**Date of Submission:** July 2, 2022

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**Course Title:** ETHICS AND CULTURE

**Course Code:** HUM103

**SECTION I: Answer to the question no. 2**

Ethics is considered to be the study of morality, which came from the word ‘Ethos’. It is also said to be the branch of philosophy where the concept of good and bad is discussed (Pojman & Fieser, 2016, pp. 1-3). It was developed more than 2500 years ago by Socrates and a group of moral teachers.

Ethics is considered to be an essential part and distinctive aspect of humanity. Before we are human beings, we are animals. The quality of holding ethics makes us distinctive from all other animals. Because, ethics come from conscience and morality, which other animals don’t have. That is why, in order to being a human, we need to hold ethics in us and ethics is an inevitable and essential part of humanity.

There are four main areas of ethics discussed in class. They are:

1. Descriptive ethics: It is the belief of a particular group or a society of what is right and wrong. Since it is the belief of a particular group, the view towards the same thing may differ from group to group. For example, in some societies, wearing black dress in a place of mourning is an ethical practice to do. Whereas, in some other societies, it is an ethical practice to wear white dress in a place of mourning.
2. Normative ethics: Norm is the general form of something. Normative ethics are claim that the way things ought to be or should be. According to Gewirth (1960), normative ethics, on a large scale, talks about the goodness of a person and his/her actions (pp. 187-191). For an instance, if we say some person is honest, loyal, trustworthy, then we are talking about the goodness of that person’s characteristics or personality. On the other hand, if we say the works or actions of that person are praiseworthy, inspirational, thoughtful, then we are talking about the goodness of that person’s actions or behaviors. However, we can also talk about a person’s moral judgement in this branch of philosophy (Gewirth, 1960, p. 200).
3. Metaethics: This branch of ethical philosophy talks about the origins of ethical notions. It is sometimes referred to as analytical ethics. It is a crucially abstract approach to ethical approach. It is the act of questioning moral judgements. It takes some ethical notion, questions it over and over, goes to the origin of that notion and helps us understand and arrive at the ethical realization. It includes theories like emotivism, naturalism, non-naturalism and prescriptivism.
4. Applied ethics: In this branch of philosophy, we study the application of ethics in the real-life problems. Often moral judgements are used to reach to a conclusion about some moral problems, which cannot be treated by other branches of ethics. For professionals, this branch of philosophy is very crucial. According to Altman (1983), applied ethics entails evaluating the results when people try to change their behavior and social structures to adhere to a certain ethical standard (p. 233). For an example, if the question arises if it is okay to tell a lie, then other branches of philosophy will say that it is not. Whereas, applied ethics will judge the case by considering the situation. If that lie is told to save someone’s life, then telling lie at that particular situation is moral by applied ethics.

These are the main divisions of the branches of ethics. There are a lot more ethical notions which can be associated within these sorts.

The word ‘meta’ came from a Greek term which meaning something more understandable and comprehensive. Metaethics questions an ethical notion and discovers the fact if that notion is testable or falsifiable. Because, if an ethical notion is a fact, there would be no dispute of its credibility. But there are so many disputes over the credibility of various ethical notions. So, there should be something which will prove the credibility of the ethical notion, and this is exactly what metaethics does. As metaethics solves dispute of different ethical questions and helps to understand those better, the metaethical issues are important for our understanding of other areas of ethics.

The ethical principles or standards are not applicable for everyone universally. Because, there are different notion of ethics which are perceived by different groups of people in different ways (Velasquez, 2010, pp. 433-434). That is why there are different branches of ethics in our study. For example, people who are non-vegetarian think that it is okay and ethical to eat meat. But this ethical notion does not apply to everyone. Vegetarian people think that it is offensive and extremely unethical to eat meat, as we have to kill the animal to eat its meat. This implies that ethical standards are not universally applicable to everyone. The view towards ethical principles varies from groups to groups or society to society.

Carrying on the thought that there could be dispute over the ethical principles, the metaethical strategies are divided into ‘moral realism’ and ‘moral relativism’. According to Railton (1986), moral realism is the factual aspect of ethical reasoning, where each ethical notion has one truth value, either the notion could be true or it could be false (pp. 163-166). Whereas, moral relativism holds the opposite perception towards ethics. Tännsjö (2007) says that, there is no such fixed truth of an ethical notion. The notions may have different perception and approach in different cultures and even different situations (pp. 123-125). So, there is a clear distinction between these two terms in terms of the point of views. The universal or objectivist ethical norms of "moral realism" are opposed by three key arguments of "moral relativism" as well. They are described below according to Railton (1986):

1. The first argument of morality is about the universality of it. As discussed before, moral realism says that there should be a universal truth about one ethical notion. But the moral relativism opposes this and says that there is no fixed truth of any ethical notion. Everything is relative.
2. The second argument is that the opposite of moral anti-realism is not moral relativism. This is because there is a term is moral realism called ‘moral particularism’ which says, moral truth could be different given extreme situations. However, relativism says extreme condition is not needed to establish different views towards the same notion.
3. The last argument that comes up is, conflicts between moral objectivity exist. Value judgements are based on culture or are purely subjective. There isn't such a thing as an objectively true value assessment. An evaluation must be made in reference to some norm or feeling, which means it must consider cultural, biological, and personal values.

The ‘moral realists’ might respond negatively to each of the arguments of subjectivism or cultural relativism. Because they believe in the uniform truth system and universal ethical notion, they find it hard to believe in the subjective notion of ethics. Alongside, they would resist to believe the contradiction of moral relativism and anti-realism. And last but not the least, they will try to defeat the fact that there could be subjective opinion towards the ethical notion.

An example would help us understand the debate between the two sides of moral ethics. For an example, lets take a situation where a businessman presents some bluff information about his product to his investor to get awarded with funds. From the aspect of moral realism, it will be an unethical thing to do. Because, he is presenting wrong information about his product, so the investor will be misguided and deceived. In contrast, moral relativism will dig deeper into the situation. If the company of that businessman is about to go bankrupt, then the businessman has done no unethical thing. Because, if he gets awarded with the fund, he might be able to sell his manufactured product in the market and gain a large amount of profit that would save the company from being bankrupt and save the job of the employees. And in this process, he might be able to implement those qualities in the product which we are considering as bluff. However, if this was not the case for the businessman, then that would be unethical. This is the difference between the two terms.

I do not agree with the position of moral realism. Because, it judges the morality of something without seeing its situation. Sometimes we need to do something which at that moment seems unethical. However, with time, the situation comes into consideration and that thing starts to seem ethical. So, before being judgmental, we need to be aware of the situation, which moral realism does not do. And that’s why I don’t agree with the position of moral realism.

Lastly, the study of normative ethics is sometimes undermined by moral relativism. Because, normative ethics only says about no universally acknowledged moral action, which is a broader sense. Whereas, moral relativism delves deeper into the individual situation, which makes it more correct to reach to the conclusion of any given situation. In this way, moral relativism is way more effective that can lead us to a more correct decision thoroughly, which makes the study of normative ethics, by some extent, undermined.

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**SECTION II: Answer to the question no. 1**

Confucius was a Chinese philosopher, who lived in the duration from 551 B.C.E. to 479 B.C.E. (Liu, 2008, 47). He had a great impact on the Chinese philosophy of his time. Many people followed him at his time and they made it a tradition or a religion, which was called Confucianism. Confucianism is a Chinese belief system. The followers of Confucianism are called Confucian. The teachings of Confucius are held true today in the modern world as well. His teachings are compiled in a book by his students, which is called the ‘Analects’ (Liu, 2008, 47). He never authored a book himself.

Confucius says that, we are imperfect by birth as a human being, however, we can become perfect following some instructions (Liu, 2008, 56). In Confucianism, self-regulation is the sole way of regulating one’s behavior and refining one’s character (Woods & Lamond, 2011, p. 672). Though he focused more on a person’s individual ethics, he taught social ethics as well. There are some key points of Confucius’s teachings.

The initial concept of Confucius teachings is Yi. According to Liu (2008), Yi is Rightness (p. 48). It is the trait of knowledge, the knowledge of right and wrong. If a person has the knowledge of what is right and what is wrong, uses his/her conscience to differ between the things, then he/she will develop good characteristics. In this process, he/she will develop good actions and habits. By constantly following this, the good actions and habits become a part of their life and eventually it becomes a ritual of his/her life. This is another term of Confucius teachings, called Li. Lai (2008) stated that Li is behavioral propriety (p. 25), in other words, Li is ritual propriety. It is a ritual of continuous good actions. By the continuous practice of these, one develops a good character, which is referred to as another term of Confucius teaching, called Ren. Therefore, Ren is the moral quality and character of a human being (Lai, 2008, p. 21).

The qualities of a human being discussed up till now are individual traits taught by Confucius. Here, Ren is not only limited to being an individual trait. Ren is the quality of a good character and having a good character is very precious itself. There is a saying that responsibility is followed by powers. Therefore, a person having Ren or a good character has the responsibility to serve the society, to help others also being good. In this way, the community benefits as well as the person himself/herself (Lai, 2008, p. 22). Thus, Ren is called ‘humaneness’ (Lai, 2008, p. 21) or being really human. According to Woods and Lamond (2011), the practice of Li should be able to teach self-control in demeanor, and should be providing correction of demeanor (p. 677).

At this point, the social ethics taught by Confucius comes into place. After a person reaches the level of Ren, he/she develops a good characteristic, helps others to flourish. There are some people who fail to do this, whereas a lot of people practice the qualities of Ren daily and make it a habit or a way of their life. This is referred to as another term of Confucius teaching, known as Dao. In Confucianism, Dao is the way of life, the way of a worthwhile life. In this process, a person develops many virtues, which is yet another Confucius terms known as De. De is the virtues in us gained through the previous stages of Confucianism. Yu (1998) said that, virtue mainly refers to excellence of manly qualities (p. 323). And those qualities lead a person to the highest stage, Junzi, another and the final term of Confucius teachings. A Junzi is a person who is called the ‘superior’ or the ‘exemplary’ person. They are such kind of persons, who develop a ‘superior personhood’ by the search of virtue (Liu, 2008, p. 57). Confucius says that, a Junzi person is not superior by nature, he/she becomes Junzi by his/her continuous practice of self-examination and reform (p. 57). This idea is called moral cultivation, another aspect of Confucianism. Moral cultivation means to experience many things, extracting the morality out of those events, learn from those and implant in within, because nothing grows without cultivation.

There are many good persons in our society. However, the number of exemplary persons is very less. In the time of Confucius, only rulers or leaders were given the title of a Junzi, because of the then political condition of China (Liu, 2008, pp. 60-62). In contrast, in the modern days, a Junzi can be anyone, who has all the virtues in him/her. A person of Ren can live an ethically fulfilled life and represent the humaneness of an exemplary person. Because, Ren represents the individual quality of a Junzi, which is called humaneness. It is because a person of Ren helps others to become good character, just as a Junzi do. Besides, a person of Ren can also lead an ethically fulfilled life, the reason is being a good character and helping others to be good is a large part of Chinese ethics (Yu, 1998, p. 331). In short, Ren could be seen as the individual contribution of being a Junzi.

Finally, a figure who would fit in the description of an exemplary person is my mother. As stated earlier, in modern days, an exemplary person doesn’t necessarily need to be a leader or ruler, he/she could be anyone. My mother is a service holder by profession. She has knowledge of what is right and wrong, that is Yi. She practices those in her daily life, choses the right path always and made it her ritual of life, which is Li. In this process, she has developed a good characteristic; individually, religiously, professionally. This is referred to as Ren. She does not only work on herself to be good; she helps others to be good as well, including me. That fulfills the condition of Ren. She practiced this for quite a long time and developed many virtues. She has chosen this virtuous life as her way of life, and Confucius mentioned such kind of life as a worthwhile life. This covers the quality of Dao and De. Lastly, having all the requirements checked, she reaches the final stage, called Junzi, which is an exemplary person. She could be exemplified professionally, as she has maintained her professional life perfectly throughout her life, with pride. She has also helped others in her professional life. She can also be exemplified as a mother, for her care and hard work for me, she is an ideal mother. She can be exemplified religiously, as she participates in her religious activity with highest belief. She can also be exemplified as a successful woman in the society, who managed her personal and professional life with full harmony. Finally, she can be exemplified as a person, who works hard every day, to better herself and the people and the situation around her with perfection.

To sum up, Confucius had a great philosophical view towards society thousand years ago. However, his teachings still ring true nowadays as well. The final goal according to his philosophy was being a Junzi or an exemplary person. There are many stages to reach that final stage. Some of the stages are designed for individual ethics and the others are for social ethics. All these combined forms an exemplary person. Such an exemplary person is my mother as discussed above.

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