

utilitarianism

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The Connection between Justice and Utility

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The Connection between Justice and Utility

John Stuart Mills argues that the barrier to happiness is justice. Every time and at times one feels they should make themselves happy, then the thought that usually comes is whether the means by which that person wants to get happy is just or unjust. Human beings therefore naturally have feelings of justice and these feelings sometimes compromise our critical and intellectual thinking and decision making as human beings. It is therefore very important for human beings to always ascertain the just nature or the unjust nature of any action before they make their decisions. They should consult both the moral constitution and the legal constitutions for them to settle on decisions that are not biased to feelings rather on justice.

The argument that no law however wrong or evil it might be and should not be violated by anyone by whatever means is very contradictory having in mind that such bad laws could be unjust and the morality of a person may not allow them to abide by such a law (Mills, 2016). This, when implemented or clanged onto by the implementers of these laws, may be unjust to the recipients of the law and should, therefore, be implemented cautiously lest it will torture people. The legal professionals are also on different views of this as others believe that these bad laws are worth being violated while others insist that however bad a law is it should be abided upon provided it is a law. It is therefore evident that there are unjust laws yet laws are supposed to offer justice to all. Amidst this irony, the legal system is still supposed and expected to serve every citizen with justice despite the injustices of its so-called just laws. There is no ultimate justice at the end of everything and thus in cases of unjust laws, the moral constitution should be used to serve the victims with justice.

Denying a person their legal rights is injustice so long as it leads to an infringement of a moral right which that particular person is entitled to. There is also a universal principle that everyone should be given the rights they are entitled to without considering whether these entitlements are good or evil and it is termed unjust when people obtain good things which they do not deserve or when they are made to undergo evil things as well which they do not deserve. This is totally contrary to the general expectation that justice calls that one should receive good only if he has done good and evil when he does evil and also that people only receive good things from people they have done good and evil from the people they have done evil.

Justice involves impartiality in that somebody should not fail to implement that which they have promised whether by just mentioning it or by writing it down (Mills, 2016). However this is often violated as the promise-giver usually does not readily fulfill the promise especially if he/she is stronger than the one he/she has promised something with the argument that since they had offered it themselves willingly, they can also choose not to fulfill it themselves as there is no legal obligation that obliges them to fulfill such promises. The other injustice that has become an acceptable practice is the practice of favoritism where somebody who is in a position to favor let's say a relative or friend, does so and is applauded instead of condemned. Happiness has therefore been given boundaries that it is just when those in positions to violate the rights of others do so while those who are not able to defend their happiness suffer injustices despite the belief that justice should be impartial.

In conclusion, there are various arguments regarding utility and justice. There is a strong relationship between utility and justice as justice is supposed to guarantee the greatest happiness. The communist argue that those who work harder should be appreciated better and the opposite

is true while others argue that a law should be obeyed whether it is good or evil. There is
therefore no agreed upon ultimate justice.

References

²
<https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/mill/utilitarianism.pdf>

Mill, J. S. (2016). Utilitarianism. In *Seven Masterpieces of Philosophy* (pp. 41-65). Routledge.

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