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## Non-Anthropocentric View towards Animal Welfare: A Moral Philosophical Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

*Animal welfare has been debated around the world, as humans continue to focus on satisfying their limitless needs and desires. They use nature as a means of survival and need satisfaction. Animals are part of nature and many environmentalists struggle for survival and the right to life of animals. The human world is focused solely on industrial development, human livelihoods and the instrumental value of nature. When discussing the nature and well-being of animals, it is necessary to take into account a moral consideration based on the intrinsic value of nature. This includes surviving animals for their own good, which is, protecting animals for their own betterment. Social wellbeing is defined as a better life. This research focuses primarily on how to provide a better life for animals while giving them a moral concern via the non-anthropological vision as explained by environmental ethics.*

*Environmental ethics embraces knowledge by providing insight into thinking morally about nonhuman beings. The qualitative methodology was adopted for the research contains the philosophical and moral analysis. As a result, this implies analytical and comparative approaches to environmental ethics. Secondary data were collected as part of several articles, research and books on environmental ethics. Non-anthropocentric is a successful measure of reducing the gap between humans and animals. It is useful and useful in implementing legislation and policies that positively support the welfare of animals and the protection of all nonhuman beings. The world needs a moral philosophical consideration to protect animals and the welfare of animals.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Animal Ethics, Animal Welfare, Anthropocentrism, Environmental ethics*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Humans and animals shared nature with each other. The technological development and modern social changes based on consumption, resulted in gradual fall in the sense and value given to nature. The relationship between humans and animals now has a considerable gap. Humans began to rely on animal life to meet their needs. The human-animal conflict has become a major concern in the world. Humans began to rely on animal life to meet their needs. The human-animal conflict has become a major concern in the world. Ecologists believe that human invasions of nature have led to conflict between humans and animals. This affects the balance of biodiversity and ecosystems. The bottom line is that humans and animals suffer. Therefore, as a solution, a discussion of applied ethics is required. In particular, the areas of environmental ethics and animal ethics deal with human-animal conflict from a broader perspective.

### **1.1 Environmental Ethical Arguments**

Ethics is the area that deals with both right and wrong. Knowledge in applied ethics discusses theoretical knowledge of ethics in practice. Both environmental and animal ethics belong to the applied ethical category. Environmental ethics deals with people's place in the environment. Therefore, environmental ethics seeks to explain what humans should and should not do in relation to nature. Environmental ethics uses theory and practice to enhance and recognize human duties to the natural world. The quality of the environment and

the relationship between humans and animals and plants are the values that are most relevant here.

There are two major approaches to environmental ethics in nature. They are the anthropocentric view and the non-anthropocentric view. The anthropocentric view indicates that man is the center of nature. Therefore, nature must be preserved for the protection of humanity. This anthropocentric environmental ethic considers future generations of the world to be the subject of current human moral responsibility. Only humans are counted with moral recognition, spreading our concerns for generations that are not yet born. But this approach is aimed solely at protecting humanity. For example, natural resources need to be protected for future human use. The anthropocentric viewpoint has not expressed their concerns about the natural environment. To bridge this gap, the non-anthropocentric view, which contrasts with the anthropocentric view, develops the importance of non-human beings and implies why humans have a responsibility to protect nature.

The basic hypothesis from the anthropocentric point of view is that humans have a direct moral value that is capable of valuing natural things. Morality is a mutual bond, or it can be a reciprocal obligation which arises among rational beings. So how do animals become relevant? The philosophy of the environment maintains that man has a moral duty or an obligation towards nature. The anthropocentric view indirectly shows that nature has put humans in a higher position making them rational and

assigned them moral duties. The anthropocentric view can be traced back to the Greek Aristotelian period of the teleological theory of nature. His claim was that everything in nature is designed to meet human needs.

As for the anthropocentric viewpoint, animals have no moral position and are not rightful bearers. That means humans should give them moral concerns indirectly. Widening that, environmental philosophers have attempted to include animals in a moral status. Thinkers such as Peter Singer have attempted to expand traditional moral systems and integrate animals into moral systems. Tom Regan (Singer & Regan, 1989) attempted the same with morals based on animal rights. In addition, Paul Tylor (Tylor, 1986), Aldo Leopold, J. Baird Callicott promoted the use of nature and ecosystems in human moral advertising. In consequence, the non-anthropocentric view appeared. This resulted in the inclusion of animals and plants in the ethical consideration of nature.

Peter Singer (Singer, 1989) argues that humans have a fundamental duty to prevent actions that adversely affect others. The reason is that harm brings pain and suffering and violates the life experiences of animals to be free from harm. He states that both humans and animals are considered morally. Practicing morality means reducing suffering and ultimately bringing happiness. The Philosopher Jeremy Bentham (Bentham, 1789) claims that "The question is not, can they reason, or can they talk, but can they suffer" (Panza & Potthast, 2010, p. 314). It

means that every sensible creature deserves moral consideration. Non-Anthropocentric thinkers also considered these sensitive creatures to have their own interests and needs, similar to humans. Consequently, they should have similar concerns. The actions that result in pain and suffering to animals should be justified as if they were directed toward human beings. The non-anthropocentric viewpoint gave answers to the aforesaid questions by giving the interests of the moral values of non-human well-being.

Environmental ethics further explains that nature has both intrinsic and instrumental values. Intrinsic value means that nature has value in its self-interest, which means that nature's value cannot be discriminated against by human demands. For instance, nature should be protected, as it has its own value. But intrinsic value does not mean that nature must be protected to sustain future generations. Furthermore, the value of nature should not be measured in terms of the benefits that humans may derive from it. But nature has to be protected because it has acquired value from the beginning. Intrinsic value is the original value of nature.

The instrumental value contains a utility idea that supports anthropocentric sight. Environmental enthusiasts suggest that nature has an instrumental value; nature is precious as it is necessary for humanity to survive. For instance, nature should be protected not because of its original value, but because of the benefits that humans derive from it. Nature is needed in order to meet human needs. Thus, the instrumental value is merely that nature must be

protected to satisfy and contribute to human needs.

## **1.2. Nature of Animal Ethics**

Animal ethics is another aspect of environmental ethics. Animal ethics encompass the theoretical knowledge of ethics into practice in the fields of animal rights, animal protection, animal welfare, animal law, wildlife conservation, theories of justice and nonhuman personhood etc. Animal ethics stands for describing the human animal relationships. The subject of animal ethics goes back to the time of Pythagoras (CA. 570 - 490 BC), which said that the souls of humans were reincarnated as animals. Aristotle stated that the fundamental difference between humans and animals is the fact that humans are able to think rationally. Animal ethics focuses on the way in which animals are treated. It has been a major concern over the past few years. For instance, all animals live under diverse moral dilemmas; some people make food using animals, some animals are kept as pets, some animals are in zoos, and some animals live in their natural habitats, and some animals are used in biotechnological experiments. Each of these diverse dilemmas possesses diverse relationships with humans. And every one of those dilemmas can also harm those animals. Thus, animal welfare is absolutely essential.

Animal welfare is the wellbeing of all non-human beings. The book "Animal Machines" (1964), Ruth Harrison discusses how animals are treated in the

industrial world where animals are used to manufacture goods. She said that welfare can be referred to as a term that emphasizes how animals experience their quality of life. It is designed to enhance the quality of life. Elisa Aaltola in her book 'Animal Suffering; Philosophy and Culture' (2012) writes, "Welfare is the balance, now and through life, of the quality of the complex mix of subjective feelings associated with brain status induced by various sensory inputs and by cognitive and emotion processes" (Aaltola, 2012, p. 21). Considering the animal, welfare is the way that animals deal with their needs and the demands of the external world. Donald Broom (1996) explains, "The welfare of an animal is its state as regards its attempt to cope with its environment, with attempt to cope including the functioning of body repair systems, immunological defenses, the psychological stress response and a variety of behavioral response" (Aaltola, 2012, p.22). Taking all these definitions into account, one can say that welfare must be provided in order to put an end to the suffering of animals.

The discussion of this research paper moves with perspectives on environmental ethics and philosophic reflections on animal ethics. The main objective here is to figure out whether the non-anthropocentric view can be used as a moral philosophical solution for providing animal welfare. This research paper further discusses the importance of environmental ethics in providing the welfare of animals, the relevance of anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric views to understand the human-animal conflict for natural resources. And it expects to explicate why

a moral consideration should be given in protecting animals. Finally, the paper explains how environmental ethics can be used to balance human demand and nature without harming biodiversity and ecosystems.

## **2 MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This is a moral, philosophical study that examines the importance of moral consideration towards animal welfare in relation to the environmental ethical approach to non-Anthropocentric view. Hence, as the methodology, the qualitative method was followed. In addition, the research employs an analytical and comparative approach to environmental ethics. As a secondary method of data collection, data were collected using books, related research papers and journal articles in the fields of environmental philosophy, environmental ethics and animal ethics primarily.

## **3 RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

Over the course of history, humans are the most concerned of the entire natural world. Anthropocentrism suggests that the humans have higher moral significance than other beings. As with the anthropocentric view, the beings with lower moral significance will be ranked at the bottom of the hierarchy in while the man at the top of the hierarchy. This is referred to as strong and weak anthropocentrism.

However, environmental ethics have negatively emphasized anthropocentric vision. Rob Boddice (2011) in his book 'Anthropocentrism: Humans, Animals,

Environment' suggests that even though the anthropocentric view explains nothing about morality or giving a moral value towards nature, it provides the ultimate power to the humans regarding moral consideration. Then, eventually, humans have the power to explain what morality is. In addition, the anthropocentric vision is a hierarchical order that includes human needs, desires, life and human rights. Furthermore, it is linked to industrialization and capitalism, whose ultimate goal of production. But in opposition to this idea, the non-anthropocentric point of view arises giving equal value to the natural resources of the environment as well.

Regarding nature, the non-anthropocentric vision does not separate human beings from other species. It takes all creatures in nature as members of it, or as biological creatures, which also belong to nature. In the non-anthropocentric perspective, humans consider their relationship with nature, that is, the ecosystems of the earth and humans see themselves as another species among all other species of nature. In his book 'Respect for Nature; A Theory of Environmental Ethics' (1986) Paul W. Taylor, the famous environmental philosopher, explains that non-anthropocentric views can be categorized into five major realities about human life in relation to nature (Tylor, 1986, pp. 101-102). The first is that humans have certain physical or biological needs to survive on earth. The second is that each being has its own will, which is not dependent upon someone else's control. Thirdly, with respect to the free will of the animals, autonomy and social freedom are not

practically applicable. But in the end, freedom may be the equal component, which is common to humans and nonhuman entities. The fourth reality that it entails is that all other beings lived here for thousands of years before humans. Thus, they share a much older relationship with nature than with humans. Finally, as with reality five, Taylor in the same book explains that humans cannot do without nature; but nature can do without humans (Tylor, 1986, p. 102).

These facts brought a wider understanding of the world and about human nature. They can be listed as follows,

1. Humans are also members of the earth ecosystems, similar to all other living beings.
2. Earth's ecosystem is an interconnected web, i.e. much complicated.
3. All living things flourish in their own way.
4. Humans are not stronger, speedier, or superior inherently than other living beings.

This explicates, all non-human beings are equal to humans. Thus, even nonhuman beings should be considered morally. The non-anthropocentric view extends the anthropocentric view, from humans to nature. That is to give the concern of moral objects towards nature as well. It focuses on the values and rights of the natural world including all the plants and animals considering them as organic individuals. We must give them moral priority as well. It develops a harmonious relationship between humans and nature within this moral priority. More than that, enhancing

this human moral centeredness towards the natural environment through the non-anthropocentric view is also expected to establish a universal environmental ethic. An important issue in the field of environmental ethics is the conflict between human values and natural values. For this reason, intrinsic and instrumental values follow the moral understanding of nature. Taylor in his book 'Respect for Nature; A Theory of Environmental Ethics' (1986) suggests that the wild living things also have the inherent value; therefore they should also be treated respectfully (Tylor, 1986, p. 71). For this reason he mentions humans as members of the earth family.

In the words of James Sterba, there is no good reason to make one species superior to another. And there is no sound reason for treating any of the living beings differently. Philosophers, who accept the non-anthropocentric view, mention that all living beings have their own interests, and they can be vital, biological and these interests are for their own sake. Regards to animal welfare, animal freedom, animal rights and the fact that animals have their own interests are also important. But the knowledge produced by anthropocentric vision does not highlight the significance of animal life. It does not prioritize talking about why humans should value animal life and their existence or discuss how to consume nature without any limitations would harm all beings. But it does suggest sustainable exploitation of natural resources for future generations. This is the gap which is bridged by non-anthropocentric vision. They suggest that saving nature is a moral responsibility of

humans. It's not in their best interests going forward, because nature has a right to be protected.

Animal welfare is included in the legislation in many countries. Environmentalists suggest keeping animals under human control also does not promote their wellbeing. Since the definitions of welfare are different from country to country, the way each of the respective countries treats animals is also diverse. David Fraser, in 2008, stated that animal industries tend to define welfare based on their interests. They focus on the human benefit. Ms. Fraser also said that it has become a matter of relevance for animal welfare. Elisa Aaltola says that agriculture, which is done with animals, pharmaceutical industries, hunting, animal entertainment industries, and regular consumers ignore the welfare provision. Therefore, those who have made animals their livelihood provide well-being according to the benefits they receive from animals. As a result, animal welfare has become a regardless topic.

Animal welfare is linked to animal rights. In addition, animal rights can be debated both legally and morally. Legal rights are imposed as a result of statutes. Moral rights are the morally accepted entitlements, whatever the existing legal systems have been accepted or prohibited. The animals first should be concerned with moral rights because they also entail life. It depicts that the animals also have an inherent value. This idea supports the non-anthropocentric view, which suggests that animals should be morally treated because of the intrinsic value they possess. In the promotion of

animal welfare, countries such as the United States rely on animal welfare legislation. This enhances the moral understanding of animals and provides their welfare. For example, the Department of Agriculture and the Fish and Wildlife Service have been granted the power to promote animal welfare. Animal welfare laws can be effective means in regulating the human use of animals. The book titled 'An Introduction to Animals and the Law' (2011) by Joan E. Schaffner, defines animal welfare, as "maintenance of animals under conditions of space, environment, nutrition, and so forth, consistent with the physiological and social needs of the species" (Schaffner, 2011, p.71). In the same book, he suggests that animal welfare should contain freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition, freedom from discomfort, freedom from pain, injury and disease, freedom from fear and distress and finally freedom of expressing normal behavior. These are obviously ethical obligations that humans have to animals. They also emphasize the inherent value of the natural world. The Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics (2014) says it's important to understand direct obligations to animals through virtue in order to make sense of animal rights. In addition, emphasis should be placed on the position of animals when entitlements are established. Animal rights should be embedded in human moral insights.

#### **4 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS**

The non-anthropocentric view tries to fill the gap between humans and nature. More

importantly, it suggests the protection of non-human beings by promoting the welfare of animals. However, anthropocentric vision fails to reduce the harm humans do to non-humans. This has made humans be concerned only about the development, and non-human beings as a form of satisfying their demands. This research focuses on the relevance of the non-anthropocentric view in providing welfare for animals. Non-anthropological thinkers such as Peter Singer, Tom Regan, Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson have attempted to explain the importance of protecting nature. Also, they tried to implement the environmental ethical knowledge influencing the laws and regulations of their states. Being moral in day-to-day practices may not be successful; therefore, policies should be implemented. The reason behind this is that the moral philosophy always becomes the legal philosophy at the end because the moral debate is leading towards a legal debate. Animal ethics and animal rights originate with this identification. This encourages moral concerns about non-humans.

Animal welfare must therefore respect the law of the land. Humans should treat the animals with the fellow feeling. The animal suffering should be justified by measuring the cause that made the suffering. Without proper laws and regulations, it is difficult to practice. In this process the animal philosophy and animal ethics are important. Peter Singer suggested that humans should relate themselves to non-human beings and their suffering, which means, the law led by the theory can influence persuasion.

Therefore, the animal welfare law is necessary. Changing the laws to promote animal welfare also means that there should be changes in the moral and ethical views of society. In this context, providing welfare means that humans have a moral obligation in treating animals humanely.

Humans must use animals to satisfy their needs while maintaining animal welfare. This is what is meant to be welfare. Beyond this idea some thinkers suggest animals should be treated not only humanely, but also with the understanding that they have lives for themselves. This means that if only humans use animals to benefit them, they must value animal life. Otherwise, these actions would be unethical. Imposing animal rights means that humans are not allowed to overuse animals for their benefits: animal rights ensure animal safety and protect the interests of animals under the law. Since the non-anthropological approach promotes the value of animal life, it always arouses moral concern and improves the well-being of animals.

Enforcing the law to ensure animal welfare is very difficult for several reasons. First, there are no laws relevant in dealing with the human use of animals. Second, the law is inadequate, because the beneficiaries of the law are the humans at the end. Thirdly, animals cannot make themselves heard before the law. Those who are willing to be the voice for animals' face lot of difficulties within the legal process. Fourth, while the government expects the health, productivity and end use of the animal to be in conflict with the animal's interests. This means that government

objectives and animal interests do not fit together. If all these problems are taken into account in the field of animal welfare, animals should receive moral attention. The laws should be enacted along with a moral standard in protecting non-human beings from suffering and pain. The non-anthropocentric approach is all about valuing the animal life. That is, the laws and regulations should take the phase of the non-anthropocentric views. As a result, the non-anthropocentric perspective promotes animal welfare while providing moral consideration.

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