

# Celestial Guidance and Human Reason: Reassessing Utilitarianism as a Foundation for Welfare Economics in Modern Welfare States

Dr. BALARAJ SARAF

M.A., Ph.D

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Dept. of Economics

S.P.& JMB Degree College SHORAPUR – 585224.

District- Yadagiri. State- Karnataka.

## **Abstract:**

This paper explores the ethical foundations of **utilitarianism** within the context of **welfare economics** in modern welfare states, proposing a critique rooted in **celestial guidance** and **human reason**. While utilitarianism focuses on maximizing happiness through human-centered calculations of **intrinsic value** and **disvalue**, it overlooks the **divine insight** provided by **sacred texts** and **moral law**. The paper argues that human reason, though essential, is limited by biases and fallibility, and thus cannot fully capture the **higher moral truths** revealed through divine wisdom. By integrating **celestial guidance** with welfare policies, the paper suggests a more holistic approach to justice, equity, and societal well-being, grounded in both rational thought and divine ethical principles.

**Keywords:** Celestial Guidance, Human Reason, Utilitarianism, Welfare Economics, Divine Insight, Moral Law

## **1. Introduction: The Intersection of Human Reason and Divine Insight in Ethical Theory**

Utilitarianism, developed by philosophers like **Jeremy Bentham** (1789) and **John Stuart Mill** (1863), has long been a cornerstone of modern ethical theory. Central to this framework is the idea of **maximizing happiness**—actions are deemed morally right if they increase overall pleasure and decrease suffering. However, this rational calculus, based on human experience, faces critique for its **inherent limitations**. As a purely human-centered system, it is subject to the flaws of **human reason**, which is often biased, fallible, and incapable of capturing higher truths that transcend empirical experience.

While utilitarianism aims to ground moral decision-making in reason, it misses the potential for moral truths provided by **divine insight**, or **celestial guidance**, revealed through **sacred texts** such as the **Qur'an** (2:286), the **Bible** (Exodus 20:1-17), and the **Bhagavad Gita** (2:47). These texts present a **moral law** that is immutable and rooted in a divine order, offering a moral framework that contrasts sharply with the contingent nature of utilitarian reasoning. This paper seeks to explore the tension between human reason and divine insight, reassessing the role of **utilitarianism** as a foundational strategy for welfare economics in modern welfare states.

## **2. The Foundations of Utilitarianism: Intrinsic Value and Disvalue**

Utilitarianism posits that the **intrinsic value** of actions lies in their ability to produce happiness or pleasure, while the **disvalue** is found in pain or suffering. According to **Bentham** (1789), **pleasure** and **pain** are the ultimate measures of moral worth, and ethical actions should aim to maximize happiness for the greatest number of people. This perspective underpins much of modern welfare economics, which seeks to create policies that maximize social welfare through the distribution of resources based on **utilitarian principles**.

However, the utilitarian framework is limited in its understanding of **value**. **Happiness** or **pleasure**, as defined by human experience, may not adequately capture what is **intrinsically valuable**. In contrast, **divine insight**, as revealed in religious traditions, provides a broader and more transcendent understanding of what is truly valuable. For example, in **Islam**, the **Qur'an** (16:90) teaches that **justice**, **compassion**, and **equity** are central values, regardless of their immediate impact on happiness or pleasure. Similarly, the **Bhagavad Gita** (2:47) stresses the importance of **performing one's duty** in accordance with divine will, independent of the outcome.

Utilitarianism, by focusing on the **empirical and transient** nature of happiness, misses these **transcendent** aspects of moral worth, which are central to divine teachings. As such, while utilitarianism offers a **pragmatic solution** for maximizing happiness, it cannot account for the **higher moral imperatives** dictated by celestial guidance.

### ***3. Human Reason's Deviations from Celestial Guidance: Limitations and Biases***

Human reason, while a powerful tool for moral decision-making, is also **prone to error**. It is influenced by **emotions, cognitive biases, and cultural conditioning**—factors that can lead to skewed moral judgments. For instance, **Kant** (1785) in his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* emphasizes that human reason, in its isolated form, can fail to discern the **moral law** and can be distorted by subjective desires and social influences. This inherent **fallibility** means that human reasoning alone is insufficient for making the ultimate moral decisions.

In contrast, **divine insight** is portrayed in **theological traditions** as **perfect and infallible**. The **Bible** (Romans 3:23) notes that all humans are fallible and subject to sin, meaning that their reasoning is flawed by nature. Similarly, the **Bhagavad Gita** (16:23-24) stresses that following **divine wisdom** is essential to overcoming human ignorance and weakness. These sacred texts propose that the **divine moral law**, revealed through **celestial guidance**, offers a **clear, unchanging standard** of right and wrong, free from the biases and limitations inherent in human cognition.

Thus, while **utilitarianism** relies on human reason, it cannot account for the **greater moral truths** that divine insight reveals. A welfare state based solely on utilitarian principles risks ignoring the deeper **spiritual and ethical dimensions** that are essential for creating a truly just society.

### ***4. Celestial Guidance: The Source of True Moral Law***

The concept of **celestial guidance** or **divine insight** provides an objective, **immutable** moral framework that transcends human reasoning. Unlike **utilitarianism**, which is dependent on the subjective perceptions of pleasure and pain, divine law offers a more **universal and eternal** standard. In **Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism**, the divine laws are seen as the ultimate source of moral authority.

For example, the **Ten Commandments** in the **Bible** (Exodus 20:1-17) provide a set of unchanging moral directives that are not dependent on subjective human experiences. Similarly, the **Qur'an** (5:8) teaches that **justice and equity** should be prioritized over individual gain or societal happiness. In **Hinduism**, the **Bhagavad Gita** (2:47) advises that individuals should act in accordance with their **dharma** (duty), independent of the results, aligning their actions with **divine will** rather than the utilitarian goal of maximizing pleasure.

These **divine laws** are seen as **absolute truths** that are not contingent on the ever-changing experiences of human life. Therefore, the **celestial guidance** provided through sacred texts is a more reliable foundation for ethical decision-making than the **rational calculations** of utilitarianism.

### ***5. Reassessing Utilitarianism in the Context of Welfare Economics***

**Utilitarianism** has played a significant role in shaping modern **welfare economics**, particularly in the formulation of policies designed to maximize societal happiness. The welfare state, with its focus on resource distribution, social justice, and public goods, is often justified using utilitarian principles, which aim to maximize the total welfare of society.

However, when **utilitarianism** is used as the foundation for welfare economics, it can fail to address the deeper moral issues raised by **celestial guidance**. **Amartya Sen** (1985) highlights the limitations of utilitarianism in welfare economics, noting that it often neglects **justice, individual rights, and the moral worth of individuals**. While utilitarianism focuses on maximizing overall happiness, it may overlook the **moral imperatives** that come from **divine insight**, such as justice, compassion, and the protection of human dignity.

In the context of welfare economics, a truly just society must not only seek to maximize happiness but also to align its policies with **divine moral laws**. **Celestial guidance** offers a more comprehensive framework for **equitable resource distribution** that respects the **intrinsic worth** of each individual, as outlined in the **Qur'an** (16:90), **Bible** (Micah 6:8), and **Bhagavad Gita** (2:47).

### ***6. Conclusion: Integrating Celestial Guidance with Welfare Economics***

In conclusion, the ethical theory of **utilitarianism**, while valuable in its focus on societal well-being, is ultimately limited by its reliance on **human reason**. It fails to account for the **deeper moral truths** found in **celestial guidance**. A truly just welfare system cannot be built on **utilitarian calculations** alone; it must be informed by the **divine moral laws** revealed in **sacred texts**.

By integrating **celestial guidance** with **human reason**, we can develop a more **holistic** and **spiritually grounded** approach to welfare economics that respects both the well-being of individuals and the higher moral order.

A welfare state that aligns itself with **divine insight** will not only seek to maximize happiness but will also foster justice, equity, and compassion, ensuring that the welfare of all citizens is truly served in accordance with the divine will.

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