

Genetic testing at workplace case study

[Science](#), [Genetics](#)



Introduction

In the modern world, genetic testing at workplace is slowly trending towards becoming a controversial issue. Well from one perspective, genetic testing is perceived to be beneficial (Howard, 2011). For instance, through genetic testing organizations are able to determine side effects and illnesses in employees that might result from chemical exposure. However, there is still fear related to the testing outcome. In many articles that have previously researched on this topic, the utilitarian perspective seems to be supported. From this perspective, gene testing is highly disqualified as an invalid method of determining the hereditary diseases. Hence, gene testing has been discouraged at in some cases. However, from the deontological perspective, genetic testing would be perceived as a moral approach as long as it is properly utilized with control and regulated by appropriate agencies. From a beneficial perspective, it has been observed that it is possible for the appropriate steps to be taken to prevent the disease that has been uncovered because of the genetic knowledge. However, shying away from the genetic testing has been dominating the modern trend although this strategy might be perceived as beneficial. This is as a result of various fears. Among these fears is based on the fact that they are likely to be denied job opportunities as a result of unfolding mysteries about their health status. Therefore, the issue and its underlying effects bring fourth various controversial issues that are problematic to resolve. This article provides an analysis of the major concern about genetic testing at workplace.

Discussion

When asked of major concern pertaining to genetic testing at workplace, the preferable opinion would probably seem to favor the perspectives of deontological ethics. Based on this perspective, the judgment of the genetic testing results is based on the adherence to specifically laid guidelines and principles. From the utilitarian ethics, this unfolds a stark contrast. This perspective is based on the argument that the selection of the best choice should be based on the fact that is highly beneficial to a high number of people (Anders & Sven, 2003). From the argument developed by Anders and Sven (2003), this perspective is perceived to be morally wrong and selfish based on the fact that it allows carrying of gene testing at workplace mainly without ensuring that the tested person is consulted. For instance, consider the famous legal proceeding between the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) versus the Northern Santa Fe Railroad (Howard, 2011). In this case, EEOC represented the employees in the Fe Railroad who had secretly been tested to verify if they contained a genetic disease. This is actually one of many authority miscarriages that have ever been imagined because the workers were never made aware that they were participants of a genetic screening procedure.

Arguing from Ravi and Christopher (2003) perspective, genetic testing is obviously perceived to have resulted in the improvement of lives. Ravi and Christopher (2003) explains that through some testing, it has been possible for diagnosis to be clarified coupled with providing directions to the physicians on the best available treatment. Through this approach, these

families have hence evaded the dilemma of bringing up children exposed to devastating conditions in addition to identification of the people prone to high risks for treatability of their conditions. For instance, through the aggressive nursing and abstraction of the growths in the colons for the people that have previously inherited the adenomatous polyposis gene, many lives have been saved as a result. However, the major concern here (based on the likelihood of using the personal genetic information) is that as a result penalty may be extended to various people by insurance carriers or businesses for the faults that may not be of their own. Besides autonomy respect and beneficence, justice is perceived to be the third main ethical principle when discussing about medicine principled issues. This concept is based on the argument that at one point, everyone should be an equal beneficiary of the medical genetics progress. This is in adherence with the deontological perspective of this concern: that this proceeding will be justified by the fact that it is morally right and its adoption is a correct stand. In addition as fellow human being, there is a responsibility of ensuring that the incredible technological breakthrough is beneficial to everyone from the genetic perspective (Simms, 1994). It is however very unfortunate to realize that some employment sectors together with the insurance carriers have often taken advantage of this privileged and private information at the disadvantage of employees.

Questionable is the modest concern of whether an individual found to possess the genetic disease should be penalized. According to the deontological ethicists, protection of the individuals with the mutation is

perceived to be everyone's responsibility as this has been perceived as morally acceptable deed to ensure that the unfortunate souls are protected (Howard, 2011).

My personal opinion on employment is that, it is important to understand whether employers need to obtain the delicate genetic information during hiring if the information might be helpful in establishing the dependability of the employees characterized with low absenteeism rate. Revisiting the case between Fe Railroad versus EEOC, the argument of the railroad was that the testing of the workers was carried out in the effort to determine if they had the carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) risk (Howard, 2011). This reasoning by Fe railroad was later to be ruled out as morally corrupt and dangerous since the court established no ideal connection between CTS development and genetic polymorphism. Some of these concept proponents have based their argument on the basis that for the small companies that have to cover the insurance expenditures for their employees, there is need to have access to the personal information. This is perceived to be an economical move towards ensuring that the hired employees in a company are healthy without any form of impairment that may be risky to their fellow employees. In these small organizations, there is in addition the fear of hiring employees that are likely to develop serious life threatening complications hence making the company to part with an enormous sum of money to cover for the insurance beyond the budget.

Currently in the United States, there has been an increasing need to ensure that a regulation is in place to evaluate the reliability and accuracy of the

genetic testing technique. Most of the laboratories that developed for the genetic testing are classified as services, with no regulation from the Food and Drug administration. Therefore, it is only in a few states that some regulatory guidelines have been established. Due to lack of government insight, this process is seen to be troublesome since marketing of these kits has been commenced by a handful of these companies to the public. Marketing has incorporated dubious claims that in addition to acting as a test for the disease, these kits also enhance customizing of the vitamins, medicine, and foods to the genetic makeup of every individual. In addition, there is also the fear that no genetic counseling is sought by the individuals purchasing these drugs on the interpretation of the results and best decisions in connection to their well-being. Therefore, assisting these individual is the ethical message because it will act as a honorable choice (Simms, 1994).

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the fact that science has advanced to intellectual promise and discovery, there is the need for the community to ensure that it is mindful of the impacts that are associated with the innovations. Moreover, there is need to encourage ethical organization that are increasingly voting to create legislation through which the employees moral rights are protected instead of violating them. Importantly, turning away from the satisfaction will be enhanced by ensuring that the personal information is not shared without consent of the “ patient.” In my concern, this will provide a solution to the threats that the employees are exposed to in the workplace.

References

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