**A Sample of Personal Ethics and Evaluation**

Personal ethics, often referred to as an individual's innate sense of right and wrong, is a fundamental aspect of human morality. It is a guiding force, influencing how individuals react and behave in situations that require ethical judgment and action. The development of personal ethics is a complex process, evolving through various stages, including the preconventional, conventional, and postconventional phases. Moreover, an individual's personal ethical framework is not developed in isolation but is profoundly influenced by a multitude of factors such as political ideology, social context, cultural norms and values, patterns of interaction, religious beliefs, gender identity, and cultural worldview. Examples of personal ethics include fairness, loyalty and compassion.

**My experience with a Moral Dilemma**

A moral dilemma arises when an individual confronts a decision-making situation that requires them to weigh competing moral values and make a choice that upholds only one of them. A personal experience I had with a moral dilemma happened when I was the driver of a public bus. I am required to wait a minimal of 40 second and a few more seconds at my discretion to allow passengers alight from the bus and board the bus at different stops. This is to ensure that the transport system is efficient, and people can plan their transit. On this day after waiting for 40 second at a bus stop, I close the door and I am about to leave, someone knocks the bus door panting from apparently running and ask I kindly wait for his mum who was standing on the other side of the road waiting for the traffic light to pass her. He apparently had sighted my bus from a distance and ran ahead to beat the traffic light because he was young and could run. However, his mum couldn’t get to the light on time and had to wait for the next green light (about 40 second count). My moral dilemma was either to wait for her to cross and board the transit so she could meet with her appointment **(compassion)** or decline the persons request so other passengers schedule will not be interrupted **(fairness).**

**My decision and consequences**

**I declined the request and asked they wait for next bus**. It is morally wrong **(my personal morals)** to delay other passengers who took effort to get to the bus stop on time for the satisfaction of a passenger who was not on schedule. I must be true to my values; I have developed a set of values and an overall sense of what my moral behavior entails. **(Postconventional level)**

My decision affected the lady’s meeting her appointment. However, other passengers got to their destination stop on schedule. I prioritize fairness and the greater social benefit over an individual’s benefit **(Consequentialist theory)**

**Evaluation of my decision**

In evaluating my decision, I considered all possible information I could about **the facts** of the situation and defined the **ethical issues** based on my philosophical approach (consequentialist). I identified the **affected parties** (myself, other passenger, the lady) and **the consequences** (long term vs short term, symbolic message my decision will pass) of my decision on each stakeholder. Fully reflected on my **defined obligation** to the stakeholders (ensuring passengers at the stop safely get to their destination on schedule) and my **character and integrity**. I finally considered if there were **any other potential actions** (unfortunately couldn’t think of any that could be carried out on time without affecting the time constraint of this situation) and checking **my gut** feelings, **I will still take the same decision.**

My decision may be unethical using other approaches. The deontological theorist focusses on compassion as a value could consider my decision unethical. The virtue ethics could consider my decision unethical if my intent was not right by their standard.

I exhibited **ethical awareness** and executed **ethical judgement** in my decision. My purpose to approach decisions based on fairness and the general good was maintained. I prioritized the fairness and the greater good over my compassion, choosing not to assist the lady due to the associated risk. I interact with people without compromising my prioritized personal ethics. **My decision was ethical based on my consequential theory approach** where I must act in a way that is fair and brings greatest good for the greatest number.

# **References**

durham. (2023). Week 2: Personal Ethical Responsibility. Oshawa, Ontario.

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