



**IJIRCCCE**

e-ISSN: 2320-9801 | p-ISSN: 2320-9798



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

IN COMPUTER & COMMUNICATION ENGINEERING

**Volume 10, Issue 5, May 2022**

**ISSN** INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA

**Impact Factor: 8.165**



9940 572 462



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# A Study on Ethical relativism

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**ABSTRACT:** Ethical relativism based on the argument that morality is relative to the norms of one's culture so if we do something and we try to look whether it is right or wrong then it is totally dependent on the moral norms of society in which these things have been done. Therefore, if we look carefully at the argument then we understand that practice which has been done in one society is right and wrong in another society in terms of moral things.

**KEYWORDS:** Ethical relativism, norms, argument.

## I. INTRODUCTION

From the point of view of an ethical relativist, there are no moral standards in our universe which could be considered for all the peoples of the society. In this case, actions are judged by the society of its own. Let's say that if we consider the ethical relativism is right then there will be no more common configurations that lead to resolve the moral disputes of the society and if we have reached a certain conclusion on some ethical matters then members have to be from different societies. Most ethicists would reject the theory of ethical relativism while some claim that if there is a difference in the moral practice of societies then the fundamental practices which have been practiced in the society were not the part of underlying principles. For example, if we look at some societies where if someone killed the parent's after achieving a certain age that is considered as a common practice for someone and believed that their life would be improved after it and become physically active and vigorous But we look carefully these things which would be condemned and a practically offense in our society because it's our duty to take care of our parents as it is our moral principles so in this case we would consider these societies which may be differ on their application of fundamental moral principles and will agree on these principles. Let's take a case where we argued that some moral principles and beliefs which are culturally relative but at the same time others would not as consider a practice where people decision about their dress and clothes depend on their local or cultural customs whereas case of torture and political repression have to be governed by certain norms and of some moral standards. So, we simply say that if some practices are relative that doesn't mean it has to apply to all the practices.

Ethical relativism is mostly criticism by philosophers due to its implications on individuals having some moral beliefs. On this, philosophers criticized that if all the actions will depend on society morals whether it is correct or not then it has to follow the norms of one's society and if we diverge from it then it should be considered as an act of immorality. So, it gave an argument that someone is a member of a particular group or society who believes that practices of racism or sexism are morally permissible so he has to accept those actions and consider them as the right thing. But that kind of thinking causes social conformity which results in no improvement in the society. So, we came across the argument which can be considered as the strongest with respect to ethical relativism, which argues that universal's moral can be part of existence if we make some moral practices and beliefs vary among the cultures. For example, if we look out the treatment which was carried out by Nazi society was more reprehensible irrespective of their beliefs that are carried by them on its own. Suppose we have to justify the moral practices and beliefs of the people then ethical relativism will not be able to recognize the fact many societies have their good reasons for the account of their view rather than other societies. It is also called as radical doctrine which will again be contrary to different thoughts of people which they commonly assume. As we know that different circumstances lead to different actions that are actually the things which make the difference. Let's take a condition where someone wants to enter in a home so it is morally permissible or not that is only depends upon the person who is owner of the house or a paying guest or some thief so people have different idea their different belief about ethics in which no one wants to deny these facts. Ethical

relativism can be described to raise some more objections against some illogical social customs in which these customs are suitable due to certain norms of society. Critics criticized that if all the actions will depend on society morals whether it is correct or not then it has to follow the norms of one's society and if we diverge from it then it should be considered as an act of immorality. There are no moral standards in our universe which could be considered for all the peoples of the society

## II. REVIEW

In the late 18th century, Kant moral philosophy was an ethical theory which was given by German philosopher Immanuel Kant. It mainly emphasizes the fact that morality of decisions will not be determined by their consequences but due to motivations of deontological moral theories. In this, actions taken by people will be based on the motivations of goodwill and their morality is not measured by its consequences. On the other hand, rule utilitarianism is an ethical theory given by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Henry Sidgwick and G.E Moore. It mainly focuses on the morality actions which would emphasize their decisions by their consequences. It is more focused on the principle of utility that will bring more utility i.e good, happiness and wellbeing to the majority of people. In Spite of their intentions, it is mainly considered the actions as good and moral if their results will provide happiness to others. The main difference between utilitarianism and Kantianism ethical theory is that rule utilitarianism is a teleological moral theory while rule utilitarian's is a deontological theory. As Kant ethical theory is based on deontological theories in which these types of theories are based on ethics which involves responsibility, commitment and having some moral duties. Due to this, Kant gave these theories to people to make them understand and have some ethical guidelines while taking some decisions and actions. He basically said that having some goodwill, extension, duty and moral worth are some important aspects to determine the morality of an action. He said that one has to emphasize their duty as a fundamental aspect when they do some action. Other than that, he further explained that humans being rational have to use their reasoning ability and thinking when they make some ethical decisions and a person has to be engaged and have to take some good actions when he should be guided and motivated by goodwill and duty. He will take two fundamental questions to give their answers when a person is doing some actions. These Questions are "Can I rationally ensure that everyone acts as I propose to act?" and "Does my action respect the goals of human beings rather than merely using them for my own purposes?" and if the answers of both of above questions are NO then we have to do the action and make these were equivalent. The very first reason given by Kant is not to consider the consequences of actions when we try to determine its morality and while doing some actions like theft, murder, lying etc., have to be stopped but sometimes these actions also lead to result in more happiness than any other actions. On the other hand, Utilitarianism is based on the principle of utility having the idea of bringing more happiness. This theory was carried by philosophers in order to attempt the lawmakers of England to take some good from the people in spite of taking some welfare of their social class when they are making some laws about it. Utilitarianism takes the ethical good of some action by locating its moral goodness, having some feelings of being a human to attains happiness and pleasure to more and more people. So, if we look at this philosophy deeply then we understand that it is solely based on the principle of hedonism and consequentialism which mainly talks about the right action that will be entirely defined by the consequences which will be produced by the people. It is a true action under utilitarianism if it produces pleasure for the doer and also for the others. So it will be considered as ethical if the majority of the people will benefit from the actions and decisions made by the people. If we look at this theory then we understand that it encourages people to compromise their interests and gives them a chance to promote happiness and good in the society. Also In philosophy, it is considered as the most important and powerful ethics

## IV. CONCLUSION

Many philosophers have not a confirmation about these ethics of wrong and right with some critical examination having some actions of different practices and beliefs about the society. So, if we from the theory point of view it justifies some moral practices and beliefs in which these relativisms were not able to recognize itself and also society will have better hold on their own views than others. But even we reject the theory of ethical relativism, after that again it raises some important issues about the society and we know that our society have deeply influenced by the culture so we also have the reasons to explore our beliefs which are different from on its own and different challenges we have to face for the reasons our beliefs and values which we hold. Therefore, ethical relativism is not a valid and practicable position.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my major project guide Professor Amit Gahlot who is my research paper supervisor, because of his patient guidance, enthusiastic encouragement and helpful critiques help us to complete this research paper. I would also want to thank my companion in this research paper Sumit Kumar and Prince Tomar whose dedication and hard work make it possible to deliver such a informative work within a given time period. And at last, but not the least

families of every one who supported unconditionally and motivates us to every bit to give our best possible.

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SJIF Scientific Journal Impact Factor

Impact Factor: 8.165

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**ISSN** INTERNATIONAL  
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