

Freedom Restraint and Morality in Mill and Plato

Posted on September 23, 2019

Freedom Restraint and Moral Philosophy

Philosophy

Mill on Freedom of Speech and Harm

According to Mill's perspective, freedom of speech is essential but limited. Human rights are created to serve human beings and make their lives easier in a certain way so that they can determine the ways of their actions. Human rights are essential and provide the right to speech, but the human rights documents could place some limits and boundaries that could determine that what should be said and what should not be said in a particular manner because freedom of speech may often lead to harm and offence patterns. The unlimited speech factors mostly include the factors of hate speech and need some boundaries. Mill was considered a great supporter of free speech, and in the given sentence quote, he is supporting the idea of free speech. He added that a struggle or hardship occurs only when authority and liberty values are present. The struggle lies in authority and liberty. The topic of free speech includes the fact that it should be held in a limited way, and people should have the right to unlimited freedom of speech. Several other factors are needed to explain the concept of free speech, including privacy, security, equality, and the harm that could be prevented due to the occurrence and availability of free speech. The speech is simply a significant part of social goods. It could lead to social welfare and the construction of a social structure in the most appropriate ways. According to Mill's idea, the existence of human beings is important and becomes valuable when someone is dependent upon the restraints allocated to the actions of other people. It means that some restraints are important and lead to the valuable existence of humans. (Mill, J. S., 1859)

Socrates on Piety and Divine Approval

According to Socrates' statement, there are two factors involved in it, and they have two different aspects. Socrates added the factors of religious aspects as, according to his view, there are two possibilities of being loved by God. It is a simple and known phenomenon that is mostly in every religion of the world. Pious men and women are the ones who are loved by God. God prefers the good deeds and religious acts done by humans, and in the statement of Socrates, it is a question that pious people are loved by God due to the reason of piety, and another question that one is pious only due to the fact that gods love him and that is why he is pious and has a good soul. According to my

perspective, the pious being is loved by gods only when humans become pious. In this case, the gods are happy because humans do piousness or good deeds, which leads to the love of God and its achievement.

Comparison of Mill and Socrates

The views of Socrates and Mill are different from each other, but they contain some similarities as well. The main similarity is that both people want to target human behaviour in a certain way. Socrates wants to clarify the piousness of humans that could be gained by conducting several acts of good deeds, including the love of human beings for each other. Freedom of speech in a limited way and with restrictions leads to happiness because, in that way, people will consider that they should not hurt the feelings of other people. The difference between both views is that one person wants to apply restraints to make the lives of humans more valuable, and the other wants pious people to be loved by God, or God loves them due to their pious behaviour.

Happiness Liberty and Virtue

Try to determine what is more valuable about happiness – individual liberty (whether or not you can do as you like) or virtue (what kind of person you are and what character you have). Justify your response. (Pecorino et al., 2022)

Meaning of Individual Liberty and Virtue

Individual liberty and virtue are two different aspects, but they are considered traits that human beings need. Individual liberty simply means that a person can spend his life with his own choices and be able to fulfil his dreams according to his wishes. A complex perspective could also be explained by the fact that people who are free are not restrained by any other factors in living their lives. Virtue is an act of worship that is almost present in all religions of the world. In simple words, virtue is an act that is influenced by moral standards. It is considered a good moral act that is taken to help someone or serve human factors.

Virtue as a Source of Happiness

Individual liberty and virtuous acts lead to happiness because one can spend his life with his own choices and do good deeds to find pleasure and good emotional stability. Virtue is more suitable for happiness than individual liberty. Virtue is an action that is taken to do something good under the rules of moral standards. Due to the occurrence of good deeds, one could enjoy the best feeling and emotional stability. Serving humanity ultimately leads to happiness, as it is the best way to show the world that people care about other people. In the scenario of virtue, one could serve other people,

which could lead to the attainment of true happiness. Serving other people and doing good deeds as acts of virtue leads to the satisfaction of the heart and the attainment of happiness.

Limits and Consequences of Individual Liberty

In the case of individual liberty, it is the way that allows a person to spend a life with his own will and without any outer constraint. It could lead to happiness as well as different other emotional constraints, such as sadness. If one could have the right to individual liberty, then it would lead to good and bad acts at the same time. By enjoying the right of individual liberty, one could make other people happier or sad, such as the freedom of speech right. Freedom of speech is a perfect example of individual liberty in which one can act positively and negatively at the same time. Many times, freedom of speech leads to disastrous consequences and negative outcomes. In this way, true happiness can't be achieved because one can never be happy by doing wrong deeds and actions. Due to freedom of speech, one could hurt the feelings of others and could lead to dissatisfaction among people. It invites right or wrong in both scenarios and leads to the achievement of happiness and sadness at the same time. So, according to my opinion, virtue is more valuable for the attainment of true happiness. In the way of virtue, true happiness can be achieved through emotional stability. However, in the case of individual liberty, happiness cannot always be found compared to the virtue perspective. (Plato, c. 399 BCE)

References

Mill, J. S.. (1859). *On liberty*. Project Gutenberg. <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/34901>

Pecorino, P. A., et al.. (2022). *Introduction to philosophy*. OpenStax.
<https://openstax.org/books/introduction-philosophy/pages/1-introduction>

Plato. (c. 399 BCE). *Apology*. Project Gutenberg. <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1656>