Information Technology Ethics;
Look to the Past and Landscape to the Future

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the current study is to reveal the inherent nature of information technology ethics. It gives an overview of the evolution of information technology history, and addresses the introduction of topics and issues into this field. Based on the relevant topics and issues associated with information technology ethics, it is considered to be an interdisciplinary field. This attitude affects the future outlook of information technology ethics. Within this paper some philosophical approaches to these ethics, which will lead to the variations of strategic and applied decisions, will be discussed.

Methodology: The main approach to this research project is qualitative content analysis. An attempt is made to arrive at the appropriate results through the study of outstanding papers on the topic.

Findings: There are two competitive hypotheses for the future outlook of information technology ethics. One predicts the introduction of ethical revolution and the other believes its combination with the current standard philosophical approaches. It seems that the different hypotheses are justified through the philosophical implications of the assumptions of information technology ethics. Different assumptions lead to various outcomes, using different analytical approaches, to the understanding and interpretation of the relationship between information technology and society. In this paper, three philosophical approaches are studied: technological determinism, social constructivism, and phenomenology.

Originality/Value: This paper explains the nature of information technology ethics. The evolutionary history of information technology ethics and some of the topics and issues associated with this are discussed. In addition, this field is recognized as an interdisciplinary field of study. The evolutionary process implies various philosophical approaches and implications.

Keywords: Information technology ethics, Technological determinism, Social constructivism, Phenomenology.