

Analysis of Impartiality in Aid: A Utilitarian Perspective Evaluated Through Islamic Scriptures

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Abstract

Utilitarianism, a prominent ethical theory, prioritizes the maximization of collective benefit. Radical utilitarianism advocates for complete impartiality, obligating individuals to aid those in need without regard for personal relationships. However, this perspective is not wholly aligned with Qur'anic ethical teachings, which emphasize responsibilities toward family, neighbors, and the religious community. In contrast, moderate utilitarianism, with its less stringent demand for absolute impartiality, offers a more flexible approach that resonates closely with Islamic ethics. These two frameworks diverge significantly in their approach to aid: radical utilitarianism urges assistance to the most needy, irrespective of emotional or religious ties, whereas moderate utilitarianism permits prioritizing kin and co-religionists within a rational and ethical framework. This article evaluates moderate impartiality through the lens of Islamic verses and narrations, demonstrating that the Islamic approach—both in delineating the scope of aid and in the practical applicability of ethical precepts in daily life—holds greater merit compared to radical impartiality.

Keywords

Impartiality, aid, utilitarian ethics, Qur'anic ethics, charity.

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