

# The relevance of darwinism in todays world philosophy essay



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This paper reflects the application, utility and the shortcomings of the “ Darwin’s theory of competition and survival of fittest” to the present scenario where sustainability is being given the prime importance. It will be describing the various applications of Darwin’s theory to the organisations and as well as to the technological developments. Firstly it will discuss some of the differences between the Darwin’s theory of competition and present theories on sustainability. Next we will move on to describing Darwin’s theory of genetic inheritance to an individual’s behaviour and its outcomes related to leadership and manager. And later on the theory of Social Darwinism is also discussed.

## **Introduction**

We have always been fascinated by the design and the processes of the natural ecosystem. There is always some amount of change which is occurring every second. From 18th century onwards the history of the world is well documented, and within these 200 years itself we have witnessed a lot of changes, whether it be in terms of physiology or in terms of behaviour. This is not only with respect to the human mankind but with respect to the whole world. To explain these processes we have a theory against which we don’t have any strong contradictions, i. e. the “ Theory of Evolution” given by Charles Darwin in 1858 in his book The Origin of Species. The theory of intelligent design has already been disposed by almost all the scientists of the world. And for those who still believe in this theory, they should understand that abiogenesis is chemistry; big bang is cosmology and evolution is biology, you cannot use one theory to explain the other. Charles Darwin’s theory is one of the best theories to explain evolutionary processes.

However The philosophy propagated by him can be questioned which talks about the competition against nature . According to him you have to continuously fight against the nature for survival, but if we apply those principles in today's world then this world might end within 20 years. We will have to go along with the nature to make this world peaceful. Some contrasts have been drawn in this paper on the negative and positive sides of the Darwin's theory.

## **Environmentalism versus sustainability**

The year 2009 marks the bicentennial anniversary of Charles Darwin's birth and the sesquicentennial anniversary of his book On the Origin of Species being published. One hundred fifty years have passed since the dawn of evolutionary science, and many are still fighting against it while others are working to prove it correct. It was Darwin that first directed our attention to nature and said " that is where we are from." As of today, the studies on the natural world have progressed a lot with better understanding about adaptation, genetic drift and mutation. We are becoming more and more environment friendly as Charles Darwin wanted it to be. However there is a lot of difference between environmentalism and sustainability. The present world wants sustainable solutions not environment friendly solutions. Here I will be contrasting some of the features between environmentalist views and sustainability views. As far as environmentalism is concerned it creates boundaries; for example we keep reminding ourselves don't tamper with nature or to quote from more general day to day life, we instruct children not to pluck leaves or flowers. On contrast sustainability creates opportunities; it creates a solution where one can actually benefit from nature without

exploiting it. Environmentalism protects legacy from the past whereas sustainability develops a future vision. Environmentalism often says ' NO' whereas sustainability attempts to say ' YES'. Environmentalism brings focus to separate set of overlooked values whereas sustainability tries to integrate and strike a balance between the separate set of values. Environmentalism wants to regulate and control the economy but sustainability transforms economy. Environmentalists ask to put a check on the technology developments but sustainable solutions ask for different solutions and they don't want to hinder that development. We have to look forward for sustainable solutions to have a better world. For example environmentalists say that we should produce lesser amount of energy and should cut down its consumption, whereas the sustainable solutions look forward to produce the same level of energy but using alternatives which don't harm the environment e. g.: solar energy.

## **Relation between Darwin's theory of inheritance and organisational behaviour**

It is well proven that genetic makeup of an individual can predict how a person is going to behave. We will be looking firstly at what the genetic makeup can predict about individuals behaviour and later on we will see how well the theories of Darwin apply to the current organisations. Darwinism can predict about general cognitive ability of a person and about his personality. It has been proved that general IQ ability of twins are almost similar but it fails to account for the fact that there are behavioural differences among twins in many cases and according to his genetic principles these differences should not have been there. For defining personality we will consider the big

five personality traits openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability [1]. The research has proved that some of the personality traits are substantially heritable. Also personality stability is also influenced by the genetic makeup of an individual. It appears that the genetic makeup of an individual has the potential to predict the unique characteristics about a person's behaviour.

The job satisfaction of an individual can also be predicted by the genetic makeup of an individual. A study has been done on predicting the job behaviour of an individual and its genetic makeup [2]. In the study, the authors have used job satisfaction reports which were collected from monozygotic twins that were brought up separately to prove that the genetic component affects substantially. They also predicted that variations among the genetic factors can actually explain the 30 percent of the variations in the job satisfaction because of the genetic makeup.

Even a person's propensity to leave job can be predicted on the genetic behaviour of an individual [2]. The most important trait of an individual with relation to organisational behaviour is leadership. Though many studies have already been done to predict leadership qualities of an individual on the basis of the genetic makeup but no strong inference from these studies have been drawn from them till now and it is poses a big challenge for the Darwin's theory which says that all major traits of the personality are dependent on the genetic makeup of an individual [3].

However the theories of Darwin can be verified fully once the scientists identify all the genes on the human genome and better genetic mapping

techniques are developed. It will help to advance our understanding of between-individual differences in organizational behaviour outcomes, such as leadership, motivation, and job performance.

Operational models and processes can be developed which can predict the organisational behaviour of an individual. The genetics have the potential to offer new insights into how an individual's behaviour can change with respect to a change in the external environment of the individual.

If we talk about organisations as a whole, then Darwinism will discourage the concept of teams. Also, it will promote competition within the teams whereas the organisations of today require that all the teams work to work towards a common goal, whereas Darwinism will promote personal interests of an individual and organisation first and thus creating conflicts. Symbiotic relationship was never promoted by Darwin. Though some argue it the other way round i. e. Darwin's theory actually help companies to survive the competition. It's necessary to understand that Darwin's theory is not true for all conditions.

## **Social Darwinism**

Social Darwinism is an application of the theory of natural selection and survival of the fittest to social, political, and economic issues. Social Darwinism follows the motto "strong only survives". This theory initially was used to promote the idea that the white European race was superior to others, and therefore they are destined to rule over the others. Now this initial application of the Darwin's principles signifies that how faulty these principles can be. However it is also argued by many of the scientists that it

is the misinterpretation of the Darwin's theories and there are no flaws associated with this theory as such. Though Darwin never promoted the ideologies of social Darwinism but people have been deriving all these ideas from the support of Darwin's theory. As Social Darwinism has many definitions, it is hard for someone to be either for or against it; some of the definitions oppose the others.

Some late nineteenth century philosophies described social Darwinism as preaching Nazism as well [4]. Evolution was linked with racialism and imperialism. The link of social Darwinism with Nazis created a severe backlash against social Darwinism. In the Nazi propaganda films it was shown that beetles fighting in a lab which propagated the theories of competition and applied the same to humans as well. The main problem with this theory was that it never discriminated between the animals and humans and considered them to be on the same platform. The theories of competition don't apply to the human organisational behaviour in the same manner. The human society needs to find a WIN-WIN situation rather than a WIN-LOSE situation. We are living in a civilised society not in a barbaric 5th century world.

Though social Darwinism had some positive aspects as well which can be applied to today's society as well. Giving alms to poor actually increases the number of beggars on the streets, which is discouraged by the principles of social Darwinism. Many of the big industrialists and big leaders actually believe that opening up of public universities and libraries will help people more. It will increase a sense of competition and will favour undeserving and deserving equally.

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## **Conclusion**

We have now started answering the questions that how the human race evolved, developed and reached this stage. For these questions Darwin's theories hold true but we cannot apply his theories to each and every dimension of the human life in the same manner. The world is growing at a fast pace and the sense of competition is intense, Darwin's theories need to be reformed in order to apply them to the present world. His genetic principles can predict a person's behaviour but not with 100 % confidence, hence further technological developments are necessary in this regard.