

Example of the ethical issues in the building of the three gorges dam research pa...

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Three Gorges Dam built on the Yangtze River in China, is the world's largest hydroelectric dam. This is based on its power generating capacity and the floor it covers. It is 1.3 miles wide and 600 feet high with a reservoir stretch of 405 square miles. The building of this dam has been controversial given the consequences it has had to the immediate society where it is located and the benefits it has accrued to the nation. It is a professional expectation that all aspects of engineering must be aimed at the protection of the public in health, safety and welfare. The proceeds of professional ethics have to be adhered to before a project is put up. There has been debate on the ethical viability of the Three Gorges Dam given the impacts it has had on the people of China. It has not been justified or concluded that the building of the Three Gorges Dam is justifiable ethically, therefore, an evaluation of its significance is of importance in every debate.

It has been highlighted by the representatives of the project that flood control is the fundamental reason for building the dam. An estimated 1 million people have lost their lives as a result of Yangtze River's floods. The controversy in this claim has been debated by humanitarian organizations on its achievements. Contrary to the purpose of its construction, the dam has flooded 13 cities, 140 towns and 1352 villages. The ethical viability of this dam becomes questionable by its effects on the areas discussed above.

Moreover, it has flooded 100,000 acres of the most fertile lands in China. The productivity and economic viability of this land has been put to waste. Studies have argued that it is illogical to save one part of something and in the process destroy other parts. It is undoubtedly true that the dam has solved the cases of flooding that frequented the areas, but its effect through

its 400 mile long reservoir has destroyed a good deal of natural resources.

Professional ethics dictate that the effects a project has on the environment are fundamental factors of consideration.

Additionally, the financing of the project which covers a range of nationalities who invested on the project raises the question of their observance to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is a professional requirement that all international endurances be observant of the humanitarian and ethical concerns of each individual. It is moreover evident through The United States Export-Bank and the World Bank's refused to fund the project that it was unethical and a threat to humanity. Contrary to this, investors proceeded with the funding of the project. This shows a huge oversight on their side on the consequences of the project and humanitarian concerns. Additionally, to give way for the project, 500, 000 citizens were displaced from their homes. The relocation of these citizens has not been done to completion up to now.

The project deprived citizens not only their homes, but also their jobs. A significant fraction of those displaced were peasant farmers who depended on small scale farming for a way of life. The government failed to take account of the cultures of the displaced people. As a matter of fact, the population was relocated from rural settings to urban settlements. It failed to take account of the disadvantages that come handy with rural-urban migration. This is a high order crime against humanity. The government did not observe the ethical components of its actions in the building of the dam. Worse still, the government tried to justify its actions by claiming that the areas were already overpopulated. In essence, the relocation process was

jammed with corruption. The terms of relocation were unfair to others. Those favored by the government were given built houses while others had to build houses by themselves.

Corruption and embezzlement of the funds meant for compensation have continuously paralyzed the development of resettlement areas. The local authorities have continued to practice nepotism in the compensation process. Studies have revealed that about 35 million dollars meant for compensation were embezzled by local authorities. Additionally, prospects of the China's Reservoir Resettlement Act are not being addressed with the seriousness it deserves. The Act highlights all the procedures of relocation, compensation for affected or jeopardized human rights and those for addressing complaints. Relocates have developed significant resentment for the government and local authorities for the manner in which their complaints are addressed and the use of force to make sure their rights are not advocated for. Moreover, its move to prosecute protesters is totally against humanitarian statutes.

There have been different forms of discrimination and assumptions on the fate of those displaced by the dam. The approval of the project was also done through an external body which failed to account for citizens. The economic viability of the project has been preferred while sacrificing humanitarian rights of citizens. This is an unethical practice of the government of China. Moreover, engineers are trained on risk assessment and it is often recommended that the consequences of a project be determined before it is approved. This was not done as the project was approved; the normal lives of citizens were sacrificed at the expense of the

government's economic interests.

In conclusion, the debate on the ethical viability of The Three Gorges Dam remains a significant factor of concern until the fate and humanitarian rights of the relocates are addressed. Moreover, risk assessment results must also be considered to ensure the continued destructive nature of its 400 mile long reservoir is solved.

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