**COURSE
GUIDE**

**PHL 103
PHILOSOPHY OF VALUE**

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INTRODUCTION

Bravo! It is good to have on this module. This module introduces you to PHL 103: Philosophy of Value(s). PHL 103 is a two-credit unit course that is taught in the first semester of 100 Level. It consists of a minimum duration of one semester. It is a compulsory course for all B. A. Philosophy students of the University (National Open University of Nigeria, NOUN). The course simplifies the concept of Value(s) which was briefly introduced to you during the Introduction to Philosophy under the sub-area known as Axiology. Axiology is one of the traditional or core branches of Philosophy that is broken down into two: ethics and aesthetics. Axiology is concerned with the origin, types, and value standards and how value judgments are formed. To put it differently, axiology or value theory embraces all branches of moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, aesthetics, as well as feminist philosophy and even philosophy of religion. This is so because all these areas of philosophy have evaluative content in them. Thus, the course aims at informing and indeed, clarifying to the learner the significance of value(s) in Philosophy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, the learner should be able to do the following:

- ✓ Define value(s)
- ✓ Mention the different conceptions of value(s)
- ✓ Mention and explain the different applications of value theory
- ✓ Explain the scope of the concept value
- ✓ Say the relationship between philosophy and value(s)
- ✓ State why people value things differently
- ✓ Make a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic values
- ✓ Explain the different kinds of values
- ✓ Identify the characteristics of values
- ✓ Mention the uses of moral and nonmoral values
- ✓ Define value judgments
- ✓ Define factual judgments
- ✓ Make a distinction between fact and value
- ✓ Explain the different classes of value judgments
- ✓ Say the importance or relevance value judgments to human life.
- ✓ Explain why value judgments especially expressive statements cannot be disputed
- ✓ Define moral philosophy/ethics
- ✓ Mention and explain the divisions of moral philosophy/ethics
- ✓ Explain what moral theory is
- ✓ State and explain moral concept: good
- ✓ Say what makes philosophers hold contrary views regarding the

concept good
- ✓ State and explain moral concept: bad
- ✓ Explain where and how good and bad can be applied
- ✓ Explain where and how right and wrong can be applied
- ✓ Show that the concept bad is the direct opposite of the concept good
- ✓ State and explain the meaning of the moral concept: right
- ✓ Mention and explain the different kinds of right
- ✓ Mention the relationship between right, good, bad and wrong
- ✓ State and explain the moral concept: wrong on the background of moral theory
- ✓ Say what makes philosophers hold contrary views regarding the concept wrong
- ✓ Explain how wrong can be equated with evil
- ✓ Say what theory is
- ✓ Show how moral theory is indispensable in human life
- ✓ Mention and explain the attributes of moral theory
- ✓ Identify and explain some basic moral theories
- ✓ Define obligation
- ✓ Say what moral obligation is
- ✓ Make a distinction between duty and obligation
- ✓ Define justice
- ✓ Mention the different conceptions of justice as seen by the ancient Greek philosophers
- ✓ Say what injustice is
- ✓ Say what constitute the criteria of justice by Aristotle
- ✓ Identify the different notions of justice
- ✓ Explain in clear terms the different notions of justice
- ✓ Say what is the essence of justice
- ✓ Identify what rights are
- ✓ Identify and say the guarantees of natural rights and who is expected to enjoy these rights
- ✓ Mention the types of rights
- ✓ State and explain the theories of rights
- ✓ Say what is practical life
- ✓ Explain how the lived-world (physical existence) leads to the application of moral theories
- ✓ State the meaning of universalisation under moral theory

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To achieve the desired success at the end of this course unit, read all the study units and do all the assignments. Open the internet link where applicable and read the suggested material(s), take part in the discussion fora, read the recommended books and other materials, prepare your portfolios, and participate in online facilitation.

Note that each study unit has an introduction, intended learning outcomes (ILOs) or objectives, the main content, conclusion, summary and references/further readings. The introduction explains to you the expectations in the study unit. Read and carefully note the intended learning outcomes. The intended learning outcomes will tell you what you should be able to do at the completion of each study unit. Thus, it enables you to evaluate your level of learning at the end of each study unit to ensure that you have achieved the intended learning outcomes. To meet the intended learning outcomes, knowledge is presented in texts and links arranged into modules and units. Click on the links as may be directed. However, if you are reading the text offline, you will have to copy and paste the link address into a browser. You can print or download the text to save it on your computer or external drive. The conclusion gives you the theme of knowledge you are taking away from the unit. Unit summaries are also presented in downloadable format.

There are two main forms of assessments the formative and the summative. The formative assessments will help you monitor your learning. This is presented as in-text questions, discussion fora and Self-Assessment Exercises.

The summative assessments would be used by the University to evaluate your academic performance. This will be given as Computer Based Test (CBT) which serves as continuous assessment and final examination. A minimum of two or maximum of three computer-based tests will be administered with only one final examination at the end of the semester. You are required to take all the Computer Based Tests and the final examination.

STUDY UNITS

There are 16 units in this course grouped into four modules. The modules and units are presented as follows:

Module 1

Unit 1   Value(s)
Unit 2   Meaning and Scope of Value(s)
Unit 3   Kinds of Values
Unit 4   Distinction between Value Judgments and Factual Judgments

Module 2

Unit 1   Classes of Value Judgments
Unit 2   Moral Philosophy/Ethics and Divisions of Moral

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Moral Theories
(http://home.sandiego.edu/baber/general/MoralTheories.html

Value/values https://philosophy.hku.hk/think/value/values.php

PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The presentation schedule gives you the important dates for the completion of your computer-based tests, participating in forum discussions and participating at facilitations. Remember you are to submit all your assignments at the appropriate time. You should guide against delays and plagiarism in your work. Plagiarism is a criminal offence in academics and it is highly penalised.

ASSESSMENT

There are two main forms of assignments that will be scored in this course: the continuous assessment and the final examination. The continuous assessment shall be in three-fold. There will be two computer-based assessments which will be given according to the University calendar. The timing must be strictly adhered to. The computer-based assessments shall be scored a maximum of 10% each, while participation in discussion forums and your portfolio presentation shall be scored maximum of 10% if you meet 75% participation. Therefore, the maximum score for continuous assessment shall be 30% which shall form part of the final grade.

The final examination for PHL103 will be a maximum of two hours and it takes 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of five questions out of which you are expected to answer three.

Note: You will earn 10% score if you meet a minimum of 75% participation in the course forum discussions and in your portfolios, otherwise you will lose the 10% in your total score. You will be required to upload your portfolio using Google Doc. What you are expected to do in your portfolio is to present your notes or the jottings you made on each study unit and activity. This will include the time you spent on each unit and or activity.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THE COURSE

To get the most of this course you need to have a personal laptop and internet facility. This will give you adequate opportunity to learn everywhere you are in the world. Use the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to guide your self-study in the course. At the end of every unit, examine yourself with the ILOs and see if you have achieved what you need to achieve.

Carefully work through each unit and make your notes. Join the online real-time facilitation as scheduled. Where you missed the scheduled online real time facilitation, go through the recorded facilitation session

at your own free time. Each real time facilitation session will be video recorded and posted on the platform.

In addition to the real time facilitation, watch the video recorded summary in each unit. The video/audio summaries are directed to salient parts in each unit. You can assess the audio and video by clicking on the links in the text or through the course page.

Work through all self-assessment exercises. Finally, obey the rules in the class.

FACILITATION

You will receive online facilitation. The facilitation is learner-centred. The mode of facilitation shall be asynchronous and synchronous. For the asynchronous facilitation, your facilitator will:

- Present the theme for the week;
- Direct and summarise forum discussions;
- Coordinate activities in the platform;
- Score and grade activities when need be;
- Upload scores into the University recommended platform;
- Support you to learn. In this regard personal mails may be sent;
- Send you video and audio lecture and postcards for the synchronous:

There will be a minimum of six hours and a maximum of ten online real time contacts in the course. This will be video conferencing in the Learning Management System (LMS). The sessions are going to be run at an hour per session. At the end of each one-hour videoconferencing, the video will be uploaded for view at your own pace.

The facilitator will concentrate on main themes that are must know in the course. The facilitator is to present the online real time video facilitation time table at the begging of the course.

The facilitator will take you through the course guide in the first lecture at the start of the facilitation.

Do not hesitate to contact your facilitator if you:

- do not understand any of the study units or the assignments;
- have difficulty with the self-assessment exercises;
- have a question or problem with an assignment or with your tutor's comments on an assignment.

Also, use the contact provided for technical support.

Read assignments, participate in the fora and discussions. This gives you an opportunity to socialise with others on the programme. You can raise any problem encountered during the study. To gain the maximum benefit from the course facilitation, prepare a list of questions before the discussion session. You will learn a lot from participating actively in the discussions.

Finally, respond to the questionnaire provided. You will help the University to know your areas of challenges and how it can help you improve on them during the review of the course materials and lectures.

MAIN COURSE		

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MODULE 1

UNIT 1   VALUE(S)

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7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces you to what constitutes the core or essence of the concept of value(s) and by extension value theory in the discipline called philosophy. It also exposes the learner to the different theoretical usages of the concept value(s). To simplify things for the learner, philosophy as broad discipline that houses the concept of value(s) is equally discussed alongside the different kinds of values.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

•   define value(s)
•   state the importance of value(s) as a concept
•   mention the different conceptions of value(s)
•   mention and explain the different applications of value theory
•   identify the relationship between value and philosophy.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

Value, the *New World Encyclopedia* says is something good, or something one believes to be good

https://newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Fact-andValue. That is, value is anything that has inherent goodness in it. It is what is either good on its own or a means to an end which produces positive or good result(s). Value as such is what is intrinsically or extrinsically good. Talking about values, Milton D. Hunnex (1986) maintains that the general theory of values originated in the debate between Alexius Meinong and Christian von Ehrenfels. Hunnex (1986:22) reports that Meinong conceived that the source of value was feeling or the pleasure the agent expects in an object while Ehrenfels on his part argued that value consisted in desires the agent endows the object he/she desires; hence, the source of value is desire'. Thus, value attracts three different usages in philosophy.

3.1   Theoretical Usages of Value(S)

1.   There are three theoretical usages that are associated with value(s). The *Stanford Encyclopedia* states that in its broadest sense, value theory is a catch-all label used to encompass all branches of moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, aesthetics, and sometimes feminist philosophy and the philosophy of religion whatever areas of philosophy are deemed to encompass some evaluative aspect. There is a pressing need to put these overlapping areas of value theory: moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, aesthetics, and sometimes feminist philosophy and the philosophy of religion into a clear perspective in order to enhance better comprehension.

Value theory in its comprehensive usage embraces moral philosophy or ethics. Ethics is from the Greek word *ethos* which etymologically means a way of life, conduct, custom, habit or character. Ethics is one of the branches of philosophy. Like philosophy, ethics too attracts many definitions. To Joseph Omoregbe (1989:3) ‒ethics is a normative science of human conducts …, it deals with the norms or standards of human behavior‖. This goes to say that ethics is only meaningful in human social environment and by extension the society that men belong. The implication of this is that human beings by the virtue of the fact that they come from a socio-cultural group, means that they already have a sense of morality which is expected to regulate their conduct or behavior in conformity with existing values of the way of life of such a society and norms of social behavior. Arising from this, Zaato M. Nor (2007:162) explains that ethics is concerned with the way men ought to behave and not the way they behave'. That is, ethics is concerned the _oughtness' of actions or conduct (the perfect standard or principle which people should aspire to embrace) and not the _isness' (the prevailing manner in which people behave or conduct themselves). To put this in different words, ethics is concerned with the ideal conduct or behavior.

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Taken as a value theory, social and political philosophy in spite of the lack of a universally accepted definition of what it is exactly, O. P. Gauba (2003: 7) submits that political philosophy is rightly concerned with the right and wrong, good and evil in the social life‖. Philip Ujomu (1999: 56) in his contributions says that socio-political philosophy refers to the rational and philosophical examination of those issues that arise from the interaction of human beings in the state. It also concerns itself with how men ought to conduct their lives and what type of government men ought to have‖. It would not be out of place to synthesize these two views by saying that social and political philosophy or socio-political philosophy is a philosophical enquiry about the ideal human conduct in relation to the ideals of organising and executing governing affairs of the state for the benefits of the citizenry. Essentially, social and political philosophy has inherent normative attributes. Additionally, Oliver T. Agundu (2010: 89) states that when viewed or clouded with ideology, social and political philosophy is reduced to a rationalisation for current and future political and social arrangements'.

Value in aesthetics sense, T. Uzodinma Nwala (1997: 5) maintains that it is concerned with the nature of beauty, artistic values and expressions. That is, aesthetics is engaged with the evaluation or the passing of value-judgment on things considered beautiful/ugly and artistic values generally.

Feminist philosophy is a reactionary philosophy. It is motivated by the quest for social justice in the favour of women. It is a philosophical system that believes in placing the rights of women on the same pedestal with those of men. Feminism as such *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP) maintains is both an intellectual commitment and a political movement that seeks justice for women and the end of sexism in all forms. That is, the idea of feminism whether in thought and action is intended to provide justice for women and above all, eliminate discrimination against women based on their gender. Feminist philosophy conceived in this manner therefore, has inherent value in it. It is a means to a good end. Thus feminism is instrumental.

Philosophy of religion also falls under value theory as defined by *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP) and therefore, requires some form of evaluation. However, prior to doing that it is important to know what religion is. The concept religion has three Latin links; it is etymologically sourced (Joseph Omoregbe, 2000: 2) from *Ligare* (meaning to bind), *Relegere* (meaning to unite or to link), *Relegio* (meaning relationship). By this etymological derivation, religion means to bind, unite, link an individual in a relationship with a Supreme Being or Deity believed to exist and is reverenced by an individual in order to attain some benefits or rewards. Philosophy on its part is from the Greek

word *philosophia* or *phileusophia* which is the equivalent of the English word philosophy. *philosophia* or *phileusophia* is in turn sourced from two Greek words; philos/phileus meaning love and Sophia meaning wisdom. Thus, philosophy ordinarily means love of wisdom and the philosopher is a lover of wisdom.

Philosophy is in a serious want of a universally appealing and acceptable definition. That is why there as many definitions of philosophy as there are philosophers. It is important to note that one of the reasons responsible for this is the orientation of the philosophers. Philosophers have different orientations based on their interest and biases so they tend to define philosophy from such backgrounds. For the purpose of this exercise, out of the myriads of definitions of philosophy, we adopt the submission by Arthur J. Minton (1976: xvii) that philosophy, as a quest for wisdom, is an attempt to provide a vision of the world that is systematic and clear, in which the contentions between significant facts are made manifest. In view of its nature as conceived, Minton stresses that philosophy searches for the first things and the last things - for the first principles and their ultimate implications.

On this background it becomes easier to consider philosophy of religion. Philosophy of religion according to Joseph Omoregbe (2000: xii), is a free, unprejudiced, rational enquiry into the nature, meaning and purpose of religion as well as the truth-value of religious tenets'. Omoregbe adds that philosophy of religion is neither hostile to religion nor is it a defense of religion.

2.   In its narrowest sense, value theory is used for a relatively narrow area of normative ethical theory particularly, but not exclusively, of concern to consequentialists. By the way, the consequentialists are moral philosophers who maintain the belief that an action can only be classified as being good or bad when evaluated by the outcome or result of the action. For instance, the moral value of an action is based on the resultant pleasure or pain, happiness or unhappiness it produced. Consequentialism is another name for utilitarianism. In this narrow sense; value theory is roughly synonymous with axiology which broadly is an aspect. Axiology as one of the primitive branches of philosophy is sub-divided into ethics and aesthetics. As explained elsewhere in this module, each of these sub-branches has its own preoccupation.

However, axiology can be thought of as primarily concerned with classifying what things are good, and how good they are. For instance, a traditional question of axiology concerns whether the objects of value are subjective psychological states, or objective states of the world. This refers to what is called axiological objectivism and axiological

subjectivism. According to Francis O. C. Njoku (2018: 5) by axiological objectivism, it means values are objective qualities and essences that are cognitive and can be empirically established‖ while axiological subjectivism on the other hand maintains the view that value resides in the subject‖. Kant subscribes to the former while the consequentialists are in tune with the latter. Dale Jacquette (2004: 284) reports that the Kantian deontologist maintains that morality is derived from the intentions or moral psychological state of an agent and not from the effects of the actions that the agent decides to perform‖. On the contrary, Dale Jacquette (2004: 284) avers that the consequentialist holds that … intentions are irrelevant to the morality of an action except in so far as they contribute to the overall effect it produces in creating more happiness or unhappiness or the like psychological consequences, an empirical aspect of morality…. Simply put there is a contention between the deontologists and the consequentialists on the source of morality. While the deontologists acknowledge intentions or moral psychological state, the consequentialists disown it all together insisting that if intentions are to be relevant, they must have an overall effect in producing or creating more happiness or unhappiness or the like psychological consequences. Anything less than creating more happiness must be rejected out rightly, the consequentialists contend. This major disagreement has kept these schools of thought on the opposite ends of the pole.

However, there is what is called axiological relationism which Njoku (2018: 5) insists that value does neither reside exclusively in the object nor the subject, but in the relationship between subject and object". That is, the concern with value(s) could best be appreciated when it is taken as two sides of a coin that is, there is the subjective and objective side to value issue.

3.   Continuing, the *Stanford Encyclopedia* adds that in a more useful sense, value theory designates the area of moral philosophy that is concerned with theoretical questions about value and goodness of all varieties the theory of value. The theory of value, so construed, encompasses axiology, but also includes many other questions about the nature of value and its relation to other moral categories. Simply put, axiology as theory of value encompasses what is known as aesthetics and ethics. The former deals with beauty/ugliness as its subject matter while the latter is concerned with morality or normative ethics. That is, morality is concerned with how an individual ought to behave or how an individual ought not to behave based on prescribed standards.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The theory of value which also means axiology is concerned with making a distinction between what things that are good how good they are. That is, the theory of value is concerned the worth of things in moral and nonmoral ways. The theory of value thus, considers aesthetical and ethical issues, that is, beauty and moral issues respectively. Value theory has three main theoretical applications which include moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, and aesthetics; however, it is sometimes taken as feminist philosophy and the philosophy of religion too.

5.0   SUMMARY

When value is considered in philosophy it is used in three different ways:

i.   Value theory is used to encompass all branches of moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, aesthetics, and sometimes feminist philosophy and the philosophy of religion.

ii.   Value theory is used for a narrow area of normative ethical theory. In this narrow sense value theory is somehow synonymous with axiology. Axiology is primarily concerned with classifying what things are good, and how good they are and by implication classifying what things are bad and how bad they are. Axiological objectivism regards values as being objective qualities and essences that are cognitive and can be empirically identified while axiological subjectivism states value is inherent in the subject. That is, axiological subjectivism takes it that it is the individual subject that confers value to a thing.

iii.   Value theory also designates the area of moral philosophy that is concerned with theoretical questions about value and goodness of all varieties. The theory of value, so construed, encompasses axiology, but also includes many other questions about the nature of value and its relation to other moral categories. Axiology as theory of value involves what is known as aesthetics and ethics.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Explain the concept value.
2.   State the etymological source of philosophy.
3.   State the etymological source of religion.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Articulate the three understandings of the concept of value.
2.   Identify the overlapping areas of value theory and explain in details.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   MEANING AND SCOPE OF VALUE(S)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit is an elaboration of the concept of value(s). It accordingly takes you beyond the concept of value(s) to the meaning and scope of value(s).

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the scope of the concept value
- say the relationship between philosophy and values
- state why people value things differently
- define and explain higher values.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

In the ordinary understanding, anything that exists or that is thought to exist or likely to exist has its own value, importance, worth, usefulness, price and utility, etc.

There is relativity thinking in relation to value(s) that a particular thing has worth or not. This however depends on the individual or society making a particular value-judgment. It is a common sight to find that what some people or society may find relevant or important may be of little or no value at all to some other people or another society. It is arising from this understanding that adults often marvel or wonder at the action or behavior of children when they fight over the ownership of things like used perfume container or packet. Children also cry when

certain objects in their possession thought to be worthless are collected from them and thrown away as such item(s) may be considered by the adults as being worthless. This is one of the ways of demonstrating the relativity of things said to have some worth. To put this differently, individuals conceive values differently even within the same culture not to talk about values across cultures. This situation is made possible by the worldview of the people, beliefs/conceptions, experiences, ideals, expectations, history, moral norms; education, society, gender, age and environment, etc. Apparently, these factors and other indicators explain value(s) and human values. In spite of this, Nor (2007: 162) states that anchored on the diversity of human cultural experiences and expressions, values glaringly differ and may look relative. However, all things and actions in themselves have their own value(s). The nature of those value(s) is a different matter altogether. Suffice it to say that what is insinuated here does not undermine the question of higher values and lower values. The seeming relativity of values does not in any way; becloud the idea of superior values and inferior values. This will be considered in details shortly.

3.1   Philosophy and the Scope of Values

The concept value(s) is a regular feature in human discourses on a daily basis. To say that humans (including children who can talk) carry out one value-judgment once in a day will surely be an understatement. In other words, mankind is deeply involved in the making of value-judgments regularly. As a matter of fact, man's entire life and even the activities of institutions, organisations and governments, etc: federal, state and local government revolve around making value-judgments for self and the country, respectively. Be this as it may, the meaning is not immediately agreeable to scholars thus the attempts of putting the concept in a precise academic perspective remains a challenge. Philosophy as it is considered above remains a speculative, reflective and critical activity which beams it search light on all human activities. As a matter of fact, philosophy is given as a speculative, prescriptive and analytic discipline of study. Thus, the submission by H. S. Staniland (Alloy S. Ihuah, (2013: 1) that philosophy is the critical examination of the ideas about us and the world, the search for truth through reasoning. It is the critical examination of the ideas we live by is simply apt. Taken as such, it means philosophy can speculatively, prescriptively and analytically, avail mankind with the scope of values. However, the scope of values as speculatively, prescriptively and analytically arrived at becomes a problematic.

John Hospers (1956: 581) in his book: *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* loudly laments this situation when he says the attempt to give a satisfactory definition of value is an unexpectedly difficult and tricky

business. However, this observation does not mean that the concept cannot be meaningfully employed in a philosophical discourse. As Brand Blanshard (1970: 81) patently notes it is the business of philosophy to take account of values, so that it has much to say of beauty and deformity, of good and of evil, of the issues of religious beliefs‖. Thus, the idea of value(s) is indispensable to human life, it cannot go un-described and profound meaning not attached to it within a particular context or a socio-cultural milieu.

3.2   Meaning of Values

Ordinarily, value means usefulness or importance of a thing. C.B. Okolo (2003: 301) maintains that in its ordinary simple meaning, value means worth of some sort, such that anything is said to have if it is worth something. In common usage, this worth is usually in terms of economic or quasi-economic sense‖. In addition, value(s) could be seen in both moral and nonmoral contexts. For example, computer, food, money, pleasure, satisfaction and love, etc all have their values. That is why Peter K. McInerney (1992: 90) regards values as being a guide to what a person does and how he evaluates other people'. This means that value(s) is (are) the acceptable standard(s) or the ideal principle(s) for the evaluation of human actions or things generally. That is value-judgments are carried out in terms of human conduct or behaviour. This position is predicated on the consideration of values in the moral sense. The implication of this is that without values there would be lack of acceptable standards of carrying out value- judgments. If there are no objective standards to rely on to make value-judgments then for sure, mankind will retreat to the era of the sophists where man was subjectively, the measure of all things… (*Homo mensura est …*). In avoidance of this retrogression, Hospers identifies three usages and applications of value in human life. According to him (1956: 583 – 4), value is:

- A liking or preference
- That which promotes a goal (and), independently of one‘s liking or preference
- That which has value in itself without reference to any end

That is, anything preferred, anything that brings positive result irrespective of whether an individual prefers it or not, and that which is simply good in itself, is regarded by Hospers as being valuable. Thus, Hospers' view is only semantically different from Frankena‘s submission that values are either ends in themselves or means to ends. In other words, the contributions by Hospers and Frankena are both centred on the understanding that values are fundamentally intrinsic and extrinsic. These intrinsic and extrinsic natures of values encircle both

values as considered in the moral and nonmoral senses. Suffice it to note that moral and nonmoral are not opposite. The opposite of moral is immoral neither does nonmoral means amoral. Nonmoral simply means indifferent to or independent of what is moral.

3.3   Analytical Distinction between Intrinsic and Extrinsic Values

As mentioned above, when a discussion of values is proposed, what becomes obvious is the consideration of values as what is an end in itself due to the inherent completeness or goodness of a particular thing, that is, the intrinsic understanding of the qualities or essences of a thing; or on the other hand, there is also the extrinsic view which maintains that values are also means to an end. In other words, extrinsic values are complementary values in the sense that they add up to make a thing complete. That is, they enhance in making a thing whole or comprehensive or better. It is on this note that the question of higher/superior or lower/inferior values become manifest. By way of trying to consider the dichotomy between these set of values, Eskor Toyo advances three kinds of value-judgments. He (Philip Ujomu, 2001: 48 – 9) makes a distinction between:

What is, what can be, what should be. The first corresponds to a description of facts, the second to an assessment of possibility, third to an injunction. They refer to actuality, possibility and desirability, respectively.

This view is however contested by some scholars. D. D. Raphael (1978) and his protégés argue to the contrary. Raphael (1978: 8) argues that values are not facts on the grounds that there is no established procedure or methodology of deciding between and amongst conflicting set of values to determine their factuality and objectivity. This claim by Raphael is worth some critical considerations. One of the implications of this position is that the society as well as the individual has no objective means of determining whether a particular thing is right, good or wrong and bad, etc. But Raphael himself cannot deny passing value-judgments. For Raphael to claim that there is lack of acceptable method of knowing what is better and objective out of conflicting values and yet he presents here authoritatively that due to conflicting values it is impossible to determine factuality and objectivity in values, is already a self-indictment. If it makes sense to disprove passing value-judgment then, for sure, he would be contradicting himself. This is so because even the above claim by him is a value-judgment. Nor (2007: 165) acknowledges the fact that fleeting values like attachment to dogmas or beliefs can be relative and not moral values which serve as check on human conduct. He (2007:165) further stresses that meta-ethically, conflicting

values are critically analysed and value-fact judgment are passed based on objectivity especially when such a conflict is centred on higher or an intrinsic value' and even instrumental values which are means to the attainment of useful ends.

But more detailed, it is important to note here that by the nature of intrinsic values being good in themselves, their inherent goodness constitutes the determinant or what makes up the source of what is lower or higher in value. That is, in view of the constituent nature of intrinsic value, it possesses what it takes to advance a standard procedure of deciding what is higher and lower values in value-judgments. Buttressing this view, Temisan Ebijuwa (1998:72) rightly maintains that for, even when we accept the facts of the variation of values, we still would have to admit that there are some reasons for preferring some values to others, part of which is the degree to which the acceptability of such values enhances the realization of goals and the fulfillment of human aspirations. The point underscored by Ebijuwa is that even if the relativism of values is adopted, the fact remains that reason is adduced for making such a preference. This Ebijuwa explains is predicated on how value(s) advances the attainment of ends as well as human desires.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Value as it has been said, refers to anything that has worth or usefulness or importance. The concept of value being very important to man can be seeing in both moral and nonmoral contexts. In the moral sense, things are considered to have some worth based on moral ground while in the nonmoral sense a thing is considered having some worth in the nonmoral sense. Values are contained in material and non-material objects such as food, money, pleasure and education, etc. Values come in intrinsic and extrinsic forms. Values especially, the intrinsically characterised ones, provide the objective standards for value-judgments. The consideration of values directly falls under the discipline of philosophy.

5.0   SUMMARY

Values refer to things considered to have some worth. They are useful things in material and immaterial forms. Values as such serve as standards in guiding what a person does and how he evaluates other people. Values could also be appreciated in the moral and nonmoral senses. Values accordingly manifest in hierarchy of higher/superior or lower/inferior values. This conclusion is arrived at because values are critically considered under philosophy as having intrinsic and extrinsic attributes.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Define the concept value?
2.   Give four examples (two each) of moral and nonmoral values.
3.   State one of the ways that value is considered in the discipline of philosophy.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Explain what is meant by value theory.
2.   Demonstrate how you think it is possible to advance objective value- judgment(s).

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UNIT 3   KINDS OF VALUES

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

For sure by now you are already familiar with what value theory is and what values are. It is on his background that it becomes possible to step up the discussion cum understanding of values by looking at the different kinds of values. This unit therefore, explains the different kinds of values and their characteristics in details alongside their different uses or applications.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

•   state the different kinds of values
•   explain the different kinds of values
•   identify the characteristics of values
•   mention the uses of moral and nonmoral values.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

As earlier mentioned, the concept of values is embedded in human discussions on a regular basis. Accordingly, the discourses on values attract diverse submissions. However, values are basically divided into two broad headings: moral and nonmoral values. Moral values are according to Frankena (1973:82) things good on moral grounds‖. That is, whatever that can be evaluated or assessed on the basis of morality (whether in the descriptive and normative senses) and approved by reason serves as code(s) or standard(s) of human conduct and could be put forward for compliance by distinct group(s) of people or

society(ies), is(are) regarded as a thing(s) good in the moral sense. Consequently, moral values are concerned with determining what is morally right or wrong. E.g. Fairness, goodness, equity and justice, etc. Often times these moral values are reduced to assessing political institutions and they are accordingly referred to as political values. Nicolae Kallos & Ovidiu Trasnea (1982: 183) regard political values as being only the relationships, institutions, ideas or ideals that meet the requirements of the free and equitable development of the human personality, of collectives and ultimately, of humanity'. Following this submission, political values as such are ideas and ideals advanced by political organisations to promote the good or liberty of humanity individually or collectively, freely and equitably. Political values seen from this perspective are intrinsic in themselves and at the same time goal-values. Political values are basically prescriptive. Their adoption or application is targeted at the attainment of the ultimate good for humanity. Meanwhile, nonmoral values‖ on the other hand according to Frankena (1973:82) are things good on nonmoral ground‖. That is to say nonmoral values are those things that are useful or important but are not directly related things of morality. E.g. education. Like political values, nonmoral values could be taken as intrinsic values or goal-values.

Religious Values are also classified under moral values. Religious Values are values that are concerned with appreciating or evaluating issues of God and religious worship in relation to how an individual or the adherents of a particular religion are expected to conduct themselves. E.g. Belief in God and worship of God for certain benefits now and in the hereafter.

There are also cultural values. Cultural values are values arising from the traditional beliefs of a people which in turn become their norms and standard of moral evaluation in the society. Cultural values give rise to axiological approach to the nature of values. Nicolae Kallos & Ovidiu Trasnea (1982: 183) maintain that axiological approach to values is based on historical experience, social situation, basic interests and ideology that determines the way in which the social group, the human community or the society (national and/or international) ascertains values, nonvalues and antivalues. As invaluable as cultural values may be, their wholesale adoption has brought about critical questions from moral philosophers leading to some objections. To put it differently, the axiological consideration of values has brought about the issue evaluation criteria of values. For instance, the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) has remained a cherished tradition among some ethnic groups in Nigeria and reasons are advanced for the practice. However, the so-called reasons are fluid as they have for sure, reduced the practice of FGM to a lower value. To keep the female anatomy intact surely is a

higher value as against the claim of circumcising the girl-child to minimize or suppress her libido in order to distract her from promiscuity. These claims by the advocates of FGM lacked scientific proofs yet they are cherished by the people. It is against this backdrop that the argument against higher and lower values can best be appreciated. Some cultural values are surely debased like the practice of FGM.

Meanwhile, nonmoral values as things good in the nonmoral context are classified into the following: Aesthetic values, Economic values and Personal Values.

3.1 Aesthetic Values

These are values that are related to the appreciation or evaluation of beautiful/ugly things and works of arts/creativity – videos, film, music, etc. That is, their worth is better expressed or known based on how they appeal to the human senses of affection or liking and disaffection or disliking of the individual. E.g. A waterfall and/or a colourful snake and a painting by an artist or literally works and even music and home videos/films.

3.2 Economic Values

These are things or activities that produce some economic or financial benefits or gains for an individual or group. That is, economic values are activities embarked upon by the individual or group of people for the purpose of attaining some financial or economic benefits. E.g. Work. Economic activities too may be subjective to the individual.

3.3 Personal Values

These values refer to an individual's preference in view of the many contending values opened to such an individual to choose from or adopt. https://philosophy.hku.hk/think/value/values.php. In other words, as individuals people are faced with a variety of choices to choose from in terms of what they consider best as their personal values. Personal values are therefore subjective and may even be taken as private. E,g. Preference for hard work rather leisure.

3.4 Characteristics of Values

Values of whatever kind whether of moral or nonmoral type, have either intrinsic or instrumental/extrinsic value in them. Intrinsic value is the inherent goodness in a thing which gives that thing the quality of being what it is especially when it is not to put into use before one can

evaluate its goodness. An object or thing of intrinsic value is good in itself. It is a terminal value. That is, it not a means to an end but an end in itself. Such a thing or object is recognised based the enduring goodness or wholeness found in it. Such an object is by necessity acceptable. That is, one cannot for any reason deny such an object or thing the enduring qualities it has. In other words, objectively, an object of intrinsic quality or terminal value is positively appreciated by all human beings who possess the attribute of rational thinking. Thus, one can objectively say that education hasintrinsic or terminal value as against instrumental value or means-value which makes a thing complete in terms of the end result.

Thus, instrumental or extrinsic value unlike intrinsic value on the other hand is something or an object that is regarded as good because it is a means to what is good. That is, though a thing of object may be good or has some worth, the goodness is not complete in itself. In other words, objects of extrinsic values or means-values are like instruments employed by the professional to enhance the value of something or they are what are used to make a thing perfect. This goes to add that though a thing or an object may be there, on its own it cannot be taken to have the desired quality until something else is added to it to make it better. Extrinsic values as such complement one another. E.g. A car and petrol. A car has value on its own just like petrol. However, it is when the two are put together the actual utility or the purpose of a car becomes attainable.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Values are classified into moral and nonmoral values. Moral values are employed in the determination of what is morally right or wrong. In this wise, moral values are employed in evaluating political institutions and they are accordingly referred to as political values. Political values being the ideals that enhance the value of the citizens become the benchmark for assessing political institutions to determine their optimal performance or non-optimal performance. Political values at the same time regulate the conduct of the citizens in a state as well as what the citizens get in return from the state.

Religious Values are also classified under moral values. Religious Values are values that are concerned with appreciating or evaluating issues of God and religious worship in relation to how an individual or the adherents of a particular religion ought to conduct themselves in order to have all the benefits promised the adherents by the Supreme Being. More so, religious values also prescribe moral values.

It is said above that cultural values are not always of higher value. This

is arrived at when critical reasoning is brought to bear on such cultural values as could be seen in the illustration of FMG above. Like George F. Thomas (1955) states and is quoted elsewhere in this module, the question of certain values being obviously inferior but being held in high esteem by the society has prompted moral philosophers to question such values leading to their outright condemnation of such values as being inferior and consequently, such values to them should be considered as being of no importance or consequence.

Nonmoral values on their part are classified into three: Aesthetic values, Economic values and Personal Values. Aesthetic values are values that have to do with the appreciation or evaluation of beautiful/ugly things and works of arts (sculpture, wood carvings, drawings/paintings, literary/written works, film/video and music, etc).

- Economic Values- these are things or activities that produce some economic or financial gains for an individual or group.
- Personal Values are values which refer to an individual's preference in view of the many contending values opened to such an individual to choose from or adopt. E,g. Preference for hard work rather leisure.
- Political values are also indispensable in the society. They promote the good or well-being of the individual humanity or the group collectively. They are accordingly, goals-values.

5.0   SUMMARY

Frankena identifies two broad categories of values – moral and nonmoral values. He says moral values are things regarded as good based on morality while nonmoral values are things considered on nonmoral ground. Thus, moral values are employed in the determination of what is morally right or wrong. Moral values have ethical undertones that they are concerned with how an individual ought to conduct his/her self. This means moral values are concerned with the oughtness of an action. That is why religious values and cultural values easily fall in this category. These two value systems are also to a large extent concerned what is morally acceptable and unacceptable.

Nonmoral values on the other hand, are identified with Aesthetic values, Economic values and Personal Values. Aesthetic values are preoccupied with things relating to issues of beauty/ugliness. Economic values on their part are derivable when individuals or group of people perform certain tasks or carryout certain activities for financial rewards or benefits. Personal Values on their part are private values which an individual may indulge in for his/her personal or private enjoyment or satisfaction and even fulfillment. It is therefore important to emphasise

that values of all kinds have either intrinsic or instrumental/extrinsic value in them.

Nonmoral values are also expressed in the political sense that is there are political values too which enhance human dignity and promote development.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. What do understand by moral values?
2. What do understand by nonmoral values?
3. What are the characteristics values?
4. What is intrinsic value and extrinsic values?
5. State one of the ways that value is considered in the discipline of philosophy.
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NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. State and explain any three nonmoral values you have studied in this unit.
2. State and explain the relevance of political values to mankind.
3. Mention and explain the characteristics of values.

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UNIT 4   DISTINCTION BETWEEN VALUE JUDGMENTS AND FACTUAL JUDGMENTS

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces you to what constitutes value judgments and factual judgments. In other words, there are value judgments and factual judgments. Furthermore, you will be introduced to how a distinction is made between the two kinds of judgments. To be equipped with a sound knowledge regarding these two kinds of judgments makes you a better person when you have an opportunity to judge or pass value judgment and factual judgment yourself.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- say what judgment is
- make a distinction between fact and value
- define value judgments
- define factual judgments
- make a distinction between the two by identifying value and factual judgments.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

It is important to understand what judgment is before advancing to what is value judgment and factual judgment. Judgment ordinarily according to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* refers to the process of forming an opinion or evaluation by discerning and comparing‖ https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/judgment. *Encarta* on its parts defines judgment as the formation of an opinion after consideration‖. Thomas Aquinas (Joseph Omoregbe, 2011: 41) states

that judgment is something properly belonging to the intellect and not found in the thing. Following these submissions, judgment could be said to be a systematic or logical reasoning process of making a distinction between things clearly in a comparative manner by an individual leading to an informed opinion or judgment about the issue(s) under consideration. Thus, as noted earlier, human beings and even institutions and organisations constantly make judgments. These judgments are made to demonstrate or show why a particular thing should be preferred or placed higher than the other or to compare and say a particular thing is good or bad and even better or worse. Judgments of moral worth are also often made. However, it is not everyone that knows the kind of judgments they pass or make.

Just like the concept of judgment is clarified above, it will do the learner some good to have the concepts fact and value explained briefly prior to undertaking the task of making a distinction between factual and value judgments. According to *New World Encyclopedia*, a fact is traditionally understood as a state of affairs that makes a proposition true. To put this in different words, a fact is what corresponds to the actual or prevailing state of affairs or situation. That is, the state of what is. Now what is a proposition? The *New World Encyclopedia* maintains that a proposition is defined as a thought or content expressed by a sentence, when it is used to say something is true or false‖. That is, a proposition is a statement that conveys a claim that is true or false. For example; Abuja is the capital of Nigeria expresses a proposition or statement. This may be evaluated as true or false. If it is true, which it is, then there is some state of affairs that makes it true, namely the fact that Abuja is undoubtedly the capital of Nigeria. If it is untrue then the proposition or statement did not correspond with the true state of affairs and therefore, it is false or untrue.

Apart from other synonyms relating to fact, fact also means truth. This granted, it therefore means that what is philosophically taken as being truthful is factual. Omoregbe (2011: 42) aptly explains this saying ‒we can say that truth and fact are one and the same thing because they both refer to state of affairs. Whatever is true is also a fact. If it is true that Socrates is mortal, then it is also a fact that Socrates is mortal. In this wise, some theories of truth will be considered here to expose the learner to a better knowledge of what is factual/truthful.

Philosophy traditionally has three main theories of truth namely: the correspondence theory, the coherence theory and the pragmatic theory. However, there are other sub-theories that emerged from these traditional theories and these include: dialectical theory, semantic theory, redundancy theory relativistic theory. According to Thomas Aquinas (Joseph Omoregbe, 2011: 41) truth is the conformity of the

intellect with the thing, and hence to know this conformity is to know the truth. … And when that which exists outside in a thing corresponds to it the judgment, it is said to be truth'. The unit will briefly consider the different conceptions of truth cum fact.

- The correspondence theory: as the term implies, by correspondence theory of truth, it means the human mind corresponds with the actual or practical state of affairs. It is like the terminating judgment of Clarence Lewis (treated below).

- The coherence theory: coherency occurs when a judgment passed with due consideration of the prevailing experience or situation. In other words, the coherence theory maintains that judgment must be made only on the recognition that there are existing events that the judgment passed must not ignore or isolate.

- The pragmatic theory holds that a thing or statement is true or factual if it works in practice or leads to benefits to humanity.

- The dialectical theory simply states that truth is in a process of becoming. That is, what is factual is not static but is always in a process of refinement. Dialectical judgments are judgments that are procedural taking cognizance of the fact that there are not objective hence they have to become objective through the dialectical process.

- The semantic theory is another version of correspondence theory. The words employed in an expression are expected to correspond with the actual situation one is talking about. Semantic theory is similar to Clarence Lewis'expressive truth which corroborates an existing situation or state of affairs'.

- The redundancy theory is a view advanced by P.O. Ramsey which states that prefixing a sentence or an expression with for instance; it is wrong'or it is good' adds nothing the sentence. Omoregbe (2011: 46) explains that the prefix it is evident, it is true‖ or it is false‖ is redundant, it adds nothing to the sentence‖. That is, a prefix is an expression that comes by way of introduction what is being said.

- The relativistic theory maintains that there is nothing called truth as distinct from opinion. Kwasi Wiredu (Joseph Omoregbe, 2011: 47) who propounded the theory argues that truth is a view from some point, and there are as many truths as there are points of view. The implication of this is that truth is not independent, objective reality and permanent but rather truth is a mere opinion.

Value on the other hand as earlier shown, the *New World Encyclopedia* says is something good on its own independent of what an individual or a group of people believed to be good' https://newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Fact-andValue. Besides, value is anything that has worth, importance or relevance to an individual, a group of people or society. That is to say value is something that has goal-value (terminal-value) or means-value (terminus-value). Values therefore are ends in themselves or means to ends.

3.1   The Distinction between Factual Judgments and Value Judgments

Arguably, the fact-value distinction is a much-contested issue. This is the case because resistance persistently comes from the opposite scholarly camps claiming the counter views. However, it is obvious that arising from the understanding of fact and value, it means that factual judgments refer to empirical state of affairs which can be described as corresponding with the prevailing state of affairs. That is, by factual judgment it is a judgment that is passed which must agree or tally with a physical situation or what is known to be that calls for such a judgment. Hence, the analogy above that Abuja is the capital of Nigeria cannot be questioned because it is a historical and evidential fact. Any attempt to question it will amount to self-contradiction because it is an established historical fact which refers to a prevailing state of affairs or what is currently.

On the other hand, value judgment is not based on the actual state of affairs but rather on the evaluation or assessment of a given experience or situation based on the inherent goodness or a means to goodness. In this wise, value judgments are not based on the actual state of affairs but rather on the nature or the intrinsic qualities in a thing. These intrinsic qualities in a thing are targeted judgments that are either terminal or means to the terminus. That is, goals-value or means-value. Nevertheless, value judgments as Clarence I. Lewis (1970) rightly notes are classified into; Expressive statements, Terminating judgments and Objective beliefs.

i.   Expressive statements are corroborative but not assertive statements about things. They are rather restricted to expressing that which seems or appears within a given experience. E. g. Abuja is the capital of Nigeria is an expressive statement which corroborates the historical and practical fact of the status of Abuja as the capital of Nigeria.

ii.   Terminating judgments on their part are as a result of a fallout arising from observable cases or situations which are in turn

verifiable. In other words, terminating judgments are judgments informed by an earlier or an existing experience. E.g. Human beings are made up of X and Y chromosomes; males have X and Y chromosomes while females are made up only X and X chromosomes. This is for sure a terminating judgment which is observable and verifiable scientifically.

iii.   Objective beliefs on their part are statements that ascribe objective value quality to things that are and also to things that may possibly exist. Objective beliefs of value are accordingly, confirmable by the medium of terminating judgments through deduction. E. g. Oranges are always sweet is an objective statement which ascribes objective value to oranges. I have seen an orange. The orange I have seen makes it possible for me to confirm via terminating judgment by taking the orange on the belief that all oranges are usually sweet. Having taken the orange I have seen will lead to the confirmation that it is sweet like the ones I have known before.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Factual judgments as discussed above are distinguishable from value judgments. Factual judgments are concerned with practical or empirical given state of affairs that are capable of description as they correspond to the prevailing or existing state of affairs. Thus, in factual judgment the pronouncement given in a judgment form is in conformity with the actual physical or practical situation or what is known to have prompted factual judgment in the first place.

Value judgments unlike factual judgments are passed independent of the actual or prevailing state of affairs. Rather they are pronounced based on rational evaluation or assessment of a given or presented experience or situation due to the inherent goodness contained in a thing. In this wise, value judgments are not based on the actual state of affairs but rather on some certain standards or ideal principles that are seen to found in a thing or situation which upon evaluation by reason, is considered as means or an end towards advancing the worth of humanity. These standards or ideal principles are target judgments that are either terminal (goals-value) or means to the terminus (means-value).

5.0   SUMMARY

Fact-value as shown above has a distinction which is a contested issue among scholars. Fact and truth are regarded as one and the same thing. Fact taken as truth can be expressed in three traditional theories of truth namely; correspondence theory of truth, coherence theory of truth and

pragmatic theory of truth. Truth is categorized into either logical truth or practical truth. Truth has sub-theories emanating from these theories which include; dialectical theory, semantic theory, redundancy theory and relativistic theory. Besides, it is obvious from the understanding of fact and value that factual judgments refer to empirical state of affairs which can be described as corresponding with the prevailing state of affairs. Hence it is right to talk of judgment based on corresponding, coherence and pragmatic theories of truth.

Value judgment is not based on the actual state of affairs but rather on the evaluation or assessment of a thing based on its inherent good qualities. These standards or ideal principles are target judgments that are either terminal or means to the terminus. That is, there are goals-value or means-value which come as expressive statements, terminating judgments and objective beliefs.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   How will you differentiate a fact from a value?
2.   What is judgment?
3.   What is value judgment?
4.   What is factual judgment?
5.   Define a proposition.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Draw out a clear distinction between value and factual judgments.
2.   Identify and explain the different classes of value judgments.
3.   Do you agree that fact is truth and truth is fact? Justify your answer.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

"Fact and   Value" New World Encyclopedia, https://newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Fact-andValue.

Lewis, C. I. (1970). Conceptualist Pragmatism and Logical Empiricism in Reck, Andrew J., *The New American Philosophers: An Exploration of Thought Since World War 11*, New York: Delta Book.

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MODULE 2

Unit 1   Classes of Value Judgments
Unit 2   Moral Philosophy/Ethics and Divisions of Moral Philosophy
Unit 3   Moral Theory and the Moral Concept: Good
Unit 4   The Moral Concept: Bad Introduction

UNIT 1   CLASSES OF VALUE JUDGMENTS

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Learning Outcomes
3.0   Main Content
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

As a follow-up to the discussion above which centred on the distinction between factual judgments and value judgments, this unit takes you further into knowing the different categories of value judgments. That is, this unit escorts you to understanding the different classes of value judgments in human social engagements or activities. The main intention of this unit is to present as clearly as possible the main classes of value judgments and how they are put to use in human discussions or affairs. Thus, the unit identifies the different classes of value judgments and additionally carries out an in depth clarification of the different classes of value judgments.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a matter of emphasis, the unit explains the different kinds of meanings, statements or proposition humans make and what they convey regarding value judgments.

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the different classes of value judgments
- say the importance or relevance value judgments to human life.
- explain why value judgments especially expressive statements

cannot be disputed, that is, they are always corroborative as such they always correspond to the actual state of affairs.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

As briefly sketched above, Clarence I. Lewis (1970) classifies value judgments into three: Expressive statements, Terminating judgments and Objective beliefs. However, prior to the consideration of the classes of value judgments, it is important you note that beyond what is given in unit one above as build-up to what value judgments entails, Lewis (1970: 32) annotates that value is used exclusively in three senses; a value-quality, value-character or value-property of something, or a kind of value-quality, character, or property‖. That is, value is contained in a thing based on the attribute it has, the character of such a thing also confers value on it, just as its property (property here refers to what is distinctive but not an essential quality of a thing). For example an individual may be handsome or beautiful as it may be distinctively shown on him or her but handsomeness or beauty is not the essential quality of such an individual. Lewis stresses that the primary meaning of value is a situation where value is predicable of immediate experience, existent objects and possible existent objects.

To buttress the foregoing, Lewis (1970: 32) maintains that primary value is a quality unmistakably identifiable in a direct apprehension of it when disclosed in experience. The determination of what value is or simply what is valuation, according to Lewis (1970: 32) ‒involves the fundamental act of intuition of value within experience‖. How is intuitive valuation carried out? To go about this, Lewis (1970: 33) maintains that one can describe the given content adequately in other respects than value, and one can make a shift to evaluate it from that description‘. To describe the given content adequately in other respects than value‘refers to how or what a thing is, irrespective an individual‘s preference or dislike. This is what Lewis calls irreducible fact of experience. Irreducible facts of experience which are immediately or directly findable though stubborn in terms of saying what they really are, they however serve as the verification of value judgments. Irreducible facts of experience are objective realities that an individual cannot reduce to suit his/her own wishes. They are simply objective as presented or given. Lewis (1970: 33) states that to talk of value-disvalue is the mode or aspect of the given or contemplated to which desire and aversion are addressed‖. That is, for an individual to say or judge that a thing has value or disvalue, the consideration is predicated on desire or aversion (dislike). By desire it means the individual has preference for a particular thing and therefore is favourably disposed to liking it while by aversion an individual entertains a strong dislike for a particular thing and therefore is favourably disposed to disliking it. Lewis (1970: 33)

explains that the immediately good is what you like and what you want in the way of experience; and the immediately bad is what you dislike and do not want. The implication of this is that the value-disvalue assigned to a thing is dependent on the individual making the judgment. In other words, value-disvalue judgments as understood under this context could be subjective and therefore not generally acceptable.

Value judgment as presented by Lewis here is purely subjective. Under this scenario, two different individuals may have cause to disagree over value and disvalue of a thing. Lewis (1970: 33) however is very quick to dispel this insinuation by pointing out that immediate value is dimension or dimension-like mode. He warns that the use of the term dimension‖ is not to suggest that value is subject to mathematicalmeasurement as the value-dimension may be different in kind from the value-dimension of another set of presentations‘. Value as such is a mode or dimension of presentations. In other words, what is given, presented or presentation has value-dimension and pure presentation. However, the two are intimately connected in an object. This is the reason why Lewis (1970: 33) insists that values do not adhere solely to presentations. Rather there is a general level of feeling, belonging to the background rather than to any item which stands out in it. In other words, beyond presentations or the given, values are determinable by way of feeling apprehended in the background of an object. In reference to the background, Lewis describes it as vague reminder of the felt, not definitely localisable, inchoate, a euphoric or dysphoric condition … likely to be attributed to Ourselves', or to things in general‘. (By the way, the word dysphoric is the adjective of the (noun) word dsyphoria which means the state of unbearable hopelessness, discomfort or unhappiness‘). The word background in this context only gives faint or unclear information about what is presented. Thus, Lewis (1970: 33) concludes that directly findable value quality which tends to be determined in some part by the relation of that presentation to the context of it … cannot be characterized as given‘. In other words, findable value quality (that is what one personally experiences) is not contained in presentations but as the name implies, it is found, sought or looked for by intuition in the value-dimension. Not contained in the presentations 'means that it is not immediately seen or felt but only immediately seen or felt. In intuition what is called value-feeling plays a fundamental role in both value-dimension and presentations. As indicated in the term, value-feeling is strictly the action of the individual who is feeling whatever he/she is feeling from what is presented. As such, the context or manner in which a thing is presented affects the value-quality in which the presentation is given. Lewis (1970: 34) identifies three of such contexts namely:

- The influence of the background of organic sensations and conditioning that is, the impact of the natural feelings and how

this natural feelings influence value-quality in the feeler.

- The context represented by anticipatory associations, whether merely habitual or explicitly cognitive this refers to the feeler's intuitive appreciation of the value- quality which may be organically linked to the object or what the feller is able to appreciate by the medium of intuitive reason.

- The purely subjective context, exemplified by the relatively free associations of the day-dream. This is where the feeler freely sees an object based on his/her emotions and even sentiments. The feeler determines value-quality not based on objective consideration but from a perspective of personal interest or benefit.

It is interesting to note here that Lewis like Frankena believes that there are only two categories of values which are intrinsic and extrinsic values. In agreement with Frankena, Lewis (1970: 34) too holds that intrinsic values are the values that are immediately findable in experience'. He further explains that extrinsic values are values individuals ascribed to objects and are in two classes: inherent and instrumental values'. Lewis (1970: 34) amplifies this conception of extrinsic values and in contradistinction to Frankena says that Inherent value is ascribed to an object whose presentation leads directly to an immediate experience of value. Instrumental value is ascribed to an object if the object leads to other objects which in turn lead to an object of inherent value. Unlike Frankena who presented nonmoral values in six categories and explained their relation as being restricted to their nature, Lewis identifies an analytic relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic values. He agrees with Frankena that intrinsic values are objective values but goes ahead to argue that extrinsic values are also objective values. This situation lumps Lewis in the class of Kantian deonotologists. Lewis (1970: 35) states that objects having instrumental value are objects which lead to objects of inherent value. That is, extrinsic or instrumental value advances to intrinsic value. But in order not to be led to a likely confusion, Lewis clears the air by making a distinction between instrumental value and the utility of an object. According to him (1970: 35) the utility of an object is its conduciveness to other objects, whether or not these objects possess inherent value or conducive to objects having inherent value. To put this in a different way, an object is said to have utility when it is able to influence, enhance or positively affect the status of other objects with inherent value or not. Any object that tends to maintain a symbiotic relationship with another leading to a better state of affairs that enhances the value of human life can be said to be of utility. On the other hand, Lewis (1970: 35) sates that the instrumental value of an object is its

conduciveness to an object of value, either remote or near. Now, simply put, the utility of an object is its conduciveness or helpfulness to other objects of inherent or non inherent value while instrumental value is its conduciveness to an object of value, it must be conducive or contribute positively to an object of value. The former necessarily has nothing to do with whether a thing has inherent or non inherent value while the latter is necessarily predicated on an object of value. It is imperative to state here that instrumentally, the active agent or human being is primary and thus the end result of any action must tend towards producing some positive value quality to enhance the life of humanity. This is to say that to Lewis extrinsic values are good in the sense that there are a means to bettering the life of humanity. Lewis (1970:35) categorically states that the ultimate value is intrinsic value, and extrinsic values are valuable because they conduce to intrinsic value, that is to the directly experienced value. That is, though intrinsic values are the fundamental values, extrinsic values are equally indispensable such that an object said to have inherent worth must lead to the possibility of further enhancement, realisation or attainment of directly experienced goodness in an object. Lewis (1970:35) explains that a possibility for experience is independent of experience in that it is possible whether or not there is an experience to actualize it‖. The implication of what Lewis is saying is that like intrinsic values, extrinsic values are equally objective. He defends this claim by pointing out (1970:35 - 6) that when an immediately apprehended value-quality or property is so affected by what is personal or peculiar to the individual that the object conducing to the experienced actuality is not likely to conduce to similar experiences in others, it is deemed subjective‖. Nevertheless, Lewis (1970:36) stresses that when the quality is such that the object is capable of leading to similar experiences in others, it is then objective. This is a re-echo of what Njoku (2018) mooted earlier which he referred to as axiological objectivism and axiological subjectivism.

Meanwhile, Lewis is not done as he explains that there is a difference between objective value qualities and physical value-qualities. According to him (1970:36) the physical properties are subject to direct tests, while value-qualities, though susceptible in certain cases to such tests, are never limited to them. Whereas with respect to hardness‖ or roundness the unsure corroboration of feeling has been supplanted by objective tests, with respect to goodness, the mode of feeling remains the head and the front of the whole matter, and no more precise test of objective value would be true to our intent. Apparent value in the thing the possibility of some experience of some value-quality in connection with it is of the essence. This is to say in other words that tough the physical features of an object can be directly tested unlike the test for value-qualities, such objects are however not limited to such test. For instance, one cannot combine objective test and feeling in order to

ascertain what is hard or round whereas feeling dominates all through the consideration of what is termed good or goodness. Taken in this context, the individual's intention of what is the objective truth simply prevails. Accordingly, it is the possibility of some value-quality experienced by an individual that adds up to the essence, core or importance of such an object.

Arising from these, Lewis (1970: 36) patently states that value judgments or better still value attributions, like any other attributions, are attributions of potentiality when referring to objects. Some attributions for experience lie within the nature of the object. Others are attributions of potentiality as realisable under certain conditions, known or assumed as actual or determined to be probable when viewed in their relation to experience, all properties of things are potentialities. By potentiality Lewis means what and individual may likely identify in an object of extrinsic value which may be of value to him/her may not be of value to another. Nevertheless, the situation adds up to the valuable content of such an object of extrinsic. It is on this background that Lewis (1970:36) states without mincing words judgments of intrinsic or extrinsic values regardless of the function of feeling in valuation, value judgments prove to be as objective as other empirical beliefs. It is on this note that Lewis anchored the three classes of value judgments namely; expressive statements, terminating judgments and objective beliefs.

According to Lewis (1970:31), **expressive statements** do not make assertions of objects, but are limited to expressing that which seems or appears within a given experience. Taken in this way, expressive statements show value quality which is directly found in what has been experienced and evaluated by the experiencer. Expressive statements are first of all subjective prior to their confirmation by another. E.g. the expression; apple fruit has warm and inviting taste, is subject to confirmation in order to ascertain the truth of the expression. This is so because it is not all people that have eaten or tasted apple.

Terminating judgments are conditional judgments, that is, there are judgments that maintain that given a particular situation, a particular thing will follow. E.g. if you strike a match stick fire will spark. Lewis (1970:31) maintains that, terminating judgments always find a cue in what is given, but they state something which is verifiable only by a course of action resulting in another state of qualitative immediacy‖. To put this in another way, terminating judgments emanate from an observed case or situation which is verifiable based on the outcome arising from that observed case or situation. It could also be taken as a judgment predicated on previous experience. E.g. I see a banana fruit; in the light of my previous experience, I know that banana has sweet taste

and if I should bite into it, I will enjoy the sweet taste. I bite into the banana and I experienced the sweet taste which leads to a verification of the experience that banana is sweet.

Objective beliefs on their part are statements that are strongly made to present an objective reality. To Lewis (1970:31 - 32) **objective beliefs** are the statements that make up what we ordinarily mean when we speak of empirical knowledge. Being statements of value prediction, Lewis maintains that they give objective property of value to an existent or possible existent. That is, these statements attribute objective property of value to real or actual existing things and possible existing things. He stresses (1970:32) that objective beliefs of value are, like other beliefs, confirmable by means of terminating judgments which can be deduced from them‖. E.g. *Swange* music played by the Tiv people of Benue State is beautiful. To confirm this assertion as an objective belief, one must locate *Swange* music and listen to it as a confirmation.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Value judgments and factual judgments are part and parcel of man's life. These judgments are always been passed by man on a daily basis regarding issues. In other words, these judgments are unavoidable. It is this indispensable nature that scholars took up the challenge of understanding what these judgments are. Lewis in his contribution made a clear distinction between these values demonstrating that these statements come in expressive statements, terminating judgments and objective beliefs.

5.0   SUMMARY

The unit has demonstrated that value judgments and factual judgments are different. A factual judgment is made based on the true state of affairs that corresponds to what is observable or seen on the ground. A value judgment on the other hand evolves ideal principles or standard by way of analysis in the making of the judgment of value. As such value judgments are not given based of the actual state of affairs but are prompted by certain beliefs that something is good.

Three classes of value judgments have been put forward by Clarence I. Lewis; expressive statements, terminating judgments and objective beliefs.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Give an example of expressive statements.
2.   Give an example of terminating judgments.

3.   Show the distinction between the two.
4.   Give an example of objective beliefs.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Mention and explain the three classes of the concept value judgments.
2.   Which of the classes of value judgment discussed above could be said to be objective? Give reasons.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Fact and Value *New World Encyclopedia*
https://newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Fact-andValue.

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UNIT 2   MORAL PHILOSOPHY/ETHICS AND DIVISIONS OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, the discussion is centred on moral philosophy better known as ethics. The unit examines the meaning of moral philosophy/ethics and divisions of moral philosophy/ethics. As such this unit exposes the learner to the fundamental or basic notion of moral philosophy as well as the components branches of moral philosophy.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to do the following;

- define moral philosophy/ethics
- mention the divisions of moral philosophy/ethics
- explain the divisions of moral philosophy/ethics
- focus on understanding the different concepts as this would enhance your learning of this unit.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

It is important at this level to state briefly what moral philosophy is prior to an examination of the moral concepts embedded in it. Moral philosophy also known as ethics is the branch of philosophy that is preoccupied with the study of rightness and wrongness of human conduct or behaviour. Aristotle (Roger J. Sullivan, 1980: 104) maintains that moral philosophy is a critical examination of life of practical moral facts encountered in experience which constitutes the ultimate source of data'. That is, moral philosophy concerns itself with human practical

experiences in life as this provide the yardstick of evaluation of what is right or wrong. In his submission, A. C. Ewing (1958: 16) states that Ethics or moral philosophy deals with values and with the conception of ought. Ethics is from the Greek word *ethos* which refers to habit or conduct. *Ethos* is the equivalent of the Latin words *mos, moris* which informed the word *moralis* which means morals in English and is known as custom. Francis O. C. Njoku (2018: 3) avers that the words ethics'and morals', refers to what can be termed the science or philosophy of human actions. In other words, it is concerned with issues of morality in human life or activities. Morality pointedly is according to *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* best understood in two ways:

1.   It descriptively refers to certain codes of conduct put forward by a society or a group (such as a religion), or accepted by an individual for his/her own behaviour, or
2.   Also, it normatively refers to a code of conduct that, given specified conditions, would be put forward by all rational persons.

In view of this, moral philosophy explores the nature of morality and examines how people should or ought to live their lives in relation to others or as a social group. Taking cognizance of the descriptive conception of morality, George F. Thomas (1955:367) maintains that moral philosophy arises among those who have become dissatisfied with the moral judgments and practices imposed by their society. Social reformers/engineers or thinkers/moral philosophers having attained intellectual maturity coupled with the ability to rationally think independently, came to the realization that some of the moral principles and virtues adopted by the society are irrational and inconsistent with one another. As a result, these moral thinkers/philosophers took up the task of critically analysing the accepted judgments and practices, to the clarification of moral concepts. Plato, in the Socratic Dialogues', was engaged with this task where meaning was sought for concepts like virtue, justice and courage, etc. It is the same concern about meaning that the following moral concepts: Good, Bad, Right, Wrong are subsequently examined here in units three and four.

It is important to emphasise here that moral philosophers do not just embark on the task of refining and clarifying group's or societal morality. As Thomas (1955:367) explains, philosophers'ultimate aim is to establish morality on a more solid basis of general principles which are consistent and comprehensive'. In the absence of this, philosophers concerned with morality sought to question the multiplicity of rules that had no bearing on fundamental principles not approved by reason. They believe in reason because it is common to all humanity and thus they conclude that the principles emanating from reason will be universally

valid. This view is strongly propagated or canvassed by the Kantian deontologists.

3.1   Divisions of Moral Philosophy

Moral philosophy is mainly divided in three: Normative/Prescriptive Ethics, Descriptive Ethics/Applied Ethics and Meta-Ethics. Normative/Prescriptive Ethics is also known as substantive ethics while Descriptive/Applied ethics on its part is referred to as comparative ethics

3.2   Normative/Prescriptive Ethics

Normative ethics/prescriptive ethics also referred to as substantive ethics is a branch of ethics which is concerned with what is considered right, good or obligatory. Normative ethics is engaged with the question of ought. That is, what ought I do or what I ought not to do? In short, normative ethics/prescriptive ethics is centred on the questions of what is right or good and what is wrong. That is why it is presented in a prescriptive manner. In other words, normative ethical propositions are mainly presented in a prescriptive manner or come in a form of prescriptive statements. According to G. O. Ozumba (2004: 7) Normative ethics … explores the ground or criteria for enunciating standards or ascribing acceptable bahaviour pattern‖. Normative ethics as such is concerned with advancing a position or an opinion with the aim of convincing people at large or a particular person or group that a particular thing be acceptable or rejected. That is why it is only moral arguments that are advanced to support a moral issue. In other words, one cannot employ immoral argument to defend a moral claim. Ozumba (2004: 6) maintains that for a moral prescription to be reasonable and acceptable, it must be backed by reasonable argument that is based on moral considerations. Ozumba (2004: 6) in an illustration annotates that if one says that abortion is bad because it entails taking of life and that killing is bad because it is immoral and depraving to take another person's life, this would be a moral argument; other than simply saying that abortion is bad because one does not like it. Normative ethics clearly prescribes acceptable standards of human conduct in the society.

3.3   Descriptive/Applied Ethics

Descriptive ethics/Applied ethics is a branch of ethics that is concerned with the descriptive empirical enquiry, historical or scientific study of ethical issues. The target is to describe or explain the phenomena of morality or to work out a theory of human nature which bears on ethical questions. In the words of Ozumba (2004: 24) Descriptive ethics is concerned with examining existing moral trends in order to find out the

opinions people have of them. It answers the question what do people say is right?. That is, descriptive ethics is keenly interested in knowing the feelings or concerns people express regarding existing moral trends. Descriptive/applied ethics also targets knowledge about the basic constituents of morality. In other words, it is interested in knowing what morality is. The concern with this is not farfetched. Among individuals and even people of different socio-cultural groups, there are easily identifiable moral differences such that what is considered right in one place is abominable in another place. For instance, it is morally acceptable and it is right to accept a sizeable pig from the suitors as an indispensable component part of the bride price ceremony when they come to marry from any Tiv home in Benue State. However, for sure, it is not all ethnic groups in Nigeria that require this as part of bride price. As a matter of fact, some ethnic groups forbid pig completely. In view of this, Ozumba (2004:24) patently notes that what descriptive ethics does is to look at the varying ethical judgments with a view to finding out why they differ. This concern with knowing why morality differs from place to place brings about the question comparative ethics. This is to say that Descriptive/Applied ethics dovetails into comparative ethics. By comparison, descriptive ethics is able to identify the reasons why people differ and by extension, why they agree. The implication of this, Ozumba (2004:24) avers is that Descriptive ethics… looks at different moral standpoints and finds out what makes them moral, what makes them different and what they have in common as moral positions. Thus, conclusively, descriptive, applied and by extension, comparative ethics is more like an investigative enquiry about the issues of morality in human situations in order to arrive at an objective understanding of why individuals or groups of people differ in the conduct of their moral actions.

3.4   Meta-Ethics

Meta- ethics in the words of Frankena (1973:95) is a branch of ethics that does not propound any moral principles or goals for action, except possibly by implication; as such it consists entirely of philosophical analyses. Meta-ethics as construed by Frankena and as it is generally presented is concerned with knowing the meaning of moral terms or the meaning of moral expressions through the analysis of such language or expressions. That is why Frankena maintains that meta-ethics does not consciously prescribe action (s) to be carried out. Being concerned with moral terms or language expressions (s), meta- ethics as a branch of moral philosophy would want to know when an individual makes a statement such as: Abortion is right or abortion is wrong. The concern with language in moral issues and the meaning of expressions aligns meta-ethics with one of the core branches of philosophy known as epistemology. Epistemology by the way, Joseph Omoregbe (2011: vi)

says: is the study of human knowledge, the study of the nature of human knowledge, its origin its scope, its limits, its justification, its reliability or otherwise, its certainty otherwise, it is knowledge taking a critical look at itself to justify itself. Thus, meta-ethics as aligned with epistemology seeks to make a distinction between moral knowledge on one hand and other kinds of knowledge on the other hand'(Ozunmba 2004: 25). It accordingly asks questions like: Can ethical and value judgments be proved, justified and be shown to be valid? If so, how and in what sense can they be proven or validated? What is the meaning of terms or concepts like rights, wrong, good, bad? etc.

Meta-ethics being a very critical study of moral knowledge intends to give concise meaning of moral terms or concepts absolutely. However, meta-ethics is challenged by the contention that moral terms are relative in terms of meaning. In other words, moral concepts are seen to be relative as they do not attract a universal or common understanding or meaning to mankind. As such, moral terms or concept do not mean one and the same thing to people. This has brought about the question of meta-ethical relativists and meta-ethical objectivists. Meta-ethical relativists maintain that there is no generally or universally accepted correct moral standard or means of evaluation while meta-ethical objectivists on the other hand state to the contrary that there exist one universally accepted meaning of every ethical term or concept (Ozumba 2004: 25). The essence of meta-ethics from whatever perspective that it is viewed, is that, when considered epistemologically, it disambiguates, that is, it clarifies or breaks down moral or ethical terms for better understanding. It makes moral or ethical knowledge more explicit for better comprehension.

Meta-ethics is divided into ethical naturalism and ethical non-naturalism. Ethical naturalism is the moral thinking which insists that moral judgments are a special subclass of facts about the natural world (Ozumba, 2004: 25) while ethical non-naturalism as an antithesis of ethical naturalism maintains that moral concepts are cognitively meaningful but not in natural terms. Moral judgments transcend physicalistic interpretations because they do not pertain to particular instances (Ozumba, 2004:27). Ethical non-naturalists accordingly maintain that morality is not dependent on the circumstance, the environment or factual state of affairs but rather on reasonability and the ideal which gives support to the action in question.

4.0 CONCLUSION
NO Conclusion

5.0   SUMMARY

No Conclusion

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCICE

1.   What prompts moral philosophers commence the task of moral refinement in the society?
2.   How do they approach this?
3.   What is meta-ethics?

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   What is moral philosophy/ethics?
2.   List the three main branches of ethics and explain?
3.   Differentiate between ethical naturalism and ethical non-naturalism.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3   MORAL THEORY AND THE MORAL CONCEPT: GOOD

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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         3.1   The Moral Concept: Good
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit engages itself with moral theory and the moral concept: good. The essence of this is to enable you realize that the concern with values can best be addressed within the ambit or scope of moral theory. The unit will in addition consider the above stated moral concept.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain what moral theory is
- define moral philosophy
- state and explain moral concept: good
- say what makes philosophers hold contrary views regarding the concept good.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

Moral theory is a theory that relates to issues of human morality. It is regarded as a structured set of statements used to explain (or predict) a set of facts or concepts *(http://home.sandiego.edu/baber/generMoral Theories.htmltml)*. These sets of facts or concepts are not taken in isolation of man. Moral theory accordingly explains why a particular action is right or wrong; why humans or individuals must act in certain or particular ways. Considered as such, moral theory serves as a standard for the determination of what is acceptable and unacceptable due to human actions. For instance: Do not kill your fellow human - this, taken as a moral theory, becomes a guide to human conduct whenever there is a threat to human life. Thus, moral theory constitutes the ingredients for the determination of what is right or wrong.

Essentially, moral theories provide the platform for regulated or systematic thinking, reasoning and evaluation of issues of morality. Moral theory is same as applied ethics. Being applicable in human life, moral theories are prescriptive and descriptive in nature. However, in usage or application, sociologists/anthropologists are engaged with the descriptive side of moral theory while philosophers on their part being concerned with the actual way of ascertaining what is right and wrong, preoccupy themselves with how to understand the nature of moral concepts. It is on this background that this unit considers the concept good while other units will take up the concepts bad, right and wrong.

3.1   The Moral Concept: Good

It is common knowledge that though man is often applying moral concepts like the ones outlined above, no time is devoted to their critical examination and analysis. It is premised on this background that these concepts are treated here. The discussion will commence with the concept good.

Good: good is the equivalent of the Greek word *agathon.* Aristotle in the consideration of good in his *Nicomachean Ethics* began the investigation of the concept from the background of his teacher's (Plato's) understanding of good as being universal. From this background, Aristotle (1962:11) argues that the good cannot be taken as something universal, common to all cases, and single; for if it were, it would not be applicable in all categories but only in one‖. Aristotle buttresses this by saying that the term good has many meanings as the word is: it is used to describe substances, e.g. divinity and intelligence are goods, qualities, e.g. the virtues are good; quantities, e.g. the proper amount is good; relatedness, e.g. the useful is good; time, e.g. the right moment is good, place, e.g. a place to live is good, and so forth‖. The point being made here by Aristotle is that good in view of its diverse notions cannot be reduced to applying it in a universal context when clearly; it is shown to apply differently under different situations. Aristotle asks rhetorically; what is the meaning of good in the different contexts as given above? The implication of this question is that given the different circumstances presented above, can the term good be seen as providing the same meaning in order to give it the status of universality? The answer is an emphatic No. Aristotle (1962:13) says: ‒The good, therefore, is not some elements from one Form‖. Aristotle in this context was criticising his master (Plato) based on Plato's conception of the World of Forms and the World of Opinions. To Plato the World of Forms is made up of real or eternal or original things while the World of Opinions is just a carbon copy or photocopy of the original things found in the World of Forms. To Plato the World of Forms made up of changing things cannot be the ideal world. That is

why Aristotle insists that the term good is not the product of the World of Forms and cannot therefore be applied in a universal context. In view of this Aristotle calls for good to be defined in terms of finalities. Roger J. Sullivan (1977: 43) maintains that to Aristotle good'is that for the sake which all else is done'. Good as such is regarded as an end in itself or a means to an end.

People like George Edward Moore will not subscribe to this. Jacquette (2004:425) reports that Moore equates good with yellow as being simple notions. Moore stresses (2004:425) that, just as you cannot, by any manner or means, explain to anyone who does not already know it, what yellow is, so you cannot explain what good is. Thus, to Moore good is an indefinable concept. Moore may be right but it appears from his thinking that words define themselves. In other words, human beings have no contribution in making words meaningful in human development. To the contrary, Ozumba (2004: 58) argues that man is the sole agent that should make moral principles meaningful. This he can do by metaethically, assigning relevant meanings to ethical terms. It is man that should say or choose how to define his terms. If he defines good in terms of pleasure and if this helps him to attain his desired goal, it is all good for him‖. Thus, what is good is intuitively known by an individual. Also, Frakena (1973: 80) in contesting the claim of indefinability of the concept good by Moore maintains that the term good has somewhat different uses that must not be confused. It occurs as a substantive in sentences like: The good is pleasure and Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, but it also has two adjectival uses illustrated by A good concert and Knowledge is good. We must be careful not to confuse the good or the things that are good with goodness or the property of being good. In this wise, good is employed to commend or recommend based on certain facts about a thing and not necessarily to prescribe or saying that it ought to be brought into existence. There are many grounds of commending or saying a thing or a person is good either on moral or nonmoral grounds. According to Frankena (1973: 81): If the thing is a person, motive, intention, deed or trait of character, one may commend it on moral grounds; then, one is using good in the moral sense. Frankena adds that One may also commend something on nonmoral grounds, and one may apply the term good to all sorts of things, not just to persons and their acts or dispositions. Like Aristotle stated earlier, the term good cannot be reduced a single application.

In line with Aristotle and Frankena, Christine M. Korsgaard, avers that good indicates that a thing is desirable or worthy of choice, so that normally you have reason to want a certain kind of a thing, you also have reason to prefer a good thing of that kind‖ (*https://search.rep.routledge.com/articlesthematic/good_theories_of_the*

/v_2/sections/his tory_and_metaphysics_of_the_good). That is, when an individual refers to a thing as good, he or she is commending a thing that such a thing has some value or worth and it is worth some preference such that it is reasonable to desire it. George S. Fullerton (1982:252) corroborates this saying that when judgments are passed from the moral point of view, it concern men and their actions which are measurable based on the standard of the social will'. By the mention of good or the association of good to a thing, it means that a particular thing or an action is desirable or worthy of preference over others that lacked the attribute good. It is a term generally applicable in different contexts. Fullerton (1982) maintains that good and bad, right and wrong can be used in a very broad sense to incorporate the negative sense. Fullerton (1982:252) illustrates this with the following: A good trick may be a contemptible action; the right way to crack a bank-safe may be the means to a successful commission of a crime. For sure, the concept good as employed here is not in the positive or moral sense. However, when good considered in the moral or positive sense, it is meant to pass moral judgment. Thus, it is often affirmative of a situation. That is, when a good moral judgment is passed, it gives the most general adjective of approval, commendation or recommendation.

Theoretically, good is considered as what is intrinsically good, it is good in itself. It is an end in itself. It requires nothing else to be what it is. It is more of a standard of evaluation, valuing or appreciation of anything at all by humanity. Good accordingly, projects human abstract thought into reality. Simply put good things are considered as ends and valued for the sake of the positive ends they promote. However, beyond this, what is good is also taken to be a means to an end. Thus, what is good has intrinsic and extrinsic value whether in the moral and nonmoral senses. There many illustrations by Frankena to buttress this, for instance, he says one may say a thing is good because of its usefulness or something is good because of it being a means to an end.

Philosophically, the theory of good is aimed at considering questions like: What makes a thing good, an action good, a person good, human life good, etc. Thus, the consideration of good is either from the moral or nonmoral values'perspectives.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Moral theories are indispensable ingredients for evaluating human conduct and activities in the society. They provide the platform for the regulation or systematic thinking, reasoning and evaluation of issues of morality in human affairs. Moral theory very like applied ethics is therefore prescriptive and descriptive in nature. But in usage or application, sociologists/anthropologists are engaged with the

descriptive side of moral theory while philosophers on their part carry out the task of empirical evaluation or examination what is right and wrong by way of investigating the language as well as the contexts of certain expressions.

It is in view of this that the concept like good engages the attention of the philosopher. Good has been broadly considered and to an analytic philosopher like Moore, good lacks any coherent definition. However, this thinking is rejected by most philosophers who insist that rather the term has many different usages and more so, good is best seen as a commendation or recommendation and not a prescription. Thus, good could be taken with reference to humans as a commendation for good character trait and other objects as being end in themselves or means to an end.

5.0   SUMMARY

Moral theory is a product of moral philosophy or ethics. Moral philosophy sought to critically examine the life or activities of man in practical terms. In other words, moral theories are developed by moral philosophers to provide an objective standard for assessing human actions and conduct in the society. Additionally, moral theory accordingly explains why a particular action is right or wrong; why humans or individuals must act in certain or particular way. Considered as such, moral theory serves as a standard for the determination of what is acceptable and unacceptable due to human actions. The unit equally preoccupies itself with the meaning and understanding of the concept of good. Though there is disagreement in terms its meaning, it is more plausible to align with the view that maintains that when one makes reference to good, one is talking about what is intrinsically good or extrinsically good. Thus good is applicable in the moral and nonmoral senses as end in itself or means to an end. In the moral sense someone's character may be referred to as being good while in the nonmoral sense an object or work of art may said to be good.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   What are the uses of moral philosophy?
2.   Can the concept good be made a universal one?
3.   What makes moral philosophers have disagreement regarding the nature and meaning of the concept?
4.   What is the concept good?

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is moral theory?
2. What is the aim of moral philosophy?
3. Do you agree that good is definable or not? Give reasons for your answer

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4   THE MORAL CONCEPT: BAD

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Learning Outcomes
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    3.2   Moral Evil
4.0   Conclusion
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

Having understood the meaning of moral theory and the moral concept good, this unit engages itself with yet another moral concept: bad. The essence of this is to enable the learner come to terms with the fact that the concern with value can best be discussed within the scope of moral theory. The unit will in addition consider the above stated moral concept. It must be noted that very often than not, the discussion o bad is not taken in isolation of good. Even if good is mentioned without the opposite bad, conversely such a discussion has at its background the issue of bad and vice versa. It is the same approach that is employed here. This so because good and bad are two sides of the same coin; even when one does not directly mention the other side in a discussion, the other side is always implied in what is being said.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- state and explain moral concept: bad
- explain where and how good and bad can be applied
- explain where and how right and wrong can be applied
- show that the concept bad is the direct opposite of the concept good.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Bad

Bad is the direct opposite of good. Bad unlike good which is desirable, bad refers to that which is undesirable. It is also taken as what is

unpleasant. When bad is reduced to a moral concept and referred to an individual in terms of his/her conduct or behaviour, then such an individual adjudged to have an undesirable, or immoral and unpleasant conduct. Thus, he or she must be an individual of debased character, an unpleasant, unacceptable and unexciting and indeed, an evil fellow. By the mention of bad or the association of bad to a thing, it means that a particular thing or an action is undesirable or unworthy of preference over others. Such a thing is imperfect or defective as it lacks any positive attribute that promotes usefulness in the thing itself or rewarding end. In other words, a thing described as bad is neither a means to an end or an end in itself. It is simply an object of detest if not disgust.

Theoretically, bad is considered as what is intrinsically substandard or imperfect in itself. It is not an end in itself. It requires a lot of refinement to bring it to the level of acceptability. It is more of a means of contrasting what is good and showing the superiority of what is good over what is bad. What is bad when compared to what is good shows a clear contrast. In this manner, both concepts being the opposites of each other enable the meaning of each opposing concept to become obvious. The engagement with what is bad brings to consciousness the opposite of what is good. In fact, the talk of what is bad implies what is good and vice versa. However, Lewis (1970) says good or bad may be predicated of anything while right and wrong are strictly applicable to only human activities. That is, for instance, one can evaluate or judge a meal and say; it's a good meal. One can also say; it's a bad meal. At the same time, one can refer to an individual as being a bad man or being a good man. On the other hand, Lewis is saying one cannot refer to a meal as being wrong or right because a meal is not a human activity or conduct. Lewis further states (1970: 38) that right and wrong are predicable only of those human activities which are corrigible and determinable by decision, and hence are subject to deliberation and critical assessment‖. That is the use of right and wrong is restricted to human acts which are liable to correction and human critical judgment to approve or disprove such human acts.

The foregoing largely captures the concept bad only from one perspective. A better appreciation and indeed, a deeper understanding of the concept bad becomes manifest when it is equated with the synonym evil. Evil according to Richard H. Popkin (Microsof®Encarta® 2009) is that which is morally bad or wrong, or that which causes harm, pain or misery. Popkin (Microsoft ®Encarta® (2009) stresses that in theology the problem arose as a result of the idea that evil exists in the world that is governed by a Supreme Being who is benevolent, omnipotent and omniscience. That is, the world that is controlled or governed by the Supreme Being who is all good/caring, all powerful and all-knowing is

enmeshed or wrapped up in evil. Evil like good serves as a benchmark for measuring what is desired and what is undesired, or what is commendable and non-commendable. Ozumba (2004: 59) maintains that they (good and evil) provide yardstick for knowing which ends and means are acceptable, and which ones should be abandoned‖. In this wise, the talk of good brings about a pleasant feeling which is inviting while the talk of evil is repelling, that is unpleasant feeling. How can these two opposing concepts be made meaningful to man? In an answer, Ozumba (2004: 59) annotates that for good and evil to be meaningful to man, there is need for both naturalistic and non-naturalistic interpretations, one providing for the particular circumstance and the other universal applicability‖. In other words, Ozumba is of the opinion that naturalistic interpretation of bad should be employed to address or tackle a particular situation of a human act regarded as being bad while non-naturalistic interpretation should be applied to what could be considered universally.

The problem of evil being of critical concern to man both in philosophy and theology as knowledge disciplines. Omoregbe (1989: 53) patently notes that whenever any value is destroyed there is an evil‖. That is, evil is anything that extinguishes or destroys anything precious or desirable. Evil has been divided into four categories for better understanding. The four categories are: moral evil, natural evil, physical evil and metaphysical evil.

3.2   Moral Evil

This has to do with conscious or willful acts perpetrated by human beings to cause pain, misery and discomfort, etc to the other person or persons. Moral evil include: murder, rape, and robbery/theft, etc. In other words, is a willful act by an individual to cause harm or pains to another individual. It is referred to as moral evil in the sense it is a deliberate behaviour or conduct by an individual targeted at bring about a situation of discomfort or inconveniences to another fellow or group of persons. Thus, the act of kidnapping for instance, is an act of moral evil. Simply, moral evil is evil conceived, strategized and executed or actualized by an individual or group of individuals against another or others to cause him/her or them pains and misery.

i.   **Natural evil** - This refers to natural disasters or natural occurrences that man has no control over such as famines, calamities, floods, and pestilences, etc. Natural as such is not man-made evil unlike moral evil.

ii.   **Physical evil** - This means bodily pain or mental anguish such fear, illness, grief, war, and anxiety, etc. Physical evil may be

self-imposed or externally imposed. But whichever way, physical evil also discomforts the victim physically or psychologically.

iii.   **Metaphysical evil** - This refers to such things as imperfection, chance and accidents, etc. Under metaphysical evil there are incidents of criminals going unpunished, deformities, and unexpected happenstances like accidents, etc. Of all the evils considered here, metaphysical evil is closest to natural evil as man appears helpless under the situation of metaphysical evil. For instance, people found themselves in automobile accidents and they are helpless.

A consideration of the issue of evil in historical times and the contemporary concerns, clearly shows that it is fundamentally **moral evil** that is the crux of the problem more than **natural evil**. Natural evil may be conceived of as being simply part of nature and not evil at all. In other words, the predominant evils are moral and natural evils however moral evil is more resounding.

4.0   CONCLUSION

By the idea of bad as the opposite of or negation of good, it means what is worthless or unpleasant. It also connotes what is unacceptable That is, the moral concept bad refers to what is substandard or imperfect in itself. It is not a finality or an end in itself as if at all it has any value, it is only known to be worthless and no worthless thing or object has value or use. Thus, to make it useful then a lot of refinement has to be put into what is bad in order to remedy it and bring it up to the level of acceptability. Bad essentially could be seen to be more of a means of contrasting what is good and showing the superiority of what is good over what is bad. What is bad when compared to what is good shows a clear contrast. In this manner, both concepts being the opposites of each other enable the meaning of each other concept to become obvious. As a matter of fact, the mention of what is bad implies what is good and vice versa. However, while good or bad may be predicated of anything, right and wrong are strictly applicable to only human affairs. More so, right and wrong are predicative only of those human activities which can be corrected by way of determinable decision, and hence are subject to deliberation and critical assessment. For better understanding of what evil is, scholars have identified four evils namely:

Moral evil – it is a conscious act by man to cause pain and misery to his fellow man.

Natural evil- this is natural occurrence which causes harm or pain to man however, it is not caused by man. It is the opposite of moral evil.

Physical evil- this has to do with physical and psychological pain due to illness, anxiety, fear and anguish, etc and

Metaphysical evil has to do with imperfections observable in things. But by and large there are basically two kinds of evil: moral and physical evils and moral evil stands taller than the rest in comparison with the rest. Mankind is highly devastated by moral evil as it is observed on a daily basis in the affairs of man. Examples abound locally and internationally as far as moral evil is concerned: is it armed robbery, insurgency, kidnapping? You can name them, the list is surely endless.

5.0 SUMMARY

Bad is the antonym of good, that is, it is the opposite of good. Bad means what is unpleasant and worthless. It is what is considered unacceptable as it offers no meaning or use to man except those bad contrasts with good and makes it possible evaluate things or judge issues of morality. As such bad and good are seen as offering the benchmark for the assessment of moral issues. Bad as equated with evil is considered under moral evil, natural evil, physical evil and metaphysical evil.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. Is the concept bad universal?
2. What makes moral philosophers have disagreement regarding the nature and meaning of the concept bad?
3. What is the concept bad?

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is the relationship between bad and evil?
2. List and explain four kinds of evil with illustrations.
3. What is the aim of moral philosophy?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3

Unit 1   The Moral Concept: Wrong
Unit 2   Relevance of Moral Theory
Unit 3   Moral Obligation/Duty

UNIT 1   THE MORAL CONCEPT: WRONG

CONTENTS

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

The moral concept wrong like the other allied concepts good, bad and right discussed above, also attracts some philosophical investigations to make it more explicit in human activities or conducts. And like the related moral concepts (good, bad and right), wrong also finds space in everyday human social interaction. This conviction is evidential as individual(s) or groups cannot but regularly carryout evaluative or normative judgments regarding human activities or conduct in the society or in particular contexts. As earlier mentioned in the discussion of right, wrong has a direct and indirect relationship with the opposite concept right. That is, the discussion of wrong has the undertone of right. Additionally, wrong shares closet affinity with bad. This is to say that what is wrong is immoral. Thus, the consideration of what is wrong will also be periscoped on the backdrop of what is immoral.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

• state and explain the moral concept: wrong on the background of moral theory

- say what makes philosophers hold contrary views regarding the concept wrong.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Wrong

The moral concept wrong is the direct opposite of the term right. Wrong according *Dictionary.com* means not in accordance with what is morally right or good
(*https://www.dictionary.com/browse/wrong*). In other words, wrong also means immoral. What is not in accordance with what is morally right is not moral. It lacks moral integrity. *Dictionary.com* also adds that wrong also means not in accordance with morality, goodness or truth. In other words, it a deviation from the truth or what is factual. It is an aberration of goodness or what is good. That is to say that wrong is unacceptable, unpleasant or a misnomer. One would not be accused of hasty conclusion to say that the concept wrong means evil/unpleasant or moderately, it implies evil/unpleasant.

From the foregoing, bad, wrong and evil have a close knitted relationship just like good, right and pleasantness on the other hand can be seen to also have a close affinity when considered under morality. Indeed, bad and wrong as implying negative moral concepts or immoral have no moral value while good, right and pleasant implying positive moral concepts have moral value or worth. In a synthesis of the foregoing, Lewis (1970) maintains that the achievement of good is desirable but conformity to the right is imperative. That is, to be good is quite desirable and worthwhile but is better to follow the right (standards or principles). He further (1970: 39) explains that the rightness of an act, therefore, depends upon the conformity of the doer to imperatives which, when realised, promise the highest probability of good results‖. That is, what is considered as being good or right has to do with the performer of an act, what is considered to be necessary or unavoidable. It is worthy of note to say that Lewis employs the word imperatives to mean the principles of right or rational judgment which must absolutely apply in order to bring about better outcome of an action.

Conversely, with reference to wrong which is the antonym of good, it would be inferred from Lewis 'submission that wrong cannot achieve anything desirable neither has it anything to do with conforming to right standards or principles. Being an aberration of what is the right standard or principle, wrong though has to do with the performer of an act, it is considered to be unnecessary or avoidable. This is because it does not bring about any positive impact on an action rather it diminishes standards or principles. Lewis (1970: 38) throws light on this saying that,

right and wrong are predicable only of those human activities which are corrigible and determinable by decision, and hence are subject to deliberation and critical assessment‖. In other words, Lewis is aptly saying that the use of right and wrong is confined or limited to the acts of humans that are liable to being corrected by human critical evaluation and are consequently subjected to approval or disproval.

Thus far, wrong can easily be equated with evil. Evil according to Richard H. Popkin (Microsof®Encarta® 2009) is that which is morally bad or wrong, or that which causes harm, pain or misery. Popkin (Microsoft ®Encarta® (2009) stresses that in theology the problem arose as a result of the idea that evil exists in the world that is governed by a Supreme Being who is benevolent, omnipotent and omniscience. That is, the world that is controlled or governed by the Supreme Being who is all good/caring, all powerful and all-knowing is enmeshed or wrapped up in evil. Evil like good serves as a benchmark for measuring what is desired and what is undesired, or what is commendable and non-commendable. Ozumba (2004: 59) maintains that they (good and evil) provide yardstick for knowing which ends and means are acceptable, and which ones should be abandoned‖. In this wise, the talk of good brings about a pleasant feeling which is inviting while the talk of evil is repelling, that is unpleasant feeling. How can these two opposing concepts be made meaningful to man? In an answer, Ozumba (2004: 59) annotates that for good and evil to be meaningful to man, there is need for both naturalistic and non-naturalistic interpretations, one providing for the particular circumstance and the other universal applicability‖. In other words, Ozumba is of the opinion that naturalistic interpretation of what is wrong/evil or bad should be employed to address or tackle a particular situation of a human act regarded as being wrong or bad while non-naturalistic interpretation should be applied to what could be considered universally. Ozumba (2004: 59) quoting Moore says that in reality the term wrong is always used in specific contexts, with context-dependent meanings'. The implication of this is that the word or term wrong can be employed in different contexts. For instance, one can say:

i.   It is wrong to go to war
ii.   It wrong to eat pork
iii.   It is wrong to throw away twins

A critical consideration of the different contexts in which the term wrong is applied shows the particular and universal application of the term wrong. The emotivists will refer to the propositions as mere expression of emotions, other ethical philosophers will maintain otherwise. It is the view that counters the emotivists that finds relevance here. The propositions i and ii could offered in particular circumstances

while iii is applicable universally. It is wrong to go to war but you can go to war to defend yourself. In the same vein, one can tell the other based on cultural or religious differences that it is wrong to eat pork. In all these cases, it cannot be universalised. However, on the iii proposition; It is wrong to throw away twins, this can be universalized without causing any tension. In view of this, Ozumba (2004:59) contends that Naturalistic interpretations are problematic in terms of being open-ended and non-contradictor‖. Thus, everyone has the prerogative to describe or fashion his/her ethical theory based on his/her preferences/Further Reading and emotions. But in all these liberties, Ozumba (20004:59) cautions that there is also the need to portray the ideal which in all cases should serve as reference points of our varying ethical considerations or judgments.

The problem of evil being of critical concern to man both in philosophy and theology as knowledge disciplines. Omoregbe (1989: 53) patently notes that whenever any value is destroyed there is an evil‖. That is, wrong/evil is anything that extinguishes or destroys anything precious or desirable. Wrong as implying evil has been divided into four categories for better understanding. The four categories are: moral wrong/evil, natural wrong/evil, physical wrong/evil and metaphysical wrong/evil.

3.1.1 Moral Wrong

This has to do with conscious or willful acts perpetrated by human beings to cause pain, misery and discomfort, etc to the other person or persons. Moral evil include: murder, rape, and robbery/theft, etc. In other words, is a willful act by an individual to cause harm or pains to another individual. It is referred to as moral evil in the sense it is a deliberate behaviour or conduct by an individual targeted at bring about a situation of discomfort or inconveniences to another fellow or group of persons. Thus, the act of kidnapping for instance, is an act of moral evil. Simply, moral evil is evil conceived, strategised and executed or actualised by an individual or group of individuals against another or others to cause him/her or them pains and misery.

3.1.2 Natural Wrong

This refers to natural disasters or natural occurrences that man has no control over such as famines, calamities, floods, and pestilences, etc. Natural as such is not man-made evil unlike moral evil.

3.1.3 Physical Wrong

This means bodily pain or mental anguish such fear, illness, grief, war, and anxiety, etc. Physical evil may be self-imposed or externally

imposed. But whichever way, physical evil also discomforts the victim physically or psychologically.

3.1.4 Metaphysical Wrong

This refers to such things as imperfection, chance and accidents, etc. Under metaphysical evil there are incidents of criminals going unpunished, deformities, and unexpected happenstances like accidents, etc. Of all the evils considered here, metaphysical evil is closest to natural evil as man appears helpless under the situation of metaphysical evil. For instance, people found themselves in automobile accidents and they are helpless.

A consideration of the issue of wrong/evil in historical times and the contemporary concerns, clearly shows that it is fundamentally **moral wrong/evil** that is the crux of the problem more than **natural wrong/evil**. Natural wrong/evil may be conceived of as being simply part of nature and not wrong/evil at all. In other words, the predominant wrongs/evils are moral and natural evils however moral wrong/evil is more preponderance.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The moral concept wrong also means immoral. It is what taken to be contrary to what is morally right or immoral. Wrong is what lacks moral integrity. A wrong act is an carried out that is in defiant to what is truthful or what is factual. It is an aberration of goodness or what is good. That is to say that wrong is unacceptable, unpleasant or a misnomer. Thus, the moral concept wrong means evil/unpleasant or moderately, it implies evil/unpleasant.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit takes cursory look at the nature of moral the moral concept wrong. It considered the and just like its sister concept bad; wrong also entertains a close affinity with the term evil. Thus the discussion informed the conviction that based on the inherent or Siamestic relationship between the two concepts, the moral concept wrong is easily linked to evil and vice versa.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Give two definitions of wrong.
2.   State and explain two yardsticks for evaluation of what is wrong/evil and right.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain how wrong can be equated with evil.
2. State and explain four wrong you have studied under this unit.
3. State the contention of the relativists regarding the question of what is wrong.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   RELEVANCE OF MORAL THEORY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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3.0   Main Content
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        3.2   Some Basic Moral Theories
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

To say that moral theory is indispensable in understanding moral issues is to state the obvious. That is to say that in order to understudy all moral issues, they must be presented and systematically analyzed in order to lay bare the core understanding of what they are. It is arising from this background that the study of moral theory becomes imperative. This unit leads the learner to understanding the value of moral theory as being essential in the consideration of moral situations and how best the presented situation or the unfolding experience can be handled. Moral theory is more or less a practical consideration of moral issues in human situations or experiences.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able:

* demonstrate the ability of knowing the following:
* say what theory is
* say what moral theory is
* identify the relevance of moral theory in the consideration of ethical or moral issues in human life and the society at large
* show how moral theory is indispensable in human life.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

A theory is a systematic or procedural guide on how to approach a thing, discussion or a study. Microsoft® Encarta® (2009) says theory is an assumption or system of assumptions, accepted principles, and rules of procedure based on limited information or knowledge devised to analyze, predict, or otherwise explained the virtue or behavior of a

specified set of phenomena; abstract reasoning. A theory as such is unavoidable in the area of academics. It is important that one be guided in the pursuit of knowledge such that what is eventually arrived at as a piece of knowledge must be systematic and logical based on the principles or rules articulated by the theory.

Moral is the opposite of immoral. Amoral and nonmoral are not the antonym of moral. Moral is from the Latin word *moralis* or *mores* which means custom. Moral relates to acceptable standards of good or bad behavior, fairness just honesty and righteousness. Immoral as the opposite of moral is a negation of the above qualities. By immoral it means, when referred to an individual, one is evil, unfair, unjust, dishonesty unrighteousness and above all, depraved, that is corrupt.

Now premised on these conceptual clarifications, moral theory could be said to refer the acceptable ways of doing and acting in situations or circumstances systematised in a procedure that gives room for analysis of claims being put up. Moral philosophy interrogates moral facts as encountered inexperience. In other words, human practical life and experiences constitute issues for moral philosophical enquiry or investigation. Sullivan is apt when he (1980:104) says moral philosophy is a critical examination of the life of practice: But what exactly should be examined? And how does one go about doing it. As muted above, what should be examined should be the practical issues of human experience as they are obviously the data for moral theoretical investigation. To talk about what is to be the examined, Aristotle (Sullivan, 1980:104) notes that the practical life concerns particulars… this situation with its constituents, this agent, this something‖. Thus, Aristotle (Sullivan, 1980:104) argues that Generalities about practice are drawn from our knowledge of particulars, and knowledge of particulars comes from experience. The implication of this is that moral philosophy is predicted on particular human experiences. Moral theory is a product of moral philosophy. It is thus pertinent to discuss its relevance in this context.

3.1   Moral Theory and Its Relevance

It has already been shown that moral philosophy is a critical examination of practical life. Moral theory greatly assists in performing this task. Besides, it is already shown above that a theory provides a systematic approach towards the attainment of a particular result. Moral theory, arising from this background brings about a systematic or procedural lead towards the understanding of moral issues. It is on the account of this that it becomes easier to illustrate the relevance of moral theory.

Mankind has been consistently faced with issues of morality. In order to put these issues in proper perspectives and address them, moral philosophers, in their different orientations, have advanced moral theories to tackle such issues. Moral theory does the following and more:

- **Provision of Insights:** Moral theory provides insights into moral maxims. Oftentimes individuals hold with more or less confidence, certain moral maxims without enough knowledge of the nature of these maxims. However, with deep reflections engineered by moral or ethical theory, a better understanding is provided. This moral theory provides intellectual insights into better understanding and appreciation of moral issues as they relate to individuals and the large society.

- **Reconciliation of diverse opinions**- Moral theory also seeks to diffuse the disconcordant opinions regarding moral issues by showing clearly issues leading to disagreement in order to enhance a better appreciation or evaluation of moral issues. Thus, moral theory desires clearness of insight and breath of views.

- **Clear comprehension of the significance of moral and the end result of ethical endeavour**: Moral theory in its functioning aims at attaining clearer comprehension of the significance of moral and at the same time, the attainment of the ultimate result of the purpose of an ethical enquiry.

- **Systematisation of moral issues**: as is inherent in all theories, moral theory systematises moral issues thereby showing the relationship between related moral issues.

- **School of thought**: Moral theory constitutes a school of thought such that scholars or individuals of like view or opinion become easily identified.

- **Abstract reasoning**: Moral theory incorporates some metaphysical or abstract reasoning. For instance, the emotivists argue that propositions or expressions, like killing is bad', are expressions of the emotions of the speaker as they do not show any relationship with what has been said in the factual or true sense.

- **Moral value judgment:** Moral theory goes a long way in aiding the passage of moral and value judgments. Judgments regarding what is morally acceptable and unacceptable are better carried out with the help of moral theory. In the same vein, moral theory is

also relevant to evaluative issues as it guides the passage of judgment of value.

3.2   Some Basic Moral Theories

Some basic moral theories are identifiable in the study of moral philosophy. They include the following but are not limited to them as some of them are discussed elsewhere in this module; prescriptivism, intuitionism, emotivism, hedonism, existentialism, situation ethics, ethical relativism and ethical absolutism, etc.

Prescriptivism: As the term implies, prescriptivism is from the word prescribe. The moral theory of prescriptivism is best associated with R.M. Hare who belonged to the analytic tradition of philosophy. In his book: *The Language of Morals*, he (1977) states that the function and use of moral language is to prescribe an action. He maintains that (1977) the reason why actions are in a peculiar way revelatory of moral principles is that, the function of moral principles is to guide conduct That is, language in its function and use is to regulate human conduct by way of prescribing how one ought to conduct the self. He insists on clarity of language pointing out that the can fusion of our moral language leads, not merely to theoretical studies, but to needless practical perplexities. To Hare therefore, words used in moral contexts are not different in meaning from words used in ordinary sense. As such to Hare (1977:82) to call something good is to primarily commend rather than describe. To him, moral expressions are clearly prescriptive in nature. The implication of the moral theory of prescription is to prescribe the course of action for an individual or the larger society.

Intuitionism: it is a moral theory which relies heavily on reason and intellectual insights devoid of sense perception. It maintains that right and wrong actions are known by intuition. To the intuitionists, moral facts are known immediately through human reason. Some of the proponents of intuitionism include: G.E. Moore, W.D. Ross, A. Meinong, A.C. Ewing, Joseph Butler, Henry Sidgwick and V.F. Carrit, etc.

Emotivism: A theory which is largely popularized by C.L. Stevenson and A.J. Ayer. The eroticists are of the consensus that moral statements do not capture facts but rather, they are product of the motions of the making such a statement. According to Ozumba (2004:1085) the eroticists maintain that moral judgments and ethical concepts such as good, right and other moral value terms have emotive meaning. This contention by the eroticists goes to say that to them, ethical statements merely express the feelings or attitudes of the speaker. Emotivism is not is not bothered about facts to which truth and falsity can be predicated

but rather with feeling and attitudes. Thus to the emotivism, statements like or moral judgments like good, bad, right or wrong do not convey any moral fact and cannot be true or false. They consider such statements as being person or community dependent and does not tell us anything about the act itself '(Ozumba, 2004:108). Premised on this, Ayer maintains that ethical concepts are pseudo-concepts. This is so because ethical symbols in propositions do not add anything to what is empirically given. Emotivism has other disciples apart from Ayer and Stevenson.

Existentialism: Existentialism: This is a movement as well as a philosophical system that is concerned with existence. The chief exponents of existentialism are Soren Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers and Maurice Merleu-Ponty, there is a central message or thesis of existentialist philosophy. As a philosophy that is concerned with man's happiness, it offers man that freedom to be free and in addition, make choices. In other words, existentialism is a philosophical system that aims at projecting human freedom. It is an individualistic philosophy because the existentialists insist that individuals are unique in themselves and cannot be represented by another person.

Man to the existentialists is unique and cannot be replaced by another. That is why they believe that no man can die for another. It is in recognition of these truths that the existentialists on man being aware of his freedom and the accompanying responsibility of being free.

Jean-Paul Sartre, one of the giants in the movement declares that existence precedes essence'. That is man has to exist before the will find the meaning of his life. This is to say that there is no already made meaning, wealth, position, etc. kept in wait for man to come and inherit. Man has to struggle to achieve anything. Sartre being an atheist, denied the existence of God arguing that God has no say in the affairs of men that is why they are free. Man is simply thrown into the world to find his essence. To find these essences, man is given free choices to make however, man has the responsibility while making these choices. If for instance, you make a free choice of consuming alcohol and you caused accident while diving under the influence, Sartre will tell you, you have to take responsibility instead of shifting it to the alcohol you took. Existentialism is thus a moral theory that seeks to remove man from life of inauthenticity, bad faith and anguish, etc.

Situation Ethics: Situation ethics theory as propounded by Joseph Fletcher, is taken as a new morality. It states that the determining factor regarding issues of morality is the situation or circumstance that informed the action. And to this, it could be added that the motive of

carrying out such an action is yet another factor. For instance, a driver of a fully loaded commercial vehicle who picked up an elderly woman free of charge along a deserted path, who was visibly tired and staggering as she moves along, based on situation ethics and indeed, ethical naturalism, should not be penalised by the law enforcement agents for traffic offence of overloading his vehicle. The motive of assisting the exhausted woman was humanitarian and not financial gains. Thus, to Fletcher (Omoregbe 1989:213), every situation is unique. Consequently, the same kind of action cannot remain morally the same in all situations. Whether an action is to be considered as good or evil depends on the situation in which it is performed'. Good illustrations of situation ethics abound even in the scriptures. For example, Ananias and Sapphira were struck to death for lying to Peter and the apostles while Abraham's and Sarah's lies to King Abimelech over their marital status were justified. Unlike the fate that befell Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, Abraham and his wife, Sarah were restituted by the innocent King Abimelech on the orders of God. This analogy and several others is a corroboration of Fletcher's view that the same kind of moral action does not remain morally the same in all situations. Thus the situation ethicists canons are captured in the words of Ozumba (2004 :124) thus:

In situation ethics morality does not consists in formalistic observance of law. Morality is the sincerity of one's response to a situation and the uprightness of one's intention‖. In other words, an action is considered good if it is good in itself by being approved of or commended in the prevailing situation or circumstance. Under situation ethics, law or legal formalisms are inferior to the prevailing situation especially when acts are carried out with the best of intentions.

Hedonism: The English word hedonism is got from the Greek words *hĕdouĕ (ńŏovń)* which, however, Dan Weijers says are concerned with what is good, how we should behave and what motivates us to behave in the manner we do *(Hedonism*, http://www.iep.utm.edu/phenomen). Despite its variegated hues and shades, hedonism broadly is concerned with pleasure/happiness and pain. It insists that all and only pleasure is intrinsically valuable. Meanwhile, hedonism considers pleasure and pain both physically and mentally. Frankena (1973: 85) annotates that hedonists, quantitative or qualitative have usually argued that pleasure is the good in itself because it is what we all ultimately at least, desire or aim at'. That is, all hedonists have conceded that pleasure remains the most sought-after desire of mankind because it is the good in itself**.**

Ethical Relativism and Ethical Objectivism (Absolutism): Ethical relativism is a moral theory which states that in view of the diverse cultures, moral laws, codes and even standards, the best thing to do is ins moral relativism. This is to say that in view of what is accepted as

moral norms or standard being different from place to place, it would just be proper to accept moral relativism. According to Anthony E. Areji (Emmanuel Ome, 2009:113) ethnical relativism is the view that morality is situated in time and space. It is ever changing‖ it is impossible to discredit this clam of the relativists.

One of other hand, ethnical objectivism or absolutism which is a direct opposite of relativism, argues that ethical statements being normative, are valid everywhere no matter the space and time. For instance, no same society approves the wanton killing of its citizens. It is argued that ethical objectivism is a moral theory that is intended to curb human excesses while at the same time projecting a universal order of considering things.

For sanity to prevail in human situate, there is need for some form of universal order which ethical objectivism can provide.

4.0   CONCLUSION

There is no disputing the fact theories are very critical to understanding issues in their depth. Besides providing insights into what may have been blurred, they also provide a guide to the consideration of moral issues in the case of moral theory. Being systematic in its approach to issues under consideration, moral theory is therefore very relevant to moral and value consideration in human conducts or actions. Moral theory is thus indispensable in human affairs. Moral theory guides the consideration of moral issues systematically showing how objective or subjective an issue may be. Moral theory.

5.0   SUMMARY

Moral theory is granted to be central notion in the handling of morality related issues in the life of man. It accordingly provides insights into discussions, it reconciles diverse opinions, makes issues comprehensible by showing the significance of moral and the end result of ethical endeavours: systematization of moral issues, incorporation of diverse opinions or views into schools of thought. It also stimulates abstract reasoning as well as passing moral value judgment, etc. There are some basic moral theories that are popular; these include: prescriptivism, intuitionism, emotivism, hedonism, existentialism, situation ethics, ethical relativism and ethical absolutism, etc.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. Say what theory is?
2. Mention five features of moral theory.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Outline any five relevance of moral theory and explain.
2. Outline and explain any five basic moral theories.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3   MORAL OBLIGATION/DUTY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Learning Outcomes
3.0   Main Content
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      3.2   Duty
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

By now as a learner who is understudying Unit Four (4) of Module
Three (3), you are no longer a stranger to the term moral. Thus it can be
mentioned in passing that it is what is ethically acceptable or tolerable.
This unit takes you through the understanding of moral obligation/duty
and by implication; it equally will expose you to what is perfect and
imperfect moral obligations.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define what moral is
- define obligation
- say what moral obligation is
- make a distinction between duty and obligation.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

To attain the Learning Outcomes of this unit, it would be appropriate to
clarify some concepts here beginning with moral.

3.1   Moral

To *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Third Edition,* in its first
submission, it says moral relates to standards of good or bad behavior,
fairness, honesty, etc, which every person believes in, rather than to
laws". Secondly, it maintains that moral means behaving in ways
considered by most people to be correct and honest. That is, in the first
submission, the consideration of moral is broad as it encompasses both

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the good and the bad. In the second entry, the concern is reduced to the conduct of the individual in respect to his/her moral character of being honest, dishonest, uprightness or evil.

Obligation and duty are considered by some scholars to be one and the same thing while others see the concepts as only being close in meaning. In this discourse, sentiments are shared with those moral theorists who regard the concepts are twin concepts. The unit will elaborate on this for the purposes or charity. Obligation and duty are considered as synonyms in English Language. In other words, these words can substitute each other in discussions or statements without losing the intended weaning. Duty is taken as an obligation. Ozunba (2004:52) quoting Thomas Reid maintains that duty is what we ought to do, what is fair and good, what is approvable, what every man professes to be the rule of his conduct, what all man praise and what is in itself laudable though no man may praise it‖. In furthermore to this; Ozunba stresses that duty is that which is always right and it is the real moral benchmark of all moral agents. Ozumba maintains that duty appears in different forms which include:

a.   Pleasant form
b.   Unpleasant form (where it is taking and non-enthusing)
c.   Pleasant and unpleasant forms

However, Ozumba surmises that when duty is evaluated from the perspective of the truly good, it is always pleasant. For duty to be regarded as such, it must not be considered in isolation of the moral agent and the action. Once it is taken in this way, the moral obligation shared by both the agent and the action arising from this, Ozumba (2004:53) avers: duty is much more honourable than the satisfaction of one‗s interests‖. He emphasises that the former cannot be ignoble while the latter can be base. This thinking gives credence to the view that moral obligation is expressed in terms of ought. Ethically, ought‖ means necessity. Thus, Ozumba says this necessity is expressed either conditionally (hypothetically) or unconditionally (categorically). Hypothetical statements are conditional expression which even though employ ought as necessity, the person being addressed is not under compulsion to carry out the act. For example: if you want to become educated, you ought to go to school ‘; this implies that the necessity of obligation is placed under conditional ought. On the contrary, a categorical or unconditional imperative will simply state: you ought to go to school to become educated.

3.2   Duty

Making some etymological concepts to the concept of duty Casmir Ani (Emmanuel Ome, 2009:91) quoting Lacey, relates duty to ought

obligation duty connected to others; obligations are primarily moral or legal‖. Obligations are always agent-centred. They do not stand alone without anyone to address them. Duties on their part have to do with roles regardless of whether those roles are voluntarily undertaken or not. Duties on their part are said to be long standing and not sudden like obligations.

Thus far, it is evident that moral obligation stems from duty. Ozumba (2004:54) is right when he says that Duty without obligation is deformed‖. That is, to talk of duty, there must surely be an obligation. John Gay (Ozumba, 2004:55) maintains that moral obligation is the obligation or necessity of doing or omitting any action in order to be happy. Ozumba stresses that obligation is an action prompted by the desire to have that end result which the obligatory act conduces or approves.

J.S Mills (Ozumba, 2004:55) explains that the source of obligation is motives and sanctions‖. Mills further explains that an individual performs an action based on the understanding that he/she will derive a certain end. More so, one refrains from carrying out certain actions for fear or being condemned. However, Mill cautions that obligation does not imply motive, it is independent of motive. Obligation necessarily goes with definite compulsion while motive is not.

Obligation: Obligation on its part also means moral duty. According to Dale Jacquette (2004:527) moral obligation or moral duty is the moral requirement to do or refrain from doing a specific act or kind of act‖. That is, it is taken as a kind of duty or responsibility placed on the shoulders of an individual to act or behave in a particular manner. Moral obligation precisely, is what morality purposely confers on humanity to implement or carryout as a rational agent. Moral obligation necessarily places a duty on the individual to act or do something in an acceptable manner. Frankena (1973: 12) observes that the ultimate concern of the normative theory of obligation is to guide us in making decisions and judgments about actions in particular situations‖. Man is often faced with decisions to make and judgments to pass in different situations and circumstances; this is where the knowledge of moral obligation comes handy as it guides man in such situations.

Ani citing Lacey (Ome, 2009:92) states the similarities of the duo. In the words of Lacey duties and obligation are therefore special kind of things we always ought to perform them since they may be overridden whether by other duties, etc or even by something non-moral‖. In a reaction, Ani (Ome, 2009:91) maintains that Duty as an obligation entails some kind of necessity… not physical necessity by sheer implied command rolled up in the categorical must. It is a moral necessity

imposed upon the human-will that ultimately derives its validity and force from the law of human nature which is in turn, based on the eternal law of the author of creation'. Ani, premised on the existential conviction that duty and obligation are man-centered or moral agent-centered aptly introduces the notion of ontology in his final analysis. According to him (Ome, 2009:92) we can say with regard to duty that it is an auto logical impulse which compels us (by the power of conscience) to act in a particular way, refrain from doing something which could have or dismay another citizen from enjoying his or her own rights‖. He accordingly stresses that the subject and object of duty is justice; doing right to oneself and to all.

In his contribution, Kant (Jacquette, 2004) identifies two kinds of duties or obligations. He talks about duties owned to oneself and duties owned others as well as perfect and imperfect duties. As social beings Kant is of the thinking that there are responsibilities we owe other persons apart from what we owe ourselves. In his four applications of the categorical imperative, Kant (Jacquette, 2004: 293) talks of the question of:

1.   Whether it is morally permissible to commit suicide in dire circumstances
2.   Whether it is morally permissible to accept a loan of money falsely promising to repay it and knowing in advance that one will not be able to repay
3.   Whether it is morally obligatory to develop one's talents as opposed to living an unproductive life of lazy pleasure
4.   And Whether it is morally obligatory to donate surplus wealth to others in need as an act of charity

It is on this background that Kant anchors the idea of perfect and imperfect duties. He (Jacquette, 2004: 293) says a perfect moral duty is one that describes something definite that we are morally required to fulfill whereas an imperfect duty does not command but permits action, and hence is less definite and positive in its command, prescribing only what is morally allowed or forbidden‖. Stressing on these, Kant arrives at the conclusion that (i and ii) above involving moral permissibility are imperfect while (iii and iv) involving moral obligation are perfect. Kant's categorical imperative is therefore aimed at demonstrating what the rational agents are obligated or permitted to do whether to themselves or others as a perfect or imperfect moral obligation.

SELFASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Define obligation and moral obligation.
2.   Mention the similarities and dissimilarities between the two.
3.   What is another expression for moral obligation?

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the main body, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Mention and explain the features of moral obligation.
2.   State and explain what is meant by perfect and imperfect moral duties.
3.   What is Kant's categorical imperative.
4.   Show the difference between hypothetical and categorical imperatives.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Moral obligation/duty as a moral theory is aimed at the good life. It seeks to bring about justice in human social relationships where the individual is moved by sensitive conscience to carry out a duty in order to put a smile on the face of another person. Advocates of moral obligation/duty consider it as a compulsory doable act to a person by an individual in order to make the other person satisfied. Though the performance of an obligation/duty may sometimes invoke some mixed feelings, it is argued that acts of moral obligation genuinely carried out evoke a feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment because they are always right. Thus, to carry out such acts is deemed noble and to refrain from such acts is ignoble.

5.0   SUMMARY

The unit considered what is moral in the broad and narrow senses. It equally explored the concepts of obligation and duty as it laid bare the synergetic relationship. In view of this inseparable relationship, obligation/duty is considered as a normative theory that regulates human interpersonal relationships. Individuals with a sensitive conscience are ever willing and they do carry out duties based on the conviction that they ought to carry out such a responsibility. By ought in ethics, it means a necessity. Thus, moral obligation/duty is a necessity. No wonder Kant made a distinction between a categorical imperative and a hypothetical imperative. However, by and large, moral obligation/duty is what nature compulsorily imposed on mankind to perform. Duties in view of their diversities have been classified into perfect and imperfect duties. The classification is for the purposes of clarification. However in essence, moral obligation/duty ultimately connotes justice where individuals with an opportunity to give meaning to the life of their fellow man happily do that. It must be pointed out that the individual owes the self some duties just as he/she owes the other person. Moral

obligation/duty is predicated on the understanding that human beings are moral agents and ruled by a moral conscience otherwise moral obligation/duty will be meaningless.

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MODULE 4

Unit 1   Justice
Unit 2   Notions of Justice
Unit 3   Rights and Natural Rights
Unit 4   Moral Theory and Practical Life

UNIT 1   JUSTICE

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit preoccupies itself with theory of justice. It explores the conception of justice from the ancient era to the contemporary times.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- to define justice
- mention the different conceptions of justice as seen by the ancient Greek philosophers
- say what injustice is
- say what constitutes the criteria of justice by Aristotle.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

Justice is derived from the Latin word *Justus*. Its English equivalent means fairness or reasonableness. Justice is in turn formed from the word just. Just as an adjective means fair or impartial. This consideration of justice is rather based on the everyday usage or application. In Greek justice is known as *dikaiosynē* or *dikasioumē*. Plato in the *Republic* (199:5-35) introduces a series of definitions in the conversation with Polemarchus, Glaucon, Adeimantus, Niceratus, Thrasymachus,

Cephalus, Charmanitides, Cleitophon and many others. In one of the definitions, justice was taken as restitution and speaking the truth. In another definition, justice is taken as human excellence; just man is wise and good, and the unjust man is ignorant and bad/evil. Justice is also regarded as the interest of the stronger. The conversation also arrived at another definition of justice as virtue of the soul and injustice is a vice (Plato, 1997:35).

By way of summation Plato (1997:35) maintains that at present the result of our conversation is that I know nothing: for why I do not know what justice is, little likely to know whether it is in fact a virtue or not, or whether its owner is happy or unhappy. In as much as Plato speaking through Socrates in the conversation admitted this ignorance, he was more inclined to demonstrating the superiority of justice over injustice. According to Plato (1997:48) justice belongs to the highest class of good things, the possession of which is valuable both for the sake of their results and also in a higher degree for their own sake such as sight, hearing, intelligence, health, and everything else which is genuinely good in its own nature and not merely reputed to be good select for commendation this particular feature of justice, I mean the benefit with which it confers on its possessor, in contrast with the harm which injustice inflicts. By this Plato rated justice as being part of the highest class of good things. With this attribute Plato went further to say that justice is intrinsically or inherently good such that to have justice is invaluable for its sake.

More so, justice constitutes a higher degree for its own sake like when one considers things like sight, good, health and intelligence. To him justice has some benefits; it confers some benefits on the one who is just unlike the one who is unjust. As a matter of fact, Plato vehemently insists that injustice harms the individual who embraces it. Justice as such is a virtue and the individual who possesses it, possesses moral virtue.

It was not only Plato that was preoccupied with the question of justice. Aristotle, his pupil was also concerned with the nature of justice. Aristotle in Book V' of his *Nicomachean Ethics* called for caution regarding the study of justice and conversely, injustice. He (1129a:5) states that in studying justice and injustice, we must examine the kind of actions with which they are concerned, what kind of mean justice is, and what the extremes are between which a just act occupies the median position; mean means intermediate value, medium term of proportion or middle way. However, as employed by Aristotle, it means the middle way. So, by which kind of mean justice is, it means the middle way between the two extremes of justice.

Median on the other hand too shares similarity in meaning with the mean.

Median according to *Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, Third Edith*, describes the value which is the middle one in a set of values arranged in order of size. That is, inherent in justice is a just act of higher quality which occupies the middle position in the midst of extremes. By these Aristotle sets a clear standard for evaluating justice and injustice. In Aristotle's (1129a:10) words we see that all men mean by justice that characteristic which makes them performers of just actions, which makes them act justly, and which makes them wish what is just‖. In other words, Aristotle is saying that justice is a distinctive or defining feature or attributes found in all men which moves them or propels them to act justly and at the same time motivates them to always desire that which is just. In same manner, Aristotle says, this formula is applicable to injustice that is, is makes people to carry out unjust acts and also desire or wish for unjust things.

Aristotle conceives justice in both the narrow and broad senses. Martin Ostwald (1962:84) in the translators notes on *Nicomachean Ethics* points out that *dikaiosynē* or *dikasioumē* broadly besides conceiving justice as virtue, takes justice as the regulator of all relations within the state, and deals primarily not only with matters that are settled before a law court. Ostwald (1962:111) adds that however in the narrow or restricted sense, justice is the same as righteousness or honesty. Aristotle further observes that justice and injustice have been used in more than one sense however, he points out that since their different meanings are closely linked, it is difficult to clearly ascertain the ambiguity contained in the usages. In other words, when meanings of two words are far apart they are better appreciated or known. Aristotle accordingly introduced the words just and unjust to show the various senses in which the words are used. According to him (1129a:30) we regard as unjust both a law breaker and also a man who is unfair and takes more than his share, so that just is what is lawful and unfair‖ and unjust‖ is what is unlawful and unfair. Aristotle explains the attitude or conduct or better still the behaviour of the unjust man or unfair man pointing out that such an individual takes more than his share. He is a greedy person who wants to acquire in excess and being unmindful that it is not all good things that are always good for a particular person. For example, meat is a good thing to eat but medically, red meet (beef) is not good for people above 50 years of age. Aristotle stresses that people pray for and pursue certain things although they ought not to do so. Rather he (1129b:5) says They should rather pray that things which are good in an unqualified sense may also be good for them; and they should choose what is good for them‖. Taking into cognisance the conduct of the unjust man who is motivated by greed and selfish interest, Aristotle points out that the unjust person does not always choose the large share. That is, when it comes to making a choice between what is without qualification bad, the unjust person will choose the smaller. If it is on the reverse, he will surely go for the larger. This is because the unjust man

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feels the lesser evil is in a sense good. However, in all these Aristotle (1129b:10) submits that He is unfair, for unfair‖ includes and is common to both (taking more than one's share of the good and taking less than ones share of the bad). An unjust person to Aristotle is simply a self-aggrandiser.

From the usages of the terms just and unjust, as Aristotle demonstrated in the foregoing illustrations, it brings about clarity on how these concepts could be understood with less ambiguity. Thus justice and injustice could better be understood and practiced in society. Acts of justice and injustice in view of this can easily be discerned. There are an implicit sense in which Aristotle conceives the criteria of justice and how the criteria can be applied in the state or the society.

3.1   Criteria of Justice in Practice

Thus far, the nature of justice as seen by Aristotle is clearly articulated; justice is regarded as virtue, society regulator in all ramification's social relationships, moral conduct, etc and furthermore, justice transcends matters settled in the law courts to righteousness, honesty, fairness, just acts as well as conduct. In view of this understanding of justice, it is indispensable in the state or the community and indeed, the life of the people. Following this understanding, Roger J. Sullivan (1980:13) categorically states that Justice concerns not only material goods but also the manner in which people treat each other, and Aristotle's famous dictum here is that equals should be treated equally, unequals unequally. St. Thomas Aquinas in the medieval era re-echoed this thinking of Aristotle. Justice so considered brings about the understanding that the fundamental bond within the community is the fulfillment of common needs and the fundamental activity of a community exchange, the fundamental condition of exchange and so of community is reciprocal justice (Sullivan, 1980:13). Apart from the need to enhance the common needs or common goods of the community, just as Aristotle understood it, is expected to develop moral excellence of the rulers (leaders) as well as the citizens to conduct themselves in morally acceptable manner.

Aristotle reputed for a sustained dislike for tyranny (to him the tyrant takes away the integrity of his subjects, their sense of common good and mutual trust and their freedom) employ justice to fundamentally central for three moral ideals in the society. According to Sullivan (1980:132) justice legislates for the moral acceptability of any constitutional arrangement of institutions and power; respect for the dignity of all men, including one's self; a sense of moral community with other men; and moral freedom‖. To Aristotle, these constitute the criteria of justice. Thus, it is only the form of government that recognizes and promotes freedom and accords the individuals dignity as well as the community that qualifies

to be referred to as a government that is operating on the basic principles of justice. Anything short of these Aristotle regards such a form of government as immoral.

From the positions of Plato and Aristotle as highlighted, thus far, clearly show that there is an intrinsic bond between justice, fairness, equality and freedom in the conception of justice as they have presented. This trend initiated several countries ago continues in the contemporary times. Justice is thus regarded as common good as it is desirous of protecting the interest of all who come to it. In the medieval era, justice was equally conceived in this manner. In his analysis of the concept of justice (Ameh Ejeh,2010: 12) says Thomas Aquinas puts it within the category of moral virtue. ‒Justice is a virtue in a person by which he/she habitually renders to everyone what is their due. It is a virtue which constantly and perpetually works for the observation and protection of the rights of the people‖. Justice in this regard has considered being a noble objective from the ancient period to the present. It is based on this that people easily judge if actions are just or unjust moral art immoral, good or bad/evil.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Justice is conceived variously.

5.0   SUMMARY

By its origin, justice is derived from the Latin word *Justus* and the Greek words *dikaiosynē* or *dikasioumē*. From their etymological conceptions, justice has been variously understood as: restitution, speaking the truth, as human excellence, as the interest of the stronger, as virtue of the soul. When taken in regard to man; a just man is wise and good, and the unjust man is ignorant and bad/evil while injustice is taken a vice.

Additionally, justice is taken to be the same thing as righteousness, honesty, fairness, just acts as well as good conduct. More so, in the society, justice is regarded as common good, it develops the moral excellence of the rulers and the citizens. Also, justice regulates all relations within the state and deals with matters that are settled outside of the law courts. Justice is indispensable in the society.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

NO Questions

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the Main Content, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

NO Questions

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   NOTIONS OF JUSTICE

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Learning Outcomes
3.0   Main Content
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit preoccupies itself with the different notions of justice. Justice like value and other related issues discussed thus far are of critical concern to humanity and therefore, very practical in human gregarious existence. Justice very like the accompanying notions such as: liberalism (in its diversity), libertarianism, Egalitarianism, Communitarianism, Socialism, Feminism, and subalternism will engage the attention of this unit. The idea of this is to enable the leaner realize that the concern with the theory of justice is holistic. The unit will in addition consider the above-mentioned notions of justice alongside legal justice which appears to be more popular in view of its constitutional support. In other words, legal justice in view of its enforcement by the government through its law enforcement agencies is readily considered as being more readily there or available as any aggrieved individual, party (not political party) or group of individual and even a corporate entity can confidently run to a competent court of law with the legal backing to seek redress for any act or action considered by the other party as being malicious.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- different notions of justice
- explain in clear terms the different notions of justice as you have studied under this unit
- ask yourself if justice can be attained after all
- ask which of the notions of justice makes the attainment possible?

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

The consideration of justice brings about different theoretical postulations. Justice is essentially anchored on liberalism (utilitarian and contractual traditions), libertarianism, legalism, Egalitarianism, Communitarianism,

Socialism, Feminism, and Subalternism. These theories and indeed, ideologies pertaining to justice advances one position or the other regarding the importance of justice to mankind and the society at large.

These theories shall be adumbratively considered below.

Liberal Theory: the liberal theory of justice has two versions: the utilitarian and contractual traditions. The utilitarian tradition which emanates from the philosophy of utilitarianism maintains that justice is derived from social utility leading to the maximisation of happiness in the society'. Its basic principle maintains that in counting and distribution of social goods, each person should be taken as one and not more than one.

The contractual tradition of liberal justice on the other hand is influenced by social contract theory. This theory is built on the premise that since people in their original thinking are rational with the capacity to conceive what is good, they also have the capacity to embark on intelligent pursuits, enter into agreements as well as eschew envy as envy makes everyone worse off besides being collectively disadvantageous. Social contract theory also recognises that the contracting individuals being rational are bias- free, sharing almost similar needs and interests coupled with the understanding that the men entering into the contract are equal, make cooperation easier. The consideration of these factors, Ramaswamy (2005: 296) says, ensures just practices and institutions in a society, viewed as fair system of social cooperation between individuals fair and equal‖. Thus, to the proponents of contractual tradition of the liberal theory of justice and John Rawls in particular, there are two background conditions: objective and subjective circumstances, leading to the conception of justice. Rawls, according to Shushila Ramaswamy, (2005: 297) maintains that objective circumstances make human cooperation both possible and necessary. Individuals coexisting together in the same definite territory are similar in physical and mental power and live in conditions of moderate scarcity‖. Furthermore, regarding the subjective circumstances, she reports (2005: 297) that: Where parties with roughly similar needs and interests are willing to cooperate for mutual advantage, they have their own life-plans, which obviously lead them to have different ends and purposes and make conflicting claims on the available natural and social resources.

However, Rawls explains (Ramaswamy, 2005: 297) that the interests advanced by the plans are not in the interest of the self but based on plurality of life-styles and the possibilities of diverse philosophical and religious beliefs and social and political doctrines‖. The position of the contractualists' theorist is (Ramaswamy, 2005: 299) that:

if human agents choose clearly and freely for themselves they will insist

on the best terms they can get and this will reflect their initial inequalities of power'.

Libertarian theory: it arises as a critical reaction to utilitarian and contractual traditions of liberal theory. To counter the position of the liberal theorists, it argues that the conception of justice is based on liberty and nothing else. The famous exponent of libertarianism is Robert Nozick. He advanced his entitlement theory to support the libertarian position of the minimal state. It is essentially a critique and an alternate conception of Rawls social contract theory. It is anchored on the notion of distributive justice. It states that whatever emanates from a just situation is in itself just and should be recognised as such. In terms of social distribution of goods and services, entitlement theory insists that if these are generated by processes that are just, and rightly summed up as from each as they choose, to each as they are chosen, then the it amounts to the libertarian conception of justice.

Egalitarian theory: justice is taken to be indispensable from equality. However, the fact of equality is an issue in itself. Thus, egalitarian theory of justice attempts to proffer answers to the problem of equality. It is thus concerned with the question: Equality of what? Egalitarian theory proposes two answers: equality of welfare and equality of resources. By equality of welfare, the theory is saying that human welfare is the most crucial and morally relevant feature of the society which the state must take as a basic priority when ordering its priorities. The state in this respect, according to Ramaswamy, (2005: 314) is not to pursue welfare not in the aggregate sense but in manner that ensures the distinctiveness of individuals'. The welfarists argue that it is difficult ascertaining a person's welfare. On the other hand, the advocates of equality of resources argue that rather than welfare, the state should distribute resources by giving everyone exactly the same amount as this confers satisfaction on everyone in the first place. The fact of individuals fulfilling their desires and securing their welfare should be their respective responsibility.

Communitarian theories: these are reactionary theories against liberal, libertarian and egalitarian theories of justice. Communitarian theories broadly (Ramaswamy, 2005: 315) insist on the importance of particularistic moral traditions with emphasis on the collective pursuit of virtue rather than the defense of individual rights as a principle of social justice. In its rejection of individualism, it argues (Ramaswamy, 2005: 315) that social contract theories' argument cannot provide a moral motivation unless one is willing to accept the notion of an individual being free and equal, separable from his constitutive attachments and if such view is accepted then the social contract serves no useful purpose in justifying justice'. To them, (Ramaswamy, 2005: 316) justice must be

theorised not only as the basis of individuals who are independent but also as people who separate but desire to profit from one another'.

Socialist theory: the socialist conception of justice is predicated on the ideal of social equality and its intrinsic relationship with justice. Arising from this, the social theorists insist (Ramaswamy, 2005: 317) that justice is the fundamental principle of human life and it is only attainable via Aristotelian concept: justice means reciprocity, equality, and equilibrium'. The socialists argue that since capitalism brings about inequality and disequilibrium in the society, it is therefore not possible to begin to think of justice in a capitalist society. Capitalism is exploitative because it produces for profit and not for the satisfaction of human needs, it brings about inequalities of wealth and welfare, it equally dehumanises because the labourer cannot at the end of the day, afford what he produces. Thus, above all, it negates the being of the one that is exploited. Consequently, the socialists demand the overthrow of the unjust capitalist system to pave way for a social system that is just.

Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels argue that with the destruction of capitalism, private property and bourgeois family, it is possible to construct a society based on social equality and realise justice. They (Ramaswamy, 2005: 317) stress that capitalism dehumanises the human being destroying his essence. In their moral consideration of justice which is rested of the distributive concept of justice, they insist that since people do not have the same capacity to produce, distribution of the people's needs should be based on the principle of: from each according to his abilities to each according to his needs. This to the Marxists is the essence of social equality.

Feminism theories: like Communitarianism and Marxism, Feminism theories also insist that an ideal society must be based on absolute social solidarity as the basis of justice. By absolute social solidarity, the feminists call for the same privileges with their male counterparts, that is, equal treatment. Thus, prompted by the notion of distributive justice, the feminists argue that the existing political theories are unacceptable because of the blatant political and social oppression meted to the female folks. They maintain (Ramaswamy, 2005: 320) that women have rights to privacy, from right to retain custody of their children to the right to choose a life partner to the right of reproductive freedom. In other words, the feminists condemn the unfavourable treatment of women regarding sex control and their helplessness to decide about matters regarding their own bodies. This situation is prevalent among most ethnic groups in Africa. For instance, it is considered as something unlawful for a wife to refuse or deny her husband sexual intercourse. Consequently, the woman must be ready to surrender to the husband once he is in the mood notwithstanding the womans own mood. The feminists condemn this

attitude and other related ones against the female folk universally and rather demand the right to personally decide by the female folks in situations that they are affected.

Subalternism theory: this social theory of justice like feminism, is dissatisfied with the consideration of justice which universalises but blazingly, ignores the peculiarities in human condition. Consequently, it aims at the good life but this time the good life of the underprivileged and the wretched of the earth who have been dispossessed especially by colonial activities. By dispossession, Ramaswamy (2005: 325) says the particular forms of agency, subjectivity and modes of sociality (such as customary laws and practices) that the colonial institutions had ignored or suppressed, become the focus or interest‖. Quoting Prakash, Ramaswamy (2005: 324) maintains that:

- **Subalternism** considers the meta-narratives chronicled by liberal, Marxists and nationalist histories and theories as Eurocentric and rejects those modes of thinking which configure the third world in such irreducible essences as religiousity, underdevelopment, poverty, nationhood, nonWesterners. She accordingly emphasises (2005: 325) that subalternism objects to the public-private divide in the colonial situation because with this division the important voices of the subaltern communities are denied their rightful place in a historical account modeled after the European nation state.

Essence of Justice: a lot has been already said regarding justice. In this wise, one can confidently infer from the foregoing that there is no unanimity especially from the perspective of social justice, regarding the notion of justice. As a matter of fact, even within the same school of thought there are disagreeing voices regarding the concept of justice. However, justice is considered as fairness, it takes individuals as ends and not means to ends. In this wise Rawls argues (Ramaswamy, 2005: 292) that Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust. Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of the society as a whole cannot override. For this reason, justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow that the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many‖. The important thing about Rawls' conception of justice is that he is an avowed deontologist. To deontologists, the essence of justice in the society is to protect the rights of every member of the society and not to make some sacrificial lambs if it becomes necessary as the utilitarians

supposed for the greater good of the majority. Since justice is the first virtue of society, Rawls in his contractual orientation of the socialist conception of justice avers that individual based on objective and subjective circumstances are compelled to cooperate for their own good as such cooperation produces more advantages than disadvantages. Thus, to Rawls, the individual or the human person cannot be studied in respect of justice without the corresponding study of society or state. Justice finds relevance in the society. The society is made up of human beings. Therefore, justice is indispensable in the life of human beings. It is informed from this thinking that Ramaswamy (2005:325) maintains that:

In spite of the contested nature of the concept (of justice) there are some broad agreements about the fundamental components of a just society, like commitment to the rule of law, respect for minority rights, state as an instrument of the people's welfare, constitutional and legal sanctity of basic human rights and equality of sexes. Without the observance of these basic features of justice in the society it would simply be reduced to higgledy-piggledy environment for humans. In fact, it would be akin to the Hobbesian state of nature where life was solitary, nasty, brutish and short. Thus, justice is inevitable in human gregarious environment. In other words, to talk of society there must be the concept of justice lurking around the corner and vice versa.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Justice right from the ancient era attracted different conceptions. But in whichever perspective it is discussed, there is an inherent element of morality in it which has to do with the well-being of people of a particular society. Justice is either taken to cater for the individual or the collective as a whole. Justice as such is only meaningful in the human society; it is accordingly society-dependent.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit considers seven notions of justice: the liberal theory of justice the first one considered here has two versions: the utilitarian and contractual traditions. Libertarian theory, the second theory as discussed above, arose as a critical reaction to utilitarian and contractual traditions of liberal theory. To egalitarian theory, justice is inseparable from equality. Realising that equality is an issue in itself, egalitarian theory of justice proposes two answers: equality of welfare and equality of resources. Communitarian theories being reactionary theories disagreed with liberal, libertarian and egalitarian theories of justice insisting that the particularistic moral traditions with emphasis on the collective pursuit of virtue is more important than the defense of individual rights as a principle of social justice. To socialist theory, justice is predicated on the ideal of

social equality and its intrinsic relationship with justice. Accordingly, social theorists insist that justice is the fundamental principle of human life and it is only attainable via Aristotelian concept of reciprocity, equality, and equilibrium'. The advocates of feminism theories like Communitarianism and Marxism, Feminism theories also insist that an ideal society must be based on absolute social solidarity as the basis of justice. Subalternism theory as a social theory of justice like feminism, condemned the consideration of justice which universalises but clearly ignores the peculiarities in human condition. It thus aims at the good life of the underprivileged and the wretched of the earth who have been dispossessed. Finally, justice, from the various submissions, it clearly shows that it is variously conceived however, with an underlying moral value in all the conceptions.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Mention seven notions of justice you have studied under this unit.
2.   In your assessment, what do you think prompted the diverse notions of justice as they are discussed here?

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the Main Content, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   List and explain any five notions of justice as discussed above.
2.   Discuss any five notions of justice as discussed above with examples.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3   RIGHTS AND NATURAL RIGHTS

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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        3.1   Theories of Rights
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit beams its searchlight on the question of rights and indeed, human rights. It thus takes the learner through to the meaning and nature of rights and natural rights. Rights basically refer to the fundamental entitlements of the individual which cannot be tampered with. In other words, rights are the basic entitlements of the human person in his social being in order to make him/her be what he/she is.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify what rights are
- identify and say the guarantees of natural rights and who is expected to enjoy these rights
- mention the types and theories of rights.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

Rights like values earlier discussed are found in and indeed, dominate human social, economic and political discourses. Even academically too, rights are considered under liberal theory as well as in moral philosophy. The question now is; what are rights and why are they so relevant to humanity in space and time?

Historically, the concern with rights in human history is easily traceable to the late medieval thought while the origins of natural rights of man are

said to have arisen from the natural law doctrine in ancient Greek philosophy. The distinguished theological and philosophical writings of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) are given credit for the coherent and theoretical exposition of the concept of rights. Aquinas argues that there exists God-given natural law as an underlying force in the universe '(Ramaswamy 232). This is to say that the universe is not a lawless or moraless space but rather God has designed moral principles and stipulated them to regulate human conduct in the universe. Though Aquinas emphasises human moral duties rulers and the ruled, rather than individual citizens rights, his pioneering efforts on rights, constitute the theoretical background regarding the emergence of theories of natural law as they become part of the gradual development of the modern secular state in Europe.

Thomas Hobbes 1588-1679 also made significant contributions on the concepts rights in the 17th century. Hobbes according to Ramaswammy (2005: 233) defines the notion of rights as the liberty of each man … to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own Life. Arising from this Ramaswamy (2005: 233) identifies five distinctive features in Hobbes' definition which are summed as follows; that:

1.   A right is related to one particular end-self-preservation. This is regarded as an independent value in Hobbes.
2.   The right of nature is attached to individuals, who solely judge about the means needed to attain the end it preserves.
3.   It is within the person's right to pursue anything that is conducive to self-preservation
4.   If right is a liberty, and liberty signifies the absence of external impediments then it is a condition whereby one is able to use one's power, this being a descriptive rather than a normative term
5.   If the person can either choose to exercise that liberty or to forebear, then a right may be waved.

Ramaswamy in a final reaction, remarks that the Hobbesian understanding of rights is inadequate when considered in the contemporary times.

The concept of rights is variously conceptualised. Rights according to *Microsoft® Encarta 2009* are traditionally regarded as entitlements to certain kinds of treatment based on one's status. Popularly there is talk about legal rights, political rights, moral rights human rights, animal rights, rights of nations, civil rights and natural rights, etc.

•   **Legal rights:** these are claims that are recognised by law and are capable of enforcement by a court of competent authority.

- **Political rights:** these are rights that the individual is entitled to in terms of party politics rights. They are recognised by law and are enforceable by a court of competent authority.
- **Moral rights:** These are the entitlements the individual enjoys based on moral grounds. Moral rights are consistent social practices as well as moral practices. In addition, they are morally justifiable however, they are not enforceable by the legal system.
- **Human rights:** these rights are traditionally referred to as natural or fundamental rights. They are rights which every individual is entitled to solely for the reason that he or she is a human being. These rights are enforceable by the legal system. Human rights have five distinguishing features which are:-

- ✓ *Universality*: They belong to all people.
- ✓ *Individuality*: They insist that the individual is free, has dignity and has moral choice
- ✓ *Paramountcy*: They are immense importance as their denial or withdrawal is an affront to justice.
- ✓ *Practicability*: Human rights are practically attainable
- ✓ *Enforceability*: These rights are enforceable by the state via its constitutional provisions and legal system.

- *Animal Rights*: These are the entitlements of animals not to be treated cruelly. In countries that laws are put in place to protect animals, their violations are enforceable in the law court of competent jurisdiction
- *Right of Nations:* These are the entitlements of nations of the world. They include: sovereignty and freedom from external intervention in the affairs of a particular nation etc.
- *Civil Right:* These are like natural rights.
- *Natural Rights*: Human rights are civil rights that have close-knitted relationships and what is taken of one of them applies to the rest.

The concern with rights also attracted the attention of the United Nations General Assembly and in 1948, it came up with the United Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The Declaration consists of a preamble and 30 Articles which sets forth human rights and fundamental freedoms to which all men and women globally are entitled to, without any discrimination. In article 3, Olakanmi and Co. (2007: 5) which reads:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights; they are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood‖ properly lays down the philosophy upon which the Declaration is anchored. The Declaration guarantees rights to life, liberty property, equality before the law, privacy, fair trial, safeguards

against torture, slavery and other forms of degradation, freedom of expression, association, worship, etc. rights as such are regarded traditionally as being natural or fundamental rights. Every human being whether a man or woman, boy or girl, black or white is owed these rights. Thus, characteristically, rights are universal, individualistic, paramount, practical and enforceable.

The concern here is with natural rights. What then are natural rights? Natural rights are rights bestowed on the individual right from birth as a human being. In other words, once one is born as a human being there are fundamental rights that accompany him/her. As a matter of fact, they are inalienable rights, that is, they cannot be taken away from the individual without causing injury, discomfort or harm to such a person. These rights, Harold J. Laski (2006: 91) says are those conditions of social life without which no man can seek, in general, to be himself at his best. That is, for a man to live his life meaningfully, his natural rights must be kept intact and secured. In view of their importance, even the state recognises and upholds them based on the conviction that all men are created equal. Thus, man's natural rights are basically three: right to life, right to liberty and right to the pursuit of happiness. As Laski rightly noted, any attempt to take away or temper with any of these conditions of social life will be catastrophic for such an individual. To live as a dignified human being these rights must be comprehensively and absolutely granted. It is only with the provision of and the guarantee of those social conditions that individuals are made complete and respected as human beings with integrity. Natural rights of man are the rights that define humanity as being distinct from the other creatures. D. Waldron (1987) identifies three broad usages of the concept of right. According to Waldron (1987:443) right is used to:

1.   Describe a type of institutional arrangement in which interests are guaranteed legal protection, choices are guaranteed legal effect or goods and opportunities are provided to individuals on a guaranteed basis
2.   Express the justified demand that such institutional arrangements should be set up, maintained, and respected
3.   Characterise a particular sort of justification for this demand, namely a fundamental moral principle that accords importance to certain basic individual values such as equality, autonomy or moral agency.

In other words, rights serve the purposes of describing institutional arrangements whereby there is legal protection of the individual's interests, choices and guarantee of the provisions of goods and opportunities.

3.1   Theories of Rights

Natural Rights Theory: This theory maintains that human beings are born with their rights which are intrinsic and therefore inalienable. Natural rights theory insists that all men or humans are born equal as such no one should enslave the other or keep another in captivity. To the natural right theorists, God has provided a basic moral law of nature which says that no one has the right to kill the self nor destroy, rob or slave another person. This is because all men equal before the Almighty God. Ramaswamy (2005:323) avers that the natural condition is a state of equality and pre-political state of nature, regulated by the laws of nature is one of perfect freedom and perfect equality. The theory of natural rights which originated in the 17th century remained a dominant theory in the 18th century and accordingly, rejects the idea of natural hierarchy together with the idea of absolute authority. John Locke, one of the earliest proponents of the theory rejects the idea of the divine rights of kings as well as the natural arrangement of political authority. On the country, Locke calls for the notion of human equality. The theory thus, rests on a solid and clearly defined moral relationship between God and the individual.

3.2   Historical Theory

Edmund Burke is the chief proponent of Historical theory. He aligns himself with Locke's theological propositions but, nevertheless, objects to the relationship between natural rights and natural law. He argues that individual reason and interest cannot serve as the adequate basis for political legitimacy. That is, the desires of an individual cannot serve as the foundation of political authority. Burke accordingly rejects the claim of economic and political equality. By this claim, Burke is able to provide (Ramaswamy, 2005:236) a theory of rights with the overall framework of his philosophy of change without undermining the constitution and disrupting the social fabric'. Burke stresses that the doctrine of natural rights is nothing but metaphysical abstractions. In this wise, Burke contrast the doctrine with the real rights of men. Burke condemns the universality of the doctrine of natural rights. He argues (Ramaswamy, 2005:236) that the universality of the doctrine overlooks the rational, geographical and cultural distinctions. Burke also takes a swipe on the idea of creating order in the society based on human reason. He maintains that based on the new ideas of liberty and equality, the theory of natural rights is not conducive for the establishment of order. Burke also disclaims political and economic equalities pointing out that it creates a consciousness of right but not of duties of order, discipline and obedience to authority. In essence Burke harps on the attainment of real rights as against the imaginary ones. That is, Burke agrees that there are natural rights but a clearer difference must be made regarding the real ones that

are attainable and the unattainable ones.

3.3   Legal Theory

The legal theory of rights was advanced by Jeremy Bentham, a British Philosopher and social engineer. Bentham (Ramaswamy, 2005:239) states that the talk of natural rights and natural law is like using a terrorist language‖. It incites the spirit of resistance to all laws – a spirit of resistance against governments' encouraging chaos and disorder. Bentham further declares that the nation of natural rights is mischievous for there is no such thing as natural rights opposed to, in contradistinction to legal. Bentham, following these premises, submits that: -

1.   Natural rights do not mean anything
2.   The sentences of the natural rights guarantee their falsity. To Bentham, words must be precisely and clearly defined in order to avoid ambiguity as the negligence is the source of most conflict in politics. Consequently, Bentham makes a case for the legal basis for the theory of rights.

3.4   Social Welfare Theory

As the title implies, social welfare theory of rights is a marriage of social welfare and rights. Laski, a foremost proponent of welfare rights as mentioned elsewhere in this module, argues that rights are the conditions of social life without which an individual cannot be himself. Laski (2006:91) defines a right as a claim of an individual, which is recognized by society and that rights have a meaning only in society‖. Social welfare theorists insist that the state must create the conditions that would enable the individual to achieve his/her best self. Social welfare entails certain economic and social rights like right to work, adequate wages, reasonable hours of work, limited right to prosperity, participation in the industry, right to education, etc, all have to be guaranteed.

3.5   Choice Theory

According to Ramaswany (2005:245), choice theory states that A may have a right only if Bs duty is owed to him/her, in the sense that he/she hasthe power to wave it, if he/she pleases'. That is, having made a promise to B, it becomes B's right to have what was promised by. On the part of A, it again becomes a duty on his/her part to carry out. However, the individual B may choose to waive the promise thereby taking away the duty of execution of the promise on the part of A. The implication of choice theory is that the individual who has been promised can overlook the promise such that the one who made the promise will no longer be duty bound to execute such a promise. Ramaswany (2005:245) thus

concludes that rights can be relinquished. An individual has the option to exercise or not to do so any right that he may have‖.

3.6   Interest Theory

This theory holds the position that an individual is given to have a right wherever, his/her interest is considered as being sufficiently important in itself to prove holding or compelling others to have a duty to promote that interest in one way or the other. For instance, a university don whose appointment was wrongly terminated has sufficiently important interest to justify why his/her challenges will have to promote his/her interest in doing everything possible for his/her reinstatement. This view implies that rights and duties are not correlative but rather rights under interest theory are perceived to generate duty. The right of wrongly dismissed don, generates duty on the part of his/her colleagues.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Rights and indeed natural rights, dominate human social, economic and political discourses. Academics to have given enough attention to the question of rights. Rights are considered under liberal political theory as well as in moral philosophy. In view of its diverse considerations, all manner of rights engages the attention of scholars beginning from animals to human rights. In other words, there are different usages of rights. These different usages or applications are informed by different theories of right.

5.0   SUMMARY

Rights as implying natural rights are indispensable in human existence. The concern with rights came to the fore only in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. However, in the 17th Century John Locke made a strong case for the rights of man thus sparking up an interest in the modern period. The notion of rights generated a lot of controversies can be easily seen in the seven different theories identified by scholars. The implication of this is that rights have different applications and usages. All manner of rights are discernable beginning from animal to human rights.

SELFASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   Mention five other rights outside natural rights.
2.   What does inalienable rights mean?
3.   State the three main rights of man.

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the Main Content, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   What makes natural rights fundamental?
2.   What do you think makes natural rights enforceable?
3.   Mention and explain one Article which sets forth human rights and fundamental freedoms to which all men and women globally are entitled to.
4.   Explain the three usages of rights.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4   MORAL THEORY AND PRACTICAL LIFE

CONTENTS

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

This unit titled Moral Theory and Practical Life seeks to bring to the learner's the nature of moral theory to the practical life also known as life-world or lived-life of man leading to issues of moral relativism universalism.

2.0   LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- know what is practical life
- say what brings about moral relativism
- state that the world lived out there which is visible that leads to the application of moral theories is phenomena
- identify the three main moral theories
- say the meaning of universalisation under moral theory.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

As shown earlier, moral theory serves as a standard for evaluation. However, moral theory is classified into relativism and universalism. From the relativist conception, moral issues or concepts are taken to be changeable or variable or not absolute due to individual differences or culture. This consideration brings to mind the question of human practical life. To talk about relativism and universalism refers directly to human life or practical life as lived by humans. What is practical life or human practical life? This can be presented technically as the lived-life or lived-world by individual humans. Edmund Husserl (1976: 39) describes lived-world also known as *lebenswelt* in German as the world of everyday life. In other words, it means practical life. Fundamentally, it is the world that is visible out there, the phenomena. It represents the environment or the surrounding world; *umwelt*. It can also be referred to as the human

condition. Husser (1976: 60) says: ‒The life-world is a realm of original self-evidences. That which is self-evidently given is, in perception, experienced as the thing itself, in immediate presence, or, in memory, remembered as the thing itself; and every other manner of intuition is a presentification of the thing itself.

Two possible perspectives of the meaning of the life-world as advanced by Husserl are evincible here. 1) There is a life-world that is self-evident, which appears out there as can be perceived or experienced while on the other hand, 2) There is a remembered life-world as the thing itself. In discussing moral theory and practical life, the concern is with the former and not the latter. Konrad Rokstad (2005:306) argues that life-world is the most promising candidate for enabling us to conduct an analysis and reflection into those fields of problems, thus deciding essentials‖. The import of what Rokstad is saying is that life-world as encompassing the world of human beings has inherent issues which compel possible reflective thinking and analysis in order to decipher what is essential in the *umwelt*. It must be emphasized that as long as people exist these problems remain recurrent decimals. These are problems which Rokstad (2005:311) says are concerned with relations with people, persons, cultures, etc, and, of course they are concerned with the conservation and development of our Life-world as being something genuinely common within a world marked by science and technology, as well as different and conflicting interests.

Life-world as a transcendent world which encompasses the individual and other individuals, Rokstad (2005:306) says is always an essentially open field for actions, practices, but also for reflections and theory-making such as sciences perform all this within a more or less open field of very different kinds of communication correlating with traditions of various kinds. That is, life-world in view of its richness, is both an open field for praxis and theory such that some issues contained in human condition leading to, for instance, issues of social consciousness arising from different kinds of traditions when eidetically reviewed, may be found to be nonessential and consequently, eliminated. It is on this background that Rokstad (2005:306) further maintains that the open field in the life-world informs clues (transcendental clues inclusive) that constitute the subjectivity and transcendence of one's own perspective'. The result of subjectivity and the transcendence of the perspective of such subjectivity lead to what Rokstad (2005:310) calls communalising with others, making communities which are grounded in genuine mutuality, without reducing the essential identity of either the other or yourself. That is, life-world as making up the individual and the other individuals' worlds is a communalised world. Being a communalised world, it calls for the analysis of the conditions or the clues in the life-world in order to arrive at its ideal meaning. The concern with the ideal meaning of the life-world

is to discover the possibility of transcending the individual self and incorporating the other selves for the attainment of the essence of the life-world which is phenomenologically expressed in harmonious coexistence of humanity. However, as laudable as this idea of attaining the ideal meaning, it ultimately leads to relativism.

Relativism states in very strong terms that there are no objective standards or criteria for determining what is right and wrong. Relativism also means subjectivism. For instance, if I consider going to school to be of value to me and the other person sees it to the contrary, my consideration cannot be seen to wrong just as the other person's inability to see the value of going to school, to be wrong either. In other words, the two of us are right based on our different subjective views which are informed by different factors.

On the other hand, universalism which also means objectivism is the direct opposite of relativism or subjectivism. Universalism holds that there is an objective/universal principle or (objective/universal principles) that is (are) objectively employed universally for the determination of what is morally right or wrong. For instance, talking about universalisation of moral maxim, Kant in *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* in Jacquette (2004: 294) argues that it is what a moral agent can will to become a natural law in the sense of providing moral guidance as a law of freedom for all rational beings and all moral agents'. To put it in other words, Kant is saying that what is right or wrong is universalisable when a rational being and moral agent carries out action/actions in a manner that it/they serves/serve as moral guidance in future human activities and in which case it can be seen as natural law. Kant stresses that if a moral maxim is universalisable in this sense, as the general form of the categorical imperative prescribes, then the agent who is considering adopting a course of action falling under a moral maxim is supposed to be able to will that the maxim is adopted as a universal principle of action for all individuals capable of reasoning‖ That is, what is taken as natural law, Kant insists, based on his Categorical Imperative theory, the moral agent will always will that it be universally adopted by all rational individuals as universal principle of action.

Broadly speaking, there are three types of moral theories. These are: Consequentialism, Deontology (Kant) and Virtue Ethics (Aristotle). Other moral theories will be considered elsewhere in this module.

Consequentialism: focuses on the consequences of action. One version of consequentialism is Utilitarianism. John Stuart Mill introduces the Greatest Happiness Principle. According to this principle; …actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness‖. The contemporary moral theorists

put this principle thus: "You ought always to act so as to maximise happiness, i.e., the right act is the act that results in the greatest amount of happiness overall‖ (https://www.newworldencycopedia.org./entry/Fact and_Value). That is, an action is good when it produces the greatest happiness or good for the greatest number and bad when it produces least happiness or good for the greatest number.

Deontology as Immanuel Kant states employs moral rules or reasons in the determination of what is moral. Kant's Categorical Imperative (version 1: Principle of Universal Law) says; Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law. Categorical Imperative (version 2: Principle of Humanity) says; Act that you use humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as a means only (https://www.newworldencycopedia.org./entry/Fact and_Value). In other words, in your action relating to humanity or man, he must be considered as the end and not a means to an end. Man must be duly taken as a priority, that is, the best interest of man or humanity must be considered first. In more recent terms Kant's Categorical Imperative is rendered as: You are No Exception Principle (YANE): "…in whatever you do, you should act for reasons that could serve as acceptable reasons for everyone" and Respect for Persons Principle (RPP): ‒In all action one should respect others as sources of value and never merely as an instrument for one's own purposes (https://www.newworldencycopedia.org./entry/Fact_and_Value).

Virtue Ethics of Aristotle on its part aims at the character of the individual. Virtue (excellence), then, according to Aristotle is:

(a)   a state of character concerned with choice,
(b)   lying in a mean,
(c)   the mean relative to us,
(d)   this being determined by a rational principle,

(e)   and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it (https://www.newworldencycopedia.org./entry/Fact and_Value). To put this in simple terms, it means, An action is right insofar as it is the manifestation of a virtuous character trait, where virtuous character traits are those that are present in the fully flourishing human being (https://www.newworldencycopedia.org./entry/Fact_and_Value).

Utilitarianism (a version of consequentialism) in the development of a theory of right and wrong (morality), begins by asking; What, if anything, is good in and of itself, something that is not merely instrumentally good--as a means to some other good but is good per se. They answer this

question by looking at the structure of human desire, what it is that (well-informed) people ultimately aim for in action(https://www.newworldencycopedia.org./entry/Fact and_Value).

The implication of this thinking is that that once individuals understand what this good is, they carry out the right act that promotes the maximum amount of human desire'.

From the foregoing, it is very clear to ascertain the relevance of moral theory or theories to human practical life. Moral theory provides the objective standard for the evaluation and indeed, the standard for passing judgment regarding issues of human practical life. Moral theory is believed to developed by the rational agent (man) becomes the standard that anchors issues of morality in the society. Not minding the contention of the relativist, at least with the Kantian categorical imperative, it is possible to talk about the universalisation of moral theory. The sanctity of human life is universally acknowledged. There is so far no known group of people that sanctions wanton killing of human beings.

4.0   CONCLUSION

It is shown from the foregoing that practical life of living or *lebenswelt* raises some moral issues leading to the question of relativism. This is true. But on the other hand, too, there are some issues that are morally considered universally as being objective and therefore universal in application and understanding. Moral theory serves as unbiased standard for the evaluation and indeed, the criteria for passing judgment regarding issues of man's lived-life. Moral theory is a product of moral philosophers regarded as rational agents introduced to constitute the basis for evaluating the issues of morality in society. These moral theories are employed for this purpose.

5.0   SUMMARY

This dwells on three moral theories: Consequentialism, Deontology (Kant) and Virtue Ethics (Aristotle). Consequentialism is predicated on the action, deontology has to do with the application of moral principles or reason to evaluate moral actions. Virtue Ethics of Aristotle on the other hand maintains that the character of the individual must be virtuous or simply excellent. The utilitarians also have their version of moral theory known as consequentialism. Moral theories provide the objective platform for examination of moral issues.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1.   What is human practical life?
2.   What is the essence of moral theory?
3.   Is it everything right or wrong that is universalisable?

NOTE: Answers to these self-assessment exercises are contained in the Main Content, conclusion and summary.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Identify the relationship between Kant's universalisation principle and his categorical imperative theory.
2.   Explain the moral theory of consequentialism.
3.   Explain the moral theory of deontology.
4.   Explain the moral theory of virtue in ethics of Aristotle.

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