rigidity.