

Welcome students to the course on Moral Philosophy, Part One.

This course is for the students of Bachelors of Arts in Philosophy in the first year. Let us look at the title of the unit, its theories of moral standard. The name of the module is Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism. We are looking at the outline now.

We're going to look at the introduction. Gross or quantitative utilitarianism or Bentham's altruistic hedonism Bentham's moral hedonistic calculus. The for external sanctions. And the criticisms of gross or quantitative utilitarianism.

Let us now look at the learning outcomes. First, we will understand the concept of utilitarianism and the types of utilitarianism as an ethical theory. We will comprehend the ethical philosophy of Jeremy Bentham, and we will critically examine and evaluate Bentham's quantitative utilitarianism. The

Introduction. Utilitarianism is a modern form of hedonism. It is also called universalism, altruism or altruistic hedonism.

It is of two types. It is gross or quantitative utilitarianism

given by Jeremy Bentham and refined as qualitative

utilitarianism by John Stuart Mill. It follows the

principle of the greatest good for the greatest number.

Therefore it is altruistic in

nature. Now let us understand this a little more. We have the

concept of hedonism, which says basically that pleasure is the

most important principle. So we need to seek pleasure and avoid

pain. Now we will look at these concepts in detail.

Gross or quantitative utilitarianism or Bentham's

altruistic hedonism. It is altruistic hedonism, as it

follows the principle of general or universal happiness. That is

the greatest happiness for the greatest number as the ultimate

moral standard. Bentham recognized only quantitative

distinctions among pleasures. Therefore, it is called gross or

quantitative utilitarianism. This theory is called

utilitarianism because it judges all actions according to

their utility to promote general happiness or prevent general

pain. Now when we talk about utilitarianism as an ethical

theory, we are saying that it is about the greatest happiness of

the greatest number. So we need to keep the quantity in mind.

The higher the quantity of pleasure we receive, the greater

will be our happiness. So in order to be happy, we should make sure that we get as much pleasure as possible. Bentham's moral or hedonistic calculus. Now Bentham gave 7 dimensions of value to pleasure quantitatively. Now, what does

Bentham do here, Bentham

explains that we need to look at pleasure in the most calculative manner, in a manner that it can be quantified, so we need to try to evaluate how much pleasure we actually received. He uses 7 dimensions of seven principles to measure pleasure.

So the first one is intensity. The more intense the pleasure is preferable to a less intense pleasure.

Duration, the more durable pleasure is preferable to a less durable one. Proximity - A proximate pleasure is preferable to a remote pleasure. Certainty or certain pleasure is preferable to an uncertain pleasure. Purity - or pure pleasure is one that is free from pain and is preferable to a pleasure mixed with pain that is an impure pleasure.

Fecundity - pleasure has fecundity when it gives rise to a number of other pleasures, that is, it has fruitfulness.

Therefore a fecund pleasure is preferable to a barren pleasure which does not give rise to other pleasures and extends to

pleasures enjoyed by a large number of persons is preferable to a pleasure enjoyed by a small number of persons. That is, the extent refers to the number of people affected.

Now let us look at these one by one. First of all, we look at the intensity. The higher the intensity of the pleasure, the more enjoyable it is. The longer the pleasure lasts that is the duration, the more pleasurable it will be. Proximity is the extent to which you can repeat the pleasure again and again.

Certainty is how sure you are that you will actually receive the pleasure. Purity is how pure the pleasure is, that is how free it is from pain. Fecundity is how one pleasure can give rise to more pleasures. And extent is the number of people that will be enjoying the pleasure. So remember, the first six are at an individual level, but the seventh one takes place at a community or a social level. Bentham also advocated psychological hedonism and argued that we do seek pleasure. Therefore we ought to seek pleasure and he based ethical hedonism on psychological hedonism. Now this statement means that it is why should we seek pleasure. We should seek pleasure because it our natural tendency to seek pleasure, and therefore because it is, it comes naturally to us. Therefore, we ought to do it, and so it is called ethical hedonism. That is

deciding what is right and wrong. Is based on our psychology. Bentham also believed in hedonistic calculus. Now this is called calculus, because he talks about pleasure as something that you can actually measure. An Action is right if it gives pleasure or excess of pleasure over pain and an action is wrong if it gives pain or excess of pain over pleasure.

So that's why this becomes an ethical theory. How do you decide what is right and wrong? If it gives you pleasure, then it is. It is a good action or it is a right action. And if it gives you pain, then it is a wrong action.

To calculate pleasure or pain, we have to take into account the seven dimensions of value in pleasures. Bentham admitted that man is egoistic by nature, but he advocated Altruistic Hedonism. Now what is Altruistic Hedonism. Altruistic hedonism would basically mean that you do something without selfish gains in mind. Altruistic is when you behave selflessly. Bentham is trying to say that man can move from egoism, that is self centeredness or selfishness to an altruistic perspective on personality. He explains the change that is transition from egoism to

altruism by means of four external

Sanctions as follows: First, we have physical

or natural sanction which operates through the pleasures

and pains caused by nature. It results when we disobey natural

laws. For example, the loss of health states that we should

satisfy our appetites moderately, or else it results

in diseases and pains so that becomes the physical sanction.

It is nature itself that sets certain laws for us. For

example, the laws of nature which tell us that certain desires or

for example, hunger, If you're hungry, you should eat, but you

cannot eat excessively. That becomes a physical sanction, or

that becomes a physical

limitation. Now, political sanctions operate through

pleasures and pains caused by the state. It consists of those

pains which follow when the state inflicts penalties on us

for disobeying or violating political laws, and when

the state rewards us for performing actions beneficial to society.

So the political sanction basically will be given by the

government or the state and it will inflict penalties or

punishments on us whenever we misbehave and we will be

rewarded whenever we perform according to that which benefits the society.

Now, social sanctions are those that operate through the pleasures and pains caused by society. When society inflicts penalties, for example, excommunication upon the individual when we act selfishly. Social sanctions operate through the pleasures and pains caused by society. Excommunication is removing somebody out of the society because they have behaved in a way that is against the social norms.

The fourth sanction is the religious sanctions. That is, which operates through the pleasures and pains caused by religion or God, and compels us to be altruistic. For example, the fear of punishment in hell, or the hope of reward in heaven.

Religious sanctions are those sanctions that are set by religion that tell us that if we behave in a particular way, we would go to hell. And if we behave in a good way, we would go to heaven. So these become the external sanctions according to Bentham. Do these four external sanctions or external pressures compel an individual to sacrifice his own interests to those of the society? Does the individual pass from egoism to altruism under the pressure of the external sanctions. Now let us look at the criticisms of gross or quantitative utilitarianism.

Let us look at the criticisms that Bentham's theory is subjected to. The first one is his Hedonistic calculus is impracticable, because feelings of pleasure and pain are subjective states of mind and cannot be measured like money. So just because you can measure other things you cannot measure pleasure. That's the argument here. So because pleasure comes from a subjective state of mind, they also depend on our mood or temperament and the circumstances.

The second criticism against Bentham is that he recognized the egoistic nature of men and still advocated altruistic hedonism without giving any reason why we pursue general happiness from pure egoism we can never evolve to altruism.

The criticism against Bentham is that how is it possible for a person to move from pure egoism to altruism? It's a huge change. It's a huge evolution, and it would be very impractical.

The third criticism against Bentham is that he does not recognize qualitative distinctions among pleasures and his theories, therefore, he only focuses on quantity, and does not focus on or does not give any importance to quality. And the fourth one is that the four external sanctions are obeyed for our good, and they can create a must or a physical

compulsion. But never an ought or a moral obligation. So the for external sanctions, Bentham says, would lead us to pleasure, or to behave in a particular way. However, they can only create a must. They cannot create an ought, so they can only say that this is what you must do, but they cannot say that this is what you ought to be doing, or this is what you should be doing. So, these are the four criticisms that are given against Jeremy Bentham's ethical philosophy.

These are my references.

Thank you.