Ethical contributions of John Stuart Mill

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**Introduction**

John Stuart Millwas a believer in the ethical theory of utilitarianism, and Mill’s philosophy is grounded on the norm of giving the paramount gladness to most of the people, Mill back the pursuit of happiness. Utilitarianism considers the ethically correct deeds are those doing that increase the joy and lessen the pain. The theory of utilitarianism thinks the result of any doing validates the moral tolerability of means to reach that end and the consequences of deeds or doings are more important than any other thoughts. It believes that the end justifies the means. Theory of utilitarianism considers an action is ethically right if its outcome is pleasure; while it is immoral if it increases pain or sufferings.

Utilitarianism trusts that sacrificing one person to protect hundreds of others is all right since you maximize the contentment of the entire public or the world. In utilitarianism, outcomes of any doings matter such a correct action results in an increase in the extent of happiness. Utilitarianism does not contemplate personal associations. In utilitarianism theory, it is our responsibility to comfort people without stressing about the outcomes, for instance, Mills believes we should help people as much as we can without affecting ourselves adversely or having damage on ourselves because giving helping people or giving charity will maximize happiness and minimize sufferings. Mill’s ethical opinion associates happiness with ethics or morality since it makes logic with shared beliefs about ethics; for instance, utilitarianism defends that murder is immoral. There are some acts that are not noble in the view of utilitarianism such as a self-sacrificing deed, for example thrashing wife gives pleasure to some people where the wife is self-sacrificing, so this action is not morally accurate and good for utilitarianism.

This paper will discuss the ethical theory and important ethical contributions of Stuart mill concerning ethics and morals; also it will discuss some of Mill’s contrasting opinions related to the theory of utilitarianism.

**Discussion**

John Stuart Mill was contributory in the progress of the ethical theory named Utilitarianism, and the goal was to make the most of the personal independence of all people. He was competent to motivate a number of societal transformations in England in his life afterward the industrialized revolution had caused enormous gaps amid the poor and the rich, extensive child employment and awful health environments. John StuartMill’s political theory overlooked social contract theory, which had gripped the preceding century’s political intellectuals, in approval of a theory that used his ethical obligations as its foundation. His philosophy functions as the substitute to Marxism that had advanced as the other chief political. Though his theory related to politics has been less prevalent because of return to the societal contract prototype and other suggested substitutes in the previous century, his opinions for Utilitarianism function as the foundation for the theories standing as one of the three main ethical theories taken most earnestly by present-day thinkers.

Mill was brought up with a contemporary education and was interpreting Greek in his early teens. His instructor was a huge inspiration on his thinking, but Stuart Mill was capable of lessening most of the chief defects in Bentham’s description of Utilitarianism to let it hold the position that it presently does. Many find the association between Mill’s political philosophies and his ethical philosophies to be challenging, but they both steered him to be a supporter for animal rights, gay rights, and women's rights at a time when both standpoints were believed by the bulk to be ridiculous. In terms of making a public impression on civilization, John Stuart is one of the most efficacious theorists at applying social transformation via his philosophy.

John Stuart Mill believed in the ethi1cal theory known as utilitari1anism, and his philosophy is foun1ded on the code of giving the ut1most happiness and peace to the majority of the individ1uals of the society; Mill backs the pursuit of happi1ness. Utilitarianism is a philosophy that consi1ders the ethically ri1ght deeds are those that 1increases the pleasure and 1decreases the pain. The philosophy of Mill believes that if the outcome of any action or deed results in goodness or happiness of other people and self as well, then it is ethically or morally the right action. On the other hand if any action or deed of an individual result in suffering or pain of other people or self then it is considered to be ethically and morally wrong action and should not be acted upon or backed.In other words, it believes 1that the end validates 1the means. All the actions and deeds are ethically correct if 1its outcome is shared happiness; whereas it is not correct if it afflicts suffering or pain to people.

Moreover, the philosophy of utilitarianism suggests that an individual or his or her desires or pleasure can be sacrificed if those desires are harmful to the community as a whole. For example, if one individual wishes to drive recklessly on a highway as it makes him enjoy the ride and be happy, then this individual should be forced to not act in this way because it will cause troubles for everyone else. For utilitarianism outcome of actions values a lot; therefore, every move should be judged on the basis of right and wrong concerning the whole community or society. The philosophy of Utilitarianism also does not take personal relationships to be more important than the good of society. If personal relationship effects the environment of the community in a negative way then that personal relationship is to be condemned. Also if one has to choose between the benefit of a closed one and the benefit of the society, society should be chosen. For instance, if there are two people drowning and you have the chance to save only one and one of the is your close relative, and the other is a doctor who is supposed to save many patients then the doctor should be saved as according to utilitarianism, it will maximize the happiness and lessen the sufferings in the world. John Stuart Mill also stresses on the idea of utilitarianism that all of us should do charitable work and help people as much as we can as it is our ethical and moral duty towards the society and humanity. We should offer our services and help without worrying about the outcomes. Such actions will maximize the happiness of the world and minimize sufferings. But everyone must realize that these deeds should not affect or damage ourselves. This is because some of the acts are not useful according to Mill, such as selfless acts. For example, if a husband beats his wife for no apparent reason but just because he can, and it makes him feel happy, or it gives pleasure to him; whereas the wife being selfless, takes the beating and do not retaliate or asks any questions; this act in utilitarianism is believed to be bad and not the right thing to do (Capaldi, 2004).

I believe that the key concern with the philosophy f utilitarianism in explaining morals as either pleasure or happiness is that it is an ethical obligation and it is not morality in and of itself (Hollander, 1985). Whereas the feeling of pleasure or happiness is not an ethical obligation but a biological capacity to struggle for that which makes an individual happy. For instance, sex, drugs and partying can offer people pleasure and happiness, but there is not always ethics or morality involved in it.

**Utilitarianism and Hedonism**

Mill was a pleasure seeker or in other words a hedonist, and though the word hedonism has a quite dissimilar implication when used in current culture, for Mill it was that he assumed happiness was the only intrinsically beneficial to human. He held the view that all other concepts of good where extrinsic and simply was in the provision of acquisition of happiness. One of the apparent difficulties with this interpretation is that many individuals get happiness from things that are injurious to other beings and there are numerous people who get pleasure from things that do not help themselves and might even be damaging to their own selves. Mill tried to address this issue.

An example of someone who might get happiness from1 something that troubles them is a drug enthusiast. In this case, what John Stuart would1 say is that though this someone is receiving happiness in the short run from the drugs, he or she is will also get a lot of ache and distress from the addiction eventually. 1The long-run pleasure these individuals can get from truly curbing their drug practice would significantly outweigh the pleasure that these individuals get1 from the drugs.

People who get happiness from giving pain to others, Mill’s ethical philosophy of Utilitarianism address this problem. Mill declares that it is our ethical 1imperative to make choices that profit the greater good and 1Utilitarianism makes the statement that the moral good is 1the greatest good to the greatest 1number of people. Since most modern proponents’ of1 this supposition are advocates of animal rights, it is often now said as “sentient beings” rather than just people (Jahn, 2005). Mill’s edition of 1Utilitarianism also has some principal disparities from the edition put forth by his guru Jeremy Bentham.

The most widespread criticism to this theory is that it is impracticable to know with any conviction what outcomes one's actions will direct to. This extends 1to the thought that because this theory does not defend the fundamental values of each individual can direct to cases where a person’s rights are dishonored in service of 1the larger good. Contemporary Utilitarian’s point out that of these illustrations are offensively unnatural, and John Stuart feels that he has the answer to both objections. Mill says that ethical actions should not be seen as on the individual level but as the rule of thumb. It means that if a specific action can be in general resolute to direct to good outcomes, then that is the deed that should be taken except there is an apparent discrepancy that is known with confidence that this time it will direct to dissimilar outcomes. Mill further elaborates that there is no complexity in proving any moral customary whatever to work poorly, if we presume universal stupidity to be conjoined with it, meaning Mills thinks that only a stupid person could possibly imagine that circumstances like these would direct towards good results. However, these criticisms still persevere, and the topic is far from mature.

**Liberty, freedom of speech, character, and action**

John Stuart Mill declares the model civilization is one where every human being has financial and personal sovereignty or freedom from the state machinery, and the base for this right for a person’s freedom is on the statistic that it will guide towards the utmost pleasure to the maximum number of inhabitants. In this way, we can stay away from the oppression or the mainstream that rivals of Democracy frequently fear. Mill held a strong belief in freedom of speech and expression and in the harm principle, which says that people should have absolute freedom to the point where their actions hurt others, Mill did not believe in the notion of unchallengeable rights. Mill assumed that if offering the definite public freedom will escort to more damage than good to civilization as a whole then that right should be discarded. Therefore, John Stuart Mill is not in the libertarian school of thought, but hold exclusively different ideas.

John Stuart was a socially progressive of his time. However, he did hold some widespread racial attitudes he robustly rejected the thought of slavery. He understood in the freedom of everyone to live as one desires even demonized clusters, for instance, homosexuals. These were all founded on the thought that being accepting of other beings and respecting their freedom would grow the happiness of society. Mill’s influence significantly enhanced the living state of affairs in much of England at the time although whether his ideas and his belief in ethical Utilitarianism is actually well-suited is still a debate.

### Speech

The makeover of civilization from patrician to progressively representative systems of organization carried with its prospects, but it also offered threats. It meant law by a communal majority would be more dominant, constant, and universal than the monarchs of earlier times. The supremacy of the bulk according to Mill, opened up about new dangers of oppression over the persons or entities. Freedom being no less at jeopardy from a freshly endowed many, than from an utter ruler. The limitations over sovereignty that troubled John encompassed, to be certain, politically ordained limitations of freedom; but they as well took in comprehensive force and control, whether in the form of physical force or legal consequences, or the ethical compulsion of public outlook. Casual instruments of public stress and hope could, in mass representative civilizations, be all governing. Mill bothered that the application of such supremacies would lead to boiling conformity in character, action, and thought. Mill aims to display that there should be no effort to regulate the expression of belief or in other words freedom of speech.

True dogmas are in broad-spectrum repressed because, although they are correct, they are believed to be incorrect. To undertake that because one considers any view as incorrect, it should be repressed, Mill reasons that to assure reliability for one’s opinions. Human beings, however, are not beings adept of reliable knowledge. It might be debated that Mill believes that some true dogmas should be repressed because they are understood to be destructive. But to debate that we should overpower an opinion because it is damaging would either be to assume reliability on its position as damaging, or to let the discussion on that query open which in turn should encompass deliberation on the practical matter itself.

Even when a conviction is not right or true, according to Mill, its declaration may still be helpful to safeguarding the truth, and thus, feelings or beliefs should not be repressed. The proclamation of wrong beliefs leads to an argument which draws to better understanding. Without energetic resistance of reality, we risk losing the wisdom of its real implication, with honest awareness becoming condensed to just phrase. It is hence just as imperative to hear counter-arguments to the reality as its re-articulation.

Nevertheless, there might be views instituting that kind of communications which do not have reality as their goal poetry, music and art should be free from interventions.

### Action and Character

Mill’s discussion for freedom of individuality or character is argued in On Liberty, chapter 3 and is divided into two parts. He claims that it is most suitable for people if they are offered space and freedom to improve their character. Additionally, Mill reasons that it is best for society as a whole as well. Mill’s debate for the prior is Romantic in nature because different characters have different mentalities and nature; they must be allowed freedom to ascertain and improve their own behaviors and their way of spending lives.

Nature of human is not an apparatus to be assembled after a prototype and made to do precisely the work arranged for it, but it is like a tree, which needs to progress and mature itself on all borders, in accordance to the affinity of the inner powers which brand it a worldly being.

The basic multiplicity of individuals means that it is not useful for them to exist in an expectation that all personalities will live in an alike way. In this logic, the discussion is a logical one; that one approach of life is doubtful to fit all distinct perceptions. But John Stuart also proposes that it is a fundamental facet of the better life that it has to be a choice of everyone in accordance to their wishes. However, it is really of utmost importance that not only what men do, but also in what fashion of men they are that do it.

Mill considers that the major threat of mass-society is self-subjugation and conformity, as this leads to the weakening of human originality and energy. Victorian civilization was according to Mill, ruled by beliefs of respectability centered on Christian self-suppression; Mill, in comparison, boosts the "Greek ideal of self-development” (Ryan, 2016). It is people that are multi-facet, genuine and impulsive those are rightly happy.

It is also significant for humanity more largely that entities be permitted to progress their ways of lives. It is advantageous to have a range of experiences of living and to be motivated by a broad range of imaginative arrangements of life. And the diversity that prevails within such a setting, Mill believes that the key to preserving social improvement. A variety of character and beliefs offers the machine of prolific strain that pushes a state ahead.

The room for legitimate compulsion is led by the ‘harm principle’ the only drive for which authority can be lawfully used over any fellow of a cultured public, against one's will, is to avoid mischief to others. An individual’s deed can be justifiably influenced upon only if that deed might hurt another person. It may not be sensible to interfere in all cases in which it is genuine to do so. Here, the belief simply states the circumstances under which intervention is permitted not the circumstances under which it is desired.

Concerning one’s own emotional state and situations, the most normal individual has resources of understanding incalculably exceeding those that can be controlled by anyone else. The intervention of the social order to override one’s verdict and devotions in what only concerns him or herself must be based on general beliefs; which may be completely wrong, and even if correct, are as likely as not to be exploited to specific cases. For instance, there should exist a common assumption against authoritarian efforts to inhibit an individual's self-interested behavior for their own betterment.

Mill willingly acknowledges that no behavior is self-centered in a way that it upsets the individual themselves. No individual is a completely secluded being, but it is only when a person violates a different and transferrable duty to any other individual, the case is thrown out of the self-centered class. It means that when we harm a person, we break up the responsibility to that person.

John Stuart Mill concern, during the course, is to preserve the freedom of individuals not only in the face of the danger of governmental or national oppression but from the risk of more sinister forms of societal pressure (Kurer, 2016). We have the freedom to argue with an individual, to dodge him, and to motivate others to dodge him too; that is the right of everyone. The separating line amid the appropriate and illicit use of our freedom and sovereignty, still, is certainly hard to draw.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, John Stuart Mill attempted to provide explanations of how to achieve happiness in the society as a whole and tried to prove in his ethical theories and philosophies that freedom of speech, actions, beliefs, and self-development opportunities will not only be useful for individuals but the society as a whole. Moreover, freedom, compassion, and respect will ultimately lead to supreme happiness and contentment. Because of his philosophies and struggle, Mill inspired a lot of people and researches to accept the theory of utilitarianism and work towards it to pursue universal happiness. Though, Mill did not agree with all the aspects of the theory of utilitarianism and therefore, presented his views that he felt were more beneficial for the society as a whole. However, the debate continues to the present day.

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