

# Ethical theories

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Ethical theories Consequentialists moral theories are in most cases teleological: they involve application of virtues to attain some goal and evaluate the actions taken in terms of moral and ethics in attaining the specific goals. Utilitarianism is a theory that critically portrays this, and involves application of ethical codes and other ethical standards that aim at maximizing the net expectable utility for all the parties that are affected by a particular decision, or a specific action. Therefore, actions or decisions are ethical to the degree that they seek to promote the best good for a great number.

Deontological theory is one of the best known principles of ethics. It's sometimes referred to as "ethic of reciprocity" (Pollock, 2010). Simply put, the theory requires that "do to others as would have them do to you." Found in many religious doctrines it's the best and most concise general principle of ethics. On the other hand, teleological theory is an outcome based theory. The theory states that an action is not motivated by the motive, but the end that is either good or bad (Pollock, 2010). Therefore, if an action causes a satisfactory good result, it is considered to be ethical in this theory, and the motive of such an action is considered independent of the end result. The two theories are similar in that they both advocate for ethics of value to one another with the natural morality law of advocating good for others, as one would like to be treated by others. Teleological theory however does not consider the motive but only the ethical end.

Having the knowledge and skills in these two theories would enhance ethics of virtue and morality when dealing with others. Each action by an individual is evaluated according to the term of the utility principle (Kay, 1997). This would facilitate actions that are ethical and moral that would result to

promote the greatest good for others.

The professional ethical dilemma I have experienced involved lying to the manager concerning a workmate that had gone to carry out his personal business. The manager questioned his whereabouts and I had to lie that he had gone for some medical checkup, and was not in a good state to go for leave permission from the manager. Though unethical to lie, the rule of utilitarianism dictates that the behavior is evaluated by rules, which if universally followed would lead to the greatest good for the greatest number of people (Kay, 1997). If I could have been ethical enough to tell the truth, the manager could have taken disciplinary action that could even have led to termination as a result of absconding duties. This would not lead to the good of all as explained above. The option was to lie and then do the job that the team member was required to do. As deontological theory explains this was what I could have wished to be done to me in my absence. The end as the teleological theory explains is the important aspect and it has to promote the good of everyone.

Ethical dilemmas in most cases might lead to actions that would be considered unethical but overall leading to fulfilling the rule of utilitarianism, and the deontological and teleological ethical theories. Ethical standards are in most cases difficult to hold, with ethical theories portraying contradictions in interpretations. However, the natural law of morality requires that a good has to be universal and to the greatest number of persons as utilitarianism rule requires. This makes an action whether good or bad be judged by the good promoted to the concerned parties.

#### References

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