

# Free essay on comparing and contrasting virtue ethics utilitarianism and deontolo...

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Application of theories depends on various factors. For instance, some people may use a theory in presenting different points of view, while others may use the same principles in envisaging different things. Often people agree with a portion of the theory rather than the entire concept. In order to help solve difficult situations and assess situations into right perspectives, most people prefer applying them. The virtue theory, the utilitarianism theory, and deontological theory have similarities and differences. These theories also address ethics and morality differently. For instance, there are theories used in making a decision, while others evaluate the outcomes or the potential effects on others.

Virtue ethics theory “ is an approach that emphasizes rules, consequences and acts and places the emphasis on the person who is acting” (Garrett, 2005, Pg. 35-36). This theory addresses ethics by determining how we judge someone based on the outcome of the situation rather than rules or social context. Actions judge people ethically, because, at the long run, there are consequences for those actions. Morally, the nature of people is as a result of their social behavior.

Morals teach us to express ourselves last because sacrifice is one of the greatest gifts. Ethics teaches us that people should be responsible for their actions. Selfishness is an essential part of human nature, Utilitarianism theory goes against that. As a morally based theory, Utilitarianism theory has to become ethically coordinated to work. For this reason, there is a need for people to come together in order to form a social contract. Deontological ethics is a moral theory that suggests that the principles of an agent define

his/her duties. This theory bases its duties on the nature of human reason or the nature of human action (Boylan, 2009). It is a theory with a moral standpoint because it emphasizes that people must fulfill their duties and obligations.

It focuses on ethical theories that suggest that the moral wrongness or rightness of an action depends on its qualities, and not on the outcome of its consequences. It requires understanding that people will always do the right thing without any supervision. Although morality will cause humans to feel guilty when they display wrongful behavior, it does not suggest a person will always do the right thing or make the moral/ethical decision. There are many similarities among the virtue theory, the utilitarianism theory, and deontological theory. One similarity is all theories challenge a person's moral and ethical behavior. They are also similar because they all require either morals or ethics to support each theory. The difference in each theory is the amount of morality and ethics involved. Utilitarianism falls under morals, while as deontological is on ethics.

When I was in the Army, I discovered that a friend's wife was cheating on him while he was not around. When he returned from overseas, he asked how his wife was doing. If I told him what I had discovered it may have jeopardized the mission, his sanity, and most likely his relationship. I had an ethical responsibility to the Army to keep this information to myself. If I did not tell him, I would break my moral and ethical obligations that one owes to a loyal friend. Using virtue ethics and the utilitarianism theory, I decided that lying to my friend would benefit the Army, my friend, his relationship, and

the team. There was nothing he could do to correct the situation which was 5, 500 miles from home.

## **References**

Boylan, M. (2009). Basic ethics: Basic ethics in action, 2nd Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Garrett, R. (2005). Virtue ethics. Retrieved from: <http://www.wku.edu/~jan.garrett/ethics/virtthry.htm>