# Net Regularity and Its Ethical Implications on Internet Stake Holders

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**Abstract :** Net Neutrality (NN) is the principle of treating all online data the same without any prioritization of some over others. A research gap in current scholarship about &ldquo;violations of NN&rdquo; and the subsequent ethical concerns paves the way for the following research question: To what extent violations of NN entail ethical concerns and implications for Internet stakeholders? To answer this question, NR is examined using the two major action-based ethical theories, Kantian and Utilitarian, across the relevant Internet stakeholders. First some necessary IT background is provided that shapes how the Internet works and who the key stakeholders are. Following the IT background, the relationship between the stakeholders, users, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and content providers is discussed and illustrated. Then some violations of NN that are currently occurring is covered, without attracting any attention from the general public from an ethical perspective, as a new term Net Regularity (NR). Afterwards, the current scholarship on NN and its violations are discussed, that are mainly from an economic and sociopolitical perspectives to highlight the lack of ethical discussions on the issue. Before moving on to the ethical analysis however, websites are presented as digital entities that are affected by NR and their happiness is measured using functionalism. The analysis concludes that NR is prone to an unethical treatment of Internet stakeholders in the perspective of both theories. Finally, the current Digital Divide in the world is presented to be able to better illustrate the implications of NR. The implications present the new Internet divide that will take place between individuals within society. Through answering the research question using ethical analysis, it attempts to shed some light on the issue of NR and what kind of society it would lead to. NR would not just lead to a divided society, but divided individuals that are separated by something greater than distance, the Internet.

**Keywords :** digital divide, digital entities, digital ontology, internet ethics, internet law, net neutrality, internet service providers, websites as beings