

Ethics. Chapter Summary

This chapter examines the elements of ethics and morality pivotal in the context of human enhancement (HE). The phenomenon of human enhancement has ramifications that extend beyond the individual to encompass the social realm. This is a matter pertaining to the human being, and thus to the perception of the human being in different cultures. This entails an ethical evaluation of the conditions, development and application of human enhancement. The evaluation of human enhancement practices is informed by a range of basic ethical concepts, including ethics, morality, values, norms, autonomy, freedom, human dignity, human rights, equality and justice. In addition, philosophical theories, including deontology, virtue ethics and utilitarianism, as well as ethical concepts which can be found in faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Atheism, provide a basis for evaluation.

The utilisation of AI systems in the context of human enhancement can be achieved through the implementation of non-invasive and invasive systems. It is imperative that the application of artificial intelligence, robotics and computer science considers the moral, social and legal implications. The future will see growth in the complexity and autonomy of artificial intelligence, with the capacity for independent development, self-control and automated decision-making becoming increasingly prevalent.

Furthermore, the concept of human enhancement has implications for the armed forces. The optimisation of the soldier, in conjunction with new technologies with the objective of increasing their combat capability, performance, endurance, strength, stress resistance and information processing, results in the emergence of a new quality of soldiers and warfare. The potential applications of different human enhancement technologies in the military are examined. Ethical considerations are brought to the fore when the efficacy, urgency and cost-benefit analyses of a given course of action impinge upon the physical integrity of the individual. This poses a question regarding military ethics, as well as the autonomy and freedom of the soldier within a hierarchical framework and subject to the fulfilment of directives.

Furthermore, the study identifies ethical test questions that can be used to evaluate decisions and actions regarding human enhancement. It also presents conclusions and recommendations for development and application in social and military spheres.