

Question Explain Bentham's greatest happiness at the greatest number.

Answer Exordium

Jeremy Bentham was born in 1748 and he is one of the influential philosophers of his time. He is famous for his concept of 'greatest happiness of the greatest number' for his theory 'Utilitarianism' which he presented in 'An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Institutions'. He based his work on two sovereign forces which are pleasure and pain. John Stuart Mill also contributed in (Bentham) expanding Bentham's theory of utilitarianism. John Mill gave his book name, 'Utilitarianism' itself. Both Bentham and Mill supported happiness but their concept of 'pleasure' is little different.

give the main headings first and relate your headings to the qs statement.

Utilitarianism by Bentham

Bentham justified pleasure and pain as two sovereign forces

which governs all the activities of individual. Every individual is in search of seeking pleasure and hiding from pain. Bentham gave the notion of 'greatest number of happiness for greatest number of people'. He also contributed in 'to avoid greatest number of pain for greatest number of people'.

do not use one word headings, they should be elaborate and self explanatory.

## I- Consequentialism

Bentham's theory is consequential based. He highlights that good or bad of an action is decided by the results. He judged events by the consequences. He favoured that if by killing few theorists you can save whole community. Then killing is justifiable as it is bringing greatest number of happiness for greatest number of people. If any action is resulted in avoidance of pain and achievement of pleasure it is

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good.

## 2- Opposition

Immanuel Kant opposed Bentham's theory. He emphasized that few actions are absolutely bad and even consequences are bringing greatest number of pleasure. Even then the action will remain bad. He identified that murder, thief, robbery all are absolutely bad. Their good consequences can not justify their absolute bad nature. He did not favour to kill anyone even if it avoid greatest number of people from greatest number of pain.

## 3- Hedonic calculus

A method which is used to measure the pain or pleasure an action brought.

It can be measured by certain factors like, intensity, certainty, propinquity, fecundity and exertion.

9. Intensity is the value of pleasure.

How much pleasure is obtaining  
If an action brought less  
intensity of pleasure than search  
for such action which has more intensity.

b- Certainty is the surety of happiness.  
While doing an action, the  
individual is sure that the result  
of action will be happiness  
or not.

c- Propinquity is the closeness of happiness.  
Whether one has to wait or  
the pleasure is at door step.

d- Fecundity is the number of  
pleasure obtaining.

e- Evertion is the measurement of how  
many people will get pleasure from  
the action.

This calculus is used to measure  
the pain or pleasure obtained  
by an action. It satisfies  
the idea of 'greatest number of  
happiness for the greatest number  
of people.' The consequence of action  
must be pleasure and avoidance of pain.

## Role of Stuart Mill

John Stuart Mill was born in 1806 and he expanded further the utilitarianism of Bentham. He contributed in two main ways. As he identified pleasure into two types. He argued that pleasure can be of physical and psychological.

Physical pleasure obtained from materialistic gain.

Psychological pleasure obtained by simple achievement it did not need material pursuit.

Mill gave preference to one form of pleasure (intellectual) over the other form (physical pleasure).

He further discussed the pleasure is obtained from liberty. The individuals are demanding liberty from state yet they are entangled in chains of society. The individuals are living under tyranny.

add more arguments.

a 20 marks answer should have around 15 arguments and be on 7-9 pages.

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of society. First demand liberty from society than from state. He advocated that it is very difficult to be right when majority is wrong.

### Denavement

Jeremy Bentham and his utilitarianism is very influential theory. He explains actions on basis of consequences. He behaved like Machiavelli when he advised to pursue every action but if it is for welfare of nation. Machiavelli allowed all actions, they are justifiable and it is ammoral approach. Bentham also focused on happiness of greatest number of people and avoidance of pain for greatest number of people. He is criticized by Immanuel Kant who believed on absolute bad actions, which can't be justified even by pleasure of greatest number. Hence, Bentham's greatest number of happiness is influential <sup>theory</sup>.

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improve the structure of the answer and the relevance of the arguments to the qs.