

**Ethics Reflection**

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## **Introduction**

The engagement with ethical theories and the case studies in real life throughout this semester have been instrumental in developing my insight into how ethics shape professional and personal decisions. In general, the reflection covers three sections that set the base for the substantial reshaping of my perspective: ethical implications of data privacy, whistleblowing, and virtue ethics in leadership. Working on such topics has not only refined my critical thinking but also given me valuable takeaways for my future professional life.

### **Ethical Implications of Data Privacy**

One of the major important topics covered was ethical issues of data privacy, as in the case of a breach of Equifax and controversies over Google Street View. I had previously thought of the issue of data privacy more as a technical one than one of morals (BBC News, 2024). However, with a utilitarian and then Ubuntu perspective on these cases, it made me understand the wider ramifications of data breaches that happen in society. Equifax made the world realize how laxity in keeping sensitive information secure may lead to financial and personal loss globally (Saaida & Debo, 2024). Moreover, the Google Street View controversy demonstrated the tension between technological advancement and individual privacy rights.

The latter has highlighted the ethical imperative for balancing innovation with respect for autonomy. A major lesson I derived from this case is that ethical data management is a legal but also moral duty, anchored in respect for persons and interdependence in society. In all data-driven projects that I will participate in, I will work on promoting transparency and active consent by users.

### **Whistleblowing and moral courage**

The story about Chelsea Manning and the leakage of classified information to Wikileaks made me reflect on my view of whistleblowing (Davies, 2022). I felt beforehand that

whistleblowers are only heroes or traitors depending on the outcome of their action. However, applying virtue ethics to Manning's actions brought out the complexity of her moral decision. While her intention was to expose the injustice she had seen, driven by loyalty to the values of truth and justice, she placed national security and military personnel in a vulnerable position.

This case further crystallized my thoughts on the ethical dilemmas whistleblowers face, especially in balancing professional loyalty with moral responsibility. I learned from this case that intent and consequence are both important to consider in making ethical decisions. In the future, I hope to foster an environment where ethical concerns can be raised internally without fear of retaliation, reducing the need for external disclosure.

### **Virtue Ethics in Leadership**

Virtue ethics in leadership, especially examples like Ubuntu, reshaped my view on what good leadership is all about. I had previously equated leadership with achieving results without much consideration of the necessary moral character that leads to building trust and uniting people. The Ubuntu philosophy, among others, has driven me to insist, "I am because we are." For this reason, community is an important aspect of leadership that should promote creating harmony, respecting individualism, and putting the collective good first over and above any personal or organizational gains.

Virtue ethics is most relevant to my leadership aspirations. I now see that compassion, honesty, and integrity, among the virtues of leaders, are fundamental in terms of the motivation of teams towards sustainable success (Hendriks et al., 2020). My takeaway learning is to apply empathetic leadership and adopt ethical behavior to ensure the actions would benefit the society I will serve.

### **Conclusion**

These topics have enriched my ethical reasoning and aspirations that have guided informed and principled career decisions. I will champion data privacy, support ethical whistleblowing, and personify virtuous leadership for meaningful contributions.

## References

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