

# Professional Ethics - Test 1

Maximum Marks: 15; All questions carry equal marks; Maximum word limit for an answer: 200. Duration: 45 Minutes; September 17, 2020

Name \*

Shreyas Bhat Kera

BITS ID \*

2018A7PS1119P



Describe and analyze the role of an ethical theory in ensuring the objective ethical truth as a standard of moral inquiry particularly when a moral agent judges the moral status of an action.

When a moral agent judges some action, one must alter his or her rules or moral vision in accordance to some standard of objective ethical truth as prescribed by a given ethical theory. It is objective in the sense that it holds with consideration of what that person or group believes. To explain, we can cite an example, by considering Deontological Ethics as described by Kant. According to its Categorical Imperatives, one must act, if the maxim of the act would be universal; this is the objective ethical truth. Irrespective of who carries out a particular action, this ideology must not be violated. If, in a particular situation, I would wish that I would never be lied to, then it is necessarily true that when someone else is in a similar situation, he/she would also not wish to be lied to. Universalizing this, we see that it would be wrong for anyone to tell a lie, as doing so would go against the morality of the framework, and there can be no exceptions.

Hence we see that ethical theories prescribe some rules and regulations in order to keep its proponents true to its ethical truth. It defines what we ought to do to sharpen or moral vision in any given moral situation to judge that status of an act.

---

#### **Individual feedback**

3.5



State and discuss any three fundamental differences between utilitarian theory and deontological theory.

One main difference between utilitarian and deontological theory is the focus on how rules or actions must be considered. In utilitarianism, the focus lies in the consequences of some rules or actions, more precisely, on the amount of happiness or utility that can be brought about by performing that action. On the other hand, Deontology focuses on the motivation of an act, regardless of the potential consequences. The motivation of an act must be in accordance to some moral, universalizable law or maxim.

Another difference is that in utilitarianism, there can be many distinctions on the happiness gained through an action; for example Bentham described a sort of hedonistic calculus to measure the amount of pleasure or pain brought about by an act, while Mill elucidated on "higher" and "lower" pleasures. Deontology provides no such distinction, only that an act is right if its motive can be considered as a universalizable maxim.

One more nuanced distinction can be the treatment of humans. Utilitarianism may allow for some unethical treatment of humans(as a means) just as long as the overall happiness increases, regardless of how that particular human is affected. Kant's second Categorical Imperative would prevent such a thing from occurring, as humans are to always be treated as ends rather than means.

---

**Individual feedback**

4.0



Describe in brief the advantages and disadvantages of ethics of virtue in comparison to ethics of happiness and ethics of duty.

Virtue ethics can be thought of as a realistic framework, allowing for humane motivations. In the ethics of happiness, motivation is irrelevant, while in the ethics of duty, motivation must and always will be the moral duty and alignment to the categorical imperatives. Virtue ethics brings about a balance in them, whereas deontology can be a cold, hard obedience of the rules, virtue ethics allows for human characteristics such as feelings of compassion and kindness.

Another advantage is the mediation of the good of the community. Utilitarianism doesn't necessarily consider the impact on an individual, just as long as the whole society's happiness improves, while Deontology prescribes the guidelines for motivations of individuals to create a "Kingdom of Ends". Being virtuous itself would find a balance between communal and individual welfare.

Some disadvantages include the observations that virtue ethics, in comparison with other theories, is not as prescriptive, meaning that there isn't a mechanism for determining how to resolve conflicts between virtues. Also, since virtue ethics focuses on character rather than rules, it leads us to question its practicality in the field of professional ethics. When compared to ethics of happiness or duty, which propose some rules or guidelines to abide by, this criticism seems valid.

#### Individual feedback

4.0

You may upload file(s), if you have not directly typed your answers in the space provided above.



Google Forms

