Are all people treated equally?

Analyzing Peter Singers Are all people treated equally?

# Introduction

Peter Singer has provided a case based on discrimination among animals on the basis of speciesism. He focuses on how this discrimination serves the purpose of human animals. He has resented a case against the animal suffering, which he believes emanates from their use by human animals. Throughput the article, Singers arguments are based on speciesism, which he presents as the form of racism. He believes that all such discrimination provides the basis for factually underestimating equality among animals. His arguments also incorporate the debates about the consumption of products linked with animals. According to him, the discrimination based on differences in speciesism serves human purposes and nothing else. Considering his arguments, this essay will be based on the presumption that *consumption of animal products are not related to the differences in speciesism.*

# Summary

## Singer’s arguments against speciesism

‘Speciesism’ was introduced by Richard Ryder in an essay related to animals and after that widely used by Peter Singer. Speciesism is related to the discrimination between species and is mostly ascribed to mentioning the differences between human animals and non- human animals. Speciesists give less moral deliberation to one species compared to others. The most used to justification they provide is that ‘not each species can serve the purpose of human existence on Earth (Singer, 1974)’. They also substantiate their arguments on the basis that some species have fewer powers and some have more. Also they believe, that considering such aspects, human-animal should make use of them. They quote such reasoning just to prove their arguments and Speciesists view about killing animal for food or killing them just to entertain their needs like leather and wool. These Speciesists argue that it is against morals to consider one animal less superior just for the reason that it has fewer capabilities, therefore its life has less value.

The arguments Singer provide just to substantiate his argument about racism or speciesism among animal lacks sense. For example, in light of each argument Singer has put forward, the human gives weight to their interests. Invalidating this point, one may need to focus over human’s segregation of society and the existing class divide. Human differentiates themselves in races which makes case for racism and some humans even consider other humans as inferior to others, which makes case for speciesism. Such division among humans serves their own benefit and makes much of their tasks easier, but how does this idea relate to animals? Singer has answered this question in some ways. For example, Singer base his argument on the idea of human conception of equality. Human considers females among them inferior and male as superiors, but still it appears as a not a justification for applying it over animals. Or if this division among human is morally or factually right, does it proves Singers’ a justification for the application of moral consideration upon animals.

## The idea of equality

Why the idea of equality is not an authentic argument offered by Singer. The concept of equality among humans is based on their capabilities. We see that humans live in a different environment compared to non- humans. There are various facets which can relate the concept of equality among humans, similarly, there are roles and responsibilities upon which human substantiate the concept of equality. Singers’ argument is related to animal capabilities and how they may benefit human civilization. We observe that since ‘race’ or ‘sex’ cannot define the concept of equality, neither in humans and nor among non- humans, therefore it is true that some animals have more capability to help humans and some have not. Singer mentions that ‘a person’s sex is no guide to his or her ability (Singer, 1974)’. Another idea about equality is also misinterpreted, for example, when human says that ‘every human is equal’, it not relate to the general abilities of human living on the face of earth, rather this can be interpreted based on certain conditions.

Singers’ critique over the human’s conception of equality is so far based on morals and upon generic endowments. As the concept of equality among humans is dependent upon specific and not the general conditions, therefore, the concept of equality among animals is also based over such factors. For example, Einarsson argues that some animals may appear suitable in certain environment and some may not (Einarsson, 2003). Singer has generally considered the difference among animals as serving the interests of humanity, which is not right. It is the environment, human needs and specific human’s thought about that animal which defines its consumption. The discrimination of animals on the notion of equality serves the interests of humanity, which also remain prudent for animal. Singer’s argument ‘the segregation based on racism or speciesism is dangerous if are environmental in origin’ appear narrowly addressing the circumstances. For example, among the animals some can serve humans and some may not, and this all again depends upon the environmental settling they face interaction.

# Reflection

Considering Singer’s argument, it is right to opine that animal cruelty remains an issue of the contemporary world. Like many issues surrounding human civilization today, this issue also holds greater significance today. Before Singer, there was negligible literature suggesting animals after, but Singer has very narrowly worked over exploring different aspect of this problem. In his article he has elaborated in greater detail the instincts of many animals, he also elaborates how they use them when it comes with interaction to the non- human animals, but that too remains very thin in describing the relation of human and animals. I believe that since human and animals are the living creatures of this planet earth, but the difference naturally defined must be respected. For example, there happen to be many incidences where humans make use of animals to get their aims or to get their work done. It is prudent that if humans make use of them and in return feeds them or offer any other substantial thing.

But when it comes to morals or ethics there must be some distinction. Although I agree that each moral aspect and value must be kept alive in treating animals, I believe a safe distance, however, must be maintained. Humans may treat them to behave in a certain manner or in a definite way, but at the last hours, they still prefer their animal abilities over what they have been taught unnaturally or by making use of external environment. By referring to Singers’ examples of different animals like rats, owls, dogs, monkeys or cats, it is again right to augment that their cognitive abilities are more self- directing. Human use of these animals is quite a disturbing fact but some of them are beneficiaries of human kindness and affection too.

Lastly, the difference in speciesism is based on certain human-driven norms, which may be false, but they remain imparting. Singers’ arguments throughout the article have remained concerns about the treatment of animals. It is all the way right since it encompasses human manners and his attitude with animals, but different in species, however, effects the use of animal products. Human tends to build relations with animals of affectionate nature which generally defines human interaction with animals.