

Capabilities and Human Rights

Names **Prof - Umar Farooq** umarfarooq5353@gamil.com

Designation University Of Central Punjab

Abstract - *A harmonious relationship between human rights and abilities is dependent on preserving a delicate balance, making sure that neither concept encroach on the territory of the other. This will allow for a healthy interaction between the two concepts. There are many different human rights that are seen as entitlements to various talents. In spite of this, the capabilities framework is inadequate when it comes to providing a comprehensive analysis of human rights in relation to important procedural freedoms. In addition, it is of the utmost importance that the procedure of public discourse serve as the foundation upon which human rights and capabilities are established and ultimately realised. The ethical principle of "objectivity" as conceived of by Rawls serves as the foundation for the procedure of public examination. In spite of this, the required lack of bias transcends the boundaries of any single nation. It is of the utmost importance that both sides make use of public thinking without any restrictions that are based on geographical boundaries.*

Keywords: *Human rights, Capabilities, Public reasoning, Freedom*

How to Cite

Prof - Umar Farooq. (2024). Capabilities and Human Rights. *Law Research Journal*, 2(1), 58–69. Retrieved from <https://lawresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/29>

INTRODUCTION

The moral application of human rights has been noted in a variety of circumstances, such as the resistance to practises like torture and arbitrary incarceration, as well as the advocacy for the cessation of medical malpractice and famine. One example of this is the opposition to practises like torture and arbitrary incarceration. There are just a few of countries, including China, South Africa, Egypt, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and the United States, where the topic of human rights conflicts has not been a prominent subject of discussion in current political discourse. These countries include China, South Africa, Egypt, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.

People frequently hold the view that the concept of human rights is intellectually feeble and does not possess a solid basis; in addition, they believe that it is inconsistent and lacks cogency. It is not uncommon to witness both a powerful physical attraction and a large degree of intellectual scepticism occurring at the same time. The French Declaration of the Rights of Man, which was written in 1789, established the notion that individuals have an inherent right to freedom upon birth and that all people are entitled to the same level of rights. This declaration was produced thirteen years after the American Declaration of Independence, which also asserted that all people had certain inalienable rights that had been given upon them by their Creator. The American Declaration of Independence was proclaimed in 1776. Jeremy Bentham did not spare any time in publishing his views in his book titled *Anarchical Fallacies*, which was released between the years 1791 and 1792. Bentham utterly and decisively discredits the notion of "natural rights" in this work, referring to it as "simple nonsense" as evidence that it is devoid of any meaningful content. He goes on to argue that the concept of "natural and imprescriptible rights" is nothing more than rhetorical babble, and he ultimately dismisses the whole idea as being incoherent and devoid of any substantial foundation. The page number 501 of Bentham's work, which was initially published in 1792 and then amended in 1843, is cited in this instance. Some people still hold the belief that human rights are nothing more than a collection of words written down on a piece of paper. This line of thinking is comparable to what Jeremy Bentham meant when he described human rights as "bawling upon paper."

Although there may be some fundamental parallels between the ideas of human rights and human capacities, it is essential to recognise that there are also a number of significant contrasts between the two. The investigation of the relationship that exists between human rights and capacities has the ability to deepen one's understanding of both of these ideas. This activity will be broken up into four different queries to be answered. To begin, it is essential to investigate whether or not it is appropriate to conceive of human rights as entitlements to a set of fundamental capabilities, and if this way of imagining human rights is acceptable, what would be the most effective way to realise this way of imagining human rights? In addition, is it possible for the capacity viewpoint to adequately address all issues that are associated with human rights? In addition, taking into consideration the importance of accuracy in the field of human rights, is it required to provide an explicit description of the full scope of capabilities in order to make efficient use of the capability viewpoint for the aim of explaining human rights? The definition of necessary capacities and human rights is a difficult work since it requires taking into account the significant range of values that may be found within different groups and countries. This results in a task that is fraught with

difficulty. Can the adoption of a universalist stance on these conceptions be judged feasible in a social setting that is distinguished by the cohabitation of cultural differences and pragmatic considerations? This context describes our society.

Possibilities as the basis for human rights

Some argue that human rights are the right to practise specific, limited freedoms, and that related obligations should focus on what others can do to protect and promote those freedoms. It appears that the two ideas, capabilities, and freedoms are related.

We ran across a problem right quickly. Before this, I've argued that freedom has numerous dimensions, and "opportunity" and "process" demand special attention.¹ While opportunities and capacities are simply identified, procedure is less obvious. Example: procedural leeway and substantive opportunity are independent but equally relevant variables. Assume Natasha wants to go out tonight. She is assumed to be safe when she goes out, to have carefully considered her option, and to go out to address a few items that are unrelated to the concerns at hand but could complicate the conversation.

Imagine that totalitarian social watchdogs told her she couldn't go outdoors because it was "very unseemly," or utilised other measures to keep her inside. Imagine that her authoritarian employers tell her she must leave ('You are expelled for the evening — simply comply') to show why this offence has two concerns. When contrasting "freely choosing to go out" with "being forced to go out," Natasha's freedom is clearly infringed even if she is pressured into doing what she would have done otherwise. Natasha's freedom of choice is violated in the second scenario because she is forced to do something she wouldn't have done.

Options and freedom of choice may be part of a realistic accounting of opportunities, which may affect the opportunity factor. Making her do something against her will rather than something chosen for her would be a more flagrant infringement of her right to an opportunity. Being "forced to go out" (when she would have gone out anyway, if free) contrasts with "being forced to polish others' shoes at home" (which is not her preferred way to spend time), showing that opportunity, not process, is the main difference. Natasha loses her independence in two ways due to incarceration. First, she is being compelled to act against her will (a violation of her process freedom), and second, she would not perform this action if she had a choice. Second, opportunities and processes can greatly impact human rights. Denying "due process" includes not just making

these possibilities real, but also denying medical care or the right to live without fear of violence, regardless of a fair trial. A fair trial before a judge has been denied.

The phrase "capability," which refers to a person's ability to do or be certain things, may assist explain the possibility side of freedom and human rights. Although opportunity is often used, it still needs a full explanation, and capability can help. When we think about opportunity in terms of capability, we can distinguish between (i) whether someone is actually capable of doing things they value and (ii) whether they have the resources, tools, or authorization to pursue those interests (although their actual capacity to do so may depend on a variety of contingent circumstances). The capability-based approach, based on the Rawlsian Difference Principle and other notions of justice, avoids overemphasising means like incomes and fundamental commodities. Even with comparable resources, two people may have quite different significant potential, according to the capacity method. Compared to a disabled individual, an able-bodied person with the same money and "primary goods" can accomplish more. Thus, it is impossible to determine if a disabled person has the same opportunities as a non-disabled person with the same means and resources.

The capacity viewpoint allows us to consider parametric variation in resource-outcome relationships. Individual differences in physical or mental characteristics (related to disability or illness); (2) differences in non-personal resources (such as public health care quality, societal cohesion, and community helpfulness); and (3) environmental diversities (such as climatic covariance) can all affect the ability to function even with the same personal means.

Calling these important choices, like the right to choose a lifestyle, "freedoms" has been criticised as stretching the definition of freedom. Example: In her insightful and sympathetic criticism of my essay "Development as Freedom," Susan Okin says I "overextend the concept of freedom" several times.⁵ The author argues that it is difficult to think of specific human functionings or the fulfilment of particular wants and goals, such as good health and sustenance, as freedoms without broadening the term to include everything of critical value to humans. Reference: (Okin, 2003, 292).

How far "freedom" should be defined is controversial. Though well-intentioned, Okin's reply ignores the incident's context. No evidence suggests that a healthy or well-nourished state (or any functional state) grants freedom or potential. In contrast, capability focuses the individual's discretionary control over specific combinations of functionings, such as proper nourishment. A person's abilities are a visual depiction of their many task options. This does not mean that eating healthy is a human right. This use of "freedom," in the sense of "capacity," refers to an individual's ability to choose specific functionings (such as a healthy diet) rather than their

actual choices. In protest of the Raj's policies, Mahatma Gandhi refused to eat well throughout India's independence war. He abstained from food. Despite these parallels in how well-nourished people function, Gandhi and a famine victim have very different personal freedom and opportunity.

Right to possess and actual possession are different. I believe a just system must consider potential and current riches. Six Including substantive rights in a rights theory makes sense. People's inability to escape extreme poverty causes many of the world's biggest injustices. Even though past poverty initiatives focused on inactivity and passivity, people have starved and suffered due to a lack of options. Marx persuaded us to "replace the domination of circumstances and chance over individuals by the domination of individuals over chance and circumstances" since poverty is associated with lack of liberty. Seven, additional human rights could emphasise freedom. Consider immigrants' ability to preserve their ancestors' traditions. Assessing this complex problem without distinguishing between prospective and actual action is difficult. A solid case can be made for an immigrant's right to continue her conventional lifestyle, but this does not imply support. This argument emphasises the individual's freedom of choice, including the right to practise ancestors' rituals. This is no reason to dismiss all other options and mindlessly follow her ancestors' customs. Making this distinction requires capability, which reflects opportunities.

Freedom as a process and information diversity

People have been talking about how the capabilities position can help a theory of justice or human rights so far. That being said, it's time to look at its limits. The idea of capability helps with the chance part of evaluating freedom, but it doesn't help with the process part because it only looks at individual advantages as a basis for capacities. Also, the evaluation of skills doesn't go far enough in looking at justice, fairness, and how easy it is for people to access fair processes.

A lot of different kinds of pictures can be used to show how two points of view are different from each other. Let me give you an example that is very controversial. It has been known for a long time that women tend to live longer than men do when they get the same amount of care. If only abilities, especially the ability to live longer, were taken into account, one could make the case for giving men more medical resources to make up for the loss that comes with being male. Still, if women were given less medical care than men for the same health problems, it would clearly go against a basic principle of procedural justice. In this case, one could say that focusing on process freedom equity might be more reasonable than just focusing on freedom related to chances, especially when it comes to making sure that everyone has the same abilities. When figuring out

what possibilities people really have, it's important to stress how important the capabilities viewpoint is, especially when compared to other views that focus on incomes, basic goods, or resources. On the other hand, the legal aspect of freedom is still very important when talking about human rights or justice. It's important to quickly admit that I was wrong when I said that the capabilities viewpoint could be used in any case within the theoretical framework of justice in this case.

To make a complete theory of moral social choice, especially when it comes to justice, it is important to think about both the fairness and effectiveness of the opportunities people have access to, as well as the fairness of the processes that lead to those opportunities. In contrast to Rawls's focus on "primary goods," the view of capability can be very helpful when evaluating secondary goods. Being competent is important, but it's not enough to explain everything that ethical social choice theory needs to explain about how things work.

Take a look at the different parts of Rawls's (1971) theory of justice.

RAWLS's "first principle" of justice stresses the value of freedom, while the first part of his "second principle" focuses on fair procedures by saying that everyone should be able to get into all positions and offices. If you only look at the informational foundation of capacities, you can't ignore or properly handle Rawls's concerns, which are at the heart of his first principle and the first part of his second principle.

Even though we don't agree with Rawls's way of dealing with these issues, they need to be brought up because they can't be solved within the limits of capability accounting.

Abilities to List

In the following discourse, I shall go into the contentious matter surrounding the concept of the capabilities list. The capability approach permits significant diversity in the deployment of applications. Martha Nussbaum has presented persuasive arguments concerning the benefits of developing a comprehensive "list of capabilities" with predefined prioritization. I am hesitant to engage in the pursuit of a definitive list of canonical items due to my inclination to resist any significant dilution of the domain of public reasoning, as well as my inability to grasp the methodology for selecting precise lists and assigning weights without a thorough understanding of the contextual factors that may vary. The utilization of the capacities framework enables the clarification and exploration of the topic of public reasoning, encompassing ethical, political, and epistemic aspects, including assertions of objective significance. I contend that it is inherently irrational to endeavor to replace the necessity of continuous public discourse.

Indeed, it can be contended that the capability perspective can be employed to underscore the importance of conducting a comprehensive and transparent assessment of the advantages and disadvantages associated with personal capabilities. This is because different functionings necessitate careful consideration and evaluation in relation to one another, alongside the potential benefits that can arise from the various combinations of functionings. The emphasis on the need for transparent examination in making social judgements is an aspect of the comprehensive capacity approach, which is closely aligned with the significance of public reasoning. The practice of transparent valuation, characterized by its openness, stands in stark contrast to the concealment of the evaluation process through the adoption of inflexible and opaque conventions. An example of such a convention is the treatment of market-assessed income as the definitive measure of individual advantage, thereby implicitly prioritizing institutionally determined market prices. The concern lies in the imposition of a singular, predetermined set of significant capacities, chosen by theorists without soliciting input from the general public or engaging in rational discourse. This compilation, which is exclusively based on theoretical foundations, limits the opportunity for substantial public engagement in determining the content and rationale for inclusion.

Throughout my analysis, I have extensively examined several compilations of talents that seem to warrant attention within frameworks of justice and, on a broader scale, in the realm of social assessment. These encompass several aspects such as the ability to engage in a nutritious diet, maintain good health, engage in travel, access education, and actively participate in public affairs, among other factors. Undoubtedly, from my first scholarly works employing the capabilities approach (e.g., the 1979 Tanner Lecture titled "Equality of What?" by Sen, 1980), my scholarly pursuits have aimed to evaluate the importance of diverse fundamental attributes in relation to a specific undertaking. The 1979 Tanner lecture explored the importance of "mobility" with other essential abilities, including "the capability to fulfill one's dietary requirements, the aptitude for being housed and protected, and the ability to engage in communal interactions." I explored the reasons why disability can be a central issue that may not be fully comprehensible while prioritizing income. In his seminal work "Commodities and Capabilities," Sen (1985a) underscored the importance of differentiating between stocks of capabilities and commodities. In my subsequent series of Tanner Lectures delivered at Cambridge University, entitled "The Standard of Living" (Hawthorn, 1987), I explored the importance of other sometimes disregarded attributes.

I am cautious about the notion of establishing a fixed and exhaustive list of capabilities that is assumed to be unalterable and impervious to public reasoning and the evolution of societal ideals.

As an advocate for theoretical perspectives, I acknowledge the importance of prioritizing our inherent liberties, specifically our potential, over material goods and commodities, in the development of a comprehensive framework for evaluation and assessment. Nevertheless, it is imperative to assert that irrespective of the population's acquisition and appreciation of knowledge, it is not feasible for theoretical concepts to indefinitely preserve a fixed set of abilities applicable to all societies. This perspective would entail a rejection of the extent of democracy's influence, as well as an inaccurate assessment of the efficacy of abstract theory in addressing the distinct social complexities that each society encounters.

Defensible discourse, cultural variety, and a global perspective

I will now proceed to discuss the ultimate inquiry. In a global context characterized by cultural and value divergence, the question arises as to how progress may be achieved. Specifically, if we consider the necessity of employing the public's capacity for reasoning in the process of assessing and categorizing capacities. In order to evaluate the feasibility of human rights assertions and the related capabilities, as well as the challenges they may encounter, what methodologies can be employed? What strategies can be employed to challenge or support this claim? It might be contended that, akin to the assessment of ethical assertions, a comprehensive and well-informed analysis is important. Consequently, it is necessary to rely on such an examination to choose whether to endorse or reject a given proposition. The ultimate criterion for assessing the soundness of these ethical arguments is in their capacity to withstand rigorous scrutiny through open discourse. The concept of human rights is intrinsically linked to the notion of "public reasoning" as articulated by John Rawls, and its significance in establishing "ethical objectivity."The numerical value of eleven.

The comprehension of the significance of public discourse in the advancement and safeguarding of human rights is of paramount importance. Based on this theoretical framework, the degree to which these ethical assertions, or their refutations, are widely accepted hinges on their capacity to endure and thrive in the context of transparent discourse and scrutiny, coupled with adequate availability of pertinent information. The validity of this argument would be significantly weakened if it could be proven that a human right is improbable to endure unregulated examination by the general public. Critical scrutiny is crucial for both dismissal and defense. The argument against the validity of human rights cannot be easily refuted by highlighting the lack of recognition and respect for these rights in politically and socially restrictive regimes where open public dialogue is not allowed.

When information becomes readily available and ethical debates are allowed to flourish instead of being suppressed, public discourse has the potential to reach a wide range of individuals. This is exemplified by the efficacy of practices such as "naming and shaming" and the monitoring of human rights abuses, which, at the very least, force the perpetrators to defend their actions.

Nonetheless, considering the indisputable global nature of human rights, it is imperative to refrain from constraining public discussions within the boundaries of a singular culture. This stands in contrast to Rawls's inclination, particularly evident in his later works, to limit public discourse to the confines of individual nations (or "peoples," as Rawls designates these geographical collectives) as a means of ascertaining justice, at least in relation to issues of national significance. Alternatively, it is possible to argue for the inclusion of perspectives that maintain a certain level of detachment in the discourse, particularly in matters pertaining to domestic justice. This approach serves to mitigate the risk of narrow-mindedness and facilitates a comprehensive examination of a broader spectrum of counterarguments. Adam Smith expounded upon the imperative nature of this phenomenon. In order to effectively assess our ideas and intents, it is necessary to adopt a detached perspective and observe them from a certain distance. Without this objective viewpoint, it becomes challenging to analyze and develop judgments about our own cognitive processes. In order to accomplish this objective, it is imperative that we exert ourselves to adopt an alternative vantage point, one that considers the perceptions of others or how they are apt to perceive the subject matter at hand. The numerical value of thirteen.

The ability of outsiders to offer accurate analysis of local circumstances is often called into question due to the perceived presence of "insurmountable" cultural barriers. Edmund Burke voiced a concern over the French statement of the "rights of man" and its universalist ideology, highlighting the contentious nature of the concept's acceptability across different cultures.

Burke posited that the foundation of liberties and constraints is not rooted in an abstract law, but rather, is contingent upon the prevailing temporal and circumstantial factors, hence allowing for limitless adaptations. Numerous other publications have effectively conveyed the argument that the purported universality underlying the concept of human rights is entirely unfounded.

Throughout history, there has been a prevailing conviction in the existence of insurmountable walls that separate the values of different civilizations. This perspective continues to be widely held in contemporary times. At times, individuals who oppose "Western values" have expressed their views, which can vary from those who defend local moral standards (as seen in the debate surrounding the perceived superiority of "Asian values" in the 1990s) to religious or cultural

separatists (regardless of whether they adhere to any form of fundamentalism). These opponents often assert an exceptional level of uniqueness and often claim superiority. On certain occasions, Western particularists have stressed their distinctiveness. An illustration of this can be found in the assertion made by Samuel Huntington (1996) that the presence of "a sense of individualism and a tradition of individual rights and liberties" is distinctively seen in "civilized societies," and that the "West had established its identity prior to its modernization."

According to the esteemed historian of ideas Gertrude Himmelfarb (1996, pp. 74-75), concepts such as "justice," "right," "reason," and "love of humanity" are primarily associated with Western values.

The author has previously addressed these diagnoses (see to Sen, 1999, as an illustrative example).

Contrary to prevalent cultural assumptions, the historical trajectories of diverse nations across the world have exhibited notable variations across time and among different subgroups within a same nation. In the twelfth century, the Jewish scholar Maimonides sought asylum in Egypt under the rule of Saladin, as part of his endeavor to protect his human right to uphold his religious views and engage in religious activities. This decision was made after he was forced to leave Europe due to the oppressive environment and the presence of Inquisitions. Maimonides' journey to Egypt involved passing through Fez and Palestine. The individual in question was bestowed with a prestigious position within the court of the Muslim ruler. In subsequent years, the European Inquisitions persisted, culminating in the execution of Giordano Bruno through immolation in Rome in the year 1600. The Moghal emperor of India, Akbar, engaged in deliberations and enacted legislation pertaining to the responsibility of the state in upholding the fundamental right to religious freedom for all individuals residing in Agra.

Autobiography titled "Long Walk to Freedom," Mandela (1994, p. 21) recounts his early exposure to the principles of democracy and individual rights. As a young kid, he acquired this knowledge from his observations of local gatherings convened at the regent's residence at Mqhekezweni. Notably, these meetings fostered an inclusive environment where all participants were afforded the opportunity to express their views. It exemplified the principles of democracy. Despite the existence of a hierarchical structure among the speakers, encompassing individuals such as chiefs and subjects, warriors and medicine men, merchants and farmers, as well as landowners and laborers, it is noteworthy that all perspectives were given due consideration and were not disregarded.

The tendency to overstate disparities in actual freedoms and rights across different civilizations is coupled with a common oversight of substantial transformations occurring inside each respective local culture, both in historical context and in the present moment. Often, opinions that are viewed as "foreign" are actually domestic issues voiced by non-mainstream organizations. The contention that Iranian dissidents should be perceived as "ambassadors of Western values" rather than just "Iranian dissidents" would only contribute to the exacerbation of the evident harm that may arise if, for example, an authoritarian regime incarcerates them based on their deviation from established norms. Cultural impartiality necessitates the acknowledgment and inclusion of individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Dissenting from the priorities of the dominant group, particularly in countries characterized by stringent information control and a discouragement of disputes and arguments.

Summary:

In a nutshell, there is a powerful synergy between human rights and capacities, but only on the condition that neither one is completely incorporated into the other. When viewed through the prism of capacity, a considerable number of human rights have the potential to realize significant advancements in their respective causes. The capabilities approach does not, unfortunately, make room for a comprehensive investigation of human rights in regard to fundamental procedural freedoms. In addition, the process of public thought is of critical significance in regard to both human rights and capacities. This is due to the fact that the lack of either human rights or capacities would result in a major loss in the intellectual substance of both spheres. The Rawlsian ethical theory of "objectivity" serves as the foundation for the approach of public inspection. In spite of this, the required lack of bias transcends the boundaries of any single nation. As a result, it is of the utmost importance to advance beyond the thoughts proposed by Rawls as well as the conclusions reached as a result of his application of the term "primary goods." Alternately, it is essential to make use of the more complex framework of abilities provided by the environment. It is quite clear that the fact that there is a need for an expansion does not lessen the obligation that we owe to John Rawls. If this particular person hadn't been so forward-thinking and adventurous in their research, our understanding of human rights and capacities would be far more limited than it is today.

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