
Positive And Negative Aspects Of Utilitarianism In Textile Industry

Utilitarianism is one of the most established and influential normative ethical theories, that determines right from wrong by focusing on consequences. It states we should strive to generate the greater good to the greatest number of people who stand to be affected by the action. In this essay I will be highlighting both the positive and negative features of utilitarianism in practice as illustrated by David Meeler's analysis of the global textile industry. Before underlining the positive and negative aspects illustrated in the case study, it is worth noting the significance that the textile industry plays within the country.

The textile industry is one of the biggest employer in the manufacturing sector providing jobs to minorities, women and most locals within small communities. It contributes greatly towards the developmental process of the economy through advancement of small communities.

In the case study analyzed by David Meeler, we see how companies within the textile industry applied utilitarian thinking due to the rising value of the dollar and decline in currencies in Asia which resulted in high cost of producing goods and services and less cost to import from Asia. Companies had make tough decisions to ensure the success of their companies by maximizing the overall long-term benefit for all. In doing so, David Meeler highlights some of the negative aspects arising from the action taken by the companies. A lot of textile jobs were lost due to closure of plants. Therefore, loss of employment equals to no income thus a decrease in standard of living and also creating stress and unhappiness. Furthermore, local business suffered because they were unable to sell goods and services to people that do not have an income and can't afford it. An increase of imports from Asia drops the country's GDP. Contributions to charities and church decrease and eventually cease. Last but not least the burden on the local governments are increased causing an increase in taxes cuts so as to support services and career retraining for the lost jobs. (pg 58 – 60).

Despite the negative outcomes listed above, Meelers article illustrates advantages as well. Through imports, the textile industry increases production at a lower cost and increases their profits which gives the companies an advantage in the local and global markets. Low cost goods in the America and stock holder's profits maintained. Also it brings new employment opportunities to developing countries, increased happiness and improved standard of living. pg 58-60)

In summary, according to utilitarianism we should act in a way that promotes the greater good for the greatest number of people. In David Meeler's case study, one may ask if the greater good for greater number of people was in Asia or America. However, the article conveyed how utilitarianism has positive and negative aspects when applied in business ethics and also how it can be justified even though it may cause harm to others.