

# Ethical theories paper

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## Traditional and ic Ethical Theories Traditional and ic Ethical Theories

Utilitarianism Theory In normative ethics, Utilitarianism theory holds that the right course of action is that which maximizes utility, particularly defined as reducing suffering and maximizing happiness. As advocated by a dual of influential contributors John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, Classic utilitarianism, is hedonistic. It is currently considered being a consequentialism, although when Anscombe initially introduced that word, it was meant to differentiate between consequentialism and " old-fashioned Utilitarianism". Utilitarianism claims that the moral of actions is determined solely by its resulting consequent, though there is still a debate over the extent of consideration that should be offered to intended consequences, foreseen consequences and actual consequences. Utilitarianism can be said to be a reductionist and a quantitative approach to ethics, as well as a form of naturalism (Zilioli, 2007). It is the opposite of deontological ethics, virtue ethics, ethical egoism, and pragmatic ethics.

### Kantian Theory

This is an absolutist and deontological approach. It is based on the fact that individuals should believe in doing things because it is the right thing to do meaning and the duty of an individual to perform a certain act, which can be regarded as right. It does not believe that each act should be done because it results in happiness but should be done because it is the appropriate thing to do. Kant's ethics are based on A Priori reasoning while Mill's and Bentham's are based on A Posteriori logic (Zilioli, 2007).

### Cultural Relativism

This is a theory which was developed in anthropological research as axiomatic in the few initial decades of 20th century by Franz Boas and

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popularized later by his students (Peoples & Bailey, 2012). Boas did not coin the term. Cultural relativism involves certain methodological and epistemological claims. It is still debated whether these claims necessitate a particular ethical stance or not. This principle should be carefully distinguished from moral relativism.

#### Individual Relativism

This is a principle of truth based on the statement "if one believes something it is true." The outcome of individual relativism results in two obvious absurdities, and consequently one nail-in-the-coffin objection. To begin with, the most obvious absurdity that is a consequent of individual relativism is if everybody's beliefs are true, then there would not be any false belief. This means everybody is always right, and their beliefs are true and cannot be false. The second relatively obvious absurdity is if there are no false beliefs, then no one will ever be wrong according to their beliefs hence there will always be conflicting beliefs. Finally, if someone believes individual relativism was false it would be true because it is true (Zilioli, 2007).

#### Ethical Relativism

Ethical relativism concept holds that variances in moral practices, in many cultures, bring a significant concern in ethics. Whether an act is wrong or right depends entirely on the society's moral norms where it is practiced. A similar act may be morally wrong in a given society, whereas it is morally right in another. According to ethical relativist, universal moral standards do not exist. A society's practices can only be judged against its own moral standards. Ethical Relativism is a sound framework for ethical behavior because it respects people's culture and beliefs. It does not force a certain group of people to believe in what the other group believes in. It does not go <https://assignbuster.com/ethical-theories-paper/>

further to make an obligation to people to do what is deemed right, but instead it sets boundaries and accepts other beliefs as they are (Peoples & Bailey, 2012).

#### References

Peoples, J. G., & Bailey, G. A. (2012). *Humanity: An introduction to cultural anthropology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Zilioli, U. (2007). *Protagoras and the challenge of relativism: Platos subtlest enemy*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Pub.