

MORAL DILEMMA-AN IMPACT ON MORAL AUTONOMY

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ABSTRACT

Ethics are usually formulated by situation that challenge one to find the right thing and help carrying out an action effectively so that those decision may not affect or act as an obstacle in future. In this paper, the occurrence for ethical combat that exists in most of the field which are conflict the post-convectional level in the theory of moral development that was proposed by Kohlberg are discussed and also explained how the rational and emotional minds behave during dilemma.

Keyword: Ethical dilemma, moral ethics, ethical conflicts, moral development

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INTRODUCTION

A moral dilemma is a conflict in which one has to choose between two or more action and have moral reasons for choosing each action. The crucial feature of a moral dilemma is that all the moral principles cannot be fully respected in a given situation .Also solving one moral principle can create two or more conflicting application for a particular situation.

Moral dilemma usually depends on ethics which are formulated from human values.

MORALS, VALUES AND ETHICS

The items moral and ethical are often used conversely in offhand conversation, but there are important discrepancies between them.

Moral

Of or anxious with the judgment of the goodness or badness of human reaction and character, connected to the acumen of good and evil .Arising from conscience or a sense of good and bad .Being or acting in consonance with standards and code of goodness .Having psychological rather than physical or palpable effects, for example, the effort on ones character .Based on strong like hood or firm conviction rather than on actual evidence or demonstration .A concisely expressed precept or general truth, a maximum .Instructive of what is good and evil .

Ethics

The ethics are the thing that says which are good and things that are bad. They help in identifying which is the right thing to do which are not. These ethics values are formulated by various morals. These helps in governing one's life with value and standard for ones well being. These are the value that helps the people to gain respectful and remarkable positions in one's own organization or a place they belongs to. Ethics however helps in governing ones code of conduct. Ethical ideas helps in Self-position, one's own condition or place, customs .Being in pact with approved standard of conduct or a communally or professionally accepted code.

Values

The values are two –faced, which has a dual nature that may result in both positive and negative effects. The positive is the one preferred .Negative is better not called a value at all but a disvalue .Values are not homogeneous but of many kinds .Values should exists and they deserve to be .As ethics they exists in the mind but are formed by the minds abstractive power from the date of experience.

ETHICS: IN REAL WORLD

In general the principles or the values have been made to enhance the people good nature and to reduce the evil nature of one. An ethical concern arises about balancing. However in some cases the principles that are formulated don't help out.

In such cases it becomes difficult to find or to identify about the good and the bad clearly. A situation calling for an ethical decision becomes an ethical dilemma when there are at least two good choices that are to be made.

Everyone come across situation that continually test how and why they make decision regarding the action of their choice .This is the reason we are here in human form to develop inner certainty and to apply agility wisely and benevolently in the ups and downs of everyday life experience.

Nation to-day are pluralistic societies comprised of many sub groups or sub communities, each of which has its own view of the morally good life .Whatever the diversity and disagreement one find, one also fine general agreement that mature persons are free to articulate and choose for themselves the life style, religious beliefs, moral convictions and sentiments they want as long as they do no harm to any other person.

NATURE AND CHARACTER ROLES IN ETHICAL DILEMMA

Nature pertains to mans thinking and behavior .It is absolute. It is the net result of man's ideas put into practice in daily living .sum total of nature may be called as character. Character is mostly one's conduct of life .While nature follow one's mind; character follows his culture .While nature comes into play in everyday life; culture is more or less a permanent feature.

While nature affects day to day life character is an overall make up of a man reflecting him totality .Character plays a more dominant role in one's life than nature. Character shapes man and woman for life. Nature affects his day to day activities .Both nature and character can be good and bad .In this respect nature plays a short lived role while character leaves a permanent mark.

Thus nature and character ennoble one in society

CAUSES OF MORAL DILEMMA

Problem of Vagueness

Vague means not clearly expressed or perceived; not specific or exact. (i.e.) For a given situation, sometimes it is unclear to one to apply the most appropriate moral consideration or principles .They may not know how and which moral principles to be used in resolving a moral problem.

Problem of Conflicting Reasons

This situation where two or more moral problems conflicting each other, each of which imply to be correct .In alternative words, this is a situation where two or more moral commitment, duties, rights or ideals come into conflict with each other; separately each one is good and correct. But when they come together it is burdensome choice to choose the good one.

Problem of Disagreement

It is quite obvious that individuals and groups may have different view, suggestions, interpretations and solution on a moral problem in particular situation .This disagreement among

individuals and group on interpreting moral issues will create a situation of another moral dilemma.

STEPS TO EVALUATE MORAL DILEMMA

Step1: Identifying the pertinent moral factors and reasons. Its involves addressing solution for conflicting responsibilities, opposing rights and incompatible ideals involved.

Step2: Collecting all the available moral consideration, which are relevant to the moral factors involved.

Step3: Ranking the above collected moral consideration on the basis of influential as applicable to the particular situation.

Step4: Making factual inquires .In other words finding alternative courses of action to resolve the moral dilemmas and following the complete implications of each.

Step5: Inviting discussions, suggestions from colleagues, friends, and other involved persons to critically examine the moral dilemmas.

Step6: Taking final decision .That is, selecting the more reasonable solution by identifying all the pertinent moral factors and reasons.

MORAL AUTONOMY

Autonomy means self reliance or unallied .Moral autonomy is the ability of critical thinking of a situation and evaluation them individually and apply those ideas to solve the issues that that arise in one's life. In other words autonomy means thinking about a situation rationally by keeping in account the moral values so that the decision taken in these situation may not violate the moral that are formulated for the well fare of the human life.

KOHLBERG'S MORAL STAGES

Kohlberg's theory cites six stages of moral development, organised in three levels.

Level I: Preconvention

Moral values dwell in extraneous, quasi-physical appearance, or in atrocious acts. The child is conscious to rules and evaluative labels, but views them in terms of amiable or unamiable consequences of actions, or in terms of the physical power of those who enforce the rules.

Stage 1: Acquiescence and punishment orientation

- Egocentric yielding to superior capability or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set.
- Objective importance.

Stage 2: Naively egoistical orientation

- Right action is that which is instrumental in satisfying the one's needs and infrequently others.
- Relativism of values to each one's needs and mindset.
- Naive egalitarianism, orientation to transfer and cooperation.

Level II: Conventional

Stage 3: Nice-boy/Nice-girl orientation

- Orientation to approval, to favorable and benefit others.
- Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or innate role behavior.
- Action is appraised in terms of desire.

Stage 4: Jurisdiction and social-order-managing orientation

- Orientation to doing duty and to displaying respect for jurisdiction and managing the given communal regulation or its own sake.
- Regard for earned confidence of others.
- Differentiates actions out of a sense of commitment to rules from actions for generally good or natural motives.

Level III: Post conventional/Self-Acknowledged Moral ethics

This level is defined in terms of conformity to common norms, rights, or duties apart from supporting jurisdiction. The norms conformed to be constitutional, and action-decisions are based on an inner process of thought and perception concerning appropriate and amiss.

Stage 5: Statutory/juridical orientation

- Standards of right and wrong are defined in terms of writ or institutionalized rules which seem to have an analytical basis.
- When a dispute arises between personal needs and law or bond, though compassionate to the departed, the individual believes the latter must abound because of its greater functional coherence for society, the majority will and welfare.

Stage 6: The morality of personal principles of conscience

- Orientation not only toward current social rules, but also toward the conscience as a advising agent, mutual faith and respect, and principles of moral choice involving coherent universalities and consistency.
- Action is disciplined by internalized ideals that exercise a pressure to act accordingly disregarding of the reactions of others in the actual environment.
- If one acts differently, self-accusation and culpability result.

TABLE1: KOHLBERG’S THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

LEVEL	AGE	MORAL DEVELOPMENT
Pre-conventional	Birth to 9 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self centered attitude • Willingness to avoid punishment • Desire to gain reward
Conventional	Age 9 to 20 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect to rules and authority • Importance to loyalty
Post-conventional	Over 20 years or may be never	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking for and by themselves • Agreed upon universal general principles • Personal moral strands

CASE STUDY 1:

Rajiv is an IAS aspirant. He studied in two premier institutions and worked for a while in an IT company. He quit the job and started preparing for the civil services exams. In his first attempt he wrote mains but could not qualify for the personality test. In next two attempts, however, he gave interviews but fate had it that his name did not appear in the final list. In all three attempts he had scored less in Mains and in two interviews his score was average if not bad.

Coming under General Merit, Rajiv had only four attempts to get into IAS. For the last attempt, he decided to take a break of one year and prepare extremely well giving no chance to fate. By then he had spent five years just for preparing for this exam with no job in hand.

He did prepare well and easily sailed through the Preliminary and Mains exam. For his final interview Rajiv, prepared himself very well. He read widely. He contacted his peers and well wishers, talked to them extensively and took feedback on his body language and communication skills. He took mock tests at prominent institutions and got a very positive feedback .His confidence was at an all time high. By the time interview call letter came, Rajiv was fully ready to face his final test to realize the dream of becoming an IAS officer.

On the previous day of his interview, Rajiv talked to his parents, girlfriend and teachers and sought their wishes. He had a sound sleep too.

His interview was scheduled in the second session i.e. in the afternoon. On the day of his interview, in the morning Rajiv was calm, composed and had a friendly chat with fellow aspirants who had stayed together in a friend’s room.

He had his lunch and left room in his bike half an hour before the scheduled time of his appearance at UPSC office.

Rajiv was riding his bike with lots of thoughts in his mind. The road was almost empty. As he was riding, just in front of him, a speeding bike collided with the road divider. Seeing this, Rajiv

stopped his bike for a minute and went near the accident scene. A man, crying with pain, was lying in a pool of blood and a girl child, around 5 year old, was lying unconscious next to the man. Rajiv looked around for help, but two or three cars sped away without stopping by.

Rajiv had to be at UPSC office in 10 minutes. If not he would forever lose his dream of becoming an IAS officer.

In this situation, what should Rajiv do?

JUSTIFICATION OF CASE STUDY (MORAL DILEMMA)

Facts:

- (1) This is final chance for his much awaited and well prepared interview
- (2) He is a past IT employee and very capable guy
- (3) Seriously injured man and girl need help, which might be life saving if provided in time

Choices

- (1) Being rational minded, leave the victims there itself.
- (2) Keep self interest at bay considering the need of the hour and try best to help those victims.

Possible actions:

- (1) He just ignore scene and go to interview
- (2) He get fully engrossed in helping and forget interview
- (3) He help them, while ensuring that he somehow appear at interview

Rajiv has been working hard for five years and it is his last chance to fulfill his dreams. He wants to appear for the interview and at the same time wants to help accident victims. But the situation allows him to pursue only one activity. Rajiv is in dilemma but dilemma seems to be self-imposed.

Rajiv has no legal obligation to stop for the victims. Rajiv might even be successful to fulfill his dream of becoming an IAS officer. But Rajiv act will be immoral as saving two lives is far more significant than a job interview in any kind of society. He will be acting out of self-interest that does not relate to public servant's qualities. Further, If Rajiv has moral values then he will definitely regret his immoral act throughout his life.

If Rajiv stays back to help the victims then he is doing his moral duty. Moral duties have nothing to do with our specific situations. Good people should always involve in moral acts, no matter what the consequences will be. Rajiv has kept his motivation level high despite the previous failures which signifies his commitment to serve for the society & nation. Even if he misses the interview, he has good education & previous experience to get a decent job if not the IAS. IAS is not the only means to serve the society & there are numerous platforms available to pursue such interests.

If Rajiv intention is to help the society after becoming an IAS, here is an opportunity for him to save the life of two persons.

Hence here in this case if Rajiv is calm and he is situation to think about what is good and bad in a rational way then the above stated decision can be taken, or if he is much alarmed about what to do and think about his dream and his suffering, pain undergone by him to reach this day of success then there is a possibility of Rajiv to overrule the moral values.

CASE STUDY 2:

Rathan and his family are going away for the weekend. Rathan daughter is 7 and she and Rathan niece are best friends, who is also 7. Rathan families are very close and his daughter asks if his niece can come with them on their holiday. Since he have been on holidays together before and don't see any problem, so he agree.

And they arrive at their holiday destination and the house they are staying is at backs onto a beach. The girls ask if they can go for a swim. He tells them that they have to wait until he have unpacks the car, but they can play on the sand directly in front of the beach. They went to play, and he begins to unpack the car. After about 5 minutes, he hear screaming coming from the direction of the beach and it sounds like the girls.

He run down to see what the matter is, and he discover that they hadn't listened to him and have gone for a swim. There is no one else on the beach and the girls are caught in a tide.

They are really struggling, particularly Rathan's niece who isn't as strong a swimmer as his daughter.

He swims out quickly, but when he get there, he realize that there is no way he will be able to get both the girls back into shore on his own. He realizes that an agonizing decision will need to be made.

He need to decide which of the girls he will rescue first, he have enough strength and energy to rescue them both, but he can only do it one at a time. He looks at the two girls, and his niece is really struggling to hold her head above water and he know if he takes his daughter back first, there will be little or no chance that she might survive.

His daughter is struggling also, but is much stronger in the water and he estimate that if he takes his niece back to shore first, there's probably a 50% chance that his daughter will be able to stay afloat long enough for him return, but he simply don't know how long she will hold on for.

JUSTIFICATION OF CASE STUDY

In this case a person is emotionally bounded to take decision

Fact:

- (1) Can take only one person at a time to shore
- (2) Both are struggling in water, in which his niece is not a good swimmer as that, of his daughter

Choice:

(1) Can take either his daughter or his niece

Approach:

In the above case if the person is stable and are not emotionally confined then he could analyze the constraints that his daughter is a good swimmer but not his niece so he make up his mind to bring the niece first then goes for getting his daughter.

But in the real case (i.e.) in real world situation no one can think as per the above solution since they are emotionally bounded with love, care and affection with his offspring than an agnate.

EVALUATIONS ON THE THEORY OF MORAL AUTONOMY

Post –Convictional Development of Kohlberg:

According to Kohlberg, the individuals are called autonomous, because they think for / by themselves and also they do not believe that customs are always right.

And also the people at this level live by general principles to maintain their integrity.

The above two reasoning are in contrary with each other since, if one think for themselves then following moral values in life is difficult and not possible.

For example we can take the above two case studies:

CASE STUDY 1:

Thinking for /by themselves: Rajiv might be leaving the victim for the purpose of reaching his dream.

Live by general principles: Rajiv helps the victim and also tries to get his dream.

EVALUATION ON THE MINDS

CASE STUDY 2:

Emotional mind: Saving one's own child.

Rational mind: Saving the niece and to save one's own child.

Here in this case if a person is in this situation he will be filled with fear, love ,care (emotions) and also responsibility which make his mind emotional to think he is guided only by his love towards his child to save her life and it's natural .But if this case is given to someone who is not in that situation there his mind is calm filled with no emotion which makes him to think to save whom , which helps him to analyze the main condition given in this situation that his daughter know better swimming than his niece daughter .

LIMITATION OF EVALUATION OF MORAL AUTONOMY

Moral autonomy is nothing but self thinking and evaluation of one's mind is typically difficult because a person decision making purely depend on the circumstances they are in and also the

people they are surrounded, and their family background greatly influence one's ability of thinking, by their principles and values since a person is greatly influenced by the society in which they reside than they values that they read through books.

SCOPE OF STUDY

Further this study can be extended by making study on various people by considering their character, people around, family and the circumstances in which they are grown and the circumstance in which they are currently in help in better understanding of people and their

CONCLUSION

Everyman is endowed by nature with individual characteristics of body, mind and will. The general disposition of the man is determined by these conglomerate factors. Human values one ought to possess to live as a citizen or as a person, they are provided with key principles compose the foundation of human values upon which societies have been established, these values guide the person in case of moral dilemmas (i.e.) they give the rational solution to the issue but in case of emotional situation then decision are mainly depend on personal moral strands .So I like to conclude that If one think for themselves (or) Mind of a person is emotional ,then the decision made might not be always ethical in case of dilemmas.

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