

# Analysing the virtue of patience philosophy essay



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In today's fast-paced world, where things happen with the click of a button, we are growing impatient. Gone are the days when people were patient enough to wait for days for the computer to produce the results, today we expect things to happen at the speed of thought. We want success, money, happiness instantly without waiting, but alas! Ask any successful person and you will know the virtue of patience.

Ancient wisdom like Bhagwat Gita has recognized the importance of patience through quotes like "Little by little, through patience and repeated effort, the mind will become stilled in the Self. If we examine ourself as a part of nature we will realize that even nature creates change very slowly and is extremely patient. Ralph Waldo Emerson perhaps said it best in one simple line: "Adopt the pace of nature, her secret is patience" – and that patience can improve life and bring it closer to perfection – if you understand nature and work with it patiently.

Nature exhibits patience in various forms. For example: considering the growth of seeds into trees – when we plant a seed and water it, it slowly turns into a flower and then into a fruit. The seed had to be planted, watered, and then be given time to grow into what it is meant to be.

Without prior efforts and in the absence of planting or watering or the nurturing of the seed, it would not have sprung above the surface. It could not develop into its current form without all that patience, time, and effort.

In order to be able to achieve success or any goals we set – we have to practice patience. Patience is different from waiting. Instead, we have to do the work first, lay the foundation, plant the seed, make sure the soil is right –

prepare get ready and then wait for all the elements to come into place before making the right decision that will drive us to greater success.

### Conceptual Framework

Definition: word web defines patience as Good-natured tolerance of delay or incompetence . Other sources like Webster define patience as patience is the state of endurance under difficult circumstances. It is also used to refer to the character trait of being steadfast.

From the above definitions we can deduce that patience is a state of persevering in case things take time or get delayed without negatively reacting or becoming sad or feeling provoked, or exhibiting patience when faced with difficulties which take a long time.

Scope: This study focuses on importance of patience on individual and group behavior and performance. Importance of patience will be studied in two dimensions, first is the patience of waiting for a certain time period to end. This is perhaps what we normally mean when we use the term patience.

Second, it is keeping one s mind free of distractions. It is perhaps only important when one is trying using one s mind on an important task that does not compel one s emotions.

Methodology: Individuals will be interviewed independently to access the implication of the patience in day to day life and performance professional life. Implications of patience on group performance would be projected based on the study and observations in general.

Five people will be separately interviewed with diverse profiles across age and profession. They include 3 students, one housewife and a bank officer. The reason for choosing people with different profile is to find out whether patience is a quality consistent across profession or does it vary across gender or work environment.

Review of Literature:

Patience: A Little Book of Inner Strength (Eknath Easwaran): the excerpts of the book giving its epitome are now quoted below-

Patience is the ornament of the brave, Easwaran's wise grandmother used to say. In relationships, patience is the mark of love. An experienced spiritual teacher who combines humor with practicality, Easwaran gives powerful insights and sometimes surprising advice for developing patience at home and at work. Stories offer quiet interludes throughout this little book.

Anecdotes about animals, sports stars, and happy family outings make these short, varied readings as entertaining as they are instructive. Gentle reminiscences of India, tales from Easwaran's Hindu heritage, and inspiration from Gandhi and the world's saints lift our spirits and give us courage. Just keep trying, Easwaran says, and you'll find there's no end to your patience no end to the wisdom, love, and compassion in your heart.

Economist Magazine

[http://www.economist.com/science/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=9898270:](http://www.economist.com/science/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9898270)

This article elaborates- Studies conducted to correlate subtle human traits such as patience and fairness with that to closest evolutionary relatives of

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human, apes such as chimpanzee. The article mentions that the essence of patience is the ability to delay the gratification of an appetite in favor of a greater ultimate reward. Past tests of the degree to which animals other than people can delay their gratification have focused on birds and monkeys. Both groups can delay gratification if a bigger reward is on offer, but only for a few seconds.

Human, All Too Human: in this paper, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche argued that -“ Being able to wait is so hard that the greatest poets did not disdain to make the inability to wait the theme of their poetry.” He notes that “ Passion will not wait”, and gives the example of cases of duels, in which the “ advising friends have to determine whether the parties involved might be able to wait a while longer. If they cannot, then a duel is reasonable [because]...to wait would be to continue suffering the horrible torture of offended honor.”

Patience and Religion: Source: Wikipedia. org: Patience is one of most important virtue as recognized by most of the important religions.

o Judaism: Patience and fortitude are prominent themes in Judaism. The Talmud extols patience as an important personal trait.

o Christianity: In the Christian religion, patience is considered as a very valuable virtue that it propagates people to imbibe. Increasing patience is viewed as the work of the Holy Ghost in the Christianity. This holy God who has accepted the gift of salvation. Patience is also regarded as one of the seven virtues in Christianity which are-

-alongside chastity,

-temperance,

-charity,

-diligence,

-kindness, and

-humility

o Islam: Patience in Islam is one of the best and most valuable virtues of life. Through patience, a Muslim believes that an individual can grow closer to Allah and thus attain true peace.

o Eastern Religion: In Buddhism, patience (Skt.: kshanti; Pali: khanti) is one of the “perfections” that a bodhisattva trains in and practices to realize perfect enlightenment also known as Bodhi.

Patience is also praised in Hinduism, particularly in the Bhagavad Gita. In both Hinduism and Buddhism there is a particular emphasis on meditation which leads to patience, and an effective and well-organized thought.

Healing Anger: The Power of Patience from a Buddhist Perspective: This book is written by Dalai Lama. In this book he has attempted to address the issue of anger. He argues that the issue of anger can be remedied through patience. He has suggested some meditation practices even for novice people. The book seems to be hard to follow if one is not much familiar with Buddhist scripture.

## Empirical Study and Generalization:

Data Collection method employed: Interview.

To study the implication of patience on individuals, I carried interview of individuals with different social and professional background. The interview consisted set of 10 questions and the answers were first recorded and then analysed to take cues and then finding the similarities and dissimilarities across the answers of the interviewees.

The 10 questions used for this study are given below-

Q1. Do you get fidgety if things that you want do not happen or take a lot of time to happen?

Q2. Why do you behave the way you do?

Q3. Are you patient in every situation alike or does your behavior depends on some factors?

Q4. Do you think being patient helps?

Q5. Whenever you are patient is it because you feel it will help make things right i. e. had you known that situation is surely going to worsen and you can't help in a situation will you still try to be patient?

Q6. Did you develop patience over the course of your life because of certain incidents/ experiences or have you always been patient

Q7. How do you react if someone is being impatient or restless in front of you?

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Q8. What is your impact on others when they behave impatiently, do you find success in convincing them about not being impatient?

Q9. Do you take any efforts to be more patient (like meditating, yoga etc?)

Q10. When are you normally more impatient? When anticipating good things or when you feel bad things may happen

### Findings of study and Generalization

Interviewee A: This person appears to be impatient; she understands the importance of patience and is ready to help others if they are impatient. She lacks the motivation to be patient but would like to learn techniques like yoga to get self control. She would need to learn meditation, self motivation to act patient in good and bad situation.

Interviewee B: This person appears more patient than the others. He has developed his patience over the course of life. He is firm believer in god and has learned to accept which are beyond control. He values personal relationships over materialism and hence whatever impatience he experiences is only confined to personal matters which are close to his heart.

Interviewee C: She practices yoga to gain self control. She has developed patience after shouldering the responsibility of younger siblings. She appears to accept good thing and do not show over enthusiasm. She needs to learn to help other impatient people. She knows her level of patience and has clear goals and targets.



Interviewee D: She being housewife has more care about family. She has accepted her role as homemaker and believes in letting others take the decision; this acceptance has made her more patient in non family matters.

Interviewee E: She gets impatient if her activities make trouble to others. She has followed mentor approach for encouragement. She shows acceptance for the things beyond control and tries to be aloof from them.

Generalizations-

Above analysis shows that people show various degree of patience. Their profession, experience, age and family has considerable impact on how they learn to accept the thing and get along with the problems.

There is awareness about the techniques to develop patience in all the age groups but people normally don't follow them as they don't get time or are unable to manage their time for it.

Personal problems have more impact on the level of patience and this trait appears to be common among respondents.

Similarly Bad incidents have more impact on patience than good . Mostly there is a willingness to help others in case of trouble.

I also deduced that normally patience is a trait that can be acquired and developed over the course of time. People find motivation to become patience on seeing the negative repercussions of being impatient that they experienced in their past or saw people experience in their past.

They also find motivation by looking at the positive effects that patience as a virtue brings along.

It was also seen that patient people are better at convincing others or making them feel calmer as compared to impatient people.

Lastly a surprising finding was that people normally behave patiently because they feel it will help them achieve their immediate goals and not because it is a part of their intricate nature. i. e the desire to be patient is more driven by its perceived benefits than by the fact that it is a established virtue.

Implication of Group Work:

Patience is one of the one of the most important virtue to possess. Patience can have positive impact on individual and hence group performance.

Being haste to get results hampers the ability of an individual to consider all the possible option for solution of a problem. It often leads to suboptimum choice and hence failure. Being patient does not means more time, but it s an emotional state wherein individual is not concerned about the quick output at cost of quality or effectiveness.

Patience is the ability to perceive hard enough till desired output is obtained. All the major scientific breakthroughs had lot of hard work and patience behind it.

Patience plays major role in negotiations, which demands a win-win situation for the negotiating parties.

Individuals need to develop patience by assessing their current level of patience. One needs to set the goals and work hard enough to achieve them.

Impatient people are often

- o Dissatisfied
  
- o Withdraw prematurely in jobs, relationships etc
  
- o Feel overwhelmed by the goals and lose motivation

When one grows patient stress is reduced and one enjoys the process of accomplishments without getting overwhelmed by the time. It makes individual to relax and develop healthy lifestyle and achieve effectively.

Individuals when work in group, the leader need to be patient and motivate the others to be patient in achieving group objectives. Impatient leader cause hasty actions by group which often is destructive and may cause delay or disorientation from group objectives. Patience is thus one of the most valuable qualities to possess for betterment of an individual and society.

Contribution to OB

Patience leads to a stable mind which is better at concentrating, and hence indirectly patience is related to a positive work performance.

Its impact on job performance and hence satisfaction makes it a very important topic of study from the point of view of organizational behaviour.

From this study, I have established that even impatient people perceive the value of being patient and that patience can be inculcated by various means

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like meditating, practicing yoga or by following positive reinforcement for people who are already patient.

This study is a contribution to OB as it forms a base which can be further built upon by conducting further research on effectiveness of the techniques to establish patience and how to maximize the gains or benefits that one derives out of being patient in a organization.

Conclusion:

Time is subjective. When one is one is enjoying the time flies. In suffering time seems forever and leads to impatience and grief. Patience makes one to learn acceptance and overcome the grief. Being patient can have positive results in ones professional, personal and spiritual life. Patience can be learnt through religious techniques such as meditation. Patience is in nature, look around in nature and observe how life takes form. And hence why should we be unnatural by following impatience when we can instead be patient and experience all the benefits associated with it.