

The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence: A Deep Analysis

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

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Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

- A** As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to evolve, ethical considerations surrounding its development and application have become increasingly significant. The integration of AI into various sectors, including healthcare, finance, and transportation, raises profound questions about the moral implications of relying on machines for decision-making processes. For instance, in healthcare, AI systems can analyze patient data more efficiently than human doctors, but this efficiency comes with the risk of dehumanizing patient care. The challenge lies in balancing the benefits of AI technology with the ethical obligation to prioritize human welfare. Professionals in the field must grapple with the responsibility of ensuring that AI systems are designed to serve humanity rather than undermine it. This responsibility includes considering how AI can enhance patient outcomes while maintaining the essential human touch in care, which is vital for building trust between patients and healthcare providers.
- B** Moreover, the potential for bias in AI algorithms presents another ethical dilemma that cannot be overlooked. Algorithms are only as unbiased as the data fed into them, and historical data often reflects societal inequities. For example, if a recruitment AI is trained on past hiring decisions that favored certain demographics, it may perpetuate discrimination against qualified candidates from underrepresented groups. This raises urgent questions about accountability: Who is responsible when an AI system makes a biased decision? Developers, corporations, or society as a whole must take a proactive stance in addressing these biases to create fair and equitable AI systems. Transparency in the development process and the inclusion of diverse perspectives can help mitigate these risks and ensure that AI serves all segments of society fairly. Engaging with communities affected by AI decisions can also foster a more inclusive approach to AI development.

C

Finally, the concept of autonomy in AI systems introduces a complex layer to the ethical conversation. As AI becomes more sophisticated, the line between human and machine decision-making blurs. Consider autonomous vehicles, which rely on AI to navigate and make split-second decisions. In the event of an accident, determining liability becomes complicated. Should the blame fall on the manufacturer, the software developers, or the vehicle owner? Furthermore, the ethical implications extend to how these systems are programmed to prioritize human lives over property. The decisions made by AI could reflect the biases of their creators, highlighting the need for ethical guidelines that govern AI behavior. As society moves forward, it is imperative to establish a comprehensive framework that addresses these ethical challenges, ensuring that technology aligns with our collective moral values. This alignment is crucial not only for the acceptance of AI but also for its responsible integration into the fabric of our daily lives. By fostering a culture of ethical AI development, we can harness the benefits of this technology while safeguarding against its potential harms, ultimately creating a future where AI enhances human capabilities without compromising ethical standards.

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
evolve	to change or develop slowly over time	<i>Birds have evolved from dinosaurs over millions of years.</i>
integration	the act of combining or adding parts to make a unified whole	<i>The integration of technology in classrooms has changed how students learn.</i>
dehumanizing	making someone feel less human or less respected	<i>Working long hours without breaks can be dehumanizing for employees.</i>
equitable	fair and impartial	<i>The teacher made sure the group's work was divided in an equitable way.</i>
bias	a preference or prejudice towards something or someone	<i>The news article showed a clear bias towards one political party.</i>
autonomy	the ability to make decisions independently	<i>The manager gave the team autonomy to complete the project.</i>
liability	legal responsibility for something, especially for paying money	<i>The company accepted liability for the accident caused by its vehicle.</i>
mitigate	to make something less severe or serious	<i>Planting trees can help mitigate the effects of air pollution.</i>

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. The new company policy aims to create an _____ environment for all employees.
2. Parents often worry about the _____ of their children when they start making their own decisions.
3. After the car accident, the question of who held _____ was debated.
4. The scientist explained how certain animals _____ over thousands of years to adapt to their environments.
5. The _____ of more renewable energy sources is crucial for sustainable development.
6. The committee discussed ways to _____ the negative impacts of climate change.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What is a significant challenge in implementing AI in healthcare?

- A. Balancing efficiency with human care
- B. Improving patient data accuracy
- C. Reducing healthcare costs
- D. Increasing the number of doctors

Question 2

Why might AI algorithms be biased?

- A. They are too complex to understand.
- B. They are based on historical data.
- C. They are designed by multiple developers.
- D. They are used in too many sectors.

Question 3

What role does transparency play in AI development?

- A. It speeds up the development process.
- B. It helps reduce AI bias.
- C. It increases competition among developers.
- D. It makes AI systems more complex.

Question 4

What ethical question is raised by autonomous vehicles?

- A. How to improve fuel efficiency
- B. Who is liable in accidents
- C. How to make them faster
- D. When to replace human drivers

Question 5

How can AI development be made more inclusive?

- A. By using more advanced algorithms
- B. By including diverse perspectives
- C. By reducing the number of developers
- D. By focusing on cheaper technologies

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. The passage mentions that AI in healthcare can dehumanize patient care. How do you think healthcare providers can ensure a balance between AI efficiency and personal patient interaction?

2. According to the passage, AI algorithms can perpetuate discrimination if trained on biased data. What steps can developers take to prevent this, and how effective do you think these steps will be?

3. Paragraph three discusses the complexity of assigning liability in accidents involving autonomous vehicles. What legal and ethical frameworks do you think should be established to address these issues?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 A

Q2 B

Q3 B

Q4 B

Q5 B

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 equitable

FIB2 autonomy

FIB3 liability

FIB4 evolve

FIB5 integration

FIB6 mitigate

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What is a significant challenge in implementing AI in healthcare?

✓ A — Balancing efficiency with human care

The passage discusses the challenge of balancing AI's efficiency with the need for human touch in care.

✗ B — Improving patient data accuracy

The passage does not mention improving data accuracy as a challenge.

✗ C — Reducing healthcare costs

Cost reduction is not highlighted as the main challenge.

✗ D — Increasing the number of doctors

Increasing the number of doctors is not discussed as a challenge.

2. Why might AI algorithms be biased?

✓ B — They are based on historical data.

The passage explains that AI bias can arise because algorithms use historical data that reflects societal inequities.

✗ A — They are too complex to understand.

Complexity is not mentioned as a cause of bias.

✗ C — They are designed by multiple developers.

The number of developers is not linked to bias.

✗ D — They are used in too many sectors.

The use across sectors is not related to bias.

3. What role does transparency play in AI development?

✓ B — It helps reduce AI bias.

The passage states that transparency can help mitigate AI bias.

✗ A — It speeds up the development process.

Transparency is not associated with speeding up development.

✗ C — It increases competition among developers.

Increasing competition is not mentioned as a result of transparency.

✗ D — It makes AI systems more complex.

Complexity is not linked to transparency.

4. What ethical question is raised by autonomous vehicles?

✓ B — Who is liable in accidents

The passage highlights the issue of determining liability in accidents with autonomous vehicles.

✗ A — How to improve fuel efficiency

Fuel efficiency is not discussed in the context of ethics.

✗ C — How to make them faster

Speed is not mentioned as an ethical issue.

✗ D — When to replace human drivers

Replacing human drivers is not the ethical question raised.

5. How can AI development be made more inclusive?

✓ **B — By including diverse perspectives**

The passage suggests that including diverse perspectives can help make AI development more inclusive.

✗ **A — By using more advanced algorithms**

Advanced algorithms are not mentioned as a means of inclusivity.

✗ **C — By reducing the number of developers**

Reducing the number of developers is not suggested.

✗ **D — By focusing on cheaper technologies**

Focusing on cost is not related to inclusivity.

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