

'slavery in the chocolate industry'



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Question 1: What are the systemic, corporate and individual ethical issues raised by this case? The article "Slavery in the Chocolate Industry" (Velasquez, 2012) is about child slavery in cocoa plantations in West Africa. Slavery in the chocolate industry case has systemic, corporate and individual ethical issues. First, from the point of systemic ethical issue, economic system should be taken into consideration. The price of cocoa beans had declined since 1996, which urged farmers to think about operate slavery to reduce the working costs.

There is another systemic issue relates to the statutory aspect of slavery in the chocolate industry. Slavery is illegal on farms in the Ivory Coast but the law is rarely enforced, as it seems. (Kuski, 2012) The next point is corporate ethical issue by the case. Middlemen who grind and process cocoa beans they acquire and collect these with their own Trucks from the Ivory Coast and sell the product to manufacturers. That means the middlemen are conscious of the slavery labor problem. After the media attention since the British television company True Vision and antislavery group activities, U.

S. Senator Tom Harkin and U. S. representative Eliot Engel, the members of the Chocolate Manufacturers Association and the World Cocoa Foundation, together with human rights groups and the Ivory Coast signed narrative of Cooperation. But the problem is they cannot control over anything because there are more than a million cocoa farms, most of them family farms and they located in rural regions in Africa. Lastly, there are some individual ethical issues whereby the Cocoa farmers are affected the most of the issue because it is illegal to use child slavery labor.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) termed forced labor as: "All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of a penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily". Also it is immorally wrong to take someone unwillingly. Another issue is the consumers who know the problem. That means us. Even if we know the companies names involved in this case we continue to buy and to consume or Chocolate Consumers aren't kept so far removed from the Cocoa slavery issue that they are unaware or even be ignorant of the mentioned issue- so they have no apologize.

Question 2: In your view is the kind of child slavery discussed in this case absolutely wrong no matter what or is it only relatively wrong i. e. if one happens to live in a society like ours that disapproves of Slavery? In the 1979's draft articles on State Responsibility, the International Law Commission suggested that state acts are international crimes if they seriously breach international peace, deny people the right of self-determination, or fail to guarantee human life and dignity (e. g. , slavery, genocide, and apartheid).

Other breaches, according to the Draft Articles, are international torts. (International Law Commission Draft Articles, 1979) In my opinion, child slavery is completely wrong. Why should I force someone to work who would not want to do? Certainly the farmers are under some pressure as the prices of beans are seemingly pressed repeatedly. The trading price of cocoa is one of the most unpredictable ones. The price is determined by multiplying the bean price by a ratio of cocoa powder and cocoa butter.

If the ratio falls below a certain number, than the production of cocoa generates a very low profit. It is these low profits and risky circumstances that lead farmers to buy children and use slave labor, rather than paying a fair price. (Zetterstrom, 2006) They also need to make meet an end- they may also have a family at home who have to be fed. On the other hand, one could, as the Geneva-based International Cocoa Initiative (a partnership between industry, civil society and labor groups) think, that child labor is largely a consequence of unsatisfactory school access and poverty. (Laura Burke, 2012) So are the children assumed they had the blame for their enslavement, and get even more an accommodation by the farmers and work-a task in life? Slavery is absolutely wrong would certainly say all people from the West, including me, because we hold personal freedom as a right. In countries where there is a high child death rate due to poverty, and starvation, living as a slave could be seen as a preferable option compared to death or living on the street-if they did not get as in this case, better housing and better treatment. Everyone depends on everyone.

It is in the true sense of the word a " vicious circle", of which is truly difficult to come out. As the farmer can live without feeling guilty, that's a good question. They do not have the right to mistreat people due to standing under pressure to have enough money. My opinion is that the major moral issue here is the treatment of the boys. Question 3: Who shares in the moral responsibility for the slavery occurring in the Chocolate industry? The term Morality deals with the norms, values and beliefs in social processes which describe right and wrong for everyone. (Crane ; Matten, 2010) I believe all farmers, government, American chocolate Companies, Distributors, and

Consumers share the moral responsibility in this case. All of them contribute to the continuation and practice of slavery. But the groups that can drive the greatest change to eliminate the use of slavery to harvest cocoa bean are the American Chocolate Companies, Distributors and Consumer who drive the prices for Chocolate. So the moral responsibility comes from the top. They are the " string puller" and the others are all their puppets, dance in that way they want them to dance.

To carry moral obligation is not easy when it concerns slavery. How can the leaders of major corporations just stand back? Maybe they have a son the same age sitting at home. The large corporations seemingly hide themselves from any emotional obligations/bonds and follow the consumer society.

African families think about voluntarily to send their children to such farms, so that money comes into the fund. One example is Yao, who was sent by his own father for hard work. " I was living in Bouake with my grandmother," Yao Kouassi said. But my father sent me here to work. I have not seen my family for three years. " (Humphrey Hawksley, 2011) So he had even been at a family place, from which he was expelled. That conduct shows a complicity of the African families. We as consumers should possibly think about us about informing us about the origin of the food we eat. Question 4: Consider the Bill that Representative Engle and Senator Harkin attempted to enact into a law, but which never became a law because of the lobbying efforts of the chocolate companies.

What does this incident show about the view that " to be ethical it is enough for businesspeople to follow the law"? Although the bill would come through, that large corporations would probably only agreed on account of the law

and not because of any ethical backgrounds. If they would provide their malfunction, they would have agreed with the first filing of the bill. This procrastination is an unethical way of thinking. So, is it sufficient that businesspeople act only according to the law and ethical matters may be hidden?

In my opinion, every company goes down the tubes when it thinks only of money and leave ethical things out respectively favor profits than the ethical doings. (Parkhe, 2013) Ethic programs are mentioned in many companies ' compliance'. They focus is on the employee's duty to comply with laws and organizational codes. Often this results in a setting that makes you just what you have to do and also staying away from trouble. These attitudes and behavior disregards the ethical implications of the conduct and standards of conduct treats as mere obstacles to be overcome or avoided.

So that means compliance stands for things that I have to do and ethics of what I could do. " The area of discretion between the legal " must" and the moral " should" presents challenges to our ethical consciousness. That is why there is a difference between what we have a right to do and what is right to do. " (Josephson Institute, 2010) If one uses the German pharmaceutical company Merck as a practical example you can see that for some companies also ethics can come first.

Many companies put profit ahead of ethics, as in the article the chocolate factories have done. The managers of Merck have spent several hundred million dollars on the introduction of a product, even though they knew that it will not be promising profitable. They felt they had an ethical obligation to

make its potentially great benefits available to people. (Velasquez, 2006, p7)

Other people as Milton Friedman put profit over ethics: " The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits". (Friedman, 1970, p. 2) On the other hand some large companies, such as Starbucks, Amazon and American Express followed that example and put ethics first. (Kulikowski, 2012) You see, there are also global companies they act ethically.

Unfortunately, the major chocolate manufacturers apparently think

otherwise. Words: 1. 399 References Crane, A, and Matten, D (2010)

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