



# **BASIC CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM**

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# DIFFERENT PERCEPTION ON ENVIRONMENT

**Fatalism:** Luck and chance determine the fortunes of man

- Environmental forces are unpredictable
- Environmental forces are uncontrollable
- Need luck to survive
- Attempts to change environment is waste of time

**Hierarchy:** Perception/culture based on promotion of order

- Everyone know their place in society
- People on lower rank have to obey those upper rank make laws and look after the interest of people
- Environment resource use should be limited to a specific limit
- Limits determined by upper ranks



# ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM

- ▶ Definition – the belief that the environment causes ALL cultural development.
  - Determinists believe that individual decisions and social conditions have virtually no impact on the way societies develop.
  - According to determinists, how well your society develops is 100% dependent on where you live.



# Determinism

- **Determinism** is the doctrine which stubbornly postulates that all events are the inevitable result of antecedent conditions and that the human being, in acts of apparent choice is the mechanical expression of his hereditary and past environment.
- Determinism emphasizes the **dominant influence** of **physical forces** in shaping man's characteristics and his modes of thought and life. According to this view, the mode of life of different people is enforced upon them by the character of their habitat.
- Nature determines the kind of work and the mode of life of any people. Man is given only a passive role. Ratzel was responsible for the development of the concepts of determinism, which was further expanded by Huntington.

# CORE THEMES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM

- ◉ Environment control human action and activities
- ◉ Human are badly dependent on the natural environment
- ◉ Human live at the mercy of environmental forces
- ◉ Human attitude, decision making are influenced by environment





# Environmental Determinism

- Similar environments produce similar cultures.
- **Example:** People who live near coasts focus on fishing and navigating waterways.



# Environmental Determinism

- ***Another example:*** Temperate (mild) climates produce inventive, industrious, and democratic societies that are most likely to control others.



# Climatological Determinism

## Definitions;

- Also known as '**environmental determinism**'
- The view that the physical environment, rather than social conditions or individual decisions, determines the culture and development of a society.
- Climate is one of the physical characteristics that makes a strong impact on the psychological outlook of its inhabitants, which then spreads throughout the population.
- Linked to the behaviourist stimulus-response model of human behaviour, which states that humans simply react and adapt to external geographical and climatic events.

## Examples:

- Tropical climates were said to cause laziness, relaxed attitudes and promiscuity, while the frequent variability in the weather of the middle latitudes led to more determined and driven work ethics. Because these environmental influences operate slowly on human biology, it was important to trace the migrations of groups to see what environmental conditions they had evolved under.
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# ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM

## **Ellen Churchill (1919)**

Man is a product of the earth's surface. This means not merely that he is a child of the earth, dust of her dust, but that the earth has mothered him, fed him, set him tasks, directed his thoughts confronted him with difficulties that have strengthened his body and sharpened his wits, given him his problems of navigation or irrigation, and at the same time whispered hints for their solution. She has entered into his bone and tissue, into his mind and soul

## **Ellsworth Huntington (1879-1947)**

We are slowly realizing that character in the broad sense of all that pertains to industry, honesty, purity, intelligence, and strength of will is closely dependent upon the condition of the body. Each influences the other. Neither can be at its best while its companion is dragged down. The climate of many countries seems to be one of the great reasons why idleness, dishonesty, immorality, stupidity, and weakness of will prevail.

## OBJECTIONS TO DETERMINISM

- Man is not a robot without will of his own
- Man have been able to create his landscape out of the natural environment: roads, bridges, Settlements etc.
- Transformation of desert land to productive agricultue land in Isreal, Eygpt
- Development of mining complexes in Australian deserts
- Production of hydro-power
- Black skin people have lived in the U.S.A for about four generations without any change in their skin pigmentation. Similarly White skinned people have lived in hot areas of the world for more centuries without necessary becoming black.

