

# Argumentative essay on national pride a bad thing

[Psychology](#), [Success](#)



The societal idea of pride is a very mercurial and fascinating thing in modern culture. Pride, in and of itself, is an emotion one feels about themselves or anything they are affiliated with (Shariff & Tracy, 2009). In the context of individuals, pride comes as a result of interacting with other people, and is often indicative of people with higher social statuses or those who have received praise and fulfillment in their lives (Shariff & Tracy, 2009). Pride is "a complex emotion that is plainly expressed," and as such is an important visual method of interacting with others and informing our decision making (Tracy & Robins, p. 147). Pride transcends culture and society to form an inexorable part of the human condition; people want to feel good about the things they do or are affiliated with. In the context of the nation with which an individual affiliates, pride can be exhibited as nationalism - an immense love for (and faith in) one's home country. However, the issue of pride is often considered either a vice or a virtue; sometimes it is seen as self-confidence, and other times it is viewed as arrogance. Despite this dichotomy, the issue of national pride remains a controversial one. However, the notion of national pride is ultimately beneficial - nations and people taking pride in themselves allows them to seek new opportunities and initiatives, because they have the confidence to believe they can do these things.

The concept of national pride is somewhat complex; there is no single, definitive source or type of national pride to speak of (Andrews et al., 2008). People of a nation always have different experiences and exposures to national symbols and history which, when combined with their own opinions and family experiences, can shape the kinds of things that one can take

national pride in. For example, British students can either have a love of Britain's more traditional national history (e. g. unique British character as a world power during World Wars) or a love of Britain's multiculturalism (Andrews et al., 2008). It is also possible for a wide spectrum of things about a nation to be loved by its citizens; national pride is not conditional on a set number of events or aspects of said country.

With this in mind, the idea of national pride is a wonderful prospect. Pride, in and of itself, is one of the most important motivating social behaviors we have (Tracy & Robins, 2007). Pride is an emotion rewarded to us by the accomplishment of meaningful achievements and successes; we feel good because our situation is better, having done those things. " Pride is a cornerstone emotion that fuels several fundamental human pursuits: the desire to achieve; to attain power and status; to meet a romantic partner with high mate value; to feel good about oneself and one's social group; and to raise successful, intelligent, and well-behaved children" (Tracy & Robins, p. 147). All of these goals have to do with the human need to excel, and that extends to our " social group," which can include our home country. When one's country does something that one agrees with, the ensuing pride comes from feeling associated with that action, and feeling as though one played a part in it by extension. In this instance, the nation is an extension of self, which makes it all the more important to cultivate a strong, positive sense of national pride.

Given a nation with that strong sense of patriotism and national pride, its relationship with other nations can be heightened. Pride and the appearance

thereof can give those who witness this pride the impression of respect and success; if someone is proud of something, it is typically because it is good, and therefore others will also be impressed (O'Morain, 2011). This also speaks to likeability, and the capacity to assert oneself as a country on a multinational stage. A country with substantial pride in its abilities and people will be more eager to participate in world events, as well as secure the best possible quality of life for its citizens (O'Morain, 2011).

There are certainly arguments for the inability to swallow one's own pride and allow oneself to be humble, particularly from a nationalist point of view. In some cases, a country might do well to eschew the concept that they do not need help from anyone when its people and future face imminent danger. After the 2005 earthquake that devastated the Indian-controlled section of Kashmir, the government announced it would reject any offer for international aid in recovering from the disaster (Sengupta, 2005). Despite the 1300 fatalities in the area, and the tens of thousands of families who were displaced, India stated that " they have no need for the United Nations, nor foreign aid agencies," to help with the disaster (Sengupta, 2005).

At first glance, one wonders why they reject the offer of aid when it is provided freely. However, the issue of pride weighs heavily on the minds of Indians, who want to present themselves as a strong people from a strong country. " In short, India has been anxious to portray itself as a giver, rather than a receiver" (Sengupta, 2005). This perspective is a double-edged sword; India wants to show the world it can handle its own problems, but if it empirically cannot, it would be a foolish gamble to pretend that everything is

fine when tens of thousands of people are displaced and in need. In this extreme instance, the stubbornness often present in national pride can get in the way of real progress and improvement for a people.

Not only is stubbornness something to be concerned about, wounded pride can be a dangerous thing at times. When one's pride is wounded (either by someone downplaying an accomplishment or achieving it faster or better), it can lead to rash, emotional actions taken in a misguided attempt to regain that sense of pride. In cases of national pride or pride in a society or community, wounded pride can often lead to wars, terrorism or other conflicts (Tracy & Robins, 2007). With that in mind, it can often be quite hazardous to have pride, if only because of the consequences of our pride, and our ego, getting hurt.

With this in mind, how does one reconcile the idea of national pride being a good thing? This question can be answered by examining the different kinds of pride that exist in our lives. The concept of hubris, or arrogance, has seemingly soured the public on the concept of pride. To display any kind of pride at all likens the person feeling proud to the aforementioned example of India - someone obnoxiously blind to their own faults, carrying on convinced that everything is all right. " People who got too full of themselves seem to have been blinded by their own hubris with consequences we know all too well" (O'Morain, 2011). This denotes a different kind of national pride: a false pride that looks at their home nation with blind adoration to the detriment of outsiders. This leads to undue prejudice against those who are not from their nation - this can make the people of said nation (and the nation itself) less

well liked than those of more temperate, altruistically prideful countries (O'Morain, 2011).

The other side of the coin - displaying complete and utter humility - can also have the same effect of stagnating progress and furthering goals. In the case of Ireland, until recent years the Catholic society that dominated the country emphasized humility to the point of impotence. It was improper to take any kind of grand initiatives or pride in your work; " the important thing was not to entertain (at least openly) any notions of getting above your station in life and to make sure children had absorbed that lesson by the time they grew up" (O'Morain, 2011). This led to the Irish people beating themselves up socially and attempting to blame others for their mistakes; a distinct lack of pride (not just national, but personal) kept Ireland stagnant.

With that in mind, the only true solution to the problem of national pride is moderation. By demonstrating a healthy pride in oneself and one's nation, people can allow themselves the confidence to be more liked, to have the motivation and assuredness to accomplish more goals, and to throw their support behind their home nation. The positive effects of a healthy level of national pride must be cultivated if nations are to progress and prosper in an ideal way.

In conclusion, pride (specifically national pride) is considered to be a positive emotion to possess. Pride, as an emotion and state of feeling, is an important way to reward good behavior and hard work through a sense of accomplishment. Extended beyond the self to a national scale, the citizens of a nation can have sufficient faith in their country to grant the motivation and

willpower to accomplish goals as they are able. While there is the danger of pride turning into arrogance and stubbornness, leading nations to refuse help even when it is sorely needed, the application of moderate levels of pride can be beneficial to all involved. When the peoples of a nation take pride in themselves and their community, the country as a whole benefits from that level of directed effort. With the added prosperity of a nation, its people can feel better about the work they have accomplished, and thus an even-handed level of pride is maintained.

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