Psychological Impact And Humane Killing Of Animals For Research: A Synthesis On Animal Welfare Law In The Philippines

Abstract

An act protecting the welfare of all animals in the Philippines has been historically signed on 11th February 1998 and was enacted as Republic Act 8485. This act covers the supervision, operation and regulation of the establishment of all facilities for different activities using all types of animals including pets and birds. It also encompassed the proper conduct of using animals in the field of research. This paper looked into the positive impact of this law in the cognitive behavior and psychological well-being of the people and made a synthesis on the arguments between scientific people and animal rights activists regarding the use of animals in laboratories for research experiments.

Keywords: animal welfare, cognitive behaviour, animal rights, research experiments

The Philippines is an archipelago with diverse ethnicity, culture,tradition and spiritual practices. The practices involving animal care and use is sometimes influenced by regional differences. However, Filipinos started to have standard rules and regulations that extensively promote the protection of animals' right to exist, live and be treated in the most humane manner since the enactment of Republic Act 8485 or widely known as Animal Welfare Act 1988 in the Philippines. This law emphasized the duty of humanity in utilizing animals as pets, economic source, sale and trading and objects or specimens in research. A lot of people may believe that this law is only to give respect and recognize the animal's existence to nature but this paper wanted to make a synthesis on its effectiveness in terms of its psychological impact on cognitive behavior of a person and its usefulness in conducting a scientific study. In this regard, the following are my hypotheses: a. If the promotion of animal welfare is practiced in all regions in the Philippines, then there will be an increased positive adaptation of cognitive behaviors among Filipinos due to less exposure to cruelty whereas some research found that cruelty to animals can be a psychological disorder symptom (Flynn,2000); b. If animal testing and euthanization will be eradicated nor limited then there will be a decreased mobility with the collection of data in the field of psychological research due to conflict with Animal Welfare Law in the Philippines which authorizes the Psychologist in using animals as an object for research study (Fraser, 2010).

Literature Review

Psychology and Animal Welfare

Many animals in the world is suffering and dying due to animal cruelty. Different researchers examine the behavior of prisoners and make documentary or self-reports trying to prove that animal cruelty co-occur with aggression and antisocial behavior of person (Quinnet, 2014). Flynn (2000) argue that any form of harm or abuse to these animals can be a symptom of cognitive behavioral disorder. Another author Gullone (2012) has provided a discussion in her book and she claim that animal cruelty behavior can be explained rationally using the existing

theories related to aggression and antisocial behavior.

Flaws and Human Harm on Animal Experimentation

Some animal activists in the world like in the U.S. protest to stop euthanization and killing of animals in laboratories due to certain studies that show a wide range of unreliable animal experimentation in the world (Akhtar, 2015). Animals have long been used in the medical field for empirical evidence but animal suffering is involved and different reports show that the majority result of experimentation involving drugs, and other harmful practices are ineffective in treating human diseases (Akhtar, 2015).

Animal Welfare Law in the Philippines

The Philippines had established a law in 1988 which was enacted as R.A.8485 or the Animal Welfare Act. This act is headed by the Bureau of Animal and Industry (BAI) whereas the rules and regulations are reviewed by a Committee on Animal Welfare which are composed of representatives from different government agencies. This provision provides guidelines on the establishment and registration of animal facilities such as veterinary hospitals, animal clinics, pet shops, zoos and others that should be maintained clean and safe for animals, the limitations in killing animals used in research and other circumstances, and the transportation of animals from one place to another by dealers. Section 7 of this law legalizes the killing of animals when it is used by an authorized person in a research field. The code of ethics in psychology provided guidelines to ensure that the killing is done in the most humane manner. One of them is the process of euthanization.

Conclusion

Animals have their rights and they deserve to be treated in the most humane manner so in this paper there are two major points to be considered. First, since some findings claims that animal cruelty may later arise with psychological conflicts such as aggression, antisocial behaviour (Gullone, 2012) and cognitive behavioural disorder (Flynn, 2000) then the provision and implementation of this law wil have a positive impact to both human and animals. The animals will be protected from torture, abuse, neglect and any harm from humans and likewise, humans will have better cognitive behavior and psychological well-being. Further, animal experimentation and testing (euthanization) may cause animal suffering (Akhtar, 2015) but the opposition must understand that animal welfare is not violated in gathering empirical data because the killing of animals is legal and indicated in Section 7 of this act in the purpose of having advancement with discovery, medicine and psychology. Overall it is important to conclude that this law is significant but it is still not perfect.

Recommendations

For Psychologist and Researchers

Psychologists and researchers can conduct further study related to animal welfare and its effects on the psychological well-being of humans to either support or repudiate the above synthesis.

For Government

The information in this synthesis paper can be used as a contributory document to the government by which the review bodies can create more revisions on the law to ensure that animals will not suffer in the research field and other circumstances. Also, it is recommended for the government to impose a more severe punishment on violators and national and local agencies should create more programs and projects to carefully monitor each region and province to effectively lessen the cases of animal abuse each year in the Philippines.

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