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| |  | | --- | | Claim: An action is morally correct if the amount of good that results from the action is greater than the amount of bad that results from the action.  Reason: When assessing the morality of an action, the results of the action are more important than the intent of the person or people performing the action.  Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim AND the reason on which that claim is based. | |

'Impact is more important than intent.' When making decisions, it is necessary to think about the possible impact of each choice. Morally, we may be led to an option which is not beneficial to the welfare of others, and that of ourselves. In my opinion, I mostly agree with the prompt's claim, albeit only to a certain extent. There is some room for nuance, and this must be explored in more detail. There are two main aspects of this issue to consider.

First, when an action is done, the intent does not always come across; the impact, however, always does. Intent deals with a person's internal feelings and reservations about a decision, and may be linked to several factors. It is possible that the intent is in the right place, and that the impact has not been taken into account at all. Take the example of elections: Citizens of democracies around the world take part in the collective decision-making process that is vital to the progress of their nations. If citizens vote for candidates who agree with them only on a few core morals, it may not be an ideal scenario for such a candidate to win, atleast from the citizens' point of view. Rather than voting on the basis of a candidate's intentions, it would be more rational of citizens to vote based on their potential societal impact. Candidates' good intentions are not always linked to their real impact, which is why such a decision requires thought and logic. The 'moral correctness' of voting for someone would, hence, be linked to their potential positive and negative impact, rather than intentions.

Second, it is vital to responsibly quantify the 'good' and 'bad' results of an action. The previous point dealt with the stated reason, but when it comes to the the claim itself, it is important to address how good and bad results are weighed. Take, for example, the country of El Salvador: After their 2020 presidential elections, the new president enacted several laws with the intention of restricting mafia activity and other nefarious organizations in the country. While this intent is good in itself, and the potential benefits of these laws is enormous, the enactment of these laws led to mass incarceration, and large-scale arrests of even people who were suspected of being associated with problematic groups. The real impact of this decision was a sharp increase in the number of prisoners, and the pain caused to their families. The president's morals related to these actions have been a matter of debate, but in my opinion, pushing people into the criminal system without enough proof simply exacerbates the country's problems. More rehabilitative approaches should be taken to approach the problem, in a manner that does not obscure possible societal impact.

In conclusion, I mostly agree with the claim and its stated reason. There may be scenarios where one may argue that one negative could outweigh an endless list of positives, but such arguments fail to adequately quantify or qualify the aspects of the issue; it is likely the case that the 'one' negative is, in fact, one that affects millions of families, and hence roughly amounts to millions of negatives. Thus, impact is a more important factor to be considered in decisions, as compared to intent.