

Utilitarianism essay examples

[Environment](#), [Pollution](#)



According to dictionary. com Utilitarianism is the ethical doctrine that virtue is utility, and that conduct should be directed towards promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. What can easily be inferred from the above definition is that interests of the society should always be held more important than the interests of few individuals and the concept can be further extended to countries and continents. It is this theory that would be used as the base to put across all the points in this paper.

Countries across the globe have become more sensitive towards environment than they were about 10 years back and many factors have contributed to this almost sudden change in the attitude. One of the many reasons of concern has been the increased ‘ Purchasing Power Capacity’ of people in developing countries like India and China and sudden increase in these Countries’ industrial potentials to sustain their High GDP growth. USA as usual has played a pivotal role in various forums at international levels and has brought in sanctions to curb the menace of pollution.

Even at national level in US, various suggestions have been put across by various agencies, governmental and non-governmental, and numerous environmentalists and conservationists to decrease the pollution level in a country which has undisputedly been the top contributor to world pollution levels. One of the various proposed suggestion cum solution has been to limit the use of cars by increasing fuel prices. Thought at the outset this solution might seem practical but it very well negates what Utilitarianism stands for. What this suggestion, if implemented, will do is that it would take a toll on incomes of people from middle income group and would make it a distant dream for a person from lower income group to ever own a private

vehicle while the people from high income group would remain largely unaffected and would hardly find it a reason enough to shun their private luxuries. This would deepen the disparities in the society and would certainly never help us realize ‘ Happiness For All’, the very soul of Utilitarianism.

Instead, more stress should be laid on educating people against wastage of fuels, public transportation should be made more efficient and comfortable to make it a preferable option for people of all sections of society. There are inherent injustices in this process of making fuel costlier to refrain people from using personal cars as this would only effect a certain section of society.

One more suggestion that has often come to light is to prevent companies from manufacturing cars that guzzle and gulp fuel (gas or diesel) and consume it manifolds than a vehicles from better mileage category does. The cars included in this very category are the lavish and flamboyant SUVs and MUVs (e. g. Hummer) and most of the companies manufacturing are mostly partially owned and encouraged by the government since they contribute a large deal pressure from government itself), would help in curbing pollution, saving fuel for future generations and hence saving our environment. Vehicles with better mileage and better and efficient fuel consumption abilities should be promoted and could even be subsidized by the government.

On one end this would have a positive effect on our environment and on the other would help more and more people realize their dreams of owning a personal vehicle and thus promoting general happiness, which forms the

backbone of Utilitarianism. Though many might term this step unethical and economically unfeasible, but a step proposed or exercised to ensure satisfaction or gratification of maximum number of people is intrinsically ethical and should be weighed over few million dollars.

‘ Zero Draft’ has been at the center stage for various Earth Summits for half the decade now and same was the case when world leaders gathered at Rio De Janerio, Brazil from 20-22 June, 2012.

The proposal was hotly debated and discussed. As per uncsd2012.org, one of the resolutions taken by member countries at the Rio+20 Summit read, ‘ We urge bold and decisive action on the objective and themes for the conference. We renew our commitment to sustainable development and express our determination to pursue the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. We further affirm our resolve to strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development. Taken together our actions should fill the implementation gaps and achieve greater integration among the three pillars of sustainable development? the economic, the social and the environmental.’

Zero draft has been a reason of friction between west and major developing countries of the world like India, China and Brazil. Chauhan states, It talks about national accounting norms, specific deadlines to meet the proposed Social Development Goals, specialized environmental body status to United Nations Environment Programme and green economy norms. Developing world claims that these norms would prove major hindrances in continuing with the magnificent growth rates that they have been achieving over years

and which has helped them lift billions from the slumber of poverty. These countries expect western and wealthy countries to implement these norms first and reduce their more than acceptable consumption of resources which they term unsustainable. Utilitarianism wants Happiness of masses to be given paramount importance and in this case that could possibly only be achieved if these norms and sanctions are not forced on the developing world since they could prove murderous for their newly found prosperity. Developed countries like US, UK should take the onus of ensuring sustainable growth, reduction in wastage and pollution in their home countries, since developed countries have been the highest contributors to these alarming rates of environment degradation.

On the other hand, developing countries should do whatever they can in their capacity by slowly adopting green economy growth and by educating their masses about the concept of sustainability. Thus, US should let developing countries use cheaper technologies like fluorocarbons, coal etc. since these are what helped US achieve the status of a ' Superpower' that it brags about today.

Works Cited

Uncsd2012. org, <http://www.uncsd2012.org/mgzerodraft.html#l>

Dictionary. com, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/utilitarianism>

Chauhan Chetan, [http://blogs.hindustantimes.](http://blogs.hindustantimes.com/ecostani/2012/06/09/earth-summit-india-piggy-bags-china/)

[com/ecostani/2012/06/09/earth-summit-india-piggy-bags-china/](http://blogs.hindustantimes.com/ecostani/2012/06/09/earth-summit-india-piggy-bags-china/)