

Utilitarianism theory according to Bentham and Stuart Mill

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Abstract

Both Mill and Bentham was the prominent upholder of utilitarianism theory. They both have differences in their thinking. Bentham's work opens with a statement of the principle of utility. Mill rejects a purely quantitative measurement of utility. Thus we will discuss about their viewpoints in this article.

Keywords: Sanction; Mill; Bentham; Law; Maximum.

1. Introduction

Utilitarianism is a family of consequentialist ethical theories that promotes actions that maximize happiness and well-being for the majority of a population. Although different varieties of utilitarianism admit different characterizations, the basic idea behind all of them is to in some sense maximize utility, which is often defined in terms of well-being or related concepts. For instance, Jeremy Bentham, the founder of utilitarianism, described utility as that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness...[or] to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered.

1.1 Nature of Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is a version of consequentialism, which states that the consequences of any action are the only standard of right and wrong. Unlike other forms of consequentialism, such as egoism and altruism, utilitarianism considers the interests of all beings equally.

2. History

Proponents of utilitarianism have disagreed on a number of points, such as whether actions should be chosen based on their likely results (act utilitarianism) or whether agents should conform to rules that maximize utility (rule utilitarianism). There is also disagreement as to whether total (total utilitarianism), average (average utilitarianism) or minimum utility should be maximized.

His importance of happiness as an end for humans has long been recognized. Forms of hedonism were put forward by Aristippus and Epicurus; Aristotle argued that eudaimonia is the highest human good and Augustine wrote that "all men agree in desiring the last end, which is happiness." Happiness was also explored in depth by Aquinas. Different varieties of consequentialism also existed in the ancient and medieval world, like the state consequentialism of Mohism or the political philosophy of Niccolò Machiavelli. Mohist consequentialism advocated communitarian moral goods including political stability, population growth, and wealth, but did not support the utilitarian notion of maximizing individual happiness. Utilitarianism as a distinct ethical position only emerged in the eighteenth century.

2.1 About Bentham and Mill

Jeremy Bentham was an English philosopher and political radical. He is primarily known today for his moral philosophy, especially his principle of utilitarianism, which evaluates actions based upon their consequences. The relevant consequences, in particular, are the overall happiness created for everyone affected by the action. Influenced by many enlightenment thinkers, especially empiricists such as John Locke and David Hume, Bentham developed an ethical theory grounded in a largely empiricist account of human nature. He famously held a

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hedonistic account of both motivation and value according to which what is fundamentally valuable and what ultimately motivates us is pleasure and pain. Happiness, according to Bentham, is thus a matter of experiencing pleasure and lack of pain.

Although he never practiced law, Bentham did write a great deal of philosophy of law, spending most of his life critiquing the existing law and strongly advocating legal reform. Throughout his work, he critiques various natural accounts of law which claim, for example, that liberty, rights, and so on exist independent of government. In this way, Bentham arguably developed an early form of what is now often called "legal positivism." Beyond such critiques, he ultimately maintained that putting his moral theory into consistent practice would yield results in legal theory by providing justification for social, political, and legal institutions.

Utilitarianism, by John Stuart Mill, is an essay written to provide support for the value of utilitarianism as a moral theory, and to respond to misconceptions about it. Mill defines utilitarianism as a theory based on the principle that "actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness." Mill defines happiness as pleasure and the absence of pain. He argues that pleasure can differ in quality and quantity, and that pleasures that are rooted in one's higher faculties should be weighted more heavily than baser pleasures. Furthermore, Mill argues that people's achievement of goals and ends, such as virtuous living, should be counted as part of their happiness.

Mill argues that utilitarianism coincides with "natural" sentiments that originate from humans' social nature. Therefore, if society were to embrace utilitarianism as an ethic, people would naturally internalize these standards as morally binding. Mill argues that happiness is the sole basis of morality, and that people never desire anything but happiness. He supports this claim by showing that all the other objects of people's desire are either means to happiness, or included in the definition of happiness. Mill explains at length that the sentiment of justice is actually based on utility, and that rights exist only because they are necessary for human happiness.

The theory of utilitarianism has been criticized for many reasons. Critics hold that it does not provide adequate protection for individual rights, that not everything can be measured by the same standard, and that happiness is more complex than reflected by the theory. Mill's essay represents his attempt to respond to these criticisms, and thereby to provide a more complex and nuanced moral theory.

Mill's argument comprises five chapters. His first chapter serves as an introduction to the essay. In his second chapter, Mill discusses the definition of utilitarianism, and presents some misconceptions about the theory. The third chapter is a discussion about the ultimate sanctions (or rewards) that utilitarianism can offer. The fourth chapter discusses methods of proving the validity of utilitarianism. In his fifth chapter, Mill writes about the connection between justice and utility, and argues that happiness is the foundation of justice.

3. Mill's Discussion on Utilitarianism

Mill was brought up as a Benthamite with the explicit intention that he would carry on the cause of utilitarianism. Mill's book *Utilitarianism* first appeared as a series of three articles published in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1861 and was reprinted as a single book in 1863.

4. Ultimate Sanction of Utilitarianism

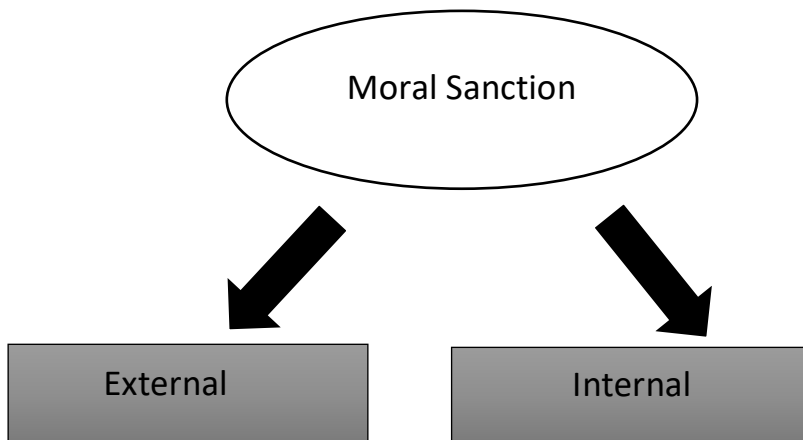
First of all, I want to recall that what is the main principle of utilitarianism, according to Mill.

The main idea of his utilitarianism can be characterized by this sentence, "That act is best which brings about the greatest amount of pleasure, on balance, for the greatest number." The slogan of utilitarianism is "*the greatest happiness of greatest number.*"

Now I am describing that what the meaning of Sanction is. This term can be considered as the official permission or approval for an action. Sanction is a strong action taken in order to make people obey a rule.

The power or subject which bounds us to do moral works that can be considered as moral sanction. No moral standard can have the workability without moral sanction. Moral sanction bound us to give priority to other's interests instead of our own interests. Mill considered this energy as binding principle. Mill writes that utilitarianism has or can impose all the sanctions that other moral systems can.

5. Classifications of Moral Sanctions according to Mill



5.1 External Sanction

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The external energies which make bound a person according to the principle of utilitarianism that is external Sanction. According to this energy, man does a work to get something. Otherwise man accepts and rejects something to fill up his aim. An external sanction is physical, coming from an outside source, by society or some authority figure.

5.2 Internal Sanction

Mill gave priority on internal sanction in his utilitarianism. An internal sanction is coming from the inside, or pain from our conscience. First we need to clear about the idea of duty. The implicit subject of a duty is conscience. Whenever we do a duty of us, then a feeling works. That can be considered as the feeling of our conscience. But if we become fail to do a duty, then we start to get a pain, which comes from our conscience, that helps us to be bound to do a duty. This pain help us to give priority to other's happiness. Mill declared this feeling as a subjective feeling. This feeling is innate. If this feeling wasn't innate that would be a quality which could be influenced from other's pain or happiness. This sanction is the ultimate sanction of utilitarianism.

6. Role of conscience to Ultimate sanction of Utilitarianism

Whenever our duty and its aim become able to give priority to other's interest then it can be considered as essence of consciousness. This conscience is an important term for internal sanction. Role of conscience are given below:

- Conscience helps a person to do his duty properly.
- Conscience makes a person to be ethical.
- Conscience doesn't only helps a person to be ethical but also helps a person to avoid unethical activities.
- Conscience makes a person enable to think for others interests. It makes bindings for a person to work for others.
- The control of conscience is the ultimate control of ethical works.

7. Relationship between Utilitarianism and Justice

- Mill here argues that utilitarianism opposes justice. His speech is very descriptive in this regard, because Mill discussed it in detail in detail about the principles of justice and its historical source. In this case, in the context of justice, he said that as a barrier to the acceptability of utilitarianism, he blamed the reason that the sub-ordinate does not support justice. Fair or unfair subject. It's a kind of quality.
- Now we will talk about the negotiation of the mill's justice.
- First of all, if someone is excluded from his person-liberty, his property rights, or any matter which he considers legally, it is considered unfair. That is, in this case, the lawful reporter has been respected. If this honor is shown, it will be treated as justice and dishonor.
- Secondly, the law that gave him the law could be an evil act. That is, he should not have been given what he should have been considered. There can be disagreements with regards to how fair or unfair it is. Some people think that if the law is bad, then the person will be forced to obey. There is a need to amend the law. They say this when they are in a privileged position. In this case, it is said that there can be no legal criterion because there may be wrong laws.

- Thirdly, everything is universally considered right, only when everyone receives it. When someone receives something that he does not deserve, it is considered unfair.
- Fourthly, there is only a matter which is considered wrong, when someone breaks the faith of someone.
- Fifthly, showing favoritism contradicts justice. That is, when somebody is given extra privileges due to bias, then it is unfair. There is a close connection with this concept to the concept of equality. And this equality can be related to the utility principles.
- Even though discussions of so many forms of wrongdoing, but it is difficult to determine whether any ideas combine all of these ideas, or it can be considered as an impersonation basis. Mill said that the concept of right from a single concept of rights can be discussed. And the right is the legal claim of a person.
- Mill argues that there are two elements of justice. The first is the desire to punish those people. This desire comes from the inspiration of self-defense, and comes from the feeling of sympathy. The other element is the person who accepts injustice and suffers. And the concept of right is not different from justice, but rather the manifestation of other things of right. The meaning of a right is that there is a person who makes its legitimate claim. Mill then observed that if judiciary or justice is used independently from utilitarianism and its support through spontaneity can be thought of and it is thought that it has its own right, then it is understandable that why the question of trial is often controversial. In fact, there is a debate about how to benefit the society, and it is managed by many contradictory ideas. For example, if there is a conflict of opinion in the case of prosecution, it should be punished and the proper distribution of punishment. In fact, the only way to overcome the conflicting claims of justice is to create the basis of its authority as the basis of social utility. The concept of neutrality is made from utility. From the concept of equality. And justice requires equality, neutrality. It is useful for the welfare of all if it is the main part of the usefulness of judicial justice. Mill says that moral rules that prohibit harm to each other, it is more important than rules and regulations, how to handle social issues. In addition, justice preserves peace among people. Therefore, the usefulness of justice plays a very strong role in preserving and applying the instructions. And the utility is not only individual, but the welfare of the highest people.
- The utilitarianism as a moral theory is related to how it should work to increase happiness. It is a tool that someone can behave morally in a superior way. Creates the maximum size of the molecular rights to protect the moral rights and utilitarian theories point to the effect of the greatest moral effect in the mold.

8. Examples of External Sanction and Internal Sanction:

- Doing prayer to make Allah happy can be used as an example of external sanction. But after completing prayer, a person feels happiness, that he becomes able to do prayer. That is internal sanction.

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- Doing study hard for getting a good G.P.A. can be used as an example of external sanction. But after getting result he feels happy. That is the example of internal sanction.
- Doing study and avoiding watching television to make parents happy is also an example of external sanction. But after making happy parents a person feels happiness. That is an example of internal sanction.
- Giving response to a class to the teacher to get attention of that teacher is a good example of external sanction. But after doing response he feels happy by thinking that he becomes able to make his teacher.
- Making clean the roadside of a society can be an example. If we do this then we feel happy. That is internal sanction. But whenever we think about the purpose behind this work, then purpose can be considered to make a good society is the purpose of this work. That will be the external sanction.

9. Utilitarianism of Bentham

- Jeremy Bentham was born in London on 15 February 1748. He became a renowned thinker through his practice of knowledge. His philosophy made him famous.
- Bentham's famous works include Fragment of Government, Defense of Usury, Manual of Political Economy, and Introduction to the Principles of Morals of Legislation.

10. The basis of Bentham's Philosophy

Utilitarianism is important in Bentham's fame for his philosophy. His Utilitarianism was huge reformism. This Utilitarianism was formulated for the reform of various subjects in those days. He was interested in reforming politics and matters of law. He advised many times about reformation of government's matter. But the government didn't accept it. He stressed on liberalism in the abolition of monopoly power.

11. Origin of Bentham's Utilitarianism from his Individualism:

Bentham gave the best explanation for Utilitarianism. He said about the importance of the government on the principle of "man's happiness and well-being." He thought that the people's welfare could come through this policy. The people of the country cannot interfere with their will. At the beginning of the "Principles of Morals and Legislation" book, he placed humans under two subjects. And they are pain and pleasure. These two people control all the actions of the human.

11.1 Society is a Fabulous Object

Bentham wanted to create such a self-centered society. Society is made for human needs. Man needs to fulfill his needs in this society. Human interest refers to the interests of these members of society. Society is a fabulous subject. Bentham gave more importance to the person while discussing the society.

11.2 Utility

Utility policy is the principle that supports or disallows every work. The reason for support and disenchantment is the increase or decrease of joy. He uttered the real religion. The object that has the usefulness can ensure the happiness of it. Humans naturally experience happiness and pain in their life. In this case, he chooses happiness instead of pain. And this is called utility.

11.3 Utility is the Controller of all Things

The claim of Bentham's nationalism is Utilitarianism. Whether it will come to the benefit of the person to be careful about the government's legislation. When a system can ensure the maximum amount of happiness, it will be the best method. People will not want to show loyalty if the law does not help. Therefore, the importance of ensuring the happiness of all is to be done. To create awareness, the environment will have to be created by the government.

12. Support of Bentham's individualism

Bentham's Utilitarianism gave full support to individualism. Bentham is the only person who says to determine the controller of state policy on happiness and sorrow. It can be said that his individualism is in line with equality. The government or the law-makers have to keep an eye on equality. Nobody can get more benefit from someone. In each case everyone will participate, give their views. No one should be given any importance to ensure the benefits of all. Ensure proper education should be ensured for all. No law can be enacted by ignoring the people. When the decision is being obstructed, people will tell it. In all cases, it is important to be careful about utilitarianism.

13. Utilitarianism in Bentham's State:

Bentham states the importance of Utilitarianism in describing the state. In his opinion, utilitarianism would be the foundation of all state policies. All decisions of the government will be based on the utility policy. Keep in mind the happiness of every person. The lawmakers will take care of utility policies. Which will be against utility policy will be canceled. Each person's opinion will play a role in decision-making. The policy of the policy will be clear. Every person will participate in all activities. No representation will be considered as important here.

13.1 There is no Place for Prevalent Rights in Utilitarianism

There is no place for prevalent rights in Bentham's utilitarianism. Declaration of independence of the contemporary American and declaration of the rights of the people of France was established on the basis of general rights, but citizens did not gain much. It was not possible to eliminate the lack of people. According to Bentham, the only law can ensure the right of the citizen, the basis of which is the utility. Laws made by law help ensure human rights as well as play a role in the development of the individual.

13.2 Bentham's Felicific Calculus

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The special characteristics of Bentham's Utilitarianism are its ability to measure happiness and pain. And this can be measured because the person can decide. The fitness of this measurement is called happiness. Through this, the quality of happiness can be determined. People cannot accept any happiness. Happiness can be stability or unstable. People want happiness sure among the things, Bentham asked to accept the matter which would ensure the greatest happiness.

14. Universality of Utilitarianism

Every man has some guilt. Again, human beings are good enough. That is, people also have some qualities. But every person wants to choose happiness by ignoring the pain. This matter is universal. There is no exception. So all the decisions of the government should be made based on the utility. And it will be a strong step.

In Bentham's theory, an action conforming to the principle of utility is right or at least not wrong; it ought to be done, or at least it is not the case that it ought not be done. But Bentham does not use the word 'duty' here. For Bentham, rights and duties are legal notions, linked with the notions of command and sanction. What we call moral duties and rights would require a moral legislator (a divine being presumably) but theological notions are outside the scope of his theory. To talk of natural rights and duties suggests, as it were, a law without a legislator, and is nonsensical in the same way as talk of a son without a parent. Apart from theoretical considerations, Bentham also condemned the belief in natural rights on the grounds that it inspired violence and bloodshed, as seen in the excesses of the French Revolution.

Bentham at first believed that enlightened and public-spirited statesmen would overcome conservative stupidity and institute progressive reforms to promote public happiness. When disillusionment set in, he developed greater sympathy for democratic reform and an extension of the franchise. He believed that with the gradual improvement in the level of education in society, people would be more likely to decide and vote on the basis of rational calculation of what would be for their own long-term benefit, and individual rational decision-making would therefore, in aggregate, increasingly tend to promote the greater general happiness.

Bentham had first-hand knowledge of the legal profession and criticized it vehemently. He also wrote a highly entertaining *Handbook of Political Fallacies* 1824, which deals with the logic and rhetoric of political debate.

Bentham figured prominently among the small number of men who became known as philosophical radicals, but his utilitarianism was not much discussed until the latter half of the nineteenth century. His prolific writings were published in part by devoted disciples, but some were published for the first time in the 1940s and after, and the publication of his complete works is still in progress. Among these writings is an analysis of the logic of deontic concepts, and *On Laws in General* contains a carefully elaborated theory of jurisprudence."

Criticism

1. There was no clear idea about the magnitude of this Utilitarianism.
2. There are many feelings in man's life. But Bentham discussed about only two feelings.
3. Many philosophers say that Bentham's philosophy is insufficient.
4. Many philosophers claim that his philosophy is unreal.

15. Conclusion

Utilitarian's believe that the purpose of morality is to make life better by increasing the amount of good things (such as pleasure and happiness) in the world and decreasing the amount of bad things (such as pain and unhappiness). They reject moral codes or systems that consist of commands or taboos that are based on customs, traditions, or orders given by leaders or supernatural beings. Instead, utilitarian's think that what makes a morality be true or justifiable is its positive contribution to human (and perhaps non-human) beings.

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