

# To the consequential theory, or also

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



(a) Discuss whether Mr. Micheal Chong's action of selling a defective product is morally right based on the Consequential as well as based on the Non-Consequential Theory and Virtue Ethics? To determine whether an act is considered as morally right or wrong, referring to the Consequential Theory, or also known as Consequentialism, we will rely solely on the consequence of the action itself. If the outcome of the action is positive, then the action is morally right. Based on consequentialism, we should opt for the action with the best overall consequences and we should always try to promote the best consequences. There are numerous types of consequentialism, however, we will focus mainly on egoistic consequentialism and utilitarianism. Egoistic consequentialism is where one only takes into consideration how the consequence of an act will affect oneself or a given group.

On the other hand, utilitarianism only concerns itself with the state of affairs. For a utilitarian, if an act has value as right or wrong, then it can only be derivatively, because of the good or bad states of affairs that it produces. The fundamental principle of utilitarianism is the principle of utility.

The principle of utility is the morally right action that produces the best overall consequences in regard to the utility of welfare of all the affected parties. Another belief of consequentialism is egoism or particularistic consequentialism. Egoism is the view that morality coincides with the self-interest of a party whether it is an individual or an organisation.

An egoist is one who determines that the moral value of an action should be founded on the principle of personal benefit. For example, an action is

considered morally right if it helps one's long-term interest. If it undermines it an action is considered morally wrong.

While making a business decision to increase the company's profits can be viewed as egoistic however pursuing one's own economic advantage can also increase the well-being of society as a whole. Those who question the theories of consequentialism are dubbed non-consequentialists. Non-consequentialism is a theory that rejects that the consequences of our acts or of the rules to which those acts conform, whether good or bad, regulates the rightness or wrongness of our actions.

The most influential of all non-consequentialist approaches is probably Kant's Imperative Theory. In his view, right actions have moral value only if they're done with a goodwill. He believed in goodwill, good actions proceed from right intentions and those inspired by a sense of duty. " Act so as to use humanity, whether in your own person or in others, always as an end, and never merely as a means." (Kant, 1785). In other words, we should always act in a way that respects human rationality in others as well as in ourselves. Another non-consequentialist approach is the Prima Facie obligation popularised by Ross (Ross, 1930) where some duties can be superseded by a more vital obligation in specific situations.

One of the prima facie duties which is relevant to our present situation is the duty of non-maleficence or non-injury where it is a person should avoid harming or injuring others physically or psychologically. In Rawls view, social institutions should not maximise good consequences. In short, Rawls

opposes the idea of utilitarianism as everyone should be treated justly and equally as justice is the first virtue of any institution (Rawls, 1999, p. 3).

As for Aristotle, he believed that for there to be a virtuous state, virtuous acts must be performed. In Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, he believed that utilitarianism justifies the exploitation of other members of the society for the happiness of others. No one's happiness should be more important than others.

(Nozick, 1974) For Mr. Micheal Chong's action to be a morally right act, based on consequentialism, it must produce a good outcome. This is based on the saying, "the end justifies the means" (Mizzoni, 2009, p.

104). If the result of his action is important enough, he can use any means necessary of achieving it. Mr.

Micheal Chong's action of selling defective wool scarf was a show of egoistic/particularistic consequentialism as his only concern was the wellbeing of the company. His action also is considered morally right under the concept of utilitarianism as the wellbeing of the company trumps over the few complaints made by the consumers. If he acted against the principles of utilitarianism by recalling the products, it would harm a greater number of people.

Hence, under the theories of consequentialism, Mr. Micheal Chong's act was morally right. If we were to view Mr. Micheal Chong's actions through a non-consequentialist point-of-view, his actions would have been morally wrong as non-consequentialist do not concern themselves with the final outcome.

Non-consequentialists are more interested in the act itself. Mr. Micheal Chong went against his prima facie obligations to the consumers who were injured by the wool scarf when he ignored their complaints whom he owes a duty of non-maleficence/non-injury. Those consumers should be treated justly and fairly as they too are a part of the society. As predicted by Nozick; when utilitarianism is practised the minority are often times exploited. As his acts were discriminative and not in goodwill, ignoring the consumer's grievances is against the principles of non-consequentialism and therefore not morally right. In conclusion, Mr.

Micheal Chong's action is considered morally right based on the principles of consequentialism but morally wrong to a non-consequentialist. (b) What would you advise Mr. Micheal Chong pertaining to this matter? In Mr. Micheal Chong's situation, as the CEO and majority shareholder of the company, Scarf Wool Bhd., he has an obligation to the Company to act its best interest. Should it take precedence over the Company's duty to provide quality products to its consumers? In my opinion, although disregarding the consumers' complaints was in the best interest of the Company, he should have found a better solution.

He should not have taken such an egoistic measure. No matter how small the complaint, a company would be nothing without its customers. Hence, it is pertinent to address and resolve the issue before the Company's name is tarnished. Recalling the wool scarf would cause the Company to suffer some damage so Mr. Micheal Chong could fire the negligent Quality Advisor/Advisor of the Company. This is to show the consumers that the

Company cares about their complaints and the Company would not suffer too much financial damage as opposed to recalling every wool scarf. This way more parties would be satisfied.

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