

Psychological haunting research paper examples

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Haunting is a common word bearing one or more meanings, depending on the context. One definition of haunting is continual memory to the mind that has a disturbing effect or arousal of strong emotions. These memories are unforgettable, and are commonly referred to as haunting memories. Second definition is recording of past event done on an environment like a household, battleground, or building. These recordings are capable of playing repeatedly when triggered in a manner similar to a film or a video. Psychologists believe that the presence of an individual can trigger playing back of these recordings. Details of how these recordings are made are not known. However, they are associated with deep emotional or traumatic events (Wagner 1). Otherness is defined as the state or quality of being others, dissimilar, different, or distinct in terms of appearance or character among other criteria (Merriam-Webster 1). This is an analyses of the social theory of otherness, psychological haunting, and the connection between haunting and otherness.

Psychological haunting

Some people often perceive apparitional experiences or are haunted by their past. Haunting by the past occurs when an individual experiences a psychological trauma. The psychological trauma occurs when damage happens to the brain as a result of distressing events. A traumatic event is a single experience, repeating, or persistent event that overwhelms a person's capacity to cope with, or incorporate ideas or emotions involved in the experience. The inability to cope or integrate with the experiences can be delayed for weeks, months, years or even decades. These experiences keep on re-occurring when triggered by similar scenarios by the individual who had the experience. The events that may lead to psychological trauma are; violation of an individual's rights or ideas, putting someone in a state of great confusion, and insecurity. It also can be caused by people or institutions that an individual depends on for survival. Other causes of psychological trauma include employment discernment, police inhumanness, bullying, brainwashing, poverty, verbal abuse, domestic violence, sexual violence, and disastrous events like volcanic outbursts and earthquakes. These traumatic events or experiences are perceived differently by different people, therefore individuals react differently.

Apparitional experience is an unusual quasi-perceptual experience. It is characterized by perceptions by an individual perceiving either living or nonliving objects without the presence of such objects within the vicinity of perception. The apparitions are experienced when an individual is awake. Therefore, they are not dreams. They are commonly referred to as ghosts. The word 'ghost' means perceptions of human beings dead, but does not include non-human beings and nonliving objects. Therefore, the term '

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apparitional experiences' is preferred in academic discussions. These apparitional experiences are as a result of human beings' ability to detect differences through electromagnetism in the environment. Therefore, in haunted areas there are high levels of electromagnetism that affects human beings. The response is manifested in form of unease feelings, standing of hair, or sensation of being watched. Some individuals with more ardent imagination may see things or even perceive audio effects in full apparition. Research done has ascertained that these anomalous experiences in haunted areas are caused by environmental factors, including the lighting stimuli. Therefore, they vary from one location to another. In addition, these apparitional experiences are not perceived by everyone and their degree of perception varies from one person to another (J. Harris 1).

Otherness

In any society there are differences of how people distinguish themselves from the others. There is representation of diverse groups of people within a society. There are the majority and the minority groups. Consequently, the different groups are controlled by the groups with bigger political power or the superior groups. These categories in a society lead to people grouping themselves into different social identities. The categories within a society are based on culture or ethnicity, class, and gender identities. These factors shape ideas of certain people associated with a group that distinguishes itself from the others. The social identities are established through social interaction with the people in the society. Through negotiation, agreement, and disagreement, people adjust their behavior to belong to their social group that they identify themselves with (Said 1).

Those with similar ideas associate with one another and differences occur among the groups. This leads to exclusion from others who do not share ideas or fulfill criteria required to belong to the social group. Just like membership of a certain club or organization, social groups within a society have specifications. People of a certain group must fulfill particular criteria, share similar ideas, and have similar character. There are no differences between groups and social identities. Through power, negotiations and relationships, an individual's social category is built. Individuals have choice on which category to belong to through what they believe and in. However, there are some groupings that occur naturally, such as family. Some people exclude themselves from others because of these groupings. This results to otherness that leads to national identities and races, as a result of skin color and families (Said 2).

Otherness theory

Theories of social determination can be divided into two. The first is functionalist or normative theory. According to this theory of social determination, there are pre-established roles within the community that deeply influence actions of an individual in the process of socialization. The individual will act according to these pre-determined roles that one is assigned by the society. The second is utilitarian or rational theory. In this theory, an individual rationally and autonomously chooses how to act according to his will. The individual reasons logically and his action will determine his or her social category in the society in the process of socialization. When aspiration of an individual fails to match with social expectations, there is a creation of a conflict. However, for there to be

harmony and perfect socialization the characteristics of an individual and the culture of the society must match. These match when an individual's role in the society matches with his or her aspirations. Education can serve to reduce the conflict and improve the process of socialization (Palacios 29).

Haunting in terms of otherness

There is a relationship between haunting and otherness. Individuals who pass through traumatic events are later haunted by these experiences. For example, those who may be sexually abused when young have a socialization problem. They will have difficulty with social determination, and therefore fail to recognize themselves with any social category. They will live as others because they have problems conforming social groupings within the society. This is because they are frequently haunted by the earlier traumatic events that affect their self esteem. Consequently, they cannot identify with any social group.

Another example of haunting experience associated with otherness is the holocaust. During the massacre of holocaust, propaganda had been spread about how the Jews in Germany caused the problem in the country during the Adolf Hitler era. The Jews were murdered and mistreated in large numbers with a few surviving. The killing was based on ' others' not part of the ordinary social category. There were segregations in terms of country of origin and those who survived are still haunted by the traumatic events that happened (Hamilton 2).

A past study was carried out to determine psychological status of Jewish survivor in different countries. The results reflect that the survivors of Holocaust residing in Israel had less post-traumatic signs compared to Jews

in other countries. The reason why those in Israel had better psychological well-being was that they associated themselves with their fellow ethnic individuals. They could integrate with the society and thus cope with the post traumatic events. Those in other countries still recognized themselves as others because they had problems of socialization in foreign countries not able to identify themselves with any social grouping. This act leads to reoccurrence of the traumatic experience that haunts them (Hamilton 3). The continued failure to identify with social groupings can trigger an individual's traumatic experience to recur. The Jews who settled in their mother countries had their roles fit perfectly with the expectations of their society; hence they had better social determination. This enabled them to concentrate on their families, and thus evaded traumatic haunting.

Conclusion

Haunting is condition in which past memory recurs continuously arousing deep emotions that have a disturbing effect. Haunting also can be referred to as the past events recordings that play back when triggered by humans. When these past recordings replay, there are changes in the electromagnetism detected by human brain. This high level of electromagnetism leads to apparitional experiences where an individual perceives inanimate or animate beings when they are absent. However, in extreme cases audio and visual effects are perceived. When an individual experiences traumatic events, he gets a psychological trauma. This leads to haunting. Otherness is the quality or state of being different, or distinct in terms of aspects such as appearance or characters of individuals. People identify themselves with groups in a society. This social identity results to

family, and nationalities. The continued failure to identify with social groupings can trigger an individual's traumatic experience to recur. People outside a specific group are referred to as others and could be haunted if exposed to traumatic experiences. On the other hand, people with better social identities cope better with traumatic experiences and consequently are less haunted by their past.

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