CHAPTER – 4

MILL’S CONCEPT OF GOOD LIFE

Mill’s concept of good life is found in his theory of morals known as utilitarianism. Mill’s concept of good life involves the treatment of a question, “what ought I do?” From this it is clear that his concept of good life emphasizes the rule, judgment and consequences of action. As a form of ethical hedonism which emphasizes hedone or pleasure as the ultimate end of human life; utilitarianism also gives importance on happiness of human beings. It is based on the assumption that man is essentially and fundamentally a sentient being and at the same time human being is a pleasure seeking and pain avoiding creature. This theory assumes that everything in man turns upon pleasure and pain and men are responsible for their actions, they are the causes of their actions. John Stuart Mill is a key figure in the development of such theory. Mill’s utilitarianism is teleological in nature. As a form of consequentialism, Mill’s theory locates moral value in the states of affairs, the consequences of action rather than locating it in the agent’s motive, character or on the intrinsic nature of action-types. He defended consequentialist hedonism which holds that the locus of moral value is in the state of affairs brought about by actions or practices that is, consequences are what morally matter. According to Mill, the central concern of moral evaluation is the difference that is made by actions rather than the character of the agent, the character of the motive. Utilitarianism derives its name from its emphasis on the concept or the principle of utility. According to utilitarianism, “the sole ultimate standard of right, wrong and obligation is the principle of utility which says quite strictly that the moral end to be sought in all that
we do is the greatest possible balance of good over evil.”¹ Therefore the basic claim of the principle of utility is that the highest moral end, value or goal is the greatest possible balance of good over evil. So an action is right if and only if it is a means to the latter and actions are to be evaluated on the basis of how much utility they produce or tend to produce. We ought to do that which produces the greatest possible balance of good over evil and here good implies intrinsically good. We ought to promote what is good and prevent what is evil and this is the presupposition of the principle of utility. It considers the concept of value as basic and that of obligation as its derivative. As a normative theory, the objectives of utilitarianism are to help one understand what constitutes a morally good life and cultivate it as best as one can. As a theory of rightness, utilitarianism can be regarded as a form of consequentialism, because according to it the ultimate determinant of the rightness of all right actions is the intrinsic goodness worth, value of their consequences. Since, goodness of the consequences is regarded as the only criterion of determining the rightness of action, therefore utilitarianism can be regarded as a monistic theory. The principle of utility states that an action is right, if and only if it has the maximum utility or usefulness. In precise manner it can be said that what makes an action right is the sum total of the intrinsic goodness of its consequences or that the utility of an action is the criterion of its rightness.

Mill's utilitarianism is an example of ethical naturalism according to which moral value is understood in terms of pleasure which is desired for its own sake and only for its own sake. So, happiness is interpreted in terms of pleasure. Pleasure is an empirically accessible, natural and psychological phenomenon, a type of experience which is desirable for its own sake and which is good as so as desired. Since pleasure
is valued as an end and only as an end, for that reason it is good as an end. However, it’s being good as an end, it is depended upon its being the ultimate object of desire. Moreover, it holds that there is a single, comprehensive criterion of right and wrong that is utility. We are to promote utility, with utility understood in terms of pleasure. Hume’s moral theory is also a form of ethical naturalism. But there is a difference between Mill and Hume. Hume explains moral theory in terms of feeling, rejecting the view that values are objective feature of things knowable by sense. Moral values and judgments are to be explicated in terms of sentiments, passions, responses, concern-phenomena that are matters of feeling rather than knowledge. But a moral evaluation does not refer to a moral fact. This is different from Mill’s approach in which the question of how much utility an action or a practice has an objective or factual matter.

Mill’s utilitarianism is monistic in nature both in his theory of value by holding that one thing is intrinsically good, i.e. happiness or pleasure and in his theory of obligation by holding that we ought to do only that whose consequences are not less good than those of any other available action. In his ethical theory maximization of intrinsic value occupies the most prominent place and he extends the notion of maximization in the direction of both the experience and the experiencer of happiness. Therefore Mill declares that the highest value which everyone ought to aim at is the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number, i.e. the greatest possible amount of happiness experienced by the greatest possible number of persons concerned. The Utilitarian principle “Greatest happiness of the greatest number” is actually derived from the Hutchison’s view ‘the greatest happiness for the greatest number’ which is the material end of good conduct. This phase came to be the slogan
of English Utilitarianism. Thus Mill tries to establish an attempt to put moral theory on an objective empirical basis. He considers that pleasure have intrinsic values. Pleasure is valued as an end and only as an end for that reason pleasure is good as an end. However, it's being good as an end is depended upon its ultimate object of desire. Mill says, "Pleasure and freedom from pain are the only things desirable as ends; and that all desirable things are desirable either for pleasure inherent in themselves or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain."2

This notion of intrinsic value is much the same as the notion of something having value as an end and not as a means. As a form of teleological theory, utilitarianism regard the moral worth of action is determined by their consequences and the objective of utilitarian's is to perform those actions which would maximize pleasure for as many persons as possible. In Mill's view, happiness and pleasure are identical but, according to Aristotle happiness is distinguished from pleasure. Though all utilitarian agree that one should strive to maximize what intrinsically valuable, but they differ about what the intrinsically valuable is.

Mill was not interested to originate an ethical theory like other philosophers, but he is interested to defend the ethical theory to which he was born. In this elegant defense his intellectual depth and his intense desire to find an ethics which fits the facts of life, led him to modify and go beyond the utilitarian doctrine propounded by his father and Jereme Bentham. Therefore Mill's ethical theory is nothing but the reinterpretable and creative theory of utilitarianism advocated by these two thinkers. Because Mill not only interprets the views of them but he also gives new ideas and thoughts with a refreshingly new notion. Bentham's utilitarianism is based on the principle that the object of morality is the promotion of the greatest happiness of the
maximum number of members of society. He says that the happiness of any individual consists in a favourable balance over pain. Consequently an action is good which tend to increase pleasure and an action is bad which tend to increase pain. For Bentham, utilitarianism is important as a philosophical support for much needed social legislation than as an ethical theory. So, Bentham is mainly concerned with political implication. But Mill is mainly concerned with the provision of a defensible statement of its underlying ethical principle. Moreover, Bentham was primarily concerned with the matter of social improvement from the perspective of the legislator; scant attention was given to the importance of individual moral attainment. Furthermore, virtue, nobility and self-sacrifice were all thought to be of no intrinsic worth, but merely useful means to the end of maximizing the general welfare. Mill was concerned with providing utilitarianism with an important individualistic emphasis and in addition with making it clear that the utilitarian of perfected virtue will be one who regards the development of individual character not merely as useful but an essential part of the good life.

Mill departed from his predecessor Bentham in making a case for qualitative distinctions among pleasures. The human dimensions of living such as knowledge, beauty, love, and moral character would count for nothing apart from pleasure. Mill was dissatisfied with this view and hence introduced a new criterion of relevance which he called quality of pleasure. Bentham's quantitative measurements, according to Mill, seem to ignore that there is a dignity and excellence in human nature. He says, "we may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feeling of which mankind are capable; we may refer it to
the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it, to the love of power or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it; but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings posses in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong.”

Mill thought that even with such distinctions, it was still possible to succeed at objective, empirical measurement of utility. He argued that the preferences of those people who have the widest breadth of experience could be used as the criteria for which pleasures are inferior and which are superior. Mill admits the experience as a criterion for determining the quality of pleasure. He felt that utilitarianism needed to accommodate the ranking of pleasures on more than quantitative grounds in order to avoid the charge of being a vulgar hedonism, of being a theory of value with a base or ignoble conception of what humans can be and strives for. Mill does not agree with traditional utilitarianism in holding that this superiority of mental over physical pleasure is due to greater permanence, safety, uncostliness etc., but insists that pleasures are essentially differently in kind or value as well as in degree. Mill says that to estimate other things both quantity and quality are taken, but in estimating the pleasures it is absurd to depend on quantity alone. In discussing the superiority of pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination and of the moral sentiment over mere sensation he remarks, “It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact that some kind of pleasures are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that, while in estimating all other quality is concerned as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasure should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.”
The evaluation of pleasure is dependent on the person who is acquainted with both intellectual pleasure and physical pleasure i.e. on the basis of experience, pleasure can be measured which is superior or inferior in kind according to Mill. The distinction between the baser and the nobler kind of pleasure is known to the wisdom of the learned. The experienced man and this wisdom are required to follow for the common man. Thus Mill admits experience as an unavoidable factor in leading a good life.

For example, any one who has experienced the pleasure attendant upon the resolution of an intellectual problem will, Mill believes, attest to the fact it is superior in kind to the pleasure of eating a meal. Though Mill adds qualitative differences of pleasure and pain with the quantity of pleasure, he is not against the doctrine of Bentham, because he accepts the rule of pleasures and pains in morality like Bentham. By modifying Bentham's concept of pleasure, Mill holds a qualitative view that pleasures differ in kind, there are higher and lower pleasures. Between two pleasures, the higher is one which is desired more than others by almost all who have experienced both, which is superior not in intensity of pleasant sensation, but in its power to elevate us. The hedonic property combining with the non- hedonic properties becomes higher or lower. Or the hedonic quality may have various determinant forms just as color has various hues and a hue has various tints or just as sound has various human swaras, each swara has different shrutis and so on.

It seems that Mill regards pleasure as experiences which one desires on account of their immediate character. Mill is thinking of pleasure as analogous to colour. In case of colour, there are for instance intensity, hue and saturation. Just as one might prefer different colours on account of their hue, as well as their intensity,
so, one might prefer different experiences on account of their specific feeling tone as well as their intensity. This is a sort of rating pleasures in quality as well as in quantity. The moral theory, for that matter must have some methods of rating different acts, such that one is shown to be preferable to another. He says, “Of two pleasures if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure.” Mill uses quality as an index for the value of pleasure for example, if one is very fond of something of which another is very unfond. A’ is likely to prefer the second’s pleasure to the first but the whole crux of Mill’s outlook as utilitarian is towards toleration of other peoples tastes. Thus he admits that others must be free to have their own values. From this we can say that Mill’s concept of good life consists not only pleasure of happiness of all people, it also includes the respect of other’s values towards their likings and dislikings. Mill, like Bentham admits the existence of the capacity of sympathy or fellow feeling which impels man to promote the good of others and prevent him from doing injustice to them. So sympathy is another characteristic of Mill’s good life. Sympathy can be crucial to accounts of what could motivate people to act morally. It is not just essential to understanding values but also to explain the practical, action- motivating character of moral consideration. This is particularly prominent in Mill’s utilitarianism. He argues that fellow-feeling and taking pleasure in the well-being of others and being distressed by their sufferings are too basic to moral concern. We could not acquire utilitarian virtue without sympathy. The ultimate end of human life is greatest happiness of the greatest number i.e. general happiness, according to Mill.
Utilitarianism as an ethics for ordinary individual behaviour states that an action is right if it tends to promote happiness and wrong if it tends to produce the reverse of happiness, not just the happiness of the performer of the action but also that of everyone affected by it. This is the meaning of ‘greatest happiness principle’ or utility advocated by Mill. Mill states that the right action among all the acts open to the agent is that which will produce maximum quantity of pleasure and the right must be determined in the light of good consequences. In assessing the consequences he relies upon the intrinsic value of happiness. The good as conceived by Mill might be pleasure, or the fulfillment of desire or the actualization of potentialities. It asserts that something can be regarded as good or bad on the basis of actual experiences and the main characteristics of an experience which make it good is its pleasantness. So pleasure and pain are the components of experiences of all sorts. They are not thought of in purely sensual terms. His claim is that if an experience is neither pleasurable nor painful, it is a matter of indifference and has no intrinsic value. According to Mill ‘general happiness’ is the ultimate end of human action. Happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain. He believes that human actions are motivated entirely by pleasure and pain and saw that motivation as a basis for the argument that, since happiness is the sole end of human action the promotion, of happiness is the test by which to judge all human conduct. To explain the ultimate end of Mill it is necessary to explain what things it includes in the idea of pain and pleasure and to what extent this is left an open question. This theory is mainly based on the fact that “pleasure and freedom from pain are the only things desirable as ends, and that all desirable things are desirable either for pleasure inherent in themselves or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.” According to Mill, the degree
of goodness of pleasant experience depends jointly on its duration and on the degree of its pleasantness. Moral rules are the means of achieving happiness and an action can be judged as right if it accords with moral rule. Moral rule would be regarded as correct if it promotes the ultimate end, i.e. general happiness. He says, "All action is for the sake of some end and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient."7 Mill says that there is one and only principle of morality, the principle of utility which says, "That actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce reverse of happiness."8

'What things are desirable' regarding this question, Mill says that happiness is desirable and the only thing desirable as an end, all other things being only desirable as means to that end. The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible is that people hear it; and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, Mill apprehend the sole evidence, it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people do actually desire it. But if this end itself were not acknowledged to be an end neither in theory nor in practice, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. Mill argues that each person desires his own happiness. It is required by all that happiness is good, that each person's happiness is a good to that person and the general happiness, therefore a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct and consequently one of the criteria of morality. This does not prove that people desire only happiness that they never desire anything else. To prove it to be the soul criterion, it is necessary to show that people never desire anything else. It will be seen that the method by which Mill would prove the general principle of
utility is closely analogous to that by which Hume tried to prove the utilitarian character of particular virtues. Mill then went on to argue that whole people do desire things which in common language are distinguished from happiness, they none the less always and only desire their own happiness. Mill accepts that the sole motive of an action is an individual’s desire for happiness which is the view of psychological hedonism. He also holds that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the goal of individual and also the standard of morality which is the motto of universal ethical hedonism. The first theory purports to be an account of the actual motive of behaviour and universal ethical hedonism is a principle by which actions are evaluated in terms of consequences irrespective of motive. In utilitarianism Mill tries to explain the transition from psychological theory to the moral theory by recourse to the concept of sanctions, the inducement to action which give binding force to moral rules. These sanctions are rooted in the hedonistic motive which implies that moral rules are acknowledged and obeyed by virtue of anticipated pleasure and pain. Sanction may be of two types- external sanction and internal sanction. External sanctions are those forces of punishment and reward in the universe which control man’s action through their fear of pain and propensity of pleasure. For example, fear of social disapproval and imprisonment are both deterrents to crime. Mill is mainly concerned with internal sanction which comes from within. The force of an internal sanction derives from the feeling of pleasure which is experienced when a moral law is obeyed and the feeling of pain which accompanies a violation of it. According to Mill, ‘greatest happiness principle’ is sanctioned from within and it is attested to by observation. He also holds that the feeling of sympathy for others is so well developed that the individual’s happiness depends upon the well being of his fellow men. Thus, by means of internal
Mill is unable to reconcile the psychological theory that every one desires his own happiness with the moral theory that one ought to act as to serve the public good. Mill argues that although the external sanctions, social and supernatural enforce the utilitarian principle, they do not obligate us to follow it. In and of themselves, they cannot bind us satisfactorily to any moral principle, since men are truly bound only when they feel inwardly that the principle is binding upon them. It is our 'feeling of humanity' which provides ultimate sanction of the principle of utility and this Mill calls the internal sanction and for this man care for others happiness besides his own happiness. However, he acknowledges that his argument in support of sanctions does not constitute a logical demonstration of the greatest happiness principle. Regardless of whether this inner feeling is inborn or acquired, Mill contends that it can be a powerful force and a sound basis for utilitarian morality. This firm foundation is that of the social feeling of mankind, the desire to be in unity with our fellow creatures, which is already a powerful principle in human nature. Mill says that as a social being, every individual has a feeling that there is a harmony between his own feelings and aim with that of the other beings living in the society. Though due to the differences of opinion and of mental culture, it is impossible to share many of their actual feelings; their real aims do not conflict with each other. In other words one cannot oppose the real wish of another which is done for its own good and even tries to promote it. This is the natural feeling of human being not imposed by out side agency and this conviction is the ultimate sanction of the greatest happiness morality, according to Mill. Therefore, it can be said that sympathy for other human being's feeling and respect for it is one of the qualities for leading a good life.
On a question of which is the best worth having of two pleasures or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings apart from its moral attributes and its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or if they differ, that of the majority among them must be admitted as final. And there needs to be less hesitation to accept this judgment respecting the quality of pleasures, since there is no other tribunal to be referred to even to the question of quantity. Mills says, “If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison of small account.” Mill here was concerned to argue that the qualitatively superior pleasure, was more pleasurable then the qualitatively inferior pleasure, where the test of the pleasurableness of the pleasure in the preference of those who have experience of both types.

The truth is that different people find different things pleasant, some derive little pleasure from what other greatly enjoy. Some cannot enter fully into sexual enjoyments, other into intellectual pleasures. These suggest that the wise men, the intellectual men are not necessarily competent judges, indeed, that the concept of a competent judge of the pleasures of all is one which has no application. All that can safely be said is that many intelligent men prefer one kind of pleasure, that many others prefer other kinds and that most prefer a mixture of the two, the proportions varying from person to person. Mill’s argument is that the pleasure which is preferred by those who have experience of both types of pleasure is necessarily more
pleasurable. Mill says, "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be a Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied." Socrates would rather choose to be a Socrates dissatisfied then to be a pig satisfied. The pig probably would not, but then the pig knows only one side of the question, Socrates knows both due to his reasoning capacity. So, the test of quality is the preference given by those who are acquainted with both.

Mill does not take into consideration the opinion of people who gives up higher pleasure for the lower. Because such people either inherently or by lack of opportunity are incapable of enjoying higher kind of pleasure. He only emphasizes the fact that in measuring quality of pleasures such opinions are accepted who have tested the entire spectrum of pleasure, i.e. who are qualified by knowledge of both. So, experience is one of the ways of measuring the quality of pleasure, according of Mill. He says, "Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying." Thus Mill sought to develop his ethical theory based on a more objective conception of human happiness by drawing a distinction between higher and therefore permanent and lower desire of preferences. Although Mill regards pleasure as a necessary condition for goodness, he speaks of goodness as being dependent upon qualities of experience other than pleasantness and unpleasantness. According to Mill, though pleasure and the absence of pain are the only things which are desirable, there are other things which are desirable such as music, money, virtue, beauty, but only as a means to happiness and when they do lead
to happiness they also become part of the end. He says, "The ingredients of happiness are very various and each of them is desirable in itself and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as for example health, is to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves, besides being means; they are part of the end. Virtue according to utilitarian doctrine is not naturally an originally part of the end but it is capable of becoming so; and in those who live it disinterestedly it has become so, and is desired and cherished, not as a means to happiness but as a part of their happiness". Thus Mill after developing his proof sought to acknowledge other things either as a mean or the part of happiness. Pleasure or happiness is nothing but the aspects of person's conscious experience when their needs, wants or interests are satisfied. From this viewpoint human welfare or good life can be interpreted as a balance of pleasure over pain. According to Mill, virtue can be desired for its own sake as part of happiness, even though an agent's concern for virtue must first be motivated by finding virtuous activity pleasing. According to Mill, virtue is a part of ethical theory. It is explicated as a habit of desire in accordance with which an agent is disposed to act in ways that promote utility. He interpreted will as a disposition or habit of desire. Will has an important place in Mill's theory because critics of utilitarianism raise the objection that we do not always act with a view towards pleasure. It seems that we often act in ways we believe we ought to act, without a view to expected pleasure. That is, to often act from volition, not from desire. It seems to threaten Mill's hedonist theory of value and human action. Acknowledging it, he replied that the will is not a separate
faculty from desire, but that in willing to do something we do it from desire having become habituated. It can only become habituated from acts of that kind of being originally associated with pleasure. In this way Mill sought to make a case for excellence of character and informed, correct judgment concerning pleasure while remaining faithful to a hedonist theory of value and a consequentialist moral theory. So also money is desired not for the sake of an end, but as part of the end. From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual's conception of happiness. According to Mill, what once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake, it is, however desired as part of happiness. The person is made or thought; he would be made happy by its mere possession and is made unhappy by failure to obtain it. All are included in happiness and they all are elements of which the desire of happiness is made up. Happiness is not an abstract idea but a concrete whole and these are some of the parts. Thus Mil concludes that, “Greatest happiness principle” includes both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of pleasure. His principle says that, “the ultimate end with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable - whether we are considering our own good or that of other people - is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyment, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality and the rule for measuring it against quantity being the preference felt by those who, in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self consciousness and self observation are best furnished with the means of comparison. This, being according to the utilitarian opinion the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality, which may accordingly be defined “the rules and precepts for
human conduct" by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation.\textsuperscript{13}

In determining good life, Mill explains pleasure with adequate justification which enjoys a logical status. According to Mill the logical end to be sought in all we do is the fulfillment of our desires or the attainment of object of desire. If the object of desire is what pleasure means, pleasure is evidently our end which indeed is a logical truism. His concept of good life falls under the moral theory known as ‘Goal-Oriented Morality’ because his concept is mainly based on how people behaved and on their fitting into practices of the community rather than obeying principles for their own sake. It emphasizes on the actual consequences of moral rules and principles and it insists that these are justified only be appeal to how happy they make us. Mill’s good life is altruistic in nature. He says that though general happiness constitute the norm of right and wrong of individual happiness, since the welfare of the individual seems to depend upon that of all people. He gives primacy to individual rights and leaves to individual freedom as large a scope as is consistent with public order. Nevertheless he admits that the right of the individual to happiness cannot be achieved by an individual independently of regard for others, his happiness must be dependent on the existence of the state. The individual needs the state for the achievement of happiness and public policies are valuable only if they promote social well-being. Thus Mill’s good life starts with an individual that desires his own happiness and ends by prescribing an altruistic goal. He says, “the moral worth of an act is to be measured by its usefulness in promoting pleasure and happiness. But this happiness is not man’s own alone. His own good is to be realized in conjunction with that of others, for he
and they alike are eager for a life of satisfaction and contentment. A satisfied, contented life is, in the ultimate analysis, a life of happiness.”

From the above it can be said that good life is the life of happiness and the life of happiness is nothing but a satisfied or contented life. As a sentient being all human beings seek pleasure and avoid pain and these are achieved from the consequences of action. The moral worth of an act is to be measured by its usefulness in promoting happiness which is not only man’s own but also for fellow beings. Therefore, the life of happiness which is called the good life can be measured in them of utility of action which is concerned both the people who experience it and also with the other people living in society. This good life consist both with quality and quantity of pleasure that is the life of general happiness is the good life, according to Mill. So good life is the happiest life which is universal, superior in quality and it requires maximum amount of pleasure. In logical sense we can say that good life is the happiest life which has a wide connotation and denotation. It means that the life which is accepted by all people for their own desires and at the same time which is qualitatively superior in their own estimation.

The clarifications of Mill’s utilitarianism require the various objections of his doctrine advocated by various thinkers and Mill’s answer to them. For example, the argument that utilitarianism is invalid because happiness cannot be attained is answered by Mill with a realistic description of happiness and a suggestion for the social means of achieving it. According to Mill, pleasure and happiness are synonymous. But John Hosper argues that the relation of pleasure to happiness is rather like that of part of whole, happiness consists of a sum of pleasures. A person may experience numerous pleasures without being happy, but he cannot be happy
without experiencing pleasure from some source, a happy person in one who has many pleasures, usually from diverse sources. A person may enjoy books and not be happy, and have many sex experiences and yet not be happy. But if he has these things and a benevolent attitude towards life and if he does not expect the impossible of reality and if his behaviour is guided by knowledge and so on, he is probably happy. Pleasure is attainable without happiness but happiness cannot be attained without pleasure. So they can't be identical. Criticizing utilitarianism some people point out that it fails to address some question with valid answers and such questions are what is meant by 'happiness' and what is the sense in which it is good? To whom does the 'greatest happiness' pertain and why ought we to pursue it? According to Mill, rightness or wrongness of an action depends upon the sum total of the intrinsic goodness of its consequences or that the utility of an action is the ground or criterion of its rightness. Critical thinkers argue that rightness of right action or wrongness of wrong action is not intrinsic, but extrinsic property of it. Because, it is not by reflecting upon the nature of any action, that we can decide, whether, it is right or wrong. We can do that only by ascertaining its consequences. Mill's theory locates intrinsic value in some state or states of consciousness. It is the mental state of consciousness, the experience, of feeling pleased or happy, of being enlightened by the acquisition of knowledge or of enjoying beauty which intrinsically is good. It is not a state or object of external world.

For utilitarianism each person is equal to the other, none is more or less equal than anyone else. Therefore the problem of distribution of the good is bound to arise. When we start judging a mode of distribution to be right or wrong, we actually use the concept of justice i.e. distributive justice. But utilitarians are not obvious of the importance
of the concept of justice. For them it is secondary or derivative concept in the sense that it is
derivable from the principle of utility. Mill also saw the need to show how justice could be
explicated on utilitarian ground. A just society for utilitarians is one which is so ordered
and organized that it procures the maximum possible welfare of its members, no matter
how this maximum is distributed among the members.

The problem with Mill's proof is that what people contingently happens to
desire does not change what is 'desirable' in the intrinsic sense, just because nobody
in the twentieth century desired equal recognition of the rights of women does not
mean that it is not in fact desirable. The second part of his proof commits the fallacy
of composition. While it is indeed true that the good of one individual contributes to
the good of the aggregate of all persons, the reverse that the general happiness is the
good to the individual which is the goal of Mill's proof is not true. The aggregate of
all persons is not an entity in itself which possess a good and any increase in the
aggregate of happiness is not necessarily fulfilling the desire for happiness of all its
members; it could be fulfilling the desires of one, few or many. Even supposing the
reality of some kind of collective unity, Mill provides no reason why we ought to care
for each others happiness. Though the critical thinkers say this, Mill says that due to
the external sanction and mostly because due to the internal sanction man care for
others happiness. According to Mill, greatest happiness is the sole end and we desire
other thing such as money, virtue as desirable as parts or means to pleasure and for
pleasure we anticipate from them. But we do not desire only pleasure for its own sake
nor do we desire only happiness for its own sake. Mill's move, that all we desire is
either a means to or parts of happiness is equally untrue, whether happiness is
distinguished from or identified with pleasure. When we desire money, food, revenge,
the welfare of our loved ones, we desire these things and not simply that pleasure or happiness, the satisfaction of our desire may or may not bring. Though Mill’s defense of hedonistic utilitarianism is unsatisfactory, it is not untenable. Thus, critical thinkers attempt to show that Mill’s proof is unsound and his utilitarianism is an undesirable moral at both societal and personal level.

Rachels states that utilitarianism might also lead to distributive injustice. For instance, if one distributes wealth, so that every one was equally happy, one is obliged to prefer a situation wherein everybody is moderately happy, to a situation wherein half the people are moderately happy and half very happy; whereas if one distributes wealth so as to maximize either total or average utility, one must prefer a situation wherein a person is extremely happy and the rest barely happy to a situation wherein everyone is moderately happy, as long as the happiness of person greatly outweigh the dissatisfaction of everybody else. Yet both preferred situation seem unfair. If we accept Mill’s principle, we are unable to justify the right in some cases. For example, a woman was jogging through a park and come across a gang of men which gang raped her. Utilitarianism justifies their action as the mens’ pleasure is far greater than the womens’ pain and as they are the majority, the womens’ pain would not matter. Similarly, the theory cannot be used to determine what is universally good. Mill’s qualitative principle does go some way to addressing this weakness. Generally, moral decisions are made by individuals in the pursuit of their personal goals and also by public bodies in the pursuit of theirs. Utilitarianism thinks that the principle of utility can be used in personal and public decision making. It is considered to be a mark of rationality to choose to do the actions one considers likely to produce consequences possessing maximum good. Utilitarian criterion may be considered one
of the correct criterions for all cases of moral decision making though it is not the only correct criterion. As far as its use in public decision making is concerned, the same situation arises. Public bodies sometimes take decisions about how to ensure the welfare of divorced, indigent women of a certain community on political, non-moral consideration. So, it is clear that there is no theoretical bar against its use either in personal or public decision making. So, some thinkers say that in principle utilitarianism appear to be practical, but in reality it is debatable whether it would be a workable ethics. Regarding the meaning of happiness or pleasure utilitarianism requires hierarchy of happiness. Moreover, happiness cannot be assessed, because it is not something which can be qualified to a degree. Thus, utilitarianism is a philosophical epidemic in contemporary social and political dialogue. The notion of greater good above the good of the individual agent has taken root in group centric ideologies. Overall utilitarianism is a philosophical mess. Its moral implications are strange; its practice is filled with difficulties and absurdities, though it has some essential characteristics, (i) pleasure in the non degrading sense is all that is intrinsically valuable, (ii) each person’s pleasure is valued equally with allowance for kind, (iii) an action’s morality is measured by its positive productive correspondence with pleasure for all, (iv) agents must be disinterested spectator in order to consider their decisions correctly. In utilitarianism Mill is concerned in establishing only one ultimate principle, i.e. principle of utility not a second principle of fairness as well like other utilitarian. He argued that every body to count for one, nobody for more than one is a part of the principle which asserts that equal amount of pleasure are to count equally. The applicability of this principle is heavily based on the moral agents’ full range of wisdom, experience, social skills and life skills. This theory
admits that present circumstances can be judged without reference to past precedence. From this standpoint, this theory seem greatly too similar to 'situation ethics' which allows certain actions to be taken which suit the particular situation. Mill introduced various modifications which went some way towards lessening the clash between utilitarianism and conventional morality. So, Mill’s utilitarianism is different from conventional morality. He makes a distinction between higher and lower pleasure and the broadening of the concept of happiness and the attempt there by to accommodate within utilitarianism a love of virtue as an ingredient of happiness. According to Mill, the rules, judgments, conclusion of one age, generation or society would have little or no relevance for another. Mill sought to avoid this extreme relativity in terms of things being desired for them, being desired for the pleasure we anticipate or obtain from them. Thus, it was that he suggested that certain things are better desired for their own sakes than others, that people ought to be educated to desire these better things for their own sakes, for thereby greater over all pleasure will result. This retains pleasure, not happiness as the sole good. So it is not a solution, because where there is no such ideal educational system in operation, people’s uneducated desires would relevant ones.

The principle of utility is construed as being both the test of which actions, rules, laws and institutions are morally desirable and as the source of justification of all true moral judgments. In determining what course of action is obligatory, Mill says that the action which contribute most general happiness is obligatory than others and regarding the general rule of conduct he says that the rule which lead us to the greater general happiness or maximizing happiness is the general rule of conduct.

Utilitarianism is an ethics of optimism which believes in perfectibility of human nature. Utilitarian method is a multidimensional methodology built on the
safest rocks of things which men love most – contentment, equanimity and poise. The inexhaustible possibility that utilitarian advocates for common welfare definitely deserves our commendation.

Mill’s On Liberty focuses on politics rather than moral theory but there is an important connection between politics and moral theory. His political theorizing makes a case for a high degree of individual freedom, and that freedom is important to individual’s fashioning and pursuing their conception of a good life. In this regard, there may be a crucial link between political autonomy and the promotion of utility in Mill’s thought. The influence of utilitarianism of Mill has been widespread, permeating the intellectual life of last two centuries. Its significance in law, politics and economic is especially notable. In its political philosophy, utilitarianism bases the authority of government and the sanctity of individual rights upon their utility, thus providing an alternative to the theories of natural law, natural rights or social contact. What kind of government is best thus becomes a question of what kind of government has the best consequences- an assessment that requires factual premises regarding human nature and behaviour. Utilitarianism supported democracy as a way of making the interest of government coincide with the general interest. They have argued for the greatest individual liberty compatible with an equal liberty for others on the ground that each individual is generally the best judge of his own welfare. They have believed in the possibility and the desirability of progressive social change through peaceful political process. After all as a leading theory of good life, utilitarianism is remarkably successful theory. As an abstract ethical doctrine utilitarianism has established itself as one of the small number of live options that must be taken into account.
Utilitarianism treats an individual in all of his aspects of existence i.e. physical, intellectual and the spiritual as a social philosophy. It is mainly concerned with the all round development of individual. Mill as a utilitarian has rightly recognized the impact of neuro-sociological constraints of human living. The influence of the environment, the genetic factor, the cultural and social factors find a prominent place in the utilitarian concept of a person. So, it has not failed into account the hard facts of life of individual. Person’s battle for security, happiness power and prestige find a place in the moral framework of utilitarianism and it gives more stress on man’s rationality endowed with high sense of intuition or discrimination. As a social animal, man has to learn everything mostly by his experience and observation. It is also reflected in Mill’s ethical theory. Mill insists on objectivity of morals for the sake of the ideal or *summun bonum* and for this objectivity man is able to achieve the excellence in human pursuit and creativity in human enterprises. Fallibility is always bound to exist in human affairs. But utilitarianism maintains the redeeming feature which is nothing but opportunity for correction and modification. The central issue of utilitarian ethics is the concept of utility i.e., general happiness. Generally, it is believed that pleasant life would be meaningless without nobility and grandeur and zest for living depends on the principle of pleasure. This is the teaching of Mill’s ethical theory. He believes in the perfectibility of human nature. Morality can neither be codified nor documented. Equally so, it is neither a legal instrument nor a Sermon on the Mount. Any attempt to look for a structure of morals is therefore bound to be inadequate which is also found in Mill’s ethics. Due to the rapid change of social and economic situation as well as rapid advance in knowledge of human nature, new
rights and duties arise, so moral code changes in due course. This feature is found in case of Mill's ethics because he gives importance on situational change.

Although critical thinkers say that it treats moral agent only as an actor and not as a knower, it cannot be true. On closer examination we find that Mill does not deny the capacity for intuitions though it only doubts the veracity of all intuitions. In fact it treats man both as a knower and an actor. No other ethical systems have given such a prominent place to this vital aspect of human existence. Mill's ethics in a sense is a very broad doctrine combining in itself the much debated philosophical trends such as rationalism, intuitionism, empiricism and hedonism. So it can be rightly characterized as a methodology for the pursuit of a common end and this makes it possible for a rationalist, an empiricist to be a utilitarian i.e. Utilitarian principle is easily attainable for people. Mill's demand for qualitative preferences of pleasure indicates his passion for supremacy of intellect. The true account of utilitarianism is that principles of justice are not waived in the interest of human happiness. According to Mill, justice is a name for certain classes of moral rules, which concern the essentials of human well being more clearly and are therefore of more absolute obligation than any other rules for the guidance of life.

From the above discussion of Mill's utilitarianism, we can say that Mill's good life contain the entire element relevant to lead it. Such as happiness, sympathy, freedom, justice, love, reason, experience etc. are all included in his good life, i.e. in the life of happiness. Good life can be determined on the basis of action and the action is evaluated as good or bad in the light of actual experiences. The only criterion of making an experience good is its pleasantness.
REFERENCES:


4. Ibid; p.46

5. Ibid; p. 46.


10. Ibid, p.47.


