

What are ethics essay

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



The possession of knowledge carries an ethical responsibility. Evaluate this claim.

The possession of knowledge can differ depending upon situations, circumstances and times. There can be no absolute authority or truth regarding this matter. However, one who possesses knowledge can have an effect on himself and others around him. Ethics are an important concept which assists people in defining their lives with dire emphasis on doing acting in a right manner. The concept of ethics itself is highly abstract, especially since it is associated with morality. Morality and ethics deviate not only if contrasting societies and cultures, but also in individuals. No two people will have the same definition of morality. Thus, reaching a consensus on where the line regarding ethics and possession of knowledge can be significantly complicated.

Ethics in general refer to a moral code or set of guidelines that help to reduce harm or negative consequences pertain to a particular situation. Thus, ethical responsibility would require an individual to correct a specific harm, or prevent something negative from happening. This would comprise of any damage being caused to people, animals and the environment in most cases. However, what constitutes as damage to us and those around us is heavily disputed and contrasts highly from person to person. Moreover, for some people ethics would comprise of whatever the law dictates, for some it would derived from religion and for other it could be the conduct their society accepts . However, taking this topic under consideration ethics would broadly constitute as anything that could harm an individual in any aspect

possible. Thus, lies, deceit, exploitation, misuse and physical abuse would all come under violation of ethical responsibilities.

Corporatism

Nowadays the corporate sector has been gaining precedence in the market of goods and services. A monopoly of sorts has been created, but not through control over the market share, but more of a control over the labor. Galbraith, an institutional economist, initiated this theory where he declared that due to excessive globalization and hampered governmental control corporations will manipulate the average worker, making him settle for a wage less than he deserves. This poses as a negative use of possessed knowledge by the educated and trained entrepreneurs. Moreover, the wages are static, and don't increase with the increase in productivity or hours worked. As Karl Marx stated, labor is exploited excessively, by extracting a surplus value that exceeds the necessary working hours, because of possessing less knowledge than those who exercise control over them. Ethics are discounted for in this case, but they become essential to avoid the majority of the working class from suffering economically. However, contrary claims might state that corporate owners need to exercise control since they put in extreme effort into the production process. Thus, through profit they need to benefit from those hard hours they put in. It is crucial to be reminded that the profit motive can exist without purposely treating the working class as mere factors production.

Internal Conflict

Making the right decisions can be extremely hard at times. Especially when it involves external pressure, for instance parents, teachers and finances. I can relate myself to this narrowed take on the topic when it comes to my education. Everyone indulges in late night cramming right before the exams. Once, I was unable to complete the topics for the exam and chose to adopt cheating as the easy way out. I possessed the knowledge and the information in the form of little pieces of paper, and I misused them to ace my exam, while others who had worked harder scored much less. In doing so, I let go of my ethical responsibilities and caused unintended harm to other people, and possibly to myself had I gotten caught. It would've resulted in expulsion. On the other hand, had I not cheated I would've let my parents down and would've lost my scholarship as well. However, it is imperative to note that misusing the possessed knowledge for gaining precedence over other represents unfair means and this internal conflict would therefore, extend to the external sphere. My friends lagged behind, despite being fair while taking the exam.

Bioethics

Ethical conduct extends over the sphere of science where concepts such as cloning and genetic engineering are becoming increasingly common. Not only does this apply to the treatment of animals, but also when it relates to research carried out on humans in order to maintain current scientific concepts and evolve towards new discoveries as well. An example of DNA testing facilities and other research institutions are obligatory to be mentioned . How can people trust these institutions to keep the information

private? Usually the information is leaked out to private institutions and companies to further on research. Since, identities are excessively revealed it could be a breach of privacy and comprise of a violation of ethical values. Moreover, genetic testing has been used increasingly by different companies to narrow down candidates for job applications. This helps companies to reduce their expenditures on health related benefits by around \$2 million in general, by finding out before hand which applicants are more susceptible to diseases . A different take on such problems would target the fact that companies can reduce their extra costs incurred by having access to such revelations. However, preaching anyone’s privacy is against ethics and constitutes as misuses of knowledge through science.

Media

Journalists today have become dictated by the lowest common denominator of the public, and aim to cater to their interests through the information that they gather. The lowest common denominator would be something that interests the maximum number of people in the society . To obtain such information journalists adopt many ulterior methods that include burning sources or breaching privacy. The most notorious example of this case was the excessive hogging by the journalists that many people believed eventually led to Princess Diana’s demise. According to Washington Post: “ The paparazzi of Europe are hungry, relentless, fearless and generally merciless celebrity stalkers, armed with cameras and driven partly by the thrill of the chase and the desire to bag that single exclusive shot that will sell to a tabloid newspaper for five or six figures and make weeks or months of waiting worthwhile .” Since, Princess Diana had been linked to Dodi Al

Fayed several times, the paparazzi were desperate to get a shot of her with him, and this obsession led to a wild car chase, which got out of control and resulted in being a minor cause for her death . Here violation of privacy has played the ultimate negative role, but opponents would declare that such acts become necessary to win out to other journalists and keep one's job secure. This can't be held valid, if people have no personal life and if it puts their life under possible danger and threat. Media personnel might have relevant knowledge regarding the location of celebrities, their whereabouts and also have access to technology to make that information public. If they are using surveillance cameras for instance to spy on someone, that would be a definite misuse of the knowledge they possess.

Art & the environment

Although these two are highly different in nature, both can be bound by conceptual ethical frameworks. Artists, in general could be anyone from marketing experts who create advertisements, to professional painters, filmmakers and musicians. Using the concept of art to sell lies or to damage the role of a minority would be considered a breach of ethics. All these artistic experts possess knowledge about their particular fields and they must use their knowledge to impart others with positive ideologies and conceptions, not to sell lies and spread unethical values. Examples of ethical contributions include the Live Aid concert in 1985, which helped to bring the problems of East Africa to the attention of the world, Leonardo DiCaprio's environmental work (with Al Gore), and Sean Penn's work in the Haitian Earthquake . On the other hand if an artist concentrates on selling values that inculcate hatred towards the blacks for instance or encourages people

to frown upon gay rights that would be considered essentially unethical and an abuse of acquired knowledge. Moreover, the art created a few years ago for a newspaper in Denmark disrespected the religion Islam, and would be considered misusing knowledge. Some would however dispute this claim primarily because it hampers an individual's freedom of speech. Freedom of speech might be important, but it can be negative if used to demean and disregard others and is a branch of shying away from ethical responsibilities.

Now environmental knowledge is very basic. In other words it is so rudimentary that almost everyone is aware of it and there is no excuse for acting out against that knowledge. Everyone knows that dumping waste into the ocean, or cutting trees and cars emitting fumes of carbon-monoxide are damaging to the environment. Thus, drawing from the idea of an ecosystem, human beings should consider wholes that include other forms of life and the environment. For example, if I choose to cut off trees that would potentially harm the wildlife, for who these trees serve as a natural habitat. Koala bears and monkeys would definitely suffer as a result of this, especially koala bears since they are becoming increasingly extinct. Arguments against might states that this supports making important commodities such as paper, but there needs to be a balance. Having the knowledge regarding protection of the important and not utilizing it is going against ethical responsibilities.

Conclusion

In every field of knowledge lie certain responsibilities that individuals must adhere to. Whether it's the field of arts, the corporate sector, science,

environment or the individual decisions, one needs to watch out for anything that can affect others. If people misuse their knowledge to gain precedence over others in any particular field they wouldn't be ethically responsible. This has been cemented through the use of examples in different fields, but opponents would still argue, rejecting claims by stating that ethics aren't definite, and since the boundaries are convoluted no absolute claims can be made regarding them.

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