

Deontological and utilitarian ethics are two opposite normative theories that significantly influence current policymaking, particularly in situations where moral trade-offs are inevitable. Based on the philosophical tradition of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, utilitarianism considers an action according to its effects to maximize the overall well-being or happiness of the least number of people. On the other hand, deontological ethics, which is a form based on the works of Immanuel Kant, evaluates the morality of actions by the rule of observing duties and principles regardless of consequences (Iyioke, 2024). These incompatible standards result in different decision-making logics of policy design and, in turn, implementation, which provide policymakers with conflicting prescriptions about what is seen as ethical action. Modern policy consists of utilitarianism and deontological ethics, which focus on the welfare of the collective and moral obligations due to obligations to the populace, respectively, necessitating an ethical balance approach that incorporates outcomes with rights to ensure that difficult issues impacting society are effectively overcome. One of the strengths of utilitarianism in policymaking is the focus on the wider benefit of society. Many modern cost-benefit analyses employ utilitarian reasoning to guide popular decisions in medical care, environmental policies, and the distribution of resources with an aim of maximizing the total social utility. Utilitarian reasoning is frequently found to justify policies in the field of public health according to which scarce medical resources, such as vaccines or hospital beds, should be allocated to the policies that achieve the highest number of lives saved or life-years, respectively (Patrão Neves, 2022). This methodology can explain the justification of the policies that ensure aggregate benefits rather than rigidly following the rules, so that flexibility and pragmatism are applied in a crisis when results matter. Nevertheless, the emphasis on



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