

Essay on ethical relativism with egoism

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



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Meaning

Ethical relativism is the situation that there is no universally valid or objective moral principle, because every moral judgment is a topic of human opinion. In other words, there are no right or wrong ways apart from what everyone considers to be as right or wrong.

Obviously, every individual has a responsibility to form their personal opinions about morality. Similarly, it is obvious that to find it more difficult to search the correct answers to ethical questions in comparison to finding the correct answers to arithmetic problems. But an ethical relativist goes ahead and claims, there are not any objective considerations by the means of which it can be said that a particular moral judgment is wrong or that few moral judgments are superior to others. Ethical relativism can further be divided into Subjective ethical relativism and Conventional ethical relativism (Lawhead, 2009 p. 416).

Ethical Egoism is a theory of people having a moral obligation to act and do only those things those are in their best interest. As per this position, the location of value is on the individual and there is no higher value than an individual's own life and well-being. Ethical Egoism is an ethical objectivism's

version and must not be misunderstood as subjective ethical relativism, as the egoist may claim that his/her moral judgments might be wrong when another person's best interests are placed before my own. Of course, the principles of an egoist will dictate different and sometimes rival, courses of action. For example, it is in my best interests to endorse the prospering philosophy program at our university, whereas it is in the best interest of the coach to promote the thriving the football program. In business, if each company attempts to capture greater market share with the best product, the society as a whole enjoys the benefits (Lawhead, 2009 p. 417).

Compare and Contrast

Ethical relativism signifies that there are no moral rights or wrongs, no moral absolutes. But Ethical egoism believes in the presence of absolutes. The problem with ethical egoism is that there are no universal standards for judging the absolutes. Ethical egoism is normative whereas ethical relativism is psychological (cmu. edu, 2002). In, Ethical relativism dispute between two groups cannot be resolved, as each group tenaciously claims to be right. Ethical Egoism does not display how to resolve such moral disputes or better called conflicts of interests (cmu. edu, 2002).

The main problems in the case of ethical relativism are; firstly, a dispute between two groups cannot be resolved, as each group tenaciously claims to be right. Secondly, we cannot condemn the immoral practices such as genocide in Rwanda or Nazi Germany, apartheid in South Africa, etc. Thirdly, the view undercuts the likelihood of reform, since it is claimed that it is illegitimate to evaluate any moral practice from outside, making acts such as civil disobedience movement as immoral (Santas, n. d.).

Problems that arise with ethical egoism include; firstly, the perceived failure of being able to give a convincing account of why one is warranted in privileging their personal interest. Secondly, the secondary problem of difficulties in identification of what is not and what is in the self-interest of a person. Finally, it seems to tell people to start value those things that are mismatched or incompatible with each other. Also, Ethical Egoism does not give a consistent set of instructions for given action-- a big problem when the goal is guiding conduct (Hawk & Schlabach, 1998).

References

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