Response Paper

Name

Institutional Affiliation

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Introduction

Noel Sharkey, the author of an article "The Ethical Frontiers of Robotics," is a lecturer at the University of Sheffield. From his academic and professional work as a Computer Science professor, he is knowledgeable on robotics that mimics the human behavior. Apart from his radio and television discussions on robotics, Sharkey's article explores the ethical issues arising from the development of robots, especially autonomous ones. Moreover, the author highlights the types of robots that raise ethical questions, particularly the machines used in war and the ones caring for humans. Further, he emphasized the need to control the development and application of robots unless serious considerations are made about the design and the use of robotics technology. Categorically, the article highlights that it is crucial for computer scientists to take into account the serious impacts arising from the use of this innovation. Consequently, the source is enlightening on the ethical issues that scientists and users of these devices have not considered adequately because more sophisticated robotics technologies are developed.

Response Section

According to Sharkey, the rise in demand for personal and professional services robots has led to their design and development without questioning the policy and social guidelines needed to manage the field. The requirement for this innovation is driven by more than one million industries that use these devices to do dangerous and dirty duties such as cleaning windows. Moreover, the realization that robots can take either dangerous or tedious tasks has led to a rapid demand for their services. This is evident from the fact that starting from 2008, there were more than 5.5 million personal and professional services robots in use (Sharkey, 2008). The second factor driving the demand for the innovation is the reduction in the costs of the

technology, considering that from 2006, robots were 80 percent cheaper than the ones produced

in the 1990s. Unfortunately, the two factors have driven the high use and production of these

devices without the formulation of national and international guidelines needed to check the

impact of robotics. The evidence proves that there are no international codes of ethics or laws on

children's rights which can ensure that the innovation is not counterproductive. In response to the

void uncovered by Sharkey (2008) on the right or wrong uses of robots in caring for children, it

is crucial that national and international community addresses the resultant ethical issues and

potential problems. Therefore, there is a dare need to treat the matter with urgency and proper

policies enacted.

Using robots in the delivery of care services may trigger problems that need further

exploration, especially the risk of affecting the social development of children. In the article,

Sharkey clarified that the studies on the early care of monkeys showed that allowing the animals

to develop attachment only to inanimate objects affected their social development. Applying the

findings to the current usage of robots in caring for children leads to the conclusion that the

practice may be counterproductive as it could affect the social and psychological development of

kids (Sharkey, 2008). In response to the view, it is important for the innovators and child

development scholars to gather evidence-based data to guide the usage of such toys, especially in

the child care. Furthermore, in light of the conclusions made in the article, one personal view is

that the development and acquisition of language can be badly impaired in children in the future

if they do not learn it from other humans. The risks arising from the child care by robots are

similarly reflected in the use of the technology in war as discussed in the next section.

To some extent, robots applications in military have been eminent. However, the position

taken by the article is that machines should not be used to substitute human participation in a

warfare. Notably, the applications of robotics in war include surveillance and bomb detonation, but the risks arising from their involvement are deaths of innocent people. In essence, for the typical roles of bomb explosion or surveillance work, all robots should be manned by humans to avoid unintended effects. Nonetheless, it is surprising that national and international communities have not considered the past problems experienced with these devices in warfare. It is worth noting that in order to tap the full potential of the innovation on battle fields, proper policies that guide its application should be laid out.

Conclusion

Sharkey is an expert in robotics, and therefore, his article is informative on this theme. It clarifies the ethical issues that the innovators of the devices and users have ignored while the technology becomes more sophisticated everyday. Regarding the use of the machines in the care of children and in war, it is worth noting that there is a need to develop the necessary policies and laws. Moreover, the application of robotics in child care should be further investigated to understand clearly whether it affects the social development of kids. In light of the use of the devices on battle fields, it is evident that human should conduct and control the robots in order to eliminate the risks arising from the technology.

References

Sharkey, N. (2008). The ethical frontiers of robotics. *Science,* 322(5909), 1800-1801.

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