

Business Ethics (MGT610)

Assignment No.01

Question No:1

a) How does utilitarianism guide decision-making in the case of the affordable housing dilemma? Discuss the key ethical considerations involved.

Utilitarianism provides a framework for decision-making in the case of the affordable housing dilemma by focusing on maximizing overall happiness and well-being. The key ethical considerations involved can be analysed in the following manner:

1. **The Principle of Greatest Happiness:** Utilitarianism prioritizes the greatest happiness for the greatest number of individuals. In this case, the well-being of low-income families should be the primary consideration. Constructing high-rise apartment buildings aligns with this principle by providing affordable housing options and improving the overall well-being of low-income families.
2. **Fairness and Justice:** Utilitarianism raises questions of fairness and justice. Displacing the existing low-income community for upscale condominiums could perpetuate social inequalities and disproportionately impact vulnerable populations. Constructing affordable housing promotes fairness and justice by addressing the housing needs of those who are poor. It ensures that everyone has an equal opportunity to access safe and affordable housing.
3. **Long-Term Consequences:** Utilitarianism requires considering the long-term consequences of actions. Providing affordable housing options can contribute to social stability, improved educational opportunities for children, and enhanced community cohesion. These positive outcomes align with the long-term well-being and happiness of the affected individuals. By prioritizing the long-term consequences, utilitarianism guides decision-making towards sustainable and beneficial solutions.

Considering these ethical considerations, utilitarianism supports the option of constructing high-rise apartment buildings in the low-income neighbourhood. This option maximizes overall happiness by addressing the urgent need for affordable housing, promoting fairness and justice, and leading to positive long-term consequences. It considers the well-being of low-income families, the current residents of the neighbourhood, and the interests of advocacy groups focused on housing rights and social justice.

Utilitarianism also acknowledges the concerns of developers and investors interested in high-rise apartments or upscale condominiums. However, it encourages finding alternative ways to accommodate their interests while prioritizing the well-being of low-income families and ensuring fairness in the distribution of resources.

Question No:2

b) Assess the potential consequences of building upscale condominiums for the low-income community. How does utilitarianism address the ethical concerns in this scenario?

Building upscale condominiums in the low-income community can have several potential consequences for the low-income residents, and utilitarianism helps address the ethical concerns associated with these consequences. Here's an assessment of the potential consequences and how utilitarianism addresses them:

1. **Displacement of Low-Income Residents:** Building upscale condominiums may lead to the displacement of the current low-income residents. This can disrupt their lives and pose challenges in finding affordable housing elsewhere. Utilitarianism recognizes the negative impact on the well-being and happiness of the low-income families and prioritizes their interests. It highlights the importance of providing affordable housing options to meet their needs.
2. **Exacerbation of Social Inequalities:** Introducing upscale condominiums can perpetuate social inequalities within the community. It may lead to the segregation of wealthy residents and further marginalize low-income families. Utilitarianism emphasizes fairness and justice, and in this context, it calls for addressing the housing needs of those who are poor. By prioritizing the well-being of low-income families, utilitarianism aims to mitigate social inequalities and ensure a more equitable distribution of resources.
3. **Impact on Community Dynamics:** The introduction of upscale condominiums may bring about changes in the neighbourhood's dynamics. It can lead to the displacement of local businesses, alter the social fabric, and weaken community cohesion. Utilitarianism considers the long-term consequences and community well-being. It encourages decision-makers to evaluate the potential negative impacts on the affected community and prioritize the overall happiness and stability of the community members.
4. **Economic Benefits:** Building upscale condominiums may attract wealthier residents and stimulate economic activity in the area. This can result in increased employment opportunities and economic growth. Utilitarianism recognizes the potential economic benefits but also emphasizes the need to balance them with the well-being of low-income families. It calls for a holistic assessment of the overall happiness of all individuals affected, considering both economic and social factors.

Utilitarianism, in addressing these ethical concerns, prioritizes the greatest happiness for the greatest number of individuals. It encourages decision-makers to consider the well-being of low-income families, promote fairness and justice, and evaluate the long-term consequences of their actions. In the case of building upscale condominiums, utilitarianism would require mitigating the potential negative consequences through alternative solutions that prioritize affordable housing options for low-income families while finding ways to accommodate the interests of developers and investors in a manner that aligns with the overall happiness and well-being of the affected individuals and the community as a whole.