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Consumer Attitude and Market Demand: Impact of Animal Welfare

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ABSTRACT

For the last few decades, the society is keenly showing interest in the welfare of animals. It has proved to be an integrated issue where the economical, scientific, cultural, and ethical angle could be noticed. Their dying conditions are also emotionally and physiologically determined about their living conditions. Thus, improvements in the welfare of animals would thus enhance the health and production of animals as well as the psychological and behavioural well-being of animals. This would thus benefit the owners themselves, the animals themselves, and society. In this light, more consciousness of the welfare of animals through changes in legal and regulatory apparatuses-which are now becoming enacted due to setting of international norms for humane treatment-is in order.

Of course, despite the progress said above, there are still hurdles ahead. For instance, due to such ignorance, or apparent in availability, or the premium price of welfare-approved products, the consumer's welfare concern fails to automatically translate to sales. Variation of trust across product labelling impacts consumer commitment to shopping for welfare. In another study, important attitudes and purchasing decisions were reduced to certain sociodemographic factors-income, age, and education. We show that welfare-credited products are linked with more-educated and wealthier consumers.

One can argue in Favor of incorporating animal welfare as a corporate social responsibility and accounting for profit, people, and the planet approach, also referred to as the "triple bottom line." Better welfare enhances safer food production and good public health that is in the right direction toward sustainability. Legislative approaches differ across the world,

Keyword: *Animal, Husbandry, Knowledge, Behaviour, Industrialized, Consumption, Legislation, Ethics, Sustainability*

I. INTRODUCTION

It refers to the manner and choice of a consumer or a group of consumers who purchase any product or service. The environment consists of emotive, social, and psychological factors that determine what the customer wants to purchase. For the past hundred years or so, awareness of ethical issues, of which animal welfare comprises a large part, has been the basis on which

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demand in markets is determined.

Indeed, ethical concerns about purchases, primarily in terms of animal welfare, inform more customers. At the most visible level, changes involve the business aspects about food, fashion, and cosmetics. More and more customers choose or exclude a product based on whether the kind of animal production of meat, dairy, and eggs is certified no cruelty or better produced than its competitors on the markets. In addition, "free-range," "cage-free," and "grass-fed" labels are trendy.

Over time, the demand in the market has transformed the concept of ethical consumerism. Companies are gradually shifting their business with a little more empathy because it has been proved that the products linked with animal welfare can be sold at a premium. Other changes like lab-grown meat and other plant-based alternatives packaged to be more humane or environmentally friendly have come into being with the demand for ethical products.

Customers are willing to pay a premium for the products that would entail a higher count of higher valued levels of animal welfare, and in several studies carried out by organizations such as the ASPCA. It means that this becomes a trend that makes animal welfare so widely recognized as a market factor influencing consumer behaviour and not a niche issue.²

Historical:

Mainstream Animal Welfare Debates The rising public concern toward the husbandry practices of animals and an emerging problem based with modern livestock production and changing human-animal relations continuing since the 1970s. The kinds of issues vary across countries. Based on the assumption that the European Commission's 2007 Eurobarometer, farming animal welfare should be protected and 77% of them believe that this percentage will increase in their countries. Changes in Animal Husbandry since WWII: This aspect witnessed increased consumption of animal-based foods with time, which completely changed animal husbandry. Time has completely changed animal husbandry since WWII.³

These have largely replaced the traditional farm farming within money-minded societies. Modern systems exercised animals to such an extent that it breeds problems in both behavioural and psychological respects. Very often, it turns out that over-population, hostile environment, as well as social isolation of the animals, is the success advantage of modern methods. So this brings deep economic problems to when they are preserved through oppression which otherwise would run in predictable streams. Farming of Animals

² American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). (2023). Consumer Perceptions on Animal Welfare

³ Fraser, D. (2008). "Understanding Animal Welfare: The Science in its Cultural Context." Wiley-Blackwell

Generally speaking, the more industrial the farming, the less attention is given to one animal whereas farm life previously was merely part of massive commercial endeavours.

Animals also fulfil many roles in society. The most important of these roles that I shall discuss below is the provision of food. Meat, primarily poultry, has increased over the last 50 years at a rate almost three times that of population growth. Milk and eggs have interworld trends of the same type but at less rapid rates. Agriculture takes up as much share of national economies as any industry, mostly through its agri-food industry.⁴

Economic and sociodemographic factors: Education, age, gender, and the number of children in a household all have several other sociodemographic variables that tend to influence welfare-friendly food product consumption. Income and other economic conditions are much more important factors. Opinions regarding animal welfare and ethical beliefs and trust in food product labels and information sources regarding welfare issues also further affect consumer behaviour.⁵

Concern vs. Buy.

The customers would have wanted to raise issues over something that looked like the concern issue over animals but did not mean that everything concerning had to be sold. This gap will lead to people consuming differently when acting as consumers but voting for their preference when performing as citizens. Lack of knowledge, belief higher welfare products are not available, believe that one has no control over welfare standards, removal from animal rearing and slaughtering, and believe higher prices are a few barriers reported that prevent people from making ethical choices. Information Trust: The information available to consumers concerning the production of foods from animals should be trustworthy.⁶

The credibility of a source and checks in place for authentication purposes would greatly add trust to information provided. Consumers in the European Union are largely not trusting of most food labels. This mainly limits any change to their buying habits. This distrust could further be the reason behind which the consumer is reluctant to narrow down the gap between its claimed concerns and its actual buying behaviour. Perception on Food Safety and Animal Welfare: A sense of food safety, a protective environment, and associated health benefits related to the animal welfare.

Consumers care much for the well-being of animals. Yet at times, customers think of food

⁴ FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). (2021). "Meat Consumption Trends." FAO Report

⁵ Verbeke, W., & Viaene, J. (2000). "Consumer attitude to meat consumption and animal welfare." *Anthrozoös*

⁶ European Commission. "Attitudes of EU Citizens towards Animal Welfare." Special Eurobarometer 442, 2016.

safety higher than the well-being of animals, taste, and nutrition. There are such customers who still believe that chicken meat is healthier although they care for the well-being of the birds just because it contains lesser fat, and lesser amounts of harmful ingredients. Animal Welfare:⁷

A welfare is generally defined as a general state of an animal considering its life and death condition. This includes the psychosomatic state of the animal. The welfare, ease of movement, feeding, security, and manifestation of an animal's natural behaviour fit the description of animal welfare. Defining the general state of welfare of an animal has long been complicated by numerous economic, scientific, cultural, and ethically variables.⁸

II. ANIMAL WELFARE LEGISLATIONS

On average, the bottom line of animal welfare rules would be the welfare and welfarism among animals. It usually aims at giving natural behaviour, proper husbandry, and the absence of suffering. The various terminologies for it vary between different sets of rules and regulations; however, the idea behind it is essentially the same.

Examples of Standards:

KRAV Standards: Revive the subject matter giving animals respect it deserves.

Regarding Article 13 of the Lisbon Treaty, Swedish Seal of Distinction believes animals deserve the same respect as living things (European Commission 2008).⁹

Animal welfare broadens the view of Carnes Valles del Elsa on giant scale production practices. The German Animal Welfare Act accords high priority to the preamble provided to life and stresses more on the safety of the lives of animals and their welfare.¹⁰

These legislations care for the animals because it appears to be concerned about the ethical issues of animal husbandry practices and social values. Companies Implementing Animal Welfare Policy: Benefits and Drawbacks

Triple Bottom Line: Profit, People, and the Environment.

The term triple bottom line suggests that the companies need to focus on three necessary considerations, such as profit, people, and the environment. The term "Planet" means responsible environmental behaviour, "people" means responsible corporate behaviour towards society where it operates and "profit" represents the money and cents earned by a firm after

⁷ European Commission. "The Use and Understanding of Labels on Food Products." Special Eurobarometer 504, 2020

⁸ Zayan, R.: Social space for domestic animals. Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, 1985.

⁹ Article 13 of the Lisbon Treaty reiterated

¹⁰ German Animal Welfare Act

deducing all expenses incurred. The same rules apply to farm livestock that is inputs into the rearing of cattle. From an analytical point of view in economics, these need to be taken into profitability account. Effects of Animal Welfare:

Improving animal welfare helps boost their psychology and behavioural life. It reduces stress because an overall well-being is generated through the increased movability and healthy diet for animals; furthermore, the opportunity for executing natural behaviours.¹¹

These enhance the health of the animal, disease-prone-free animal, and productive. Many of these environmental sustenance practices will probably relate with policies on animal welfare. For instance, instead of those encouraging the intensification of natural behaviours, farming practices can be dominated by lower stocking densities. This then sets up a positive effect for the alleviation of ecological degradation. Organic farming, combined with rotational grazing is the largest exemplary practices under sustainable agriculture methods that are environmentally friendly and indeed great for animal welfare. Legislative and regulatory improvements are based on the rise in awareness and concern regarding animal welfare. So to establish international standards based on humane treatment or to standardize procedures or practices related to the care of animals, there have been governments and other agencies at different times who have included welfare standards as part of their policies.¹²

Benefits to Society

Some of the most important benefits of animal welfare to society

1. Improved Public Health -; since zoonoses, or disease from poor animal living conditions, are less likely with improved welfare practice on animals' part. When the animals are healthier, the foodstuffs are safer. Lower incidence rate is linked to better welfare practices.
2. Higher food safety-; Welfare-friendly animals are healthier, thus safer as meat, dairy products and eggs to eat. Lower incidence rates of diseases are highlighted in the case of welfare-friendly practices

III. CUSTOMER CONCERN AND ATTITUDE

Citizenship and consumerism: The roles of citizen and consumer have to be clearly differentiated in order for health in farmed animals to be addressed.

Citizens can voice public concern, mobilize legislation, and influence action decisions by expressing their public outcry regarding several issues of animal welfare. Some classical citizen

¹¹ Fraser, D. (2008). "Understanding Animal Welfare: The Science in its Cultural Context." Wiley-Blackwell

¹² Allen, T. et al. (2017). "Global hotspots and correlates of zoonotic disease emergence." Nature Ecology & Evolution

behaviours include voting, speaking out both to politicians and to media outlet voices, and joining organisations. An attitudinal, belief, and behaviour change can convince better moral treatment of agricultural livestock. Power of Consumers: In the consumer buying decision, the power of consumers is that they can enforce change in the marketplace.¹³ They can boycott the products manufactured by companies they hate. As members of society, very often, customers' opinions do not determine what they buy and sell. Attitudes vs. Concerns: Two words, attitude and concern, have been used interchangeably too often in the past. However, two different things actually exist. A concern is consideration of, or attitude toward, a problem. An attitude, on the other hand, represents a psychological leaning that is espoused by determining an entity in some particular degree of Favor or disfavour. There are three classes which could be used for classifying concerns:¹⁴

Common concern of consumers: With food scandals happening one after the other, food safety is the concern of every consumer. Specific group concerns: Although such concerns are difficult to be translated into buying behaviour still these are important to specific consumer groups who want to live up their ideals.

This is just but one among the ethical concern issues by public on environmental sustainability of manufacture practices since they have gone overutilizing them from their natural resources.¹⁵

IV. TECHNIQUES FOR ILLUMINATION ABOUT ANIMAL WELFARE

Overview Animal welfare efforts have evolved from the endeavour to keep animals away from negative experiences to providing animals with good experiences. It aligns with better treatment in that it is one methodology that focuses on giving animals attention to what they appreciate. The various methods undertaken in different countries toward improvement of animal welfare correspond with the legal and commercial settings in their respective countries. Good sense of animal welfare The good sense of animal welfare means not only that animals should not be made to suffer but also that they should appear to be happy and to be in good conditions.¹⁶

This approach takes the interaction relationship between humans and animals up new lines of

¹³ Lentz, E.E., & Bostrom, A. (2013). "Food safety and animal welfare: How consumer attitudes impact their preferences." Food Quality and Preference

¹⁴ Beardsworth, A., & Keil, T. (1997). "The vegetarian option: Variations in contemporary food vegetarianism." Sociology of Health & Illness,

¹⁵ McIntosh, W.A., & Kline, C. (2008). "Food safety concerns and consumer preferences: The role of risk perception." Journal of Consumer Affairs

¹⁶ Elkington, J. (1997). Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business

thought and action beyond merely keeping them from bad states. Some notion researchers such as Yeates and Main (2008) and Boissy et al. (2007) support which is gaining a trend in the science of animal welfare, ensuring to move animal welfare ahead with their mood states. Different strategies for each country There are several methods applied by different countries to further advance animal welfare. Animal welfare in Sweden is based on national legislation, which is in itself generally compliant or exceeds what the EU lays down. The UK had developed tough private regulation in animal welfare and, therefore, relied considerably on market forces.¹⁷

This was supposedly cost-effective to push animal welfare and, of course, to dissipate the customers' apprehension as well. Other scholars argue that market-based standards alone are not safe to be set as a whole, and therefore instead settle on baseline legislations that must be applied to all animals, for such would give levels of animal welfare. Industry Standards Laws: Industry standards laws are largely of preventive character. Again, whether the strategies to be adopted are market-based or legislative, it remains open whether these would promote animal welfare. The minimum standards would be effective and robust for committed farmers but there ought to be benchmark laws for everyone's protection of animals. The argument of INGENBLEEK et al. (2012) posits that the governments should come up with a cost-benefit trade-off in reducing the law by the nation if the latter is above the EU levels.¹⁸

This is because they think that the market shall play the role of preservation or improvement of welfare through private norms. However, it indirectly depends upon consumer education and the readiness of the consumer to pay for more welfare products. Recognition by consumers and Expectations Consumers also expect humane production in most cases. However, in general, consumers are ignorant of the intricacies of modern farming methods. It is, therefore clear that European consumers want something better than the existing welfare. This consumer interest translates into demands for better welfare conditions both at the state and at the EU levels.

Value conflicts arise where customers balance their demand for pretty cheap food items against the requirement of higher welfare norms. Consider Economics and Ethics National welfare standards respond powerfully to the desire of farmers for control over their own business and the willingness of consumers to pay for higher animal welfare. This rightly causes concern that strict national regulation will lead to production in countries that have relatively lax standards

¹⁷ UK Animal Welfare Regulation, Swedish National Animal Welfare Laws.

¹⁸ Ingenbleek P. T. M., Immink, V. M., Spoolder, H. A. M., Bokma, M. H., & Keeling, L. J. (2012). EU animal welfare policy: Developing a comprehensive policy framework. Food Policy

and result in a worsening of global animal welfare. It needs to be struck between welfare standards and commercial viability lest it cause those unwanted side effects. Improving animal welfare means the various policies should be market- and legislation-based to balance each other out; understand customers' knowledge and expectations; and, more importantly, be able to address the moral and financial problems. The forces of marketing and consumer mean much in determining EU policy that has consequences for national legislation; to say it right, tough national legislation enhances welfare standards.

Schemes would arise calling for endless debate and criticism in order to have proper welfare of animals as part of the long-term push towards financial sustainability. Neither would such practices become "easy money". Things were already changing before Hungary joined the EU, though.

Animal welfare standards are defined legislatively in most countries' marketplace and therefore will require entry into a product. Chain restaurants like McDonald's to TGIF started showing interest in welfare and extremely minute technological and quality requirements to their suppliers. This increased the care of animals from the producers and therefore market price. Organisation bodies that are responsible for food safety, it is often.¹⁹

V. CONCLUSION

There are two important viewpoints through which the economic consequences of animal welfare legislation on firms can be viewed these are productivity and consumer sales. Since healthier animals that live in accordance with their nature usually live longer and are more productive, both advantage to owners, the animals themselves, and to society generally, better animal welfare oftentimes implies higher output. On the other hand there are some major difficulties at the level of consumers. Poor education and financial constraints make some consumers discourage purchasing the more expensive, animal-friendly products, though public interest in animal welfare is on the increase. Unfortunately, part of the positive change must be paid for by reductions in market competitors. Maybe, balance cannot be achieved as it is unrealistic to expect perfect balance in large-scale market systems or natural ecosystems. Partial improvement may come from proper interaction between the market mechanism and emerging public consciousness on the environmental issue at hand. Laws and standards must be installed in animal welfare protection or guarantee. Since values vary worldwide, standards relating to animal care under regulations also differ. In this connection, particular importance attaches to the factually concrete definition of terms such as "animal welfare," "unnecessary

¹⁹ European Commission. (2008). Article 13 of the Lisbon Treaty

suffering," and "natural behaviour" so that less vagueness and smooth impact would be felt over the very same rule. Framed within consumer appeal and business viability, private animal welfare rules in Europe do not boast the same underlying nexus as governmental law, which remains fettered with declared purposes and actual, broad responsibilities. There must be more openness and confidence, so that less of a gap exists between what the laws aim to attain and what they accomplish.

Governmental law still gives a nod to the other side: declared goals and ethical principles are not developed in detail. At least, this research has the most critical parts on how clearly values should be formulated specifically in the instant when laws and regulations are established in such a way as to emerge with coherence for both texts of regulations and the policy-making process in itself. Systems need to be transparent if their customers are going to maintain the confidence, and proper animal welfare is to be promoted correctly.

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