Ethical Issues in Information Technology

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The advancement of information technology has brought a lot of benefits in almost all sectors of the economy. Various inventions of information technology have revolutionized how various operations are done by increasing accuracy, speed, and reliance. Despite all these advantages, information technology experts and users are faced with ethical issues or challenges. These ethical issues ranging from privacy, increased cyber-crimes, infringement of copyrights and security. This paper, therefore, seeks to deeply exploit ethical issues facing IT specialists and users and the key privacy challenges in IT.

Cybersecurity is one of the ethical challenges facing IT users. With the advancement in information technology, there are many computer experts with ill intentions of accessing individuals' and companies' private data. With the use of the internet, these experts commonly known as hackers may use the internet protocol addresses of the internet users to extract their private data (Dejoie, 2001). Once they have the data, they use it for their personal gain. For instance, a hacker can interrupt with the online banking system, extract users' data and even divert money to their preferred accounts.

Infringement of copyright is another ethical issue facing information technology. Today, internet users have easy and free access to any kind of data and information from the internet unlike before. There are many sites that are being used to download free music, videos, files, books, and movies. This means that the owner of these artistic works does not benefit from their work. Similarly, there has been a tremendous improvement of video sharing networks which are used by users to share free videos and music amongst themselves. This, in turn, denies the owner of these videos ownership.

Privacy issues have also cropped up in the field of Information Technology. The use of social networks has created a lot of loopholes through which people can have access to your personal data such as pictures (Kilcoyne, 2006). Once an individual gets your personal private data, they can share with their friends who may, in turn, use the data for wrong purposes and thereby exposing you to risks.

To support ethical issues in IT, a virtue ethics approach can be applied. This approach basically states that an individual's character is the key to ethical thinking.IT professionals and users should develop a positive character from the initial stages of their career so as to develop a sense of ethics. Further, these professionals should ask themselves whether whatever they intend to do is ethical before they do it. This approach will help to support ethics in IT.

Tracking and identity theft are among the commonest privacy issues in IT. Websites make use of cookies as a tracking device to its users. Once you click on OK button to accept the use of cookies, they start storing your information which compromises your privacy. Similarly, with the use of smartphones, most apps normally want to have access to your contacts, emails, storage, and texts. This further exposes the user to risks. Most websites require the user to register with them by providing their names, location, and date of birth (Johnson,2003). This information is enough for a professional hacker to steal your identity. With these details, a hacker compromises an individual's privacy which may lead to financial loss and even further cybercrimes.

Tracking and identity theft among other privacy issues are the main drivers to migration. Due to the increased number of privacy issues victims, there is a need to change in the way privacy issues in IT is being handled. This migration would be in form of development of various strategies to curb this problem and ensure that website user and their data are in safe

custody. Information technology professionals should lead to this migration by coming up with the best strategies to solve the problem and protect the users.

In this lecture, I have learned that just like any other sector, Information Technology sector is also faced by ethical issues. As a future professional, I will strive hard to ensure that being ethical in my field. Engaging in unethical practices such as hacking and identity theft will jeopardize my career in the future. Further, I will work towards solving some unethical practices in my field. For instance, I will try to come up with strategies that will protect individuals' data from strangers. These efforts will be made with an aim of eradicating or minimizing cybercrimes and ensuring the safety of the users.

Conclusively, it has been seen that despite the many advantages that are brought by the advancement in technology, professionals and users in this field are faced by ethical challenges. These challenges include privacy, infringement of copyrights and cybercrimes. Most of these issues revolve around privacy which pose a challenge to the experts in this field to come up with ways of solving them. It has also been seen that users' privacy specifically present itself in form of tracking and identity theft. Information Technology would be more beneficial if these issues are solved.

References

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