Example of term paper on ethics and morality: a discussion

[Technology](#), [Development](#)

One of the most common misconceptions about ethics and morality is that they are the same thing. However, while the concepts are linked, something that is ethical is not necessarily moral, and vice versa. Morality is defined by the individual; it is the structure by which the individual deems an action right or wrong (Ambrose and Cross, 2009). This value system is considered an internal value system. Morality may be informed by society as a large, but moral decisions are made on a personal, internal basis. A moral question, then, may be one of whether or not lying about an assignment to get out of trouble with an instructor or boss is acceptable in a certain context. Usually, moral questions deal with humanity's primary virtues and vices, such as questions of honesty, integrity, steadfastness, and so on (Ambrose and Cross, 2009).

On the other hand, ethical structures are external structures designed by society at large. These are, essentially, rules of conduct that are defined in relation to an individual's social or cultural group. For instance, a businesswoman may be held to a certain code of ethics that do not concern a housewife, as they are in separate socio-cultural groups in this particular case. While a business woman's concerns about ethics may revolve around honest business practices and openness in transactions, a housewife may be more concerned with other types of ethical considerations, like reducing her family's carbon footprint, for example.

Ethics, then, can vary based on the context in which the individual is experiencing an ethical question. Certain socio-cultural groups may have different ethical structures than others, but an individual's moral code-- the code that dictates what the individual believes is right and wrong-- stays

mostly consistent. An individual may betray his or her moral code in certain situations, but that does not inherently change the code itself; however, ethical practices can and do change based on context (Steinbauer, 2000). Ethics and morality are different, but questions of ethics and questions of morality are often very tangled up together. It is often difficult to extricate the moral question from the ethical one, which is why so many people believe that ethics and morality are synonymous.

References

Ambrose, D. and Cross, T. (2009). Morality, ethics, and gifted minds. New York: Springer.

Steinbauer, A. (2000). Ethics versus Morality. Philosophy Now.