



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON MOORE'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY

BY

TESFAY TAREKE

JUNE, 2017

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Abstract

This thesis deals and examines Moore's concept of moral philosophy. He considers the subject matter of ethics should be examining the nature of the concept good or answering for the question what is good. He believes that good is simple, indefinable and non-natural property. In this regard, Moore is rejecting naturalistic and metaphysical theories of ethics for the reason that these theories are failing to deal the primary concern of ethics and are committing of the naturalistic fallacy for being defining of good by natural and metaphysical properties. His moral theory rotates around the attack of these theories. So, for Moore one who tries to define good in any sense is just committing a fallacy. If this is so, I will argue that Moore's notion of morality has a limitations or weaknesses in describing of his moral concept while he is rejecting to natural and metaphysical theories of ethics and in his saying of good is indefinable.

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INTRODUCTION

George Edward Moore (1873-1958), an English philosopher, is considered as the influential philosopher of the 20th century. He has a great contribution to the development of contemporary moral theory, mainly related to meta-ethical issues. Moore became more popular through his work *Principia Ethica*.

As Horgan and Timmons state, “metaethics understood as a distinct branch of ethics, is often traced to Moore’s *Principia Ethica*” (Horgan and Timmons, 2006: 1). Metaethics focuses on the idea of “second-order non-moral” issues and questions, while normative ethics is concerned on the issues of “first-order moral questions” such as what is good and bad, right and wrong and the like. So, we can say that metaethics, as a branch of ethics, is a part of the philosophical ‘legacy’ of *Principia Ethica* (ibid).

As Piervincenzi states:

It is safe to say that after G.E. Moore published *Principia Ethica*, just over one hundred years ago, philosophical ethics underwent a dramatic change. All forms of ethical naturalism and metaphysical ethics, theories that accounted for the majority of approaches to ethics, were under attack. Moore offered an ambitious and vexing collection of arguments that inspired, and continues to inspire, high praise and scathing criticism (Piervincenzi, 2007: 1).

So, it is possible to say that Moore has a great contribution for the beginning and development of metaethics. In this sense, we can call Moore as the shifter from the idea of normative ethics to the idea of metaethics which focuses on the nature of moral judgment. He is also known as an opponent of natural and metaphysical theories of ethics.

Moore’s popular book *Principia Ethica* inspired or encouraged a revolution in 20th century ethical theory. Moore’s concept of naturalistic fallacy, and his conceptual analysis had a revolutionary effect on meta-ethical inquiry (Welchman, 1989:317). So, according to Altman, “a century after its publication of Moore’s *Principia Ethica* stands as one of the classic statements of anti-naturalism in ethics. Moore’s metaethics revolves around an aggressive attack on naturalism (Altman, 2004: 1).

The objective of Moore's book, *Principia Ethica* was "to create a new science of ethics" (Piervincenzi, 2007:1). He begins by purporting to identify the "scope of ethical enquiry". He tries to answer questions like what is the subject matter of ethics, and what is that we purport to study when we engage in moral reasoning? For Moore the study of ethics should begin with the "general enquiry into what is good" (ibid: 1-2).

Accordingly, the aim of this thesis is to examine and reflect on Moore's moral theory. As mentioned above Moore's moral concept lies in the idea of the nature of goodness. Before saying "this is good" or "that is right" we must first discover what the nature of the good is. The first question of ethics should be not about the wrongness or rightness of action, rather about the nature of the concept good.

For Moore, the subject matter of ethics should, therefore, be the nature of the good. Moore, in his understanding of good differs from naturalist and metaphysical philosophers. For instance naturalist philosophers like Mill and Spencer define good in terms of natural property. Metaphysical ethicists define good on the basis of metaphysical or supersensible reality. But, for Moore defining good through natural property and metaphysical reality is committing naturalistic fallacy. Good is simple, non-natural and unanalyzable property. Since it is simple, it cannot be defined by any property.

This thesis explores why Moore thinks that good is indefinable, and does Moore reject the naturalistic and metaphysical theory of ethics. If good as Moore says, is indefinable how can we know it? What arguments does he used to say that good is indefinable? And why does he come up with naturalistic fallacy?

To discuss about the issues raised above, I have organized this thesis in three chapters. In the following chapters I will look into the moral theory of Moore, how his moral concept is explained, for what purpose he refuses the moral concepts of other philosophers, and reflect why others oppose Moore's moral view and so on.

The first chapter deals with Moore's notion of morality. This chapter examines a detailed reflection about Moore's moral concept, the subject matter of ethics, the notion of good, open question argument, intuitionism, intrinsic value and cognitivism and non-cognitivism. In each

sub-titles I will try to examine how Moore describes these points. Mainly this chapter focuses on the concept of good. So, I will explain what is good, how we can define and know good.

The second chapter deals with Moore's argument against ethical naturalism and metaphysical ethics. The focus will be not only arguing against the said but also to show how Moore describes naturalistic fallacy. In this sense I will raise like Spencer and Mill, why Moore rejects their moral concepts and in what way they are committing a mistake.

The third chapter is the last chapter which discusses about arguments advanced against Moore's moral concept. It emphasizes and reflects on the anti-thesis of Moore's notion of morality. I will raise points of some philosophers in what way and why they oppose to Moore's moral concept. I will not raise all the philosophers who oppose Moore, but I raise only some of the main criticisms. In doing this, the objection which is given to Moore's morality are not all reasonable and nonsense. Furthermore, my critical reflection will be made in this chapter. In my reflection I will not oppose blindly all his morality. But I will explain some of the limitations or weaknesses of Moore's moral concept. In reflecting the weaknesses I will refer some supportive arguments to develop my argument. Finally, I will come up with the conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

MOORE'S NOTION OF MORALITY

1.1 The Subject Matter of Ethics

In the preface of *Principia Ethica*, Moore states, in ethics, as in all philosophical studies the problems and disagreements occur “due to a very simple cause: namely the attempt to answer questions, without first discovering what question it is which you desire to answer” (Moore, 1903: vii). It is better if philosophers try to discover what questions they were raising before attempting to discuss and answer ethical issues and questions. For Moore, the disagreement in ethics comes due to the inadequate study or discovering of ethical issues and questions (ibid). As Sylvester states, for Moore the subject matter of ethics must focus on the questions, “what is good, what things are good and in what degree, and what ought we to do” (Sylvester, 1990: 4). As Sylvester states, Moore describes:

The first line of inquiry is directed at answering the substantive question of the nature of value, or of *good* itself, and how it is known. The second is aimed at determining what things are qualified by good; that is, what things possess the quality of *being* good, and how good is experienced in them. The third takes up the problems of normative ethics; that is, the basis of moral obligation and the standards by which moral behavior is to be judged (ibid).

For Moore, issues like “this is wrong, this is right, this is bad, this is good” definitely fall into the domain of ethics. If these are the issues of ethics, it is possible to say that they are about the questions of human conduct. But, for Moore the concern of ethics is more than this. The subject matter of ethics must not only be human conduct but also “the general enquiry of what is good”. So, the question how good is defined should be central in all ethics. On the basis of this contention, Moore draws the conclusion that the main task of ethics is dealing with the nature of good (Moore, 1903: 2).

As Moore states, it is possible or easy to indicate some of the every-day judgments which are indeed concerned with ethics. When we say “Abebe is a good or a nasty person”, or “temperance is virtue and drunkenness is vice”, we unquestionably make ethical judgment. When we make ethical judgments we use words like virtue, vice, right, good and bad. However, these judgments do not describe the ‘province’ of ethics (ibid: 1). “That province may indeed be defined as the

whole truth about that which is at the same time common to all such judgments and peculiar to them” (ibid).

If we take the above issues as the concern of ethics, it is possible to say that they are about human conduct. Judging that an act is bad or good, right or wrong largely refers to human conduct. When we say “Abebe is a good man” we commonly mean he acts rightly, or when we say “someone is bad or vicious” we mean that he is doing wrong. The issues of human conduct are the concern of ethics. This means, ethical questions are limited to human conduct or practice. But, for Moore the restriction of ethics to human conduct or practice is not really acceptable (ibid: 2).

Moore does not deny that ethics is concerned with the question of good conduct. But limiting ethics only to the notion of conduct is a mistake because good conduct is a complex notion which cannot be defined easily, and more importantly “all conduct is not good” (ibid). Therefore, Moore states that the main concern of ethics is the following:

And hence I shall try to avoid it by considering first what is good in general; hoping, that if we can arrive at any certainty about this, it will be much easier to settle the question of good conduct; for we all know pretty well what conduct is. This, then, is our first question: What is good? and What is bad? and to the discussion of this question (or these questions) I give the name Ethics, since that science must, at all events, include it (ibid).

For Moore, ethical judgments belong to ethics. For instance when we say “books are good” or “pleasure is good” we make judgments that can be discussed by ethics. However, these judgments are more related to the issue of casuistry than to ethics. The reason is that ethics is more general while casuistry is more particular or specific. But this does not mean that ethics and casuistry are different. Their difference lies not in kind rather in degree. So, casuistry aims at discovering what actions are good. But the main focus of ethics is not on the question that what things are good, but how good is defined. And how good is defined is a concern of ethics rather than that of casuistry. So, the most fundamental question in ethics is the question of “how good is to be defined” (ibid: 4-5). In relation to this Moore states, “the main object of Ethics, as a systematic science, is to give correct *reasons* for thinking that this or that is good; and, unless this question be answered, such reasons cannot be given” (ibid: 6).

If we classify things as good or bad before studying the nature of goodness and badness, it leads us to false judgment or conclusion. Therefore, ethics as a systematic enquiry must deal with the nature and definition of the notion of good first.

As John Hill witnessed, Moore admitted that considering human conduct as a starting point for ethical study is a mistake. The scope of ethics is broader than that of conduct since it comprises “motives, circumstances, and ends” (Hill, 1976:18). Besides, conduct is also treated by other sciences. So, if we consider that the subject matter of ethics is conduct, it loses its autonomy. According to Moore, ethics differs from all other sciences by its autonomy. Since human conduct is more particular, and considering it as the main focus of ethics is a mistake (ibid). According to Hill, Moore explicates why he rejects human conduct as the subject matter of ethics as follows:

The fundamental mistake which would be made in regarding human conduct as the subject-matter of ethics would be that the science would then be concerned with studying conduct as good or bad: thus goodness, the property common and peculiar to good conduct, could be mistaken for the goodness which is common and peculiar to good conduct and all good things. In this way the student of ethics would come to an incorrect idea of what ‘good’ means. To avoid this unfortunate result, the order of procedure within ethics should be reserved, since the student, in order to know what good conduct is, should already know the meaning of ‘good’. Moore therefore saw ethics, not as a treatment of human conduct, good or bad, but as ‘the general enquiry into what is good’. ‘Good’ was the fundamental term of ethics and ‘the only notion which serves to distinguish Ethics from every other study’ (ibid: 18-19).

From the above quotation it is possible to say that the subject-matter of ethics is not human conduct or not the goodness or badness of actions rather, what is good and how it can be defined.

1.2 Moore’s Concept of Good

As mentioned above, Moore brings a new understanding about the subject matter of ethics as compared to his predecessors. He is more concerned about the nature of ‘good’ than about human conduct. Accordingly, Moore explains the term ‘good’ as follows.

He says “If I am asked what is good? my answer is that good is good, and that is the end of the matter. Or if I am asked how is good to be defined? my answer is that it cannot be defined, and that is all I have to say about it” (Moore, 1903: 6). As Sylvester noted, Moore has brought a key

revolution in moral philosophy. His main focus is the concept 'good' which is indefinable, non-natural object of thought (Sylvester, 1990: 3). Moore is explaining his position about the simplicity and indefinability of goodness by considering it as analogous with yellow.

Good is a simple notion, just as yellow is a simple notion; that, just as you cannot, by any manner of means, explain to anyone who does not already know it, what yellow is, so you cannot explain what good is. Definitions of the kind that I was asking for, definitions which describe the real nature of the object or notion denoted by a word, and which do not merely tell us what the word is used to mean, are only possible when the object or notion in question is something complex. You can give a definition of a horse, because a horse has many different properties and qualities, all of which you can enumerate. But when you have enumerated them all, when you have reduced a horse to his simplest terms, you can no longer define those terms. They are simply something which you think of or perceive, and to anyone who cannot think of or perceive them, you can never, by any definition, make their nature known (Moore, 1903: 7).

In short, for Moore, good and yellow are simple, indefinable and irreducible concepts that differ from the concept of horse or any other natural property. The concept horse is composed of parts that can be reducible to simplest parts and hence it can be defined. Consequently, the simplicity and irreducibility of the concept good makes it indefinable.

He believes that we can define even an animal that we have never seen physically. For instance, let us define what a 'chimaera' is. We can say that "it is an animal with a lioness's head and body, with a goat's head growing from the middle of its back, and with a snake in place of its tail"(ibid). When we define chimaera we describe its parts that make it resemble other animals. The purpose of this example is to explain how an object can be defined by its composite parts. In this sense, 'good' cannot be defined because it has no parts. To make it clear Joseph Margolis states, "it is clear that yellow is a "natural quality" of things, in the fairly straight forward sense that yellow is perceptual quality. Moore wishes to hold that good differs from yellow in being "non-natural" quality" (Margolis, 1976: 36). However, saying that good is a simple notion like yellow but it does not mean that yellow is non-natural. Even if Moore defined good as a simple and indefinable quality just as yellow is, good is non-natural and yellow is natural entity (Donagan, 1981: 293).

As Cooper states, Moore contends that the definition of good cannot be defined in “arbitrary verbal definition and verbal definition proper” (Cooper, 1959: 978). Moore did not say that good is indefinable in this sense. Cooper argued that, this kind of definition can state the meaning of one word in other words. This kind of definition does not have any importance in ethics but only in “lexicography”. For Moore, the most important definition is not lexicography or any other verbal definition rather the “definition by analysis” is the acceptable one (ibid).

When we define a horse we know that it is composed of different parts. It has four legs, a head, a heart, a liver, two ears and eyes etc. But good does not have such parts. In this case, Moore is denying the definability of good. Therefore, according to him, good is a simple notion that cannot be defined as any other properties. Since it is not composed of any parts, nothing can substitute the term good. However, we can say something about a cow that it differs from a donkey or any other animal (Moore, 1903: 8). Not only good, but also there are many examples that are simple and indefinable. For instance:

Consider yellow, for example. We may try to define it, by describing its physical equivalent; we may state what kind of light-vibrations must stimulate the normal eye, in order that we may perceive it. But a moment’s reflection is sufficient to show that those light-vibrations are not themselves what we mean by yellow. *They* are not what we perceive. Indeed, we should never have been able to discover their existence, unless we had first been struck by the patent difference of quality between the different colors. The most we can be entitled to say of those vibrations is that they are what corresponds in space to the yellow which we actually perceive (ibid: 10).

Moore states we may define yellow by its physical equivalent, i.e. by the light vibration that stimulates the normal eye. But this light vibration cannot help us to discover the nature of the term yellow. In this case, for Moore, yellow is a simple property which is not analyzable.

Moore maintains that “good is actually present in the world quite independently of any awareness of it; that is, good is independently real” (Sylvester, 1990: 6). He discusses good as an idea or concept which cannot be identified with individual idea, rather it is real and an abstract entity. The concept good in Moore’s understanding is non-natural and unique concept (ibid: 7-8).

Defining good in terms of natural properties and considering these properties completely and totally the same with the concept good is a mistake. Moore explains that this kind of idea is

called “naturalistic fallacy”. Defining of good in terms of natural property is committing this kind of fallacy (Moore, 1903:10). Here, I do not want to say more about naturalistic fallacy because this will be discussed largely in chapter two. But I only want to mention defining good by other property is committing a mistake.

1.3 Open Question Argument

Moore explains that philosophers do not agree among themselves in defining the idea of good. Some philosophers maintained that ‘good’ is understood in terms of pleasure. There are also others who understand ‘good’ in terms of desire. In defining the concept good each of these philosophers argues that what some others say is wrong. For instance, someone may assert that good is desire and another may argue that good is pleasure. According to Moore, these two different ideas attempt to prove that the other is wrong. The first focuses on the idea that good is pleasure and not desire; and the second believes that good is desire, not pleasure. But, Moore raises a question, “How is that possible?” He raises this question for the reason that good cannot be defined in terms of pleasure or desire, since good is indefinable and simple concept (ibid: 11).

The idea that “when ‘A’ says Good means pleasant and ‘B’ says Good means desired, they may merely wish to assert that most people have used the word for what is pleasant and for what is desired respectively” (ibid :11-12). Yet in Moore’s contention, saying that good is pleasure or good is desire is absolutely meaningless (ibid: 12). In short for Moore, the concept of good cannot be defined in terms of pleasure and desire. Pleasure and desire cannot substitute the idea of good.

Andrew Altman elucidates that Moore’s “open question argument aimed to refute any proposed identification of good with some natural property, and Moore concluded that the argument that good must be a non-natural property”(Altman, 2004:395-96). So, open question argument is an argument that Moore uses for proving the indefinability and simplicity of the concept good, and for showing that it is not a natural object or property.

Moore starts by outlining the possibilities or options for what type of property goodness might stand, and he states that “if it is not the case that good denotes something simple and indefinable, only two alternatives are possible: either it is a complex, a given whole, about the correct analysis of which there could be disagreement; or else it means nothing at all, and there is no

such subject as Ethics” (Moore, 1903:15). If good cannot be indicated by something simple or indefinable, it either causes a disagreement in the analysis or it is meaningless. Understanding or defining good as a complex and definable object cannot be the subject matter of ethics because for Moore the subject matter of ethics is the notion of goodness i.e. simplicity and indefinability.

Moral philosophers have tried to define good without knowing its nature. The need to define the concept good arises mainly from the interest to clearly know its nature. In order to arrive at the conclusion that good denotes simple and indefinable property, two options should be carefully considered (ibid). These options are, “It might possibly denote a complex, as horse does; or it might have no meaning at all. Neither of these possibilities has, however, been clearly conceived and seriously maintained, as such, by those who presume to define good; and both may be dismissed by a simple appeal to facts” (ibid).

When we come to the first option Moore attempts to prove in the revised edition of the *Principia Ethica* that goodness is not complex as indicated by him “the hypothesis that disagreement about the meaning of good is disagreement with regard to the correct analysis of a given whole, may be most plainly seen to be incorrect by consideration of the fact that, whatever definition may be offered” (Moore, 1993:67). For instance, when we think that “A is good” we are thinking that A is one of the things we desire. However, Moore raises a question “is it good to desire to desire A”? or “is A good”? To answer this question Moore tries come up with idea that, “the predicate of this proposition—‘good’—is positively different from notion of ‘desiring to desire’ which enters into its subject: ‘that we should desire A is good’ is *not* merely equivalent to that A should be good is good” (ibid).

In this sense, the problem which occurs in connection to the definition of goodness is due to the disagreement upon the correct analysis of the concept good. Consequently, to show the concept good as simple, indefinable and non-natural; he raises the idea that, “A is good, is good defined in terms of desiring A”. This is the open question argument he raises and tries to prove the indefinability and simplicity of goodness. This is to say, it is not clear that the concept good is substituted by other property which is good itself. In this sense, analyzing the concept good by other property is really different from the concept that we use to represent. Therefore, Moore developed the argument that the term good cannot be identical with any complex or natural property.

Moore explained the second alternative in the following way.

And the same consideration is sufficient to dismiss the hypothesis that ‘good’ has no meaning whatsoever. It is very natural to make the mistake of supposing that what is universally true is of such a nature that its negation would be self-contradictory: the importance which has been assigned to analytic propositions in the history of philosophy shows how easy such a mistake is. And thus it is very easy to conclude that what seems to be a universal ethical principle is in fact an identical proposition; that, if, for example, whatever is called ‘good’ seems to be pleasant, the proposition ‘Pleasure is the good’ does not assert a connection between two different notions, but involves only one, that of pleasure, which is easily recognized as a distinct entity. But whoever will attentively consider with himself what is actually before his mind when he asks the question ‘is pleasure (or whatever it may be) after all good?’ can easily satisfy himself that he is not merely wondering whether pleasure is pleasant (ibid: 68).

In the second option Moore tries to explain that good has no meaning if we define it in terms of any natural property. He starts by explaining the mistake that some naturalists commit. Understanding the “universal ethical principle” which really refers to something that has its equivalent, yet this can make the contradiction in applying to the idea of good. In this sense, if we are defining good by identifying it with pleasure, it is meaningless. This is the mistake that Moore identified. For him, good cannot be defined by any natural property. The definition of good in terms of natural property cannot be the concern of ethics.

James M. Scott explains why and how Moore uses the open question argument. He tries to elaborate by giving some examples. For instance, ‘bachelor’ means ‘unmarried male’. By its definition bachelor is identical with unmarried male. When we say Abebe is a bachelor we mean that he is unmarried male. When we ask what is bachelor, some body may answer by saying that he is just unmarried male. In this sense, this question is not an open question or it is a ‘closed question’ because our answer to the question does not need additional explanation. To add another example, ‘triangle’ is defined as a figure that has three sides. This is also a closed question. On the other hand, when we say “Z is a fruit, but is Z sweet”? This question is an open question. The reason is that “sweetness is not necessary property of being a fruit”. In other words, sweet is not equivalent or identical with fruit (James, 2011: 144-145).

Following the above example, Moore states that when we say 'A' is good, is 'A' is what we desired? So, this is an open question argument 'A' is not necessarily what we desire. Nothing can equivalently be defined with good.

1.4 Intuitionism

One of the fundamental questions that Moore raises as the concern of ethics is, "how do we know that things are good in the world" (Sylvester, 1990: 35). As Sylvester states, Moore believes that through the acts of intuition we can know intrinsically good things in the world. For Moore, good can be known by direct awareness. For instance, "I tell someone that a particular thing I have experienced is good, and am asked why I believe the thing is good, my answer is that I have noticed that it is good as a matter of direct and immediate experience"(ibid: 36). So, according to Sylvester to clarify the above concept Moore states in the following way.

I say, "X is good."
Someone says, "Why do you say 'X is good'?"
I say, "Because I am aware of goodness in X."
My interrogator says, "What evidence do you have that X is good?"
I say, "I have no evidence other than X having the property I notice and call good. I cannot deduce X's goodness from some other facts true about X, or from some theory about X's being, or from anything else whatsoever except X's goodness being manifest to me (ibid).

Following this argument, Moore moves toward the idea that this kind of experience is actually revealed by intuition. Through intuition it is possible to know intrinsically good or valuable things.

We know the nature of good by the means of "direct cognitive awareness". Intuition is a direct cognitive experience or awareness towards something that exists (ibid: 37). "...we learn the meaning of the word 'good' by ostention; that is by experiencing things that are good in themselves. Such direct cognitive awareness however, conveys no information about what actions to be done..." (ibid). Here, intuition does not answer the question what actions ought to be done. In any event, Moore's clear argument is that questions of practical ethical concepts cannot be replied via intuition acts alone. Reasoning can never replace or substitute for intuition (ibid: 38).

As Sylvester states, if good can be known by the means of direct awareness, saying that “X is good” is a proposition which is evident or visible to the person making the claim (ibid:40) “Moore claims that the truth of a proposition asserting the goodness of a thing or event is self-evident-at least to the person asserting it” (ibid). So, saying that “X is good” does not depend on reason rather it is based on intuition. The goodness of the thing is only revealed for the person who affirms the thing as good based on immediate awareness.

As Sylvester mentioned, Moore uses analogy to explain his position. The analogy is the concept of yellow. To make this point clear Moore raises a question and discusses as the following.

One judges that X is yellow. Can it be proved that X is yellow? Are there reasons for asserting ‘X is yellow’? One can of course point to X, direct attention to its color, and compare it ostensively with a standard color chart. ... the evidence given in direct acquaintance of X’s being yellow for the claim that the proposition ‘X is yellow’ is true. Moore believes that the same argument pattern holds for good. One judges that X is good because the truth of the proposition ‘X is good’ is evident and is given in the proposition (ibid: 40-41).

Following this idea, Moore concludes to know that an event or an action is good depends on direct experience or acquaintance. In other words, an individual may judge this good on the basis of the direct grasp of the event or a thing. In this sense the thing which is good is just true for the individual, but it may not be for others. According to Moore, when we say “this is yellow” and the yellowness of the thing is true for the individual, the same is true for the term good.

In Moore’s explanation when a proposition is self-evident, it is not reason that elaborates why the thing is true. He believes that good can be known through the act of intuition. This intuition is not experience and also not reason. So, for Moore saying that something is good is only based on the direct grasp upon the thing. Therefore, good cannot be known or grasped by any other means except through the means of intuition (Moore, 1903: 143-144). Moore further explains in the following way.

...it is untrue, because it is untrue, and there is no other reason: but I *declare* it untrue, because its untruth is evident to me, and I hold that that is a sufficient reason for my assertion. We must not therefore look on Intuition, as if it were an alternative to reasoning. Nothing whatever can take the place of *reasons* for the truth of any proposition: intuition can only furnish a reason for *holding* any

proposition to be true: this however it must do when any proposition is self-evident, when, in fact, there are no reasons which prove its truth (ibid: 144).

Therefore, something is false because it is false, and there is no other reason. Because when Moore is saying something is false that falsity is true for him and he takes that is acceptable reason for his affirmation. In this sense, intuition has a great role for accepting the proposition as true.

1.5 Intrinsic Value

In the preface of Moore's book *Ethics*, which is edited by William H. Shaw explains about the concept of Moore's intrinsic value. As Shaw tries to explain, "to say that something is 'intrinsically good' means that its existence would be a good thing even if it existed quite alone, without any further accompaniments or effects" (Shaw, 2005:xviii). In this way for instance, to say that 'A' is intrinsically better than 'B' means 'A' can occur or exist without any additions or results. To distinguish that whether an object is intrinsically good or not, Moore uses the "method of absolute isolation". This method is used to determine an object whether it is intrinsically good or not and also determines to what degree is the object intrinsically good (ibid).

In his book of the revised edition of *Principia Ethica*, he puts the definition of intrinsic value as, "to say that a kind of value is 'intrinsic' means merely that a thing possesses it, and in what degree it possesses it, depends solely on the intrinsic nature of the thing in question" (Moore, 1993: 286). This means that, the difference in intrinsic value of the object from the other depends on the intrinsic nature of the entity. For instance, "if X and Y have different intrinsic natures, it follows that X cannot be quite strictly one and the same thing as Y; and hence if X and Y can have a different intrinsic value anywhere their intrinsic natures are different" (ibid). According to this view, if entities are different in their intrinsic nature, they can have different intrinsic values. So, the difference in intrinsic nature can be a reason for the difference in intrinsic value. In this sense, as Sylvester states, for Moore, the features of intrinsic goodness;

depend *only* on the intrinsic nature of what possess it ... and that, though this is so, it is yet not itself an intrinsic property. Intrinsic value is a property of the thing, but not an *intrinsic* property. The properties that are intrinsic to the thing are those Moore calls *natural* properties. Properties that depend upon the

intrinsic properties of the thing are called *non-natural* properties of the thing. Good, or value, depends solely on the intrinsic properties of things that are good. Thus good is intrinsic to that thing. Yet even though good is intrinsic to the thing that has it, and is a property of the thing that has it, it is not an intrinsic property (Sylvester, 1990:132).

The method that ‘absolute isolation’ is used to determine the question “what things have intrinsic value, and in what degrees”? (Moore, 1903: 187). To answer this question first of all it is essential to study what things have occurred by themselves in absolute isolation. In order to determine the existence of the things that are good, we should decide the degree of value of the objects by making the relative value of the things (ibid).

As John Hill explain Moore’s concept of absolute isolation in the following manner. The method of absolute isolation is:

The only method which could be safely used if one wanted to know what things had intrinsic value and in what degrees they had it. Each thing to be assessed in terms of intrinsic value had to be considered in absolute isolation, stripped of all its usual consequences and circumstances, and compared with other things similarly isolated. The way suggested of applying this method in the imagination was to consider the thing to be assessed as so it were existing in the last year of history. If, for example, the thing being assessed was someone’s life, one would be able to determine in this way whether it was really good in itself or only good as a means (Hill, 1976:62).

Accordingly, the method of absolute isolation is essential to determine things. It uses to determine the end from the means. The other use of this method as Hill mentioned is that, it protects confusion “between the value which belonged to a thing as such, and the value which belonged to it either because it was a part of some other thing or because some other thing was a part of it” (ibid). The reason that there are things that we accept as having a value in themselves, is that because when we isolate them by this method they become things of no value or less value. Their value may come from being a part of the whole, and this made him to believe that the method is useful to determine and to distinguish such kind of ambiguities (ibid).

Hill holds that the method of absolute isolation, for Moore is used not only for the purpose of setting apart the value of the end from the value of the means, but also for clarifying the concept of intrinsic value which belongs only to complex wholes. In other words, Moore observed that,

that there are things as good in themselves and has value simply as parts of a complex whole. However, when these parts which consist of value within the membership of the whole are considered as good in themselves it becomes a mistake for Moore. If the part is distinct from the whole, then it becomes a part with no value. That is why Moore uses the absolute isolation as a method to differentiate such kinds of issues and to say something is good in itself if it is isolated from the complex whole (ibid:63-64).

The relation of the whole and part in some sense is similar and in some other sense different to the relation of means to ends. That means the value of the means comes entirely from the production of the end. The same is true to the existence of the whole which depends on the existence of the part, and this part is affirmed to value the whole. So, the part may have its own intrinsic value, which is essential to that of the whole. But the relation between the part and the whole is not causal; it is rather a mutual dependence. So, the whole cannot be an end to any of its parts (ibid).

1.6 Cognitivism Vs. Non-Cognitivism

Before identifying Moore as a cognitivist, it is better to explain what cognitivism is. Moral philosophers have different perceptions and understanding about these two views. In determining moral issues and judgments, these two theories have their own interpretations. The cognitivists have their own understanding and interpretations which are direct opposite to those of the non-cognitivists.

Alex Miller states, cognitivists accept the view that “moral judgments express a belief. Beliefs can be true or false: they are truth-apt or apt to be assessed in terms of truth and falsity” (Miller, 2003: 3). Accordingly, cognitivist moral philosophers admit that moral judgments have the ability of being true or false. In this sense, cognitivism is the view that we can have moral knowledge, and our understanding of morality proposes moral truths that can be evaluated in terms of truth values. A cognitivist claims that moral issues can express ethical beliefs. For instance, the moral judgment “murder is wrong” is believing that the judgment “murder is wrong” is true. So, moral judgments or moral issues can express belief and this belief can be evaluated as true or false. Therefore, cognitivists believe in the truth value of moral judgments (ibid).

There are two kinds of cognitivism. These are strong and weak cognitivism. A strong cognitivist theory is one that holds that moral judgments “(a) are apt for evaluation in terms of truth and falsity, and (b) can be the upshot of cognitively accessing the facts which render them true”(ibid: 4). The advocates of this theory can be the ‘naturalist’ or ‘non- naturalist’. Here, the cognitivist naturalist moral philosophers reflect that moral judgment can be true or false by referring to the natural state of activities. Thus, referring to natural states of activities help us to access and evaluate moral judgments as true or false. Miller quoted Moore that the concept ‘nature’, is the subject matter of the ‘natural sciences’ and of ‘psychology’ (ibid). In this sense, the naturalist cognitivist considers that moral properties are equivalent to natural properties. Moral judgments can be weighed as true or false by referring to natural properties. Whereas non-naturalist cognitivist philosophers consider that moral properties are not equivalent to natural properties or cannot be evaluated the way natural properties are being evaluated (ibid: 5).

However, a weak cognitivist theory “is one which holds that moral judgments (a) are apt for evaluation in terms of truth and falsity, but (b) cannot be the upshot of cognitive access to moral properties and states of affairs” (ibid: 5-6). Weak cognitivism and strong cognitivism have similar outlook on the first principle, since both of them consider that moral judgments can be determined in terms of truth value. Yet, they disagree on the second principle. Strong cognitivism determine moral judgments based on the cognitive accessing result. But weak cognitivism determines moral judgments not based on cognitive reality (ibid). According to Miller, weak cognitivist theory which held that “judgments about morals *determine* the extensions of moral predicates, rather than being based up on some faculty which *tracks, detects* or *cognitively accesses* facts about the instantiation of moral properties” (ibid: 6). So, moral judgments can be true or false not based on the “upshot of cognitive access to moral states of affairs” (ibid).

The contrary concept to cognitivism is non-cognitivism. Unlike cognitivists, non-cognitivists consider that moral judgments cannot be evaluated as true or false. Moral judgments can only promote feeling and emotions. Consequently, moral judgments are not true or false rather they express liking and disliking of a moral agent towards an action (ibid: 3).

Non-cognitivist disagrees with the two types of cognitivism. When we say a cognitivist considers that moral judgments can express beliefs, we inspire some body to do something. For instance, if

someone judges that something is good, he/she is purported to pursue that good thing. Based on this, even if we accept moral judgments express belief, indirectly they express desire. But it does not mean that belief has a necessary connection to desire. However, non-cognitivists think that moral judgments cannot express beliefs. Different moral philosophers have different views of non-cognitive theory. For instance the emotivist Ayer explains moral judgments express emotion, or feelings of approval and disapproval of action. Blackburn also states that moral judgments express feeling of approval and disapproval. Therefore, a non-cognitivist accepts as a true that moral judgments can only express feeling, liking and disliking of a moral agent towards an action. It is a matter of approval and disapproval by leaving aside or denying moral judgments that express truth value (ibid: 6-7).

According to Miller, Moore is one of the contemporary moral philosophers who advanced the notion of strong cognitivism and non-naturalism (ibid: 5). According to him, moral judgments can be evaluated as true or false. Moral concepts or statements do not only express feeling or emotion but also help to understand “laws and principles”. So, cognitivists believe that, in moral judgments there is a possibility of acquiring knowledge and ethical understanding. Moore is a cognitivist non-naturalist. When we say he is a non-naturalist it means he decides and evaluates moral judgments on the basis of “non-natural properties”. The moral judgment that we evaluate is not equivalent with natural properties (ibid). Therefore, Moore argues for a type of non-naturalistic strong cognitivism. “Non-naturalistic strong cognitivism holds that the truth-conditions of moral sentences are determined by facts about the instantiation of non-natural properties” (ibid: 10). In this way, Moore refutes the understanding of naturalistic philosophers.

This is the idea that Moore developed in his book, *Principia Ethica*. I mentioned in the second title of this chapter that good is indefinable and unanalyzable because of its simplicity and non-natural quality. So, defining or deciding moral judgment in terms of natural qualities has no acceptance for Moore. This is a kind of mistake or fallacy that will be discussed largely in chapter two.

From the discussion made above, we can understand that, being a cognitivist is not being a naturalist. There are cognitivist moral philosophers who reject naturalism and advocates non-naturalistic principle. Being a non-cognitivist does not mean being a non-naturalist because there are non-naturalists who promote the idea of cognitivism.

To sum up, Moore's primary concern is to determine the subject matter of ethics. The first and chief concern of ethics should be studying the nature of good, before saying this action is good or that conduct is right. In other words, judging this is good, and that is bad cannot be the chief concern of ethics. He is not denying that moral judgments are the concern of ethics. But the chief concern or subject matter of ethics should be what is good, or what the nature of good is. For the question how can good be defined, is answered by saying that good is good, simple, indefinable, with no parts and non-natural. Because of its simplicity and non-naturalness good cannot be defined. Therefore, defining good in terms of natural quality is committing a mistake known as naturalistic fallacy. So, good is as simple as the term yellow. The only difference is that, yellow is natural whereas good is non-natural. For Moore, we cannot give clear information to those who do not know what the term yellow means. The same is true to the concept of good. Therefore, he concludes that good is indefinable, simple and non-natural.

To prove the indefinability and simplicity of goodness, Moore purports to use the open question argument. This argument is used as a method or evidence to prove the indefinability of goodness and there is nothing that can substitute the concept good. Considering good as a complex property is committing a mistake. Good is not reducible and it is not identical with any object. Moore said that some moral philosophers define good in terms of desire. For instance, if we say that "X is good", is X is something we desire? For Moore, this is the open question argument that X is not necessarily defined in terms of desire. So, the open question argument is a kind of argument which Moore used to invalidate the idea that good can be defined by natural property.

As Moore states, good can be known through the acts of intuition. Intuition is not reason or experience; rather it is direct or immediate awareness. He argues that intuition helps us to know the concept of good. Intuition is not logical that explains why something happens it is rather that makes us to know directly and immediately about the truth of goodness.

For the question, can we intrinsically know good things, Moore answers by using the method of absolute isolation. This method is used to differentiate intrinsically valuable things from non-valuable things. The method is very essential in differentiating what things have intrinsic value and what things do not have intrinsic value.

Finally, Moore is cognitivist and non-naturalist philosopher. He is a cognitivist for he advocates the idea that moral judgments can be evaluated as true or false. For him, moral concepts do not only express feeling or emotion but also help us to understand what things are wrong or right. In this way we can have moral knowledge. However, non-cognitivist perspective towards ethical concepts is different from that of cognitivist. They assume that moral judgments are only a matter of liking and disliking.

CHAPTER TWO

MOORE'S ARGUMENT AGAINST ETHICAL NATURALISM AND METAPHYSICAL ETHICS

2.1 Naturalistic Fallacy

Before I discuss Moore's argument against ethical naturalism and metaphysical ethics, it is better to see what naturalistic fallacy means and for what reason he uses it. As I mentioned in the second section of chapter one, defining good by any natural object is a mistake. Since good is a simple and non-natural, it cannot be defined by natural property. Attempting to define the concept good in terms of natural property is just committing a fallacy.

Moore argues, the mistake is formed that "many philosophers are defining good by different properties and these properties were simply not other, but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness and this view I propose to call the naturalistic fallacy" (Moore, 1903: 10). Naturalistic fallacy is the idea that some qualities necessarily go with the quality or feature of goodness (Prior, 1949: 1). As Arthur Prior states, for Moore, naturalistic fallacy "is the assumption that because some quality or combination of qualities invariably and necessarily accompanied the quality of goodness, or is invariably and necessarily accompanied by it, or both, this quality or combination of qualities is identical with goodness" (ibid). For instance, saying that whatever "pleasant is good" or whatever "good is pleasant" is committing of the naturalistic fallacy. So, good and pleasant does not have one and the same quality (ibid).

Moore's aim is to disclose that good is not equivalent with any natural quality. So, accepting good as equivalent to any property is a mistake that he calls the naturalistic fallacy (ibid: 3). But for Moore good is not definable in terms of natural property. Good is not only indefinable in terms of natural property but also indefinable in terms of metaphysical properties (Miller, 2003: 13). Not only naturalistic philosophers who commit the mentioned error in defining the concept of good but also metaphysical philosophers make similar mistake about the concept good (Bruening, 1971:144).

Naturalistic fallacy is an assumption which can be committed by anybody if they purport to provide any kind of definition for the concept good. For instance, when we say that good is equivalent with any natural property 'Y', and saying that 'X' is 'Y' mean that 'X' is good.

However, this is the open question that it is not possible to say that 'X' is identical to good but also 'Y' itself cannot be identical to good. In this sense, if any one tries to define good by whatever thing he/she is committing such kind of fallacy (Miller, 2003: 13-14).

Philosophers like Aristotle, Bentham, Mill, Spencer, etc. have committed naturalistic fallacy because of the denial of indefinability and simplicity of goodness. That's why Moore's *Principia Ethica* focuses on exposing the naturalistic fallacy committed by these philosophers (Baldwin, 1990: 69). Baldwin explains in what way naturalistic fallacy occurs.

Moore introduces the phrase in association with an analogy between yellowness and goodness, and says that just as it is a mistake to think that yellowness can be defined in terms of those physical properties which cause us to perceive things as yellow, it is a mistake to think that goodness can be defined in terms of those properties of a thing which make it good, a mistake which he proposes to call the 'naturalistic fallacy' (ibid: 69-70).

Moore argued that defining good is impossible like that of defining yellow. Since he believes yellow is a simple concept, it cannot be defined by any other concept such as red or blue. In other words "yellow is yellow". The same is true to the concept of good, which cannot be analyzed in terms of any other thing. The only thing one can say is "good is good". So, defining good by anything other than itself is committing the naturalistic fallacy (Tanner, 2006:1).

This idea suggests that a person commits this fallacy if he/she denies that good is indefinable and accordingly attempts to define it by different things which could not represent the concept of good. Metaphysical ethicist also commits naturalistic fallacy because of considering goodness as metaphysical property or something defined in terms transcendental reality (Baldwin, 1990: 70). In this connection, Moore assumes that:

The naturalistic fallacy always implies that when we think this is good, what we are thinking is that the thing in question bears a definite relation to some one other thing. But this one thing, by reference to which good is defined may be either what I may call a natural object—something of which the existence is admittedly an object of experience—or else it may be an object which is only inferred to exist in a supersensible real world (Moore, 1903 : 38- 39).

According to Baldwin, in Moore's explanation someone is committing the naturalistic fallacy if he/she has done one of the following key concepts. "(a) to deny goodness is indefinable; (b) to

assert, concerning something other than goodness is goodness; (c) to deny that goodness is non-natural” (Baldwin, 1990: 70). As a result, some body commits the fallacy if he/ she define good by natural or metaphysical property and accepts the definition as equivalent to that property (ibid: 172). But, good is indefinable, irreducible, simple and is non-natural and non-metaphysical object (ibid, 2006:191). However, “his account makes clear that the fallacy is more properly considered to be the fallacy of improper identification of identifying two objects which are distinct”(Gauthier, 1976: 315). This is to say defining things which cannot be defined by anything is just committing a mistake for Moore.

Based on this, he rejects ethical naturalism like hedonism; utilitarianism and egoism for the reason that they are defining the term good by pleasure. For Moore, defining good based on pleasure is committing naturalistic fallacy (Moore, 1903: 13).

2.2 Moore’s Rejection of Ethical Naturalism

According to Rachels, ethical naturalism is the notion that ethics is understood in terms of ‘natural science’. This means, moral properties like ‘goodness’, ‘rightness’ and others are equivalent with natural properties and these properties are scientifically explainable. Following this ethical naturalistic explanation it can be argued that moral beliefs are produced by a ‘causal process’ (Rachels, 2000: 2). Rachels quoted C. D. Broad, “if naturalism be true, ethics is not an autonomous science; it is a department or an application of one or more of the natural or historical sciences” (ibid). However, Moore is objecting ethical naturalism for the reason that ethical properties are explained in terms of natural properties, or ethical claims or statements are clearly about natural matters of fact (Sturgeon, 2003:528). As I tried to mention in the first section of chapter one ethics differs from other sciences by its autonomy. If we purport to explain moral properties in terms of natural properties, ethics loses its autonomy. Based on this reason he rejected naturalistic ethics since it is impossible to analyze ethical properties in terms of natural properties.

In Roger Hancock’s explanation both Moore and Hare defined ‘naturalism’ as the outlook in which ethical words are considered to be the same with non-ethical words. But for Moore, ethical concepts cannot be expressed through natural property or non-ethical concepts (Hancock, 1960: 327). Defining or stating the term good based on natural object is just switching ethics

with natural sciences. The replacement of ethics by natural science is a mistake that limits the subject matter of ethics to conduct (Moore, 1903: 40). Accordingly, he states the following:

Whether good be defined as yellow or green or blue, as loud or soft, as round or square, as sweet or bitter, as productive of life or productive of pleasure, as willed or desired or felt: whichever of these or of any other object in the world, good may be held to *mean*, the theory, which holds it to *mean* them, will be a naturalistic theory. I have called such theories naturalistic because all of these terms denote properties, simple or complex, of some simple or complex natural object; and, before I proceed to consider them, it will be well to define what is meant by nature and by natural objects. By nature, then, I do mean and have meant that which is the subject-matter of the natural sciences and also of psychology. It may be said to include all that has existed, does exist, or will exist in time (ibid: 40).

What Moore wants to say is that explaining good by something we observe, taste, or touch is defining it by natural property which is either simple or complex. But, these things are subject of natural sciences or psychology. Things which are explained in terms of natural objects exist in time and may cease to exist in view of this, defining good by natural object is not only impossible but also a mistake.

Moore raises a question “can we imagine good as existing *by itself* in time, and not merely as a property of some natural object?” For myself, I cannot so imagine it” (ibid: 41). By this he means good does not exist in time by itself as a natural object. Some individuals consider good exists as feeling in time. The naturalistic ethics asserts that the good which can be found in the property of things exists in time and hence can be defined by such properties. So, for him by no means good can be equal with feeling, or any other thing (ibid).

James Fieser states that evolutionary ethical theory is one of the naturalistic ethics which argues that “human social behavior is an extended development of biological evolution” (Fieser, 1993:271). Moore also opposes evolutionary ethics especially Herbert Spencer’s evolutionary theory. He disagrees to the following Spencer’s idea which is quoted by Fieser from Spencer’s book *The Data of Ethics*:

Guided by the truth that as the conduct with which Ethics deals is part of conduct at large, conduct at large must be generally understood before this part can be specially understood; and guided by the further truth that to understand

conduct at large we must understand the evolution of conduct; we have been led to see that Ethics has for its subject-matter, that form which universal conduct assumes during the last stages of its evolution. We have also concluded that these last stages in the evolution of conduct are these displayed by the highest type of being, when he is forced, by increase of numbers, to live more and more in presence of his fellows. And there has followed the corollary that conduct gains ethical sanction in proportion as the activities, becoming less and less militant and more and more industrial, are such as do not necessitate mutual injury or hindrance, but consist with, and are furthered by, cooperation and mutual aid (ibid: 271-72).

In Spencer's contention the complexity of the organism moves up wards from insect to humans, and the same is true to the complexity of human conduct. Human beings are the most complex organisms and also have the most complex conduct. Accordingly, "ethical conduct (1) has emerged only in the most developed life form, that is, human life, (2) is the most developed form of human social conduct, and (3) has emerged only in the most advanced human societies" (ibid: 272). So, Spencer tells us that to understand conduct we must understand the evolution of conduct. This is to say, for Spencer the basis of conduct is the evolution of conduct.

Moore is criticizing Spencer's idea on the basis of two grounds. First he argues that, Spencer is committing naturalistic fallacy in using terms like "more evolved" (natural term) as equivalent with "higher & better" (ethical terms). And secondly, Moore takes as a mistake the idea of Spencer that pleasure is the same with goodness (ibid: 271).

Moore opposes to Spencer for the idea that good behavior is taken as highly evolved behavior. For him, "more evolved" is different from being "higher or better". In Moore's understanding, Spencer is not aware while saying that they are the same. Moore's main claim is that in the evolutionary process some organisms are less evolved while others are more evolved. Similarly, some human conducts are ethically lower while others conduct is ethically higher or better (ibid: 273).

According to Fieser, in Spencer's expression an organism is higher means the more evolved organism. Likewise, saying some conduct is higher means a more evolved conduct. So, for Spencer, "conduct is higher if and only if that conduct is ethically significant (i.e. that conduct may be deemed either good or bad). By contrast, ethically superior conduct for him would mean

conduct which produces universal pleasure” (ibid). Since Spencer states, the term “higher” means only “more evolved” and it does not signify ethical superiority (ibid).

Moore criticizes Spencer for the identification of ‘good’ with ‘more evolved’. The evolution conduct tells us some conducts are more evolved than others. However, Spencer proved that “conduct gains ethical sanction” in proportion as it displays certain characteristics. In other words for Spencer the gaining of ethical sanction is identified with being more evolved. The phrase “conduct gains ethical sanction” means that conduct is recognized as good, or is ethically commendable (ibid: 273-274).

Moore opposes Spencer’s concept of evolutionary ethics as follows.

Spencer does not, after all, tell us clearly what he takes to be the relation of Pleasure and Evolution in ethical theory. Obviously he should mean that pleasure is the *only* intrinsically desirable thing; that other good things are good only in the sense that they are means to its existence. Nothing but this can properly be meant by asserting it to be *the* ultimate moral aim, or, as he subsequently says, *the* ultimately supreme end. And, if this were so, it would follow that the more evolved conduct was better than the less evolved, only because, and in proportion as, it gave more pleasure. But Spencer tells us that two conditions are, taken together, *sufficient* to prove the more evolved conduct better: (1) That it should tend to produce more life; (2) That life should be worth living or contain a balance of pleasure. And the point I wish to emphasize is that if these conditions are sufficient, then pleasure cannot be the sole good (Moore, 1903: 51-52).

Accordingly, Moore tries to refute Spencer’s idea that, the relation between evolution and pleasure and also pleasure cannot be the only good as believed by Spencer. Describing the term good by the term pleasure is just committing naturalistic fallacy (Ibid: 52). In Moore’s understanding, Spencer believes that pleasure is the only good to be used as a criterion or principle to consider the way of evolution, has a great contribution and a valuable role to the science of sociology (ibid: 54).

2.3 Moore’s Argument against Hedonism

Before I explain Moore’s idea against hedonism, it is better to see what the term hedonism means. Hedonism is “the ethical doctrine that pleasure is the highest good, and the production of pleasure is the criterion of right action” (Miller, 1984: 381).

Hedonism is one of the popular ethical positions, which focuses on the issue that “pleasure is the only good”. If the main concern of hedonism is this, for Moore this is a naturalistic ethics. He criticizes hedonism because it fails to distinguish the indefinability of good. Most of the hedonistic philosophers accept as true that pleasure is the only good except Henry Sidgwick, who believes that good is something unanalyzable (Moore, 1903: 59). In opposing hedonism, Moore is criticizing for the principle that “pleasure alone is good as an end or in itself” (ibid: 62). Moore further opposes hedonism for the idea that pleasure is the only good as means and as an end.

Hedonists believe that pleasure is the only good as an end, and other things like knowledge, virtue, and beauty are used as means for the sake of pleasure. These things do not exist for their own sake rather used as means. This idea was developed by philosophers like Aristippus, Epicurus, and later by Bentham, Mill and others. However, these philosophers have different perspectives and understandings of what hedonism is. The way one interprets hedonism differs from the others interpretation. But this does not mean that they have complete difference rather they have the same understanding towards the idea that pleasure is the only good (ibid: 63).

2.3.1 Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism as a principle focuses on the term ‘utility’ which means ‘usefulness’. Utilitarians understand that utilitarianism means “promoting the greatest balance of good over evil” (Miller, 1984: 393). So, “utilitarianism is the ethical doctrine that an action is right if and only if, it promotes the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people” (ibid: 394). Mill is one of the advocates of this idea.

Moore critically examines Mill’s concept of utilitarianism. He explains that Mill makes a mistake so long as he advocates the idea of hedonistic principle. This principle focuses on the idea that pleasure is the only good as an end and as a means. For Mill “Pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and again, at the end of his argument, to think of an object as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences) and to think of it as pleasant are one and the same thing” (ibid). Moore states:

Mill holds, then, that ‘happiness is desirable, and *the only thing desirable*, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end’. Happiness he

has already defined as 'pleasure, and the absence of pain'; he does not pretend that this is more than an arbitrary verbal definition; and, as *such*, I have not a word to say against it. His principle, then, is 'pleasure is the only thing desirable,' if I may be allowed, when I say 'pleasure', to include in that word (so far as necessary) absence of pain. And now what are his reasons for holding that principle to be true? He has already told us that 'Questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof. Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something *admitted to be good without proof*'. With this, I perfectly agree. ...Mill is using the words 'desirable' or 'desirable as an end' as absolutely and precisely equivalent to the words 'good as an end.' We are, then, now to hear, what reasons he advances for this doctrine that pleasure alone is good as an end (Moore, 1993: 117).

From this we can understand that Moore does not oppose to Mill's idea that pleasure or happiness, and also the absence of pain can be desirable. But, Moore is not convinced by Mill's idea that pleasure alone is good as an end and as means.

According to Moore, Mill believes that "questions about ends are questions about what things are desirable" (ibid). So, the utilitarian doctrine advocates the idea that happiness or pleasure is the only desirable end and other things are used only as means (ibid).

Moore explains the naturalistic fallacy that Mill has committed. In Moore's understanding Mill makes a mistake and he is not conscious of; "the fact is that desirable does not mean able to be desired as visible means able to be seen. The desirable means simply what *ought* to be desired or *deserves* to be desired; just as the detestable means not what can be but what ought to be detested" (Moore, 1903: 67). In this connection, Moore states that desirable can really "what is good to desire; but when this is understood, it is no longer plausible to say that our only test of *that*, is what is actually desired"(ibid).

In Moore's understanding the concept of hedonism is simply fallacious. The expression that good is something desired means that it is equivalent with desire. Yet this is unacceptable and entirely valueless idea (ibid).

As I tried to explain above, good means something desired. In this sense, Mill tells us that pleasure alone is good. If this is so, pleasure is the entity or object of all desire and it can be the common end of all human activity. Such kind of view is called "psychological hedonism". Accordingly, Moore assumes that people do not only desire pleasure but also they desire food,

drink, money, fame and others (ibid: 68). According to Moore, if our desire is not only pleasure then “what is meant by desire and the object of desire. If there is a necessary relation between desire and pleasure, the question is what sort of relation they have” (ibid). Moore does not deny that there is a universal relationship between desire and pleasure or he accepts that pleasure is the object of desire and also the idea that we desire something because we desire pleasure. However, he has not accepted the idea that pleasure alone is good (ibid: 69).

Moore tried to examine the psychological state of desire. This psychological notion of desire is limited to mind in which events and objects do not exist. Assume that for example Abebe desires Meta Beer. He has interest for drinking the mentioned beer but he has not drunk it. So, for Moore how does pleasure relate to this issue? The idea for drinking Meta beer can cause a feeling of pleasure. This means he desires that which he has not yet acquired. When Abebe desires beer, he desires not beer but rather he desires the pleasure which he expects to get from drinking beer. So, the idea of pleasure is not always essential to cause desire (ibid: 69-70).

From this, Moore comes to the point that the object of desire is not always and merely the idea of pleasure. The reason is that, “in the first place, plainly, we are not always conscious of expecting pleasure, when we desire a thing. And, in the second place, even when we do expect pleasure, it can certainly be very rarely pleasure *only* which we desire” (ibid: 70). In this connection when we say that Abebe desires drinking beer, he is expecting pleasure from drinking or having beer. But in Moore’s expression pleasure cannot be the only entities of Abebe’s desire. Drinking beer is not the only thing which brings pleasure; there may be other things which can bring pleasure. Accordingly, it is difficult to ascertain that pleasure alone is good. In this sense, pleasure is not something we want or desire to have, but it is something we already have or something we experience (ibid: 70-71).

Therefore, the idea that pleasure is the sole good, and the rejection of Moore is summed up as follows:

First of all, he takes ‘the desirable,’ which he uses as a synonym for ‘the good,’ to *mean* what *can* be desired. ... if, therefore, he says, we can find some one thing which is always and alone desired, that thing will necessarily be the only thing that is desirable, the only thing that is good as an end. In this argument the naturalistic fallacy is plainly involved. That fallacy, I explained, consists in the

contention that good *means* nothing but some simple or complex notion that can be defined in terms of natural qualities. In Mill's case, good is thus supposed to *mean* simply what is desired; and what is desired is something which can thus be defined in natural terms. Mill tells us that we ought to desire something (an ethical proposition), because we actually do desire it; but if his contention that 'I ought to desire' means nothing but 'I do desire' were true, then he is only entitled to say, 'We do desire so and so, because we do desire it'; and that is not an ethical proposition at all; it is a mere tautology (Moore, 1993:124-125).

According to Moore, Mill argues that there is quality of pleasure. If pleasure differs from another pleasure by quality, this means that pleasure is complex which is composed of something. " Mill, therefore, in thinking that to estimate quality of pleasure is quite consistent with his hedonistic principle that pleasure and absence of pain alone are desirable as ends has again committed the fallacy of confusing ends and means" (ibid:131). Moore assumes that there are different kinds of pleasure in which there are also different types of color like, yellow, red, green. Then, according to Moore if our end is to have color alone it is possible to have by having a particular color. This particular color is used as a means since our end is to have color regardless of its type (ibid).

Accordingly, if we bring this idea to Mill's concept of pleasure; if we consider that quality of pleasure as a main principle, then we cannot take pleasure as the only good and end. The example Moore gives about color applies to this Mill's idea. If we believe that color is good as an end, it is impossible to prefer one color to another color. Since our aim is to attain color, we must not contrast red with other colors because the other colors also have equal contribution to be used as means. Consequently, if color is the end, the types of colors are used as means and they have the same role. So, if color is our target to obtain as an end, none of the colors can be better than another as a means (ibid: 131-132).

Therefore, Moore attempts to generalize his argument against Mill's ethical concept by saying first the indefinable good is defined in terms of desire and this kind of explanation is a mistake i.e. naturalistic fallacy since desire is a natural property. And secondly Moore, opposes the idea that pleasure is the only good. Taking pleasure as the only desirable thing is unacceptable since it is not the only desirable thing. This is to say, there are also other desirable things.

2.3.2 Egoism

As Miller states, in the ancient Greek philosophy there are two examples of egoistic hedonism. These are ‘Cyrenaicism’ and ‘Epicureanism’. Both schools are the prominent figures of egoistic hedonism (Miller, 1984: 381). For this section, I only discuss about the first school i.e. Cyrenaicism.

According Miller, the founder of ‘Cyrenaicism’ school is Aristippus. Aristippus describes “we should act to maximize our own pleasurable sensations” (ibid). Associating of hedonism with the ‘lower pleasure’ is always a mistake. But, in Miller’s expression Cyrenaicism was most interested in the lower pleasure (ibid). “The point is to enjoy as much bodily pleasure as possible, and as immediately as possible: Double your pleasure, double your fun, and eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die” (ibid: 382). This school discloses that, we should act to make our own pleasure great and it tells us that everybody should pursue his/ her won pleasure. It does not care about the happiness and pleasure of others. But, Moore rejects the idea of egoism.

For Moore, egoism refers to the notion that every person pursues his/her own maximum happiness as the final end. Ethical egoism is a doctrine which aims at pursuing one’s own pleasure and happiness. Definitely it is the opposite of altruism. An individual is an egoist, if his/her actions are really focused on the way to advance his/her pleasure (Moore, 1903: 96). Accordingly, “egoism may be used to denote the theory that we should always aim at getting pleasure for ourselves, because that is the best *means* to the ultimate end, whether the ultimate end be our own greatest pleasure or not” (ibid). On the other hand, altruism aims to imply at other people’s happiness (ibid).

It is clear that the term egoism is more expressed in the idea that “my own good is the sole good”. An individual might be an egoist even if he/she does not advocate hedonism. It is not mandatory for one to be a hedonist in order to be an egoist. So, an egoist individual is one who promotes primarily his/her own interest (ibid: 97).

Moore raises a question as, what does it mean when one says “my own good, in what manner is something good for me”? (ibid: 98). And Moore states that:

When I talk of a thing as my own good all that I can mean is that something which will be exclusively mine, as my own pleasure is mine (whatever be the various senses of this relation denoted by possession), is also *good absolutely*; or rather that my possession of it is *good absolutely*. The *good* of it can in no possible sense be private or belong to me; any more than a thing can *exist* privately or *for* one person only. The only reason I can have for aiming at my own good, is that it is *good absolutely* that what I so call should belong to me—*good absolutely* that I should *have* something, which, if I have it, others cannot have. But if it is *good absolutely* that I should have it, then everyone else has as much reason for aiming at *my* having it, as I have myself. If, therefore, it is true of *any* single man's interest or happiness that it ought to be his sole ultimate end, this can only mean that *that* man's interest or happiness is *the sole good*, *the* Universal Good, and the only thing that anybody ought to aim at. What Egoism holds, therefore, is that *each* man's happiness is the sole good—that a number of different things are *each* of them the only good thing there is—an absolute contradiction! No more complete and thorough refutation of any theory could be desired (ibid: 99).

In Moore's expression we understand that there is confusion between the idea of "my own good" and that of the "sole good". If someone says "my own good" he/she means that he/she possesses something good which belongs to him/her. He/she has what others may not have. If this is so, egoism is the ethical principle which accepts that each man's happiness is the sole good. If each man's happiness is the sole good, for Moore there is a contradiction with the idea that happiness is the "only good" or "universal good".

In Hutchinson's expression, Moore opposes ethical egoism because it teaches that everybody is concerned with and focuses on his/her own good. Moore believes that this is not only "against philosophy, but also common sense" (Hutchinson, 2001: 112). In this sense, Moore understands, ethical egoism is not merely 'wrong' but also 'irrational'. While ethical egoists try to explain their view, they contradict each other and have no agreement with each other (ibid). Egoism is not simply 'irrational' but also 'self-contradictory' (Baldwin, 1990:124). Therefore, Moore said that the principle of egoism is self-contradictory because it creates "a confusion with regard to the meaning of the phrase my own good" (Moore, 1903:104).

As I mentioned above, ethical egoism as a principle focuses on the idea that, we must pursue our own interest and pleasure. As Piervencenzi states, for Moore this is a mistake. The reason is firstly, ethical egoists commit naturalistic fallacy for defining goodness in terms of pleasure and

secondly, ethical egoists confuse the universal concept of goodness, with something that is not universal (Piervenceni, 2007: 9).

2.4 Moore's Argument Versus Metaphysical Ethics

Metaphysical philosophers differ from naturalistic philosophers for considering non-natural objects. They believe that everything is explained by non-natural objects (Hutchinson, 2001: 113). Moore tried to examine the ethical notions of Stoics, Spinoza, and Kant. These philosophers have the same understanding to the view that, “they use some *metaphysical* proposition as a ground for inferring some fundamental proposition of Ethics. ...ethical truths follow logically from metaphysical truths—that Ethics should be based on *Metaphysics*” (Moore, 1993:161). In Moore's explanation these philosophers are define “Supreme Good” based on metaphysical terms (ibid). Such an assertion was made by:

Stoics when they asserted that a life in accordance with Nature was perfect. For they did not mean by ‘Nature,’ what I have so defined, but something supersensible which they inferred to exist, and which they held to be perfectly good. Such an assertion, again, is made by Spinoza when he tells us that we are more or less perfect, in proportion as we are more or less closely united with Absolute Substance by the ‘intellectual love’ of God. Such an assertion is made by Kant when he tells us that his ‘Kingdom of Ends’ is the ideal (ibid: 165).

According to Baldwin, Moore states that metaphysicians such as Plato believe that “value judgment does not concern to recognize natural objects which exist in time; instead they concern ideas which transcend space and time” (Baldwin, 2006: 293). Plato and other metaphysicians have been deal with this idea and tried to affirm concepts which do not exist in time and space. They refuse the natural world, since they believe that the real thing is found in the world of being or in the super sensible world. But, for Moore this idea is not convincing and also a mistake (ibid).

Plato is one of the advocator of metaphysical ethics. For him world divides in to two categories. The world of “Becoming” and the world of “Being”. According to Plato the world of “Being” is the ‘unchangeable’, ‘eternal’ and ‘perfect’ world, whereas the world of “Becoming” is the ‘changeable’ and ‘imperfect’ (Miller, 1984: 76). In this connection, for Plato ‘Good’ is found in

the world of 'Being' or in the transcendental world. So, good is found only in the eternal world not in this sensible world (ibid).

In this sense, Moore is not only opposing naturalistic notion of ethics but also metaphysical ethicists for the reason that metaphysicians accept as true that all facts are present in the supersensible world, which means beyond space and time (Baldwin, 2006: 293).

Metaphysical ethicists use metaphysical statements as basis for inferring or understanding important issues of ethics, which means that the basis of ethical facts is metaphysical truths. Accordingly, metaphysicians explain that the 'Supreme Good' is based on metaphysical terms (Moore, 1903:110). Moore uses the term metaphysical in opposition to the term natural. When we say something is metaphysical it is beyond the sensible world, on the contrary, when we say something is natural it is found in this sensible world (ibid). However, he states that Metaphysicians have:

the great merit of insisting that our knowledge is not confined to the things which we can touch and see and feel. They have always been much occupied, not only with that other class of natural objects which consists in mental facts, but also with the class of objects or properties of objects, which certainly do not exist in time, are not therefore parts of Nature, and which, in fact, do not *exist* at all. ... the most prominent members of this class are perhaps numbers. It is quite certain that two natural objects may exist; but it is equally certain that *two* itself does not exist and never can. Two and two *are* four. But that does not mean that either two or four exists (Ibid: 110-111).

What Moore wants to say is that metaphysics can be used as source of knowledge by focusing on things which cannot be touched and observed. This is the attempt to acquire knowledge of objects beyond this sensible world. For instance, he gives the example $2+2=4$. This two or four does not exist in time. This is one of the uses of metaphysics as a source of knowledge.

According to Moore good is a non-natural property, and he believed that metaphysicians are right for defining good as a non-natural property. But they made mistake for thinking that good exists. For instance when we say $2+2$ is four it does not mean that four exists and likewise good does not exist. It is clear that for Moore good is simple and indefinable object. So, no one mentions its existence and also its non-existence (Dreier, 2006: 196-197).

Moore objects metaphysical ethics for committing naturalistic fallacy. Metaphysicians state or identify good with metaphysical non-natural property. However, for Moore defining good based on this concept is unacceptable, and they are guilty of the naturalistic fallacy, because “they reduce statements of what is good to assertions about reality” (ibid: 198).

Metaphysicians assume that everything real is not found in this sensible world and believe that there are things which cannot be perceived or do not exist in time as source of knowledge. From this point, we can explain metaphysics not by “what it has” rather by what it attempts to address. So, it assumes that it gives us the knowledge of supersensible through the process of reasoning. Therefore, the truth or the reality of things is found beyond this sensible world (Moore, 1903:111-112).

Something of metaphysical nature cannot be accessible to sense perception or observation. It only refers to something supersensible. Based on this, metaphysicians attempt to prove the reality or truth of non-natural objects (ibid: 112).

The metaphysical ethicist explains the idea of good in metaphysical terms or supersensible reality. According to Moore, the metaphysical ethicist makes clear the idea that, “A Metaphysical Ethics is marked by the fact that it makes the assertion: That which would be perfectly good is something which exists, but is not natural; that which has some characteristic possessed by a supersensible reality” (ibid: 113). Therefore, the claim of metaphysical ethics that something is good cannot be found in this sensible world rather in the transcendental world.

But, Moore raises a question ‘what is real’? The question what is real has some ‘logical bearing’ upon the question what is good. The argument that ethics should be based on metaphysics, means that the supersensible reality is important for “what ought to exist” (ibid 113-114). So, the supersensible reality is the source of ethical activities, and this is the real thing of this sensible world.

The primary task of Moore is to show the idea of metaphysical ethics is mistake or false and he raises a question, “In what way can the nature of supersensible reality possibly have a bearing upon Ethics”? (Moore, 1993: 166). And he describe in the following manner.

I have distinguished two kinds of ethical questions, which are far too commonly confused with one another. Ethics, as commonly understood, has to answer both the question ‘What ought to be?’ and the question ‘What ought we to do?’ The second of these questions can only be answered by considering what effects our actions will have. A complete answer to it would give us that department of Ethics which may be called the doctrine of *means* or practical Ethics. And upon this department of ethical enquiry it is plain that the nature of a supersensible reality may have a bearing. If, for instance, Metaphysics could tell us not only that we are immortal, but also, in any degree, what effects our actions in this life will have upon our condition in a future one, such information would have an undoubted bearing upon the question what we ought to do. The Christian doctrine of heaven and hell are in this way highly relevant to practical Ethics. But it is worthy of notice that the most characteristic doctrines of Metaphysics are such as either have no such bearing upon practical Ethics or have a purely negative bearing—involving the conclusion that there is nothing which we ought to do at all (ibid).

Metaphysicians do not tell us about the future reality; rather they tell us about the eternal thing on which our activities or doings cannot bring any change. Such an idea may have importance to practical ethics but most of the metaphysical doctrines have no a relation to practical ethics (ibid).

Metaphysicians recognize that metaphysics is the essential component of philosophy for answering ethical questions such as “what is good in itself and what we ought to do”? Such questions can be answered by metaphysics. If so, metaphysicians are committing a fallacy i.e. naturalistic fallacy. For Moore, good is indefinable, non-natural property, and defining good based on metaphysical concept is a mistake (Moore, 1903:118). Moore again raises a question, “If we ask: What bearing can Metaphysics have upon the question, “what is good, the only possible answer is: obviously and absolutely none. We can only hope to enforce conviction that this answer is the only true one by answering the question: Why has it been supposed to have such a bearing”? (ibid). From this, we can say that metaphysical thinkers have failed to differentiate the main ethical question like “what is good” from some other questions. That is the reason why metaphysical philosophers get in to confusion; they take as true that metaphysics is the basis of ethics without critically differentiating the primary questions (ibid).

From a consideration of what it is to be real, we can infer that what is real must have certain supersensible properties: but to have those properties is identical

with being good—it is the very meaning of the word: it follows therefore that what has these properties is good: and from a consideration of what it is to be real, we can again infer what it is that has these properties. It is plain that, if such reasoning were correct, any answer which could be given to the question ‘What is good in itself?’ could be arrived at by a purely metaphysical discussion and by that alone. ...Metaphysical Ethics is to expose the chief errors which seem to have led metaphysicians to suppose that to be good *means* to possess some supersensible property (Moore, 1993:173-174).

From this view we can understand that in Moore’s explanation metaphysical ethics creates a mistake by taking the idea of metaphysicians that good is defined in terms of supersensible reality. They explain that having supersensible reality is equivalent to being good. However, this is unacceptable for Moore because good cannot be defined by any property which is either natural or non-natural. So, it is impossible to define good based on supersensible reality and it cannot be identical with this reality. As I have mentioned earlier, good cannot be defined by natural objects. Good can only be grasped or known by the act of intuition. The same is true, that an attempt to understand good based on the supersensible reality is a mistake. So, good is not defined in terms of either natural object or supersensible reality. Simply good is indefinable and only grasped by the means of intuition, not by any other property.

Moore generally accepts metaphysical issues that have supremacy over naturalistic system of thought. Metaphysicians perceive that the supreme good differs broadly from what exists in this world. However, if we accept this idea in this sense, “ethics should, far more emphatically, be *based on* fiction, metaphysicians will, I think, admit that a connection of this kind between Metaphysics and Ethics would by no means justify the importance which they attribute to the bearing of the one study on the other” (Moore, 1903:122).

Moore tried to come up with the point that, metaphysics is understood as the examination of supersensible reality which is found beyond this sensible world. If so, this concept have no reasonable relation or bearing to answer the fundamental question of ethics “what is good in itself”. Moore clearly defined the term good by saying that it is indefinable and simple thing. But, the indefinability of goodness is ignored by metaphysics. He said that, Metaphysics may have relation to ethics on the question “what ought we to do”? But it cannot tell us the effects whether those effects are good or bad. What he means is that metaphysical ethics cannot tell us that what is good in itself rather merely tell us about the results of future action. But, the basic

and primary question of ethics is not about what we ought to do rather about what is good. Based on this concept, since metaphysical ethics ignored the primary question of ethics and he concludes that they are using good for something supersensible thing (ibid: 139-140).

CHAPTER THREE

ARGUMENTS AGAINST MOORE'S MORAL CONCEPT

Moore's concept of moral philosophy is objected by different philosophers. His moral notion has its own strong and weak sides. In fact he has a great contribution to the development of modern moral philosophy. But, his notion of morality also has some weaknesses or limitations. In this sense, I prefer to select some of the main objections which are raised by some philosophers. In this chapter I will explain some of the objections which are given by Hartman, Tredwell, Frankena, and Altman and so on. The reason I raise these philosophers is, to explain in what sense they understand Moore's notion of morality and also to explain is their argument against Moore is plausible. In doing this, the objection which is given by these philosophers are not all plausible and nonsense.

However, in raising these philosophers it does not mean that Moore's notion of morality is meaningless and I am not totally discarding his moral concept. What I want explain is the limitation of his morality. So, while raising the limitation of Moore's moral notion I will borrow some of the moral limitations of Moore which is raised from the mentioned philosophers to support my argument and position. But, I am not arguing that his moral concept is totally unacceptable.

3.1 Objection against the Indefinability and Simplicity of Goodness

As mentioned in the second section of chapter one, Moore defines the notion of good as simple, non-natural and indefinable. This definition of good is objected by different philosophers. Some of them are like Hartman and Tredwell. These philosophers contended that Moore has made a mistake in thinking that good is indefinable.

3.1.1 Hartman's Objection

Moore defines the term good as indefinable. But, according to Hartman this definition of good, by Moore, is not clear and misunderstood. The definition is not clear because "it is not accessible to rational understanding" (Hartman, 1965: 235). In Hartman's expression Moore himself, "faltered in his intuition of the self-evident clarity of this notion. With this one exception, however, he steadfastly kept to the conviction expressed in *Principia Ethica*, that the notion of

good is so simple as to be incapable of proof” (ibid). So, if it is incapable of prove such kind of definition is unacceptable for Hartman.

Moore plainly recognizes that there is good. But Hartman states that Moore does not clearly understand what good means, and does not also differentiate its qualities and features. In others words, Moore does not tell us “How could it become distinct”. So, according to Hartman Moore cannot analytically tell us the simplicity and indefinability of the term good. Thus, it can be separate or distinct merely synthetically (ibid: 240). This would mean that, “its differentiation would result in a science such as mathematics and natural science-precisely the kind of science that for Moore is the prototype of the sciences of Ethics and Casuistry” (ibid). Therefore, for Hartman, Moore’s definition of good is based on synthesis, not analysis.

Hartman raises a question, “why did Moore think that his intuition that good is good was the end of the matter”? (ibid: 242). According to him, the argument of Moore regarding the indefinability of good depends on a mistaken view of definition. For Moore, the most essential definition is that which states “what are the parts which invariably compose a certain whole; and in this sense ‘good’ has no definition because it is simple and has no parts” (ibid). As an example for such definition Moore names a horse. It is possible to define a horse analytically by numbering its properties. However, a systematic science does not focus in such definition. The systematic science like physics or chemistry differs from other sciences like geography or history by its synthetic definition. Accordingly, Hartman states that, Moore’s mistake arises from his inclusion of ‘physiology’ as physics and chemistry (ibid: 243).

Defining that horses have a head, heart, four legs etc., are not “synthetic a priori” statements like that of chemistry and other sciences. In Hartman’s account, physiology is a “purely empirical science”. Therefore, “good as the fundamental term of the science of Ethics cannot possibly be an analytic term. It must be a synthetic term. Good, in other words, is not unanalyzable because it has no parts but because it is not analytic” (ibid).

3.1.2 Tredwell’s Objection

Moore explains that goodness is a non-natural, indefinable and known through intuition. If this is so, according to Tredwell opposing Moore’s idea becomes both easier and difficult. It is easier for the reason that he does not have any concern for the strength or truthfulness of his arguments

(Tredwell, 1962:793). He also explains that opposing Moore is difficult. Because, he said that “I confess quite frankly that, while I have only a little trouble in recognizing a valid argument when I see one, I have no ability to perceive this added property of goodness” (ibid). So, Tredwell criticizes Moore’s idea by saying that, “good is not non-natural; and it is not indefinable. On the positive side, I shall maintain that goodness is a number of relations sharing several formal features; that these formal features can be specified without much trouble” (ibid). In this sense, Tredwell understands the concept good in contrary to Moore. It is not a non-natural and also shares several formal features.

As Tredwell states, “Moore would certainly object that goodness is not a typical classification property any more than it is a typical natural property; for while goodness admits of degrees, properties like ‘cow’ do not” (ibid: 796). But Tredwell raises a question “does goodness admit degrees? Even in ordinary language we do not speak of one thing’s having more or less goodness than others” (ibid). Rather we are speaking about things by saying ‘better and worse’. In Tredwell’s expression when we use the adjective ‘good’ we mean that it is better than from the ordinary or common standard. For instance, saying a good teacher is one who teaches better than other teachers. However, “here the thing that admits degrees is not goodness but firmness” (ibid).

According to Tredwell, goodness is a ‘derived feature’ which depends on our interest to compare different objects; of which some objects are better than the other objects. In this regard, good is not an object which is similar or analogous to the term yellow rather it is similar feature to the term ‘large’. To make clear the similarity between goodness and largeness and how they differ from colors, he explains some examples. When we say that Jupiter is large planet we mean that larger than the other planets and saying that good bicycle means better than most bicycles (ibid).

Tredwell understands goodness in the following way. “Goodness, it seems to me, is a feature that an object has by virtue of three things: 1. Its membership in a class. 2. The class’s being ranked in terms of better and worse. 3. The object’s relatively high place in the ranking” (ibid: 797). He does not analyze all of these premises; rather he only focuses on number one that is “a thing’s goodness depends on its membership in a class” (ibid).

Tredwell concludes that unlike Moore good is definable. The question what is good can be answered for the idea that X is better than Y, Y is better than X or we can also say that X and Y

have similar or equal value in terms of natural objects. In this connection good is not non-natural and it is not indefinable. The understanding or perception of good does not also depend on the distinct type of intuition (ibid: 801-802).

3.2 Objection against Naturalistic Fallacy

As mentioned in the first section of chapter two, Moore explains defining good as equivalent to natural property is a mistake. Anybody who tries to define good by natural property is committing of a naturalistic fallacy. This concept of naturalistic fallacy objected by different philosophers. Some of them are like William Frankena and Hartman. These philosophers opposed that Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy is not a logical fallacy and plausible argument. I mention these philosophers as a critic to Moore's naturalistic fallacy, is to show how they understand the notion of naturalistic fallacy.

3.2.1 Frankena's Objection

The clarification of Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy and its mistake revealed by the work of William Frankena's article entitled, *The Naturalistic Fallacy*. Mean that most commentators try to understand Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy by the works of Frankena (Piervincenzi, 2007: 69). According to Piervincenzi most philosophers owe to Frankena and accept his idea "the naturalistic fallacy, if it is fallacy at all, is a definist fallacy i.e., the attempt to define an indefinable property" (ibid). This kind of idea is written in Frankena's idea. Frankena is one of those who gave a detailed analysis of Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy. One of Frankena's comments on Moore's idea is as follows.

Moore used the idea of naturalistic fallacy for opposing the naturalistic and metaphysical systems of ethics. Naturalistic fallacy is a fallacy which occurs by defining of good based on naturalistic and metaphysical theories of ethics. However, according to Frankena the concept of naturalistic fallacy which is used to refute naturalistic and metaphysical theories of ethics is not clear. Moore commits the fallacy without making argument and reasonable expression. Following this idea, Frankena argues that the "definist fallacy" is the appropriate name for Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy (Frankena, 1939: 465).

Thus, Frankena's point against Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy focuses on two main issues. First, Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy is not a logical fallacy. Second, Moore's naturalistic fallacy is "begs the question in being just what is at issue in the controversy between the intuitionists and their opponents" (Luebke, 1970:263).

According to Frankena, the deduction of ethical conclusions from non-ethical premises is not in any way a fallacy. He raises a question "is it a fallacy to deduce ethical conclusions from non-ethical premises"? (Frankena, 1939: 468). To clarify this question Frankena tries to elaborate in the following way.

Consider the Epicurean argument for hedonism which Mill so unwisely sought to embellish: pleasure is good, since it is sought by all men. Here an ethical conclusion is being derived from a non-ethical premise. And, indeed, the argument, taken strictly as it stands, is fallacious. But it is not fallacious because an ethical term occurs in the conclusion which does not occur in the premise. It is fallacious because any argument of the form "A is B, therefore A is C" is invalid, if taken strictly as it stands. For example, it is invalid to argue that Croesus is rich because he is wealthy. Such arguments are, however, not intended to be taken strictly as they stand. They are enthymemes and contain a suppressed premise. And, when this suppressed premise is made explicit, they are valid and involve no logical fallacy (ibid).

Here, naturalistic fallacy is not a fallacy. A fallacy is said to have been committed if there is illogical relationship between the conclusion and premises. According to Moore, defining the term 'good' in terms of any natural object is naturalistic fallacy. But for Frankena, identifying two different properties is making a mistake because two properties that are different cannot be identical. Moore believes that good cannot be defined by any property other than "what it is". But for Frankena Moore's fallacy is the "mistake of misidentifying two separate properties" (ibid).

According to Frankena the deduction of ethical statements from non-ethical statements is naturalistic fallacy. But naturalistic fallacy is not for him a logical fallacy. We can have the example of naturalistic fallacy and not a logical fallacy. The following syllogism is used by Frankena to show that naturalistic fallacy is not a logical fallacy.

- (a) Pleasure is sought by all men.
- (b) What is sought by all men is good, (by definition)
- (c) Therefore, pleasure is good (ibid: 468-69).

What Frankena wants to say based on this syllogism is that naturalistic fallacy is not a logical fallacy. For Frankena even if the premises are false the argument is valid. Based on this reason naturalistic fallacy is not a logical fallacy.

The other point of Frankena's argument is that naturalistic fallacy "begs the question". He names the naturalistic fallacy as one part of the "definist fallacy" (ibid: 470). According to Frankena, Moore explains, "when a man confuses two natural objects with one another, defining the one by the other ... then there is no reason to call the fallacy naturalistic (ibid). This idea of Moore is interesting but according to Frankena the concept of naturalistic fallacy misinforms readers about his book *Principia Ethica*. Moore uses the concept naturalistic fallacy for both naturalistic and metaphysical theories of ethics. But this is not clear because if the metaphysical ethicists commit a fallacy, it is better to say metaphysical fallacy instead of naturalistic fallacy (ibid).

If defining good by any object is a fallacy, it is better to call it "definist fallacy", not a naturalistic fallacy. Accordingly, in Frankena's expression, the concept of naturalistic fallacy does not prove or give any evidence about the indefinability of goodness in terms of "non-ethical" objects. They simply use the term "natural" as a naturalistic fallacy. Yet for Frankena this concept is the basis of their mistake and also it is not clear for what purpose he uses (ibid: 471). For Frankena, naturalistic fallacy is a fallacy, "not because it is naturalistic or confuses a non-natural quality with a natural one, but solely because it involves the definist fallacy" (ibid). Accordingly, Frankena states the definist fallacy in the following way.

The definist fallacy is the process of confusing or identifying two properties, of defining one property by another, or of substituting one property for another. Furthermore, the fallacy is always simply that two properties are being treated as one, and it is irrelevant, if it be the case, that one of them is natural or non-ethical and the other non-natural or ethical. One may commit the definist fallacy without infringing on the bifurcation of the ethical and the non-ethical, as when one identifies pleasantness and redness or rightness and goodness. But even when one infringes on that bifurcation in committing the definist fallacy, as when one identifies goodness and pleasantness or goodness and satisfaction,

then the mistake is still not that the bifurcation is being infringed on, but only that two properties are being treated as one. Hence, on the present interpretation, the definist fallacy does not, in any of its forms, has no essential connection with the bifurcation of the 'ought' and the 'is' (ibid).

According to Frankena, the definist fallacy reveals “the motto of *Principia Ethica* borrowed from Bishop Butler that as he quoted “everything is what it is, and not another thing” (ibid: 472). Following this idea, goodness is what it is and cannot be another thing. In this connection, identifying or analyzing of goodness with any other thing making of a mistake. This mistake occurs because of unclear identification of two different objects (ibid).

Definist fallacy is a mistake which occurs in defining the indefinable property or quality. But there is a question “which qualities are indefinable”? Saying that the quality of goodness is indefinable is begging the question in favor of intuitionism and in this sense the naturalists commit the fallacy of definist fallacy. But according to Frankena one must understand that the indefinability of goodness before arguing that the definist fallacy is a fallacy (ibid: 473).

As mentioned above, according to Frankena the naturalistic or definist fallacy is not a logical fallacy. The fallacy depends “on the error of confusing two characteristics ... but it is not really a logical confusion, since it does not actually involve being confused about the difference between a proposition and a definition” (ibid: 276). Frankena maintained that the concept of naturalistic fallacy is a mistake, because it is not really a fallacy and also its focus is merely natural objects. In other words the idea is an error in reasoning. According to Frankena, naturalistic fallacy is not a fallacy and it is not also a midway between Moore and his opponents to understand the debate. The reason Frankena gives is that, defining ethical concepts by any other object does not commit any logical fallacy (ibid).

3.2.2 Hartman's Objection

Not only Frankena who attacked Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy but also Hartman who argues that the argument Moore puts against naturalism is not clear and also hinders “scientific ethical knowledge” (Hartman, 1965: 241). The argument against naturalistic ethics is not only unique but also 'confused' or unclear, and hence it is not valid. In this sense “it already fails to satisfy the requirements of ethics as a scientific study” (ibid).

Hartman also elucidates that Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy confuses many moral philosophers. He is stating the following:

This fallacy, not only obstructs the vision of "almost all" ethicists to the true nature of Ethics, it also deludes them "into accepting ethical principles which are false". It makes their knowledge of Ethics not only obscure but erroneous, which means that they regard as clear what is obscure, thus closing their minds against all further inquiry. Moreover, since their obscurity is based on a logical fallacy, their error is a logical one; they regard, as true what is false. Thus there arise false ethics. Whereas when we are not so deluded we are at least not trapped into falsehood. Thus, it is better for good not to be defined than to be defined falsely. The indefinable nature of "good" serves Moore as a guard against error, and a guarantee for a more distinct knowledge in ethics (ibid: 242).

From this quotation we can understand that naturalistic fallacy as an idea misleads ethical philosophers. It makes them believe or accept things as true while it is false. So, for Hartman this idea is logically false. He further comments that the indefinable nature of good is used as the guard against mistake.

Therefore, both Hartman and Frankena consider that Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy is logically false, or there is no committed logical fallacy. Based on the account of these thinkers the concept of naturalistic fallacy does not refer to any argument or plausible concept. Both of them criticize the argument that Moore advance to attack naturalistic and metaphysical philosophers because it is not clear and reasonable why Moore rejects their idea.

3.3 Altman's Objection against Open-Question Argument

As mentioned in the third section of chapter one, Moore's open-question argument is used to show good as non-natural and indefinable. He refuses the identification of the term good with any property and concludes that good is the non-natural property that cannot be defined by natural object. For Moore good cannot only be defined by natural property but also it cannot be defined by supersensible reality. However, Moore's idea of the open-question argument is criticized by Andrew Altman in the following manner.

Altman first of all raises the question whether good is a self-predicate term? The term good cannot be clearly "predicated of itself", but can be "predicated" of any natural property. Hence,

according to Altman it is possible to ask the question “is natural property ‘P’ good”? This is always a clear and intelligible question. In other words, the question itself is meaningful, even if the answer is negative (Altman, 2004: 398). However, we cannot ask questions like “is being yellow good?” This is not a question which can be raised without any reference to any specific object, and the answer that should be given to this question is like: “in general, yellow is not good or bad, but in a particular painting or color scheme for a house; it may well be good or bad” (ibid). Therefore, the term good cannot be the predicate of itself rather it can be the predicate of natural property.

Following this idea, asking the question “is good good?” does not make any exact sense. This question does not have meaning. Its meaninglessness lies not in its redundancy (good is good) which would be like asking a question “is largeness large”? The exact response for the question “is largeness large?” would not be yes, because it is a tautology or redundancy and also lacks a precise meaning and the same is true for the idea that good is good (ibid).

The answer to the question “is largeness large”, is ‘no’ because largeness does not express the size of any object like large, small or medium. The term largeness is not the property of physical objects. This explanation leads to the question “is goodness good”? The answer to this question just like the above is ‘no’, because goodness is not good or bad. The term good can be the property of objects, actions, judgments such as pleasure, knowledge etc. What Altman says is that good itself is not an object rather it is the property or quality of objects. Accordingly, he concludes that the self-predication premise is mistaken (ibid: 404-405).

For criticizing Moore’s open-question argument Altman focuses on four issues. He uses these four points to reject the open-question argument advanced by Moore.

First Altman criticizes that the open-question argument is committing the fallacy of begging the question. Naturalistic philosophers classify some natural objects ‘P’ as equivalent to good. He argue that the open-question argument focuses on the idea that, “it’s always an open-question whether an object ‘O’ possessing any given natural property ‘P’ is good. So no natural property can be identical to good” (ibid: 402). For Altman, this idea is guilty of begging the question. The reason is, “the premise that, whatever ‘P’ is, it is always an open question whether ‘O’ is good is not argued for and does not seem to have support in considerations that are independent of the

conclusion ... that no natural property is identical to good” (ibid). What Altman wants to explain is that the premises and the conclusion of his argument do not have connection, and hence it is simply begging the question.

Secondly, Altman believes that Moore is committing the fallacy of hasty generalization. Altman again states:

Moore did indeed consider only a few examples of natural properties that might be proposed as candidates for being identical with good. But the measure of Moore's argument should not be the number of natural properties he considered. Rather, it should be whether the ones he considered were the leading candidates from the philosophical theories of his day. And the properties Moore examined were among the leading candidates: pleasure, being the object of desire, and being the object of a desire to desire. Perhaps there were other theories he should have considered. But it is insufficient to charge Moore with hasty generalization unless one specifies the leading candidates that Moore overlooked (ibid).

In this contention, Altman tries to come up with the conclusion that Moore is committing hasty generalization fallacy because he is focusing on the specific issues of natural properties.

The third criticism is about Moore’s failure to deal with the “paradox of analysis”. According to Altman, the paradox of analysis frequently makes philosophers to affirm that, “an adequate analysis can involve an analysans that is not obviously or transparently equivalent in meaning to the analysandum” (ibid: 403). And in this sense in Altman’s expression Moore’s argument actually depends on the doubtful and unclear premise. The adequate interpretation will be often clear and transparent. So, there must be a clear and transparent analysis. Here, even if good were equivalent with any property ‘P’ the deficiency of clearness in the identity relation may lead us to concern as open question whether the property possessed ‘P’ was good (ibid).

The fourth and last criticism about the open-question argument focuses on the idea of Moore’s failure to take account of the fact that predicates that are not identical in meaning can still refer to the same property”(ibid :402). Altman states:

The open question argument ignores the fact that predicates which do not have the same meaning can still refer to the same property. For example, it is claimed that ‘being water’ and ‘being H₂O’ refer to the same property although their

meaning is not the same. Moore's argument is said to ignore the possibility that 'good' could refer to the same property as some natural-property predicate, 'P', even if a lack of synonymy between 'good' and 'P' always made it an open question whether an object to which P applied was also good (ibid: 404).

What Altman wants to say is that Moore considers that defining the term 'P' by another thing is just identical to that thing. So, Moore is ignoring the similarity of predicates which can express the same property.

3.4 Critical Reflection

So far I have been discussing Moore's moral concept. I have tried to explain how his moral notion differs from that of his predecessors and why and how he rejects their moral notions. I also raised objections against Moore's moral theory. In this section, I will reflect my position by referring some of the objections explained before. Figuring out the weakness of Moore's moral concept does not mean that Moore has done nothing. He has a considerable contribution to the development of modern moral philosophy. Yet I will figure out some weaknesses of his moral concept from chapters I discussed above.

3.4.1 Problems in the Concept of Good

I will start with Moore's notion of good as unanalyzable, indefinable, non-natural and irreducible. To me, this is not clear and right definition of good. We use words for different purposes. The same is true to the word good. It is a symbol or a sign which refers to something. The word good symbolizes or is used to express values. All values are not good and also not bad either. In this regard values express the importance or usefulness of action. So, good can be defined in terms of values, which are desirable and useful. In our day to day activity we use the words good and bad. We use the word good for something which is useful, whereas we use the word bad for something which is undesirable, unnecessary or harmful.

Value is a complex concept which can be defined in different senses. For instance there are different values like, aesthetic value, economic value, religious value, moral and social value etc. The term good can be defined in terms of these values. Value is hierarchically structured. There are high values and also low values.

For instance, Baldwin states that when we say “good computer”, the term good indicates that computer has a nice quality as compared to others. But defining good as simple and non-natural property cannot be its characteristic. For Baldwin, it is not clear how Moore has understood the concept good. So, according to Baldwin Moore’s ethical notion is “fatally flawed” (Baldwin, 1990: 73). Since Baldwin believes that the term good can be defined in terms of different things, it is very difficult to understand Moore’s concept of good. Tredwell also agrees with this and holds that when we say a “good teacher” we are to mean a teacher who is better than those teachers who are bad. In this case, if value refers to usefulness or uselessness the term good can be defined by value. To show the definability of goodness it is possible to make an argument in the following way:

Premise 1: Good is definable, analyzable in terms of values.

Premise 2: Values are definable, analyzable through natural and non-natural properties.

Conclusion: Therefore, good is definable and analyzable through natural and non-natural properties.

As mentioned in the second section of chapter one, Moore answers for the question “what is good”? By saying that “good is good”. He also said that good is indefinable. Moore believes that this answer is true and correct. But in my understanding this answer is unclear. Moore’s answer commits the fallacy of begging the question. He repeatedly used the term good without of giving or defining it by any other thing. Since the term good is used in day to day activities, why it cannot be defined? For instance, if we ask “what is water” and if someone responds by saying “water is water” he/she is committing circular fallacy. We can say some other thing about the nature or the whatness of water. Analogously, we can also say something about the concept good instead of saying that “good is good”. In my opinion saying “good is good” cannot be an answer for the question “what is good”. That is why I said he is committing the circular fallacy. Begging the question or circular fallacy which occurs:

When an arguer uses some form of phraseology that tends to cancel the questionably true character of a key premise. If the reader or listener is deceived in to thinking that the key premise is true, he or she will accept the argument as sound, when in fact it may not be (Hurley, 1994:152).

If this is what circular fallacy means, then, in my understanding Moore is guilty of begging the question fallacy. Indeed different philosophers defined good in different ways depending on their

perspectives. But Moore's definition that "good is good" does not give any message about the concept of good. We ask about goodness in order to know what it is but the response does not help any to know and understand what goodness is. Although, Moore is criticize those who defined good in terms of natural property are guilty of naturalistic fallacy. He himself has committed the fallacy of begging the question.

In Moore there is some sort of self-contradiction. On the one hand, he says that good is indefinable, and on the other hand he says that good is simple, indefinable and non-natural. These may be considered as features or qualities of the term good. I think this is contradiction or confusion. In one sense he says good is indefinable and in another sense he lists the characteristics of good in terms of which it could be defined. If we explain the qualities or the features of one thing I think to a certain extent we define it. Based on the quality they possess we define things and this is also what Moore does.

Moore again maintains that good for some people is pleasure, and for some others is desire. But since pleasure and desire are natural properties, good cannot be defined in terms of these properties. It is true that there is relativity, in accepting and defining ethical issues. But, because of this relativity can we say that good is indefinable? I don't think so. Different philosophers may have different understanding or perception about moral concepts. Based on this, there may be difference and relativity among philosophers in explaining things. But such difference in moral concepts does not prevent people from defining things. The difference in people's understanding of something does not yield the indefinability of that thing. People may understand things as they feel and perceive. So, the fact that Moore said that good for some people is pleasure and for others desire cannot be the definition of good. We have different ideas of moral action. But this does not mean that moral issues are indefinable.

The other problem related to the concept good is that for Moore good does not have parts and cannot be defined. In this sense, does he mean that all the words that we use have parts? Or anything that cannot have parts is indefinable? We use words for different purposes regardless of its simplicity and complexity. The simplicity of the term good cannot be the case for it to be indefinable. It is better to say that Moore simply gives his own opinion. We define words or things based on tangible and intangible things. Therefore, when we say things are simple it does

not mean that they are indefinable. So, Moore's explanation about the concept of good is simply implausible.

3.4.2 Problems Related with Intuitionism

For Moore, the question how can we know 'good' can be answered by saying through the act of intuition. As he said intuition is not reason or feeling but a "direct awareness" which helps people to know good. According to Moore's explanation, we can know the nature of 'good' by the "direct cognitive awareness". But, I want to raise a question, what is this intuition or the immediate awareness? In what way the term intuition helps us to know the term good? The reason why I raise these questions is, to oppose his argument that the term good is only known through the act of intuition. This is I think, unclear and complex explanation.

If something is not accessible to rational understanding, experience and feeling how can we know things? Philosophers really have different answers for the question how to attain knowledge. According to Miller, there are two main theories about the basis of knowledge. These are rationalism and empiricism. As Miller states, throughout human history, philosophers answer the question what is the basis of knowledge.

On the one side, we have those philosophers who, in one way or another and in varying degrees, have emphasized *reason* as the source of knowledge. On the other side, we have those philosophers who, in one way or another and in varying degrees, have emphasized *experience* as the source of knowledge. The position stressing the role of the intellect or reason is called *rationalism*, and those holding to this position are called *rationalists*. The position stressing the role of sense experience is called *empiricism*, and those holding this view are called *empiricists* (Miller, 1984:185).

We can understand that rationalism as basis of knowledge focuses on the idea that reason is the source of knowledge. We acquire knowledge through reason not through sense experience. Empiricism on the contrary focuses on the idea that sense experience is the source of knowledge. In short, rationalist philosophers believe that knowledge can be acquired through reason, whereas empiricist philosophers believe that knowledge can be acquired through sense experience.

However, for Moore knowing good is neither possible through experience nor through reason but through intuition. If so, where can we find this intuition? Saying that we know the term good

through intuition is unclear explanation, since intuition is not accessible to rational thinking and also to sense experience. Based on this reason, Moore's explanation about intuition is not credible argument. In my understanding intuition cannot be the source of knowledge since it is not provable. In other words, Moore does not give us any reasonable explanation about intuition which helps us to know good. Intuition seems to me a magic, or abstract which cannot be realized. In this sense, I believe that we know things by the interplay of reason and experience rather than intuition.

In other words, intuition as way of acquiring knowledge is dogmatic. It does not depend on the "justified true belief". It does not help us in acquiring valid knowledge of things. For instance, as Bonjour states that when we say that, S to know some proposition P at some time t, the following three conditions must be satisfied:

1. S must believe or accept 'P' at t without any doubt.
2. P must be true.
3. S must have at t a reason or justification that guarantees that P is true

(Bonjour, 2009: 23).

Accordingly, this idea shows that knowledge is about a justified true belief. "(1) a belief or acceptance condition, (2) a truth condition, and (3) a reason or justification condition (so that accounts of this kind are often referred to as *justified true belief* accounts or definitions of knowledge" (ibid:24). In this sense, P is really true by the reason that the guarantee of S. knowledge involves that at least three conditions. I use the above example to explain intuition is something unclear.

From this point of view, Moore's concept of intuition is a kind of dogmatic concept. Intuition does not depend on the justified true belief. It is not reasonable. It is simply dogmatic which others cannot know. Based on this reason, saying that good can be known through the act of intuition is difficult to justify its truthfulness. If we cannot justify or give reason about something the thing is simply unclear for the reader or listener.

Hartman opposes the idea of Moore's intuition. The reason why I take Hartman's idea is, because his idea supports for my argument. According to Hartman, Moore in his book of

Principia Ethica states that “x is good” can be known by the act of intuition. But for Hartman such expression is:

Not relevant evidence whatever can be offered: from no other truth, except themselves alone, can it be inferred that they are either true or false. We can guard against error only by taking care, that, when we try to answer a question of this kind, we have before our minds that question only and not some other or others (Hartman, 1965: 245).

Intuition is inaccessible to proof. That is why Hartman said it is not essential evidence to know the term good (ibid: 246). For Moore, intuition is not ‘psychological’ and ‘epistemological’. The truth of intuition cannot be manifested or is not accessible to sense experience. Moore is ‘anxious’ to explain the truthfulness of proposition. For instance, Moore said that “saying that a proposition is self-evident, we mean emphatically that its appearing so to us, is not the reason why it is true: for we mean that it has absolutely no reason” (ibid). Hartman tries to conclude self-evident proposition is “incapable of proof” and lacks a “logical reason” (ibid).

The above idea of Hartman that opposes Moore’s concept of intuition is acceptable for me. As Hartman said, intuition lacks logical reason and is incapable of proof. Intuition does not give us useful and relative evidence. In this sense, intuition does not help us to know good.

According to Moore, good exists in the world independently of any awareness as a ‘real’ and ‘objective’. But, can we say that anything which is indefinable and only known in terms of intuition becomes objective, and real to everyone? For me I don’t think so. It is difficult to say that good is real and objective because, Moore does not give us any evidence in support of it. To say that something is real or objective there must be evidence about the truth or falsity of the thing. If we say that something is objective without evidence it just nothing. Good can be known based on intuition, but this intuition does not depend on reason or experience. In this sense, things that can be known through the act of intuition cannot be objective. How can the knowledge acquired through intuition be objective? I do not think so that any knowledge of this kind is objective.

3.4.3 Problems Related with Naturalistic Fallacy

According to Moore, defining good in terms of natural property and metaphysical ethics is committing naturalistic fallacy. Why Moore does use the phrase naturalistic fallacy for both of them? In what standard do two different things commit one kind of fallacy? Here, in my understanding Moore is making a mistake in thinking that both theories commit one and the same fallacy. Even if both theories commit a fallacy, the way of committing this fallacy is not one and the same. Metaphysical ethicists identify goodness with metaphysical or supersensible reality. In other words, they are non-natural. On the other hand, naturalistic ethicists define good in terms of natural property. In this sense, both theories are define or understand good from different angle. In my opinion Moore is committing a fallacy by naming the inappropriate fallacy for both metaphysical and naturalistic theories of ethics. They cannot commit the same fallacy even if they make a mistake. So, even if a metaphysical ethicist commits a fallacy it is better to say that they are committing metaphysical fallacy instead of committing naturalistic fallacy. In addition to this as mentioned above Frankena also said that if metaphysical ethicist commits a fallacy, we cannot say that naturalistic fallacy rather it is better to say metaphysical fallacy.

The other criticism I want raise is about the concept of naturalistic fallacy. I want to explain my idea on the basis Frankena's argument. Frankena criticizes Moore's notion of naturalistic fallacy. This is not appropriate name for his denial of naturalistic and metaphysical philosopher's moral concept. According to Frankena, defining good by any object is a mistake for Moore. But Frankena comments that instead of calling naturalistic fallacy it is better to call it "definist fallacy". As I tried to mention before, the definist fallacy is confusing of two properties, defining one property by another (Frankena, 1939: 471). This means, the definist fallacy occurs when we are tried to define things by another things which cannot substitute by the thing we define. The same is true to Moore's concept of naturalistic fallacy. It is created by confusing two different things. In Frankena's understanding this is not a naturalistic fallacy rather a definist fallacy. Accordingly, for Frankena naturalistic fallacy does not prove the indefinability of goodness. So, Frankena claims that naturalistic fallacy is not a logical fallacy. In this sense, it is possible to say that naturalistic fallacy is definist fallacy.

Moore criticizes naturalistic and metaphysical philosophers for committing naturalistic fallacy. Both are alleged to define the indefinable and simple concept of good. Some moral philosophers

are defining good without understanding its nature. They define it in different ways but for Moore this is not acceptable. Moore tried to show the indefinability of good based on the open-question argument.

However, the open-question argument is not plausible because it does not give evidence that establishes the indefinability of goodness. As explained in chapter one in the title of Open-question argument, and Moore said that, is it good to desire to desire A, is A is good? To desire A is good, is not identical to that, A should be good is good. In this sense, if good is defined in terms of desire it is a mistake since good is not identical with desire. But as Altman states such argument commits begging the question fallacy. I agree with Altman's idea that Moore is simply redundantly uses the word good and desire. This makes its message unclear. In my opinion, the open-question argument did not show the indefinability of goodness.

If we say that 'A' is fruit, but is 'A' sweet? This is really an open question. But we cannot conclude that 'A' is not sweet because 'A' might be sweet. But in Moore's expression the word fruit is not identical with the word sweet. The same is true for the concept of good that, if we say 'A' is good, and he raises a question is 'A' is what we desire to desire? In this sense, likewise the above example he concludes that good is not in any way identical with desire. So, he said that when we say that A is good, A should be good is good. But this idea is not clear and Moore's argument about the indefinability of goodness is not attractive and convincing.

As Moore said good is indefinable because nothing is really identical with Good. As Frankena said two properties cannot be identical. Here, does the definability of things depends only on the identity of identically of things. In my assumption, things are defined by another things based on their similarity or sameness. What Moore is saying is just something implausible. Does he mean that something without identical property is indefinable? In my understanding, different things are expressed or defined not always on the basis of identity but they can be defined by analogous things.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis we have examined and reflect Moore's notion of morality. Like any other philosophers, Moore has his own strong and weak sides. So, it is not fair to say that his moral philosophy is entirely invalid. It is not also fair to say that his idea is free from limitations or inconsistencies. Moore contributed to the development of contemporary moral philosophy. Specially, after the publication of his book, *Principia Ethica*, philosophical ethics made a remarkable progress and change. In this sense, it is possible to say that metaethics as a part of philosophical ethics is developed after Moore. So, it is possible to think that Moore contributed a lot to the development of metaethics.

To my mind Moore is right to say that before judging something as either "this" or "that" we must first discover the nature of the thing. This can help us to observe things. In review of this, Moore introduces the idea that the first and key concern of ethics should be examining the nature of good. He believes that most of the disagreements created in ethics are due to the inadequate study of the nature of the ethical issues. The subject matter of ethics should, therefore, be the inquiry into the nature of good.

As we have seen throughout the thesis, Moore gives much emphasis to the concept of good. For him, good is simple, indefinable, non-natural and unanalyzable. Because of its simplicity it cannot be defined by any property. Nothing is identical to or substitutes the word good. Good is simple just like yellow. We can know good, according to Moore through the act of intuition. This intuition is not either reason or experience rather an immediate awareness.

Following this, Moore rejects naturalistic and metaphysical theories of ethics. Since good is simple, defining and analyzing this on naturalistic and metaphysical ground is committing naturalistic fallacy. Both naturalistic and metaphysical theories fail to understand the simplicity and indefinability of goodness, and there is nothing that can substitute good.

Although Moore describes moral concept in the sense discussed above, he is also criticized by different philosophers. The main concepts of Moore such as the notion of good, intuition and naturalistic fallacy fall under the attack of different philosophers. Many of them oppose Moore's idea that good is simple and indefinable, since they believe that good can be defined in terms of different properties. For them, Moore's idea of good does not depend on reasonable and rational

understanding. For instance, Frankena rejects the idea of naturalistic fallacy for the reason that it does not commit a logical fallacy rather commits a fallacy of begging the question. For Frankena, a fallacy is committed when there is illogical relationship or link between the premise and the conclusion. Confusing good with any natural or metaphysical object, is not a naturalistic fallacy but it is a definist fallacy.

I argued in this thesis that Moore's notion of morality has limitations and inconsistencies. For instance, his idea of the indefinability of goodness is unclear. It is possible to define the term good in terms of value. Value is something desirable or useful. So, good can be defined and analyzed through different values and properties. He also said that "good is good" this idea commits circular fallacy. This and other limitations are occurring in his moral notion. However, I am not saying that Moore's notion of morality is totally invalid and unacceptable.

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