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Review Article

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Character Determinism: A Contemporary Perspective in The Multicultural Society as An Antidote in Coping Mechanism

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ABSTRACT

Character determinism is a concept defined by a society towards an individual in an environment where he discharges his duties. Outcomes are often detrimental and occasionally pleasant and this happens when an individual in question is determined to make things happen for an entity in a positive direction. The analogy is that character determination in a negative phenomenon is rooted in jealousy and hate by individuals who place personal interests over the interests of an institution for fear that their agenda would not be realized. At times, the individual in question may not realise right from the word go that something sinister is occurring but with intuition it surfaces often too late to be reversed.

The paper seeks to create awareness among those who might find themselves as culprits to make informed choices before things get worse. To the communities perpetrating character determination in a more unpleasant way, the paper is a recipe for thinking otherwise.

A multifaceted literature review combined by hands on experience by the researcher was reviewed using qualitative methods.

Character determinism is real and occurs in both public and private institutions including faith-based ones. This is one of the factors that hinder development to take its course and if left unchecked the outcome may result into loss of potential man power, stagnation, frustrations and consequently loss of innocent lives.

The study concludes that in the event that one finds themselves in the situation that character determination is negatively directed at them, never, ever impose on people who do not want them so taking leave is but a desired option.

Keywords: Character Determinism, Jealousy, Culture, Environment, Institutions

Background

In life a lot happens either for good or worse as a social response to one's own character. Of course, some of the social outcomes could be detrimental and yet defined towards a wrong course of action. While it is a common tendency to do no harm going by medical ethics defined by hypocritic oath, motives lead by evil desires have challenged this understanding [1]. It is therefore important to be meticulous when demonstrating good intentions towards hostile environment and this does not negate one from doing good when needs be.

Character appears to be objective and temperament tends to define it making it expressive to the external environment, hence, both are useful in assessment regarding how one reacts to the environment. This is usually what aids the onlookers to easily define one as being good or not in their perspective.

What is character determinism? It is the idea that a person's actions and decisions are largely guided by their inherent character traits rather than random choice. Character determinism suggests that people behave in ways consistent with their established traits, values, beliefs, and temperament though often misunderstood. For example, an honest person is likely to return a lost wallet and be defined as a fool, while a highly anxious individual may interpret neutral events as threatening, reflecting

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how their character shapes responses to situations. Essentially, character acts as an internal compass guiding decisions and reactions. Much as character determination can be influenced by both internal and external factors, the individual responses to these factors matter, hence one's intelligence is vital. As such, the question of intelligence selection relates to wider issues concerning the genetic determinism of behavioural traits, i.e. alcoholism or substance abuse. A study done before, found that these problematic issues relate to wider assumptions that are made in order to put forward intelligence selection as a viable ethical option [2].

Character determinism is therefore misappropriately categorizes individuals as opposed to true personality that make them who they are. This therefore calls for intelligence, let alone wisdom to distinguish which of the external or internal forces need to be responded to. At times it is inevitable to exercise free will which is not easy at any given situation as established by Brücher & Gonther [3].

Factors Influencing Character Determinism

Character is shaped by a combination of **genetic, environmental, and experiential factors:**

Genetics and temperament influence innate tendencies and emotional responses. As individuals, we are what we are because of genetic predisposition which can hardly be taken away. This is a combination from genetic endowments from both parents depending on the genes that are dominant. The perceived domination of characters in a person does not exclude that the other genes from either parent are diminished, it only shows that these genes are not expressed but may be expressed in another offspring best known to nature itself when it takes its course.

Family upbringing and childhood experiences contribute to moral development and coping strategies. Suffice to say that societal predisposition has a great part to place as far definition of a character. The influence of a significant other cannot be undermined. This is because of the closeness and exertion of influence making the individual's closeness to the source be real to be identified with. For instance, in a culture where young ones are influenced to marry at a tender age such as below 20, as part of self-actualization, young people in such society may not view education as important since it delays them to meet societal demands [4,5].

Culture, society, and education provide norms, values, and behavioural expectations. This happens as both active and passive learning as one grows and interacts with the society. One of the trio acts as a catalyst that wolves from either side, for instance; education. Education could be formal or informal and the word is relative when used in literal sense, hence caution to be adhered to when talking about educated or uneducated. The fact is one may never had a chance of seeing a four-walled classroom and be superior in knowledge and wisdom than one who has been to a metropolitan higher place of learning commonly referred to a varsity. Therefore, the acquisition of culture, society and education cannot be underscored.

Trauma and adversity can create lasting patterns of thought and behaviour. This goes without saying as life threatening experiences tend to create long lasting impressions in an individual's life. The lasting impressions may result into a situation that is unpleasant such as depression, ill health or mental incapacitation with negative outcomes or even suicidal tendencies or death itself. Where possible, individuals subjected to this may require long term therapy as this may contribute to character determinism.

Repeated choices and habits reinforce character traits over time. For instance, a child who experiences constant criticism may develop perfectionism or self-doubt, which later affects relationships and decision-making. This may contribute to low self-esteem in that child as we are also what we are because of the society or environment by definition. Much as habits and choices are continuous, neutrality may play a role when reprimanding individuals later alone have a bearing on character determinism.

In this write up, the author focuses on environment and experience as factors that assist an individual to cope up with the unpleasant situation and if anything, leave the aggressive society of character determination in awe and melancholic behaviour. While, the aggrieved society tends to be in loss for the ill choices made towards character determinism, tends not to express the feelings outwardly but chronically justifies for the occurrence. This brings a disadvantage to the institution if at all the people were representing it.

Environment – in this context it is referring to the aggressive individuals or society in general at any given place. This could be referred to a place of work, church, village, school or related place where a group of people lives. This aggressive society surrounds the individual whose primary role determination is to make things happen in the positive direction. Persons with vision for an institution often are not understood especially among people whose primary role is to put their personal agenda first than that of the institution. These are the people who often infect others with lies against an innocent person and indeed they often succeed, only to realize too late that they were in the wrong or rather mislead by power hungry culprits. It is important to know that such people can even kill or bring the organization to disrepute, so caution must be taken when in such society. This is therefore a wake-up call for independent decision making at all levels to avoid preventable regrests.

Experience – in this context it is referring to an individual's level of maturity, achievement and capabilities to make things happen attracting envy, hate and ill consequences from the irrational and aggressive society. It is therefore a recipe for taking time to be aware of the situation so as to make informed decision. Trying to resist by remaining at a place where negative effects of character determinism point to that fact that you are not wanted is like trying 'to get water from the rock, if you were not Moses'. There is always a limit to which one can resist to an aggressive situation, where possible to take leave before the worse happens is advisable.

Environment

In a society where people of different backgrounds live, the expectations would be that a lot happens either positively, negatively or in between. The response to the environment could be determined by the amount of external exposure that has been faced over time. At times, one might have been exposed

extensively but chose to remain as before or there are people who may not have learned even after being exposed to a given body of knowledge. On the other hand, persistent exposure to the same environment tends to influence an individual or individuals to see the situation they are in as the utmost best over others.

For instance, a child who has been brought up in a small grass thatched hut in an impoverished society, to him, that is the best environment so far. To bring the point home, if many of those grass thatched huts are stationed together and the dwellers share ideologies of common interest, then it becomes a community. These groups of people tend to influence each other in many ways. On the other hand, there is a significant strength in these groups but the weakness cannot be underscored. Often the strength in such groups of people is in the negative direction aiming at bringing others down as commonly cited 'pulling others down'.

Eventually the dwellers become obsessive and protective with their environment and sometimes become defensive on matters that need not. Accepting new knowledge might be an obstacle to development, hence, challenging and worse still acquisition of change even to their advantage might be tantamount to sacrificial abattoir.

The situation might be life threatening if it happens that one of the dwellers whom they thought they knew well joins them with the new hat. This is likened with what is recorded in the bible John 1:46 'Can something good come from Nazareth?' Nathanael's sceptical question reflects Nazareth's low reputation in first century Galilee, yet the Gospel emphasizes that something profoundly good did come from there: Jesus of Nazareth, whom Philip invites Nathanael to "come and see." The question "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" expresses cultural prejudice, but the Gospel narrative overturns that assumption by presenting Jesus—Israel's Messiah—as the ultimate "good" emerging from an unlikely place.

This is applicable to character determinism; people are influenced to judge others based on what they know of them of the past not by what has been achieved overtime and what they are able to do. The common saying in Malawi dialect - Chichewa that 'sichimuyenera, chinamuthera mthupi' means 'the clothe that does not make him look well, wears off on him with time'. Literal translation 'what is yours is yours; no one can get it away from you'. This is to make mention that 'respect has to be given to whom it is due'. One might have come from an impoverished background but with time and opportunities might come out from that situation and become the cream of the society, it is therefore imperative to accept them and work with them to make the difference. If such individuals are ignored because of jealousy or ill hatred, people do so at their own peril.

Leave alone character determinism, let us face the reality. In life, it is important to accept certain situations as they come especially those beyond our control. Often this is something unequivocally significant and if it happens that you are one of the victims of character determinism, never mind, never look down upon self and do not worry, you have not done anything wrong, the situation dictates. If anything, you have acquired something, they do not have.

Worse still negative effects of character determination might come not only in a working situation or entity but it can also occur in families or faith-based institutions. In such places, where one undermines the other, it is also necessary to take time before reacting or else tide might reverse in an opposite direction in that one who is in the wrong might be in the right and vice versa. The analogy is to stay at piece with all and if this cannot be achieved why not take leave before violence, the worse or even loss of life happens?

Below are some practical tips to internalize and apply where possible to professionally address the negative effects of character determinism;

Mind your own business. Know who you are, where you are coming from, where you are at and where you are going. Distractors can hinder you from realizing your goals. It is not even easy at times since in such communities one might be viewed as a coward, easy goer or an idiot but in long run, patience pays.

Be emotionally intelligent. In a situation where someone does wrong things whilst they know they need not to do so, instead of blaming them just correct the situation by doing the right thing and report to them or not depending on how receptacle they are. This procedure works well particularly in a contemporary environment such as home where less people are involved, say with kids or spouses. However, it can be applied elsewhere.

Make decision with sober mind. Never, ever make decisions when you are angry, extremely happy, hungry or stressed. If it happens that you are in a valley that requires decision making, postpone it until such a time you are sobber. This will enable you to make rational decision and have no regrets.

Feed your mind with things that bring peace. Think good about yourself, others and the situation you are in regardless of the circumstances you are in. Important to have natural and neutral mind putting all preconceived ideas at bay, applying what we call 'methodological consideration'.

Choose carefully, where or who to get advice from as others may mislead you to something else. The fact is, get as many pieces of advice from many people as possible but take time to accept one and apply it because at the end of it all, you become responsible.

In an event, where you make a mistake with unpleasant outcomes, accept responsibility and work positively to address it. Never, ever blame or fail to forgive yourself.

Limitations

In any given task, there are challenges that are faced and, in most cases, it is normal. Where possible such bottle necks should be used as stepping stones for moving forward hence cherished when they are met. In this write up, pragmatically time constraint has certainly been one of the challenges faced during the process. However, the paper has the strength of informing potential culprits of character determinism, what it does to many people with good intention to make well informed decisions as they work with diverse cultures or communities worldwide.

Conclusions

Character determinism in the negative direction is rampant in many organizations and causes suffocation for an organization to flourish. The organized few selected individuals with lies to destroy others in a quest of ill motives are usually the causative agents. However, strategies envisaged by this paper are important to step away from those against good intention.

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