

Chapter 2: Ethics and Information Technology

Study Questions

1. How do descriptive (empirical) claims and prescriptive (normative) claims differ? Give examples of each kind of claim.

Based on the text “descriptive text are statements that describe a state of affairs in the world. For example: the car is the driveway”. While normative claims are based on the text “cannot be supported simply by pointing to the facts about what individuals do or say or believe.” Meaning they have to explain it in every detail properly it should be detailed for the listener to understand on what you are talking about.

2. Describe a discussion of a moral issue that is currently receiving attention in the media. Identify the different claims and arguments that were put forward and defended. List the claims in an order that illustrates dialectic about this issue, with one claim and argument leading to another claim and another argument, and so on. Are there some claims that are still being presented in the media that have, in your judgment, already been rejected in the dialectic?

Moral issue that is currently receiving attention to the media is about the hong kong hostage incident. it is morally wrong when many tv networks are on the spot doing anything just to have a footage of the video which is live because the hostage lasted after many hours. The media did not think that they are causing the delay of the process of talking to the hostage taker because they are doing everything like when they talked to the hostage taker when a radio interviewed him and said something that made him more angry which caused him to kill hong kong citizens. They should be more careful because they are doing this for the sake of their network but not thinking on the consequences that will happen they are not thinking of the bad things and the negative side of it they should had a plan for them not to fail and not to be blamed by many people.

3. Explain the difference between “ethics is relative” as a descriptive claim and as a normative claim.

In a descriptive claim we can explain the word “ethics is relative” by just saying that ethics is virtual. But by using a normative claim we can say ethics is relative because it can be used in many things and there are many kinds of ethics in different fields and can be used in a different way by different people.

4. What evidence can be used to support “ethics is relative” as a descriptive claim?

Ethics is relative as a descriptive claim because it is understood that whatever kind of ethics that is and in whenever kind of field we can still understand it that the main question that we will be asking ourselves if this is morally wrong or not. And if this is unethical or ethical?

5. What are the three problems with “ethics is relative” as a normative claim?

Based on the text first problem is “it is not just about attacking the evidence but questioning whether it supports the conclusion” second one is “to move the dialectic forward to treat ethics as relative as normative claim” third one is the “this ethics is relative claim does not provide much help in making moral decisions, especially not with decisions in tough situations.”

6. What is the basic principle of utilitarianism?

Based on the text “utilitarianism begin by focusing on values and asking what is so important, so valuable to human beings, that we could use to ground and ethical theory.” Meaning utilitarianism is about the study of what is the most important thing that we should consider in our life and the life of other people.

7. What is the difference between an instrumental good and intrinsic good?

Instrumental good are things that are materials and we want to have like money because money can buy you everything while the intrinsic good is what money cant buy like happiness and knowledge of a person having a strong relationship with your family is a example of intrinsic good.

8. Why do utilitarians believe that happiness is the ultimate basis of morality?

They believe in this because based on the text “what is valuable, will not stop until you get to happiness” meaning we won’t get content or happy until we get what we wanted for them we are like selfish people who seeks for happiness in every way and will do everything in order to feel or gain happiness.

9. What is the difference between act-utilitarianism and rule-utilitarianism?

Act utilitarianism is based on the text “put the emphasis on individual actions rather than rules” where they focus more on the actions of people and how they perform it. While the rule utilitarianism is based on the text “if followed by everyone, would in the long run maximize happiness” this is when you follow all rules and regulations you will be happy even if you are controlled by another person.

10. What is the major criticism of utilitarianism? Explain it using an example other than the distribution of scare medical sources.

Based on the text “one of the most important criticism of utilitarianism is that when it is applied to certain cases, it seems to go against some of our most strongly held moral intuitions” meaning we should apply utilitarianism in good way not in a bad way.

11. What is the unique characteristic of human beings according to deontologists? How is this quality connected to morality?

Humans are good when they want to seeks for happiness they are not treating everything and is not giving up whenever they have problems but this still depends on the attitude on how a certain human deals with his problem.

12. What is the categorical imperative? Give two examples of violations of the categorical imperative.

Categorical imperative is about the definite and certain importance of a certain thing it should not be violated and we should consider the most important thing out of it.

13. How can rights be based on deontological theory? How can rights be based on utility theory?

Rights can be based on deontological theory by rules, following rules that are made for you to follow. While the utility theory is doing everything in order to have happiness. Rights can be based on deontological theory by following the rules of a certain country because this not only for their own good but for everyone and for the whole country while the utility theory is doing everything and taking risk for happiness.

14. What is the veil of ignorance on the original position in Rawl's social contract theory?

Based on the text "according to Rawls, justice is what individuals in the original position would agree to." Meaning human beings are rational this is like buying a cellphone or a computer which you don't know its specifications and how good it is you just bought it because it attracts you outside but you know its features inside?

15. What are the two principles of justice in Rawl's theory?

Based on the text the two principles are first "each person should have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. While the second one is based on the text "social and economic inequalities should be arranged so that they are both reasonably expected to be everyone's advantage and attached to positions and offices open to all.

16. How does virtue ethics theory differ in focus from other theories discussed in this chapter?

Virtue ethics theory is important because this is the study on the main or major characteristic on what ethics is all about in its relation to the different theories a certain ethics have analyzing this ethics will help us understand more the virtue of ethics and its value to other people.

17. What is the analogical reasoning? Give an example of how it can be used in computer ethics.

Analogical reasoning is analyzing something on a thing like based on the text an IT is analyzing on what the world would be without internet for sure many people will go crazy like what happened in Cairo where their president removed all their internet connections which made the people really mad.

18. Why should we always use caution when arguing on the basis of analogies?

We should be careful when analyzing and arguing this analogies because we don't know where this analogies came from and we have different point of views but if this is more knowledgeable than us then we should be careful on the arguments that we will take not and analyze in the future.