

# E-GOVERNANCE:-A SYNERGY OF COMPUTER ETHICS, INFORMATION ETHICS, AND CYBER ETHICS

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## Abstract

*The development of the internet and other communication technologies over the past decade has seen a corresponding growth in the development and use of technologically-based e-governance. This paper explores concerns arising for the term e-governance and the impact of ethics committees and how these might be addressed. Ethics forms a subsystem of society that is connected to other subsystems such as economy, technology, polity, religion, culture, ecology, science, medicine, etc. Hence if a human being acts in the ethical system of society, she/he also acts in another societal system. This result in a differentiation of the ethical system and of subsystems such as economical ethics, technological ethics, political ethics, religious ethics, cultural ethics, ecological ethics, scientific ethics, medical ethics, etc.. This paper will review three types of ethics i.e. computer ethics, information ethics, and cyber ethics and their impact on e-governance. We have also reviewed the said ethics in terms of their explicit behaviours and the concerns.*

**Keywords:** E-Governance, Computer Ethics, Information Ethics Cyber Ethics

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### 1. Introduction:

Basically, the ethics regulates human behaviour in doing something, whether someone doing the right thing or wrong thing. In determining whether someone doing is true or not, ethic is more concerned to the acceptability by his social environment. In this sense, ethics are social centric. An individual can not properly claim that his action is right ethically, unless their social environment consider it correct. This is consistent with what is stated in the, that ethic is relationship conduct pattern based on respect own rights and others against their environment.

Moral action is action that distinguishes good and evil behavior and communicates judgments and rules that derive from these judgments. Ethics is a science whose object of study is morals and the conditions of moral action. Ethics doesn't supply detailed principles of good behavior. It doesn't make moral judgments, but tries to make sense of the notion of morality and to provide general principles that can help human beings in concrete situation to decide how to act and how not to act. Good and evil, freedom, and happiness are important categories of ethics.

The different ethical approaches can be classified into four categories that form a typology. This typology is based on the distinction between subjects and objects in society.

1. There are subjective, individual ethics that conceive norms and values as individually constructed.

2. There are objective ethics that conceive norms and values on an objective level.

Objective here can be understood in two forms: Either as an inter-subjective or as an absolute dimension of ethics. Hence there are two subtypes of objective ethics: Inter-subjective ethics see norms and values as the result of discourse and communicative action. Absolute ethics conceive norms and values in transcendental

terms.

3. Dualistic approaches argue that there is a subjective and an objective level of ethics and that these two domains are independent of each other.

4. Dialectical approaches maintain that there is an objective and a subjective level of ethics and that these two areas produce each other and are interconnected.

### 1.1 COMPUTER ETHICS: EXPLICIT BEHAVIOUR AND CONCERNS

At this time, there are several emerging applied ethics, such as environment ethics, media ethics, etc. Several applied ethics that related to computer science world is computer ethics, information ethics and cyber ethics.

As the name implies, computer ethics is closely related to the use of computers by humans. We may suggest that there are two things in the computer ethics that can be observed, i.e. whether the computer is used to do the right things or the computers are used correctly. It is revealed that computer ethics is not simply ethics not only applied to computing. Computer ethics can be considered to have two parts:

1. the analysis of the nature and social impact of computer technology, and
2. the corresponding formulation and justification of policies for the ethical use of such technology

Explicit behaviour of computer ethics can be understood as a standard for computer use, signifying the prevention of copyright infringement, such as the reproduction of software, invasion of privacy, and circulation of objectionable material. Computer ethics is made to research about security and its beneficial aspects. Computer ethics may also be used to refer to professional ethics for computer professionals such as ethical codes of conduct that can be

used as guidelines for an ethical case. Other interesting opinions related to the computer ethics is that computer ethics is neither in the list of ethical principles to obey, nor in the technology deprived of certain values while implementing those principles. Thus, computer ethics urges scholars to revisit computer technology and its values. Even though computer ethics is a field related to and in between science and ethics, it is a unique and holistic discipline providing principles for understanding, conceptualization and computer technology use.

It is suggested that there exist two parts of computer ethics, i.e. mainstream computer ethics and disclosure computer ethics.

In mainstream computer ethics, a typical study begins by identifying a morally controversial practice, like software theft, hacking, electronic monitoring, or internet pornography. Next, the practice is described and reviewed in descriptive terms, and finally, moral principles and judgments are applied to it and moral deliberation takes place, resulting in a moral evaluation, and optionally, a set of policy recommendations.

From some of the above explanations, it can be concluded that there are several issues related to computer ethics, i.e. reproduction of software, invasion of privacy, circulation of objectionable material, and security. Several other issues are software theft, hacking, electronic monitoring, and internet pornography. Some of these concerns can also appear in information ethics or cyber ethics.

## 1.2. Information Ethics : Explicit Behaviour and Concerns

In simple terms, information ethics can be interpreted as ethics in the using, accessing and disseminating the information. In this case, the information is used for the right things, the information accessed in the right way, and the information is delivered correctly to the hand who has the rights.

Information ethics has been developed since the 1980s, encompassing areas such as computer ethics and global information ethics. Information ethics is not only about norms, but also about our critical reflection on the visions and options for better lives in the digital age.

Information ethics is an open space of reflection where commonalities and differences, theoretical as well as practical, can be discussed without the immediate pressure of decision making. Information ethics is the new ecological ethics for the information environment. Information ethics is essentially concerned with the question of who should have access to what information.

Information ethics relates to questions of ethics in terms of information or an information-oriented society. This includes the standard for judging behavior of an individual or a member of community and classifying these as moral or immoral.

Information ethics is closely related to environmental and social and it is also one aspect of a much larger philosophy known as social ethics. In this we have to fight any kind of destruction, corruption, pollution, depletion (marked reduction in quantity, content, quality, or value) or unjustified closure of the info-sphere, what shall be referred to here as information entropy. The ethical use of ICT and the sustainable development of an equitable information society need a safe and public info-sphere for all, where communication and collaboration can flourish, coherently with the application of civil rights, legal requirements and the fundamental freedoms in the media. Information ethics in the future should be a discipline that supposed to carry out four under mentioned functions-

1. information ethics is prescriptive ethics;
2. information ethics is preventive ethics;
3. information ethics is transformative ethics; and
4. information ethics must be universally global ethics, not one or the other, but must consist of both global and local disciplines

Furthermore, it also stated that for the proper use of information in an information society, the education relating to information ethics may present four goals, i.e.

1. respect for others must be cultivated;
2. although sharing beneficial information is welcome, other people's intellectual property right must not be infringed;
3. various forms of information will be used productively; and
4. Telecommunications and the Internet will be used for acceptable time periods so that it does not harm actual life.

There are several concerns related to information ethics. Several concerns are emerged with different names or from different sources, but its essence remains the same. One of the most important concerns in information technology ethics is privacy. The core concerns of information ethics include intellectual freedom, equitable access to information, information privacy, and intellectual property. In addition, it is also stated the two major concerns of information technology, i.e. the conflict between observing others' privacy, and the simultaneous pursuit of individual freedom and autonomy. Another concern related to information ethics is responsibility and accountability. This is in line with what is also revealed in that information ethics deals with the moral conduct of information-users based on their responsibility and their accountability.

## 1.3 Cyber ethics: Explicit Behaviour and Concerns

"Cyber" is a prefix used to describe people, things, or ideas that are connected with computers and the internet. Therefore, cyber ethics is closely related to the development of internet technology, so that some definition of cyber ethics will include the internet or online terms in it. Indeed, some sources call cyber ethics with internet ethics.

Cyber ethics is really about social responsibility in cyberspace. Cyber ethics has an explicit behavior of a system of standards that prescribe morality and immorality in cyberspace, signifying the preservation of freedom of expression, intellectual property, and privacy. Other explicit behavior of cyber ethics can be found in that is cyber ethics is the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation as they pertain to online environments and digital media.

The right or wrong about the utility of internet by mankind can be referred to as cyber ethics. The utility of internet by mankind includes interpersonal communication, information's delivery, research, storage and so on.

It could be argued, that all of ethics, which applies in the computer ethics and information ethics can also apply on cyber ethics, but only focused on its application to the internet. The term of internet ethics can be thought as a special extension of computer ethics, but the main difference amongst them is that internet ethics is dealing with the behaviors performed in internet.

The challenge for cyber ethics is to discuss principles of morality that can guide human action so that people are empowered to establish a sustainable, participatory global information society.

Cyber ethics can discuss real possibilities of development of the information society and criticize ideologies that portray the information society in uncritical and one-dimensional ways. By e-mail or newsgroup, any sort of opinions and thoughts can be spread all over the world. On the one hand, it can help people communicate, express opinions and thoughts, and get responses from other people fast; on the other hand, it also may be misused, such as quite a few bothering ads, fraud letters, non sense articles interfering seriously with other people's chances to get useful information. Some of cyber ethics issues raised in i.e. plagiarism, copyright, hacking, fair use, file sharing, online etiquette protocols, posting incorrect/inaccurate information, cyber bullying, stealing or pirating software, music, and videos, online gambling, gaming, and internet addiction. Several other current cyber ethics issues are raised in, i.e. privacy, security, electronic monitoring of employees, collection and use of personal information on consumers, and identity theft.

#### 1.4 E-Governance

E-Governance is crucial for efficient e-Government adoption. E-Government offers a way for an organization to move from its existing position to its long term future state. E-government services are precise services delivered by the government like interactive consulting, licenses, public-oriented services such as application for residency permits, weather and traffic information, and free e-mail services. The major advantages of e-Government include efficiency, enhanced services, better accessibility of public services, and transparency.

E-Government provides electronic interactions between a government and its citizens (G2C), government and businesses (G2B), government and employees (G2E), and also between government and governments or agencies (G2G). It has been understood as being centered on the operations of government, and is now thought to extend the scope by including public engagement and participation electronically. Nepal in this context has been seen entering the digital age and people are practicing e-Government services. The major target groups that can be distinguished in governance concepts include government, citizens or people and business organization.

A number of developed countries have been taking advantage from e-Government services, but there is still a lot of possibility for enhancement. Due to the low levels of e-Government services, a number of barriers involved in the adoption of e-Government services in India. Establishing good governance and public administration has become a major issue for sustainable socio-economic development. All countries resolve to fight against poverty and accelerate social and economic development hence in that context the implementation of e-Governance can make a precious contribution. It fosters creation of new jobs, encourage the development of business, increase public participation in decision-making and improve the efficiency of government services.

#### 1.5 Bottom-Line Review

In this paper we have tried level best to establish that how ethical concerns and online participation of citizens by virtue of their explicit behaviour is crucial to increase quality government services i.e., E-governance.

E-Governance is an information system and it can be said that several theories about the information system can be applied in e-Governance. This also implies that the users of e-Governance systems will generally use computer in accessing the system.

E-Governance has one of the characteristics of postmodernism, which is the social construct. This shows the presence of interaction between human beings in e-Governance. The interaction of course

needs a set of rules to regulate it. One set of rules that can be applied is ethics.

Based on the above explicit behavior and description regarding to e-Governance, we can conclude to have significant impact of computer ethics, information ethics and cyber ethics in it. But, beside these three applied ethics, in e-Governance, it could also apply some others applied ethics.

E-Governance is not simply about information technology or website, but there are also some aspects of management in it. E-Governance is socio-technical and there are two aspects in e-Governance, viz., the technical aspects (technology) and managerial aspects (management ethics) as well.

Superimposing the aspect of ethics on one bigger domain of our concern, we can readily conclude that explicit behaviors and concerns of various kind of ethics can eventually ascertain that e-governance is nothing but a synergy of computer ethics, information ethics, and cyber ethics.

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