

# Example of defining ethical terms essay

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



A Consequentialist is someone who believes that an action is only wrong or right depending on the nature of outcomes of the action. When consequences of the action are morally acceptable to the society, it means that the action is right thus; a person committing the action is has upright morals. On the contrary, an action is wrong when the consequences are ethically negative, and the person responsible for the action is deemed wrong. For instance, the case a driver preferring to kill one person crossing a road to save lives of many passengers on board could be argued consequentially. Consequentially, the action of the driver is right for sacrificing the life of one person to save the lives of many passengers in that vehicle (Kent, 2013).

On the other hand, a non-consequentialist is the person who judges whether action is right or wrong depending on the intrinsic virtues and not the results of the action. Kent (2013) commented that if the action is ethically wrong then the person responsible behind the action is wrong even that person did it for a good course and vice versa. For instance, the case of a driver killing one pedestrian to save several passengers on board when judged non-consequentially produces a different result from the consequential point of view. From the non-consequential point of view, the driver was wrong because killing is ethically wrong, and nothing can justify the reason for the action. Therefore, the consequentialist basis the nature of action depending on the outcomes of the action while non-consequentiality judges the nature of the action depending on the intrinsic ethical properties of the action. Non-consequentialist thinks that it is the duty of everyone to act within the moral laws and the intended action is right based on these laws. On the

contrary, consequentiality thinks that the results of a certain action should be pivotal to justify action. The consequentialist is impractical because it is hard to assess the degree of goodness of the results of certain actions. The non-consequentialist is practical because it is possible to weigh the weight of the action based on the properties of the action in the moral point of view. Additionally, in consequentialism the tendency of favors towards certain groups of people is likely thus giving a probability of producing different judgments for similar consequences of the action. However, in non-consequentialism there is no room for favors because the nature of the action is based on the moral laws of the course of the action (BBC, 2014). Morality is a system that guides people to differentiate between the good and bad codes of conducts. Morality is based on religious, cultural, or philosophical attributes that people use to make certain actions universal. Views of morality are collections of statements that people use to illustrate certain concepts of ethics. One of the views is moral subjectivism whereby people usually go against the basic moral standards, and moral subjectivists usually view that it is justifiable for someone to oppose moral standards. For instance, when someone takes vengeance against someone else some people view the act as rightful. Additionally, in cultural subjectivism people believe that the actions tied to the cultural background are morally right, and criticism for the actions is not acceptable. For instance, in some societies, female genital mutilation is considered right, but ethically the action is wrong. The third morality theory is ethical egoism that lays behind the principle of psychological ego and it usually encourage selfishness. A perfect example is when a lawyer tries to defend a defendant against an action the

accused has committed with the intention of amassing wealth and fame. Absolutism and relativism are two theories that justify the right or the wrong actions, but the ways they justify the principles of judgment are completely different. Absolutism is a theory that shows that there are codes of ethics that should always be right while others are always wrong regardless of any circumstances on the ground. (Hubpages 2014) highlighted that the judgment of the certain course of action is universal, and there are no grounds to oppose the principle. The theory is difficult to handle because of the different cultural and religious beliefs existing in the world. For instance, murder is globally unacceptable action regardless of the person and the reason for committing the act according to the absolute point of view. Relativism is a theory that opposes a certain action to be judged rightful or wrongful at a global perspective. The theory proposes that the action should be judged right or wrong depending on the situation that led to the occurrence of the action. The theory fits best when it comes to multicultural and religious codes of ethics, as they vary with different sects. An individual may commit murder for several reasons that could be intended or unintended. According to the theory of relativism, murder is wrong but if someone committed the action for self-defense, it is acceptable (Hubpages, 2014).

The theories of relativism and absolutism are different when trying to explain certain concepts. For instance, absolutism proposes that all humans should face similar judgments for the action without any form rationalization of the action. However, relativism proposes that action though has similar ethical stand, as absolutism for a certain action the ground of committing the action

should be considered. (Hubpages 2014) stated that absolutism views the actions on the universal front while relativism is opposed to globalizing some principles of the action. For this reason, absolutism does not support some religious and cultural based actions, but relativism seems to fit into the world with cultural and religious based actions. Relativism is preferred to absolutism because of its situational viewpoint while the latter is simply based on natural laws that leave no room for justifying the action.

Virtue ethics is a terminology that philosophers use to emphasize the significance of one's characters and virtues in assessing ethical conducts. There are theories used to explain the terminology with Aristotle being the mastermind behind them. According to Nafsika (n. d), Aristotle describes a virtuous person as someone with perfect morals with the traits acquired naturally, but cultivating them makes the traits attain a state of stability. For instance, a virtuous being is someone who always expresses a sense of fairness in different situations reason being it is the nature of that person, but not because the person has anterior motive of getting favors. The major defect behind the theory of virtue ethics is that it does not provide a platform on the way people should act to nurture their virtues (Rosalind, 2012).

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