

Deodological and utilitarian principles essay



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Poultry farming is one of the well-known industries in UK. This is underscored by the fact that, over 50, 000 people relies on poultry farming as a means of earning some form of income. Further, it is worthy noting that, UK farmers contribute significantly to all chicken sold in the European market given the fact that, the UK output of poultry in a single year for instance, in the 2004 was well above 1. 6 million tons.

This translates into sales revenues of about 247 million pounds. (Crane & Matten, 2004). In addition, poultry industry is an important employer in Britain and this has seen the industry produce one of the biggest employee and employer unions such as the British Poultry Council.

TASK 1 A revolution in the industrialisation and globalisation of our food system had led to chicken (poultry) being cheaper in our supermarkets today than twenty years ago.

Industrialisation had contributed to more efficient production methods which has seen the cost of production go down over the years, as a result of technological advancement as well as the machinalisation of production, chicken can today be produced faster than ever before. Scientific advancement as well as discovery in new production technologies has meant that, more chicken can be produced at a lesser cost and faster. This brings about a question of efficiency and effectiveness versus ethics.

The controversy surrounding poultry industry in Britain has a lot to do with poor management and the concentration of a few large-scale producers, which have made the industry seem like a monopolistic one, despite the fact that there are about 10, 000 farms in the UK. (Vardy & Grosch, 1999). Even

with such big number of poultry farms, about 1, 500 farms specialise in breeding broilers while only a paltry 15% control the industry. This clearly indicates that about 85% of UK breeding farms who own less than 25 animals are neglected in the supply chain and do not get involved in key decision-making issues affecting poultry farming.

Production methods as well as trade in chicken has therefore been left to few players in the industry who have the means to avail the much needed diet in the supermarkets. From a utilitarian perspective, there is nothing wrong with the production methods and trade in chicken and chicken products on behalf of the producers through the supermarkets because this ultimately contributes to overall utility for the British population (Bowie, & Patricia, 2005).

The actions of the producers and the traders are morally worthy considering the fact that, the outcome is availability of chicken (poultry) not only for the citizens of Britain, but also for the European economic zone. The outcome of the production methods and the trade chain has resulted into availability of chicken (poultry) in the supermarkets ready for consumption by the population, which depends on chicken (poultry) for proteins is an action or rather an outcome that is worthy praising.

Even with this suffering and purported pain of the chicken (poultry), the outcome is that, the pain and suffering of the chicken (poultry) ultimately results into the happiness of the citizenry. Hence, a justification for whichever methods the producers and traders use to avail the ‘ high demand’ chicken (poultry) in the ready market. Given the fact that pain and

pleasure are the common values amongst human beings, it therefore results that, any action that generates pleasure is permissible and should be tolerated (Vardy & Grosch, 1999).

From this perspective, it becomes evident that, no matter the methods that the producers and traders use in chicken (poultry) production and the eventual availing of the same in the market, all that matters is that their actions are geared towards a given outcome; that is, to achieve pleasure amongst chicken (poultry) consumers whose pleasure is to have chicken (poultry) on their menu and lack of chicken (poultry) on their menu therefore, would result into pain.

The means of production of chicken (poultry) is informed by the fact that, there is a need to achieve economies of scale in poultry farming and in the process, achieve cost-effectiveness so as to avail the much needed chicken (poultry) in the market. If this therefore takes production to utilise some given methods such as artificial rearing, then it is permissible because the production is aimed at achieving good for the greatest happiness of the Britain population, which is in this case, the greatest number of people compared to some consumer groups who represent minority interests.

Chicken (poultry) consumption results into physical pleasure achieved by eating chicken (poultry). This therefore implies that, there is a greater value in physical pleasure attained in the process as compared to the cultural pleasures that would be achieved by the same. In this case, physical pleasure is a higher pleasure since it is grounded on consequentialism and the happiness of the majority as opposed to harming others. Utilitarianism

holds that, whenever faced with a choice one is supposedly required to weigh the ultimate consequences of such actions so as to arrive at the right choice of what action leads to the most happiness.

In this case, it is evident that, producers and traders in chicken (poultry) in as much as one would want to look at them as representing their narrow interests, are on the contrary concerned about bringing happiness to the greatest number of people. Their actions in terms of production methods have numerous consequences but none is as important as achieving or balancing the delicate supply demand chain in a big market like the UK market or the European market for that matter.

From the above, it is evident that, the production methods, which have attracted so much criticism from consumer groups, are inevitable and cannot be done away with because it is through such production methods that, the producers are able to avail chicken (poultry) in the market hence generating the most happiness. This should be looked at as an internal or external process by the chicken (poultry) organisations, which have utilised technological resources to the capacity as a means of business process re-engineering.

Task 2 Consumer groups have in recent times been critical of every stage of the supply chain. The RSPCA considers “ suffering of broiler chickens as one of the most pressing animal welfare issues in the UK today”. Fifty percent of chickens entering the food chain are also known to carry campylobacter; a cause of food poisoning. Supermarkets have been criticized for using chicken

in marketing promotions such as “ buy one get one free” that cause farmers substantial loss of income.

Consumer groups are bring their case forward citing diminished returns owing to the fact that, their chicken are fetching lower prices than it was the case in the past decade despite the fact that, the cost of production especially for those farmer who rear chicken in small numbers is diminishing. Another argument being brought forward by the consumer groups is the seemingly domination of the chicken poultry industry by producers and traders which has meant that, farmers and consumers are not consulted in making of major decisions.

Lack of participation has negatively affected the farmers in that, their interests continue un-addressed. Consumers, in the advocacy for animals’ rights, have been purely concerned with their own happiness and there is evidence that, the consumer groups lack in the understanding of the important role the producers and traders play in this delicate balance in the supply chain process. They go in contravention with utilitarianism principle, which holds that, what is right is not the agent’s own happiness but rather the happiness of everyone involved in the supply chain.

Harmony comes into center play in this debate on chicken (poultry) production methods in UK. However, judging by the fact that human beings desire to be in unity with fellow human beings, it is correct to say that producers and traders have the interest of the rest of the players in the supply chain at heart and the fact that the consequences may not be

pleasurable to some of the players in the supply chain, is something that is of little concern.

The harm or bad caused by the methods currently in use by producers and traders in the chicken (poultry) industry are debatable. Going by the principle of consequences, there is little evidence to consider the actions of chicken (poultry) producers and traders as resulting to unhappiness to any of the players in the supply chain.

Even though farmers have been skeptical about some of the promotional marketing campaigns, there is little evidence to suggest that such methods such as the 'buy-one-get-one-free' is causing notable losses to farmers. Therefore, this leaves a lot of unanswered questions as to how the choice of producers and traders in chicken (poultry) has caused harm to farmers but the fact that the choice of the producers and traders has led to benefits for more people is clear for all to see.

The above can be summed up thus; the methods adapted by producers and traders in chicken (poultry) have benefited majority of the people in UK and Europe and therefore, the personal feelings or societal constraints resulting thereof are not a reason enough to warrant a ban to current production methods being practiced by producers and traders in chicken (poultry) industry in the UK according to utilitarianism.

Consumer groups have in the recent past increased their criticism of the production and trade in chicken (poultry) and chicken (poultry) products through to the supermarkets at the end of the supply chain mainly based on deodological principles. Of particular concern to the consumer groups has <https://assignbuster.com/deodological-utilitarian-principles-essay/>

been the fact that, they have been raising their reservations about what they feel as continuous exploitation by producers and traders in the chicken (poultry) industry.

Although there have been numerous brainstorming meetings between all players in the supply chain, the producers and traders including the relevant government ministry, has not been keen in keeping promise and following the law. All that consumer groups are asking for is for all players to adhere to rules and regulations of the industry as well as always following the law. Consumer groups are asking for all decisions in the industry to be based on individual obligations something which leads them to refute some marketing promotions such as the ' buy-one-get-one-free'.

The consumer groups are right in rising from the public to ask questions, which not many people have been willing to ask. This is seen as supererogation. The consumer groups are ready to suffer for the rest, and despite the fact that many view the arguments as lacking in logic they cannot be ignored. Consumer groups are interested in the progress of the chicken (poultry) industry, which they view as very much dependent on how different players play effectively their roles in the industry. Their motive is to call for actions that are less dependent on consequences but which are considerate of the process by adhering to moral rules and duties.

The consumer groups advocate for contractualism based on moral obligations in line with the very rules and policies that govern the chicken (poultry) industry in the UK. As a result of acting morally, consumer groups are interested in upholding positive social relationships for mutual benefit of

every player in the supply chain as opposed to a consequentialism approach, which provides room for gray areas in the process of achieving the outcome as the only concern for deontological based ethics is a perfect relationship that calls for accomplishment of goals through the best and the most upright approach.

From a deontological point of view, modern production methods of poultry which have been occasioned by globalisation and the rapid spread of modern production methods have lead to chickens to be produced more quickly in terms of the period taken to produce chicken using modern technologies. As a result, of the suffering that chicken undergo by being subjected to unnatural treatment in the hands of producers, consumer groups have openly expressed their disappointment and resentment at the seemingly unethical practices demonstrated by producers.

The reason why opposition is bound to arise whenever chicken (poultry) producers do only what is best practice in modern organisations by swiftly responding to market environment. Evidently, prohibiting chicken (poultry) selling may not help meet consumer groups' interests leave alone calling for drastic production in chicken (poultry) broiler confinement because modern business practices calls for careful balancing in the production process so as to arrive at an outcome that is desirable both for the producers and for the end users.

That the methods have been occasioned by a desire to satisfy the well being of all, is for sure. All that is required is for the producers to be aware of the consequences and as long as the consequences are in line with intended

plans, then greatest happiness principle is achieved and therefore, there is no cause for consumer groups to be wary. The actions of the chicken (poultry) producers and traders whether in the farms or in the supermarkets promotional campaigns cannot be termed as right because consumer right groups consider that to be against some perceived values.

According to deontological perspective, the actions of producers and traders in chicken (poultry) business are not right because the consequences for their actions have resulted into a state of more suffering for the animals.

Task 3 Conclusion. In this chicken (poultry) trade stand-off leads to the question as to whose interest chicken (poultry) business belongs to. The answer to the above is quite complex as there are different players in the industry and judging who is more important than who in the supply chain is a tricky issue.

Consequently, this leaves the decision of whose interest the actions of the chicken (poultry) producers and traders serve open but evidently, the majority interests have been well taken care of as a result of the chicken (poultry) producers and traders utilizing the methods that they do in chicken (poultry) business. That there are no alternatives or feasible alternatives to the current production methods adapted by producers and traders is for sure.

Therefore, this results to the justification of the producers and traders production methods because it is the only available alternative capable of meeting the demands in the market for chicken (poultry). The above discussion highlights key issues both from the utilitarian standpoint and the

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deodological standpoint. The strongest argument comes from the utilitarian principal, as the complex supply chain in the chicken (poultry) industry is far much complicated to be strictly governed by moral concerns.

The fact that in business external forces and internal forces always emerge to dictate the shape the industry takes justifies the utilitarianism approach, which is concerned about the outcomes or consequences and are less concerned with the means. Therefore, utilitarianism presents stronger argument considering the fact that chicken (poultry) industry is a key sector in the UK, which must be left to market forces to play the regulatory aspects.

For deodological purposes, their interests of the majority are overlooked and the fact that they leave little room for market forces to take effect is a clear indication that, if the deodological standpoint is to be allowed to take the lead in the current issue facing the chicken (poultry) industry, this would spell doom for an industry that supports thousands of Britons directly and millions of others indirectly.