

What is tolerance and how it affects us philosophy essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Tolerance can be simply stated as the ability to accept diversity and to live and let others live. It is the act of enduring practices that are not related to you or you don't approve of. A person having a high tolerance quotient would be able to practice a fair and objective behaviour towards those whose opinions differ from his opinions. By being tolerant, you are respecting and learning from others, valuing differences, bridging cultural gaps, rejecting unfair stereotypes, discovering common ground, and creating new bonds. Tolerance, in many ways, is the opposite of prejudice.

Accept all kinds of behaviors, is this what tolerance means? Of course not. Behaviors that disrespect others, like being mean or bullying, or behaviors like lying or stealing, should not be tolerated. Tolerance means to treating others the way you would like to be treated.

According to me, tolerance is essential to live a healthy life. We live in a world which is a potpourri of a rich blend of cultural traditions and this leads to the major differences among the people. Being an entity of this world, we are supposed to interact with people of differing cultures, ethnicities, nationalities, races and religions. Our circle of friends, schoolmates, college-mates, office colleagues and all people around us reflects the diversity around us. In short, success in today's world depends on being able to appreciate others work and being tolerant to the differences that co-exist.

Various facets of Tolerance

Spiritual tolerance

In Srimad Bhagvad Gita, Krishna distinguished the self from the subtle mental/emotional body. In doing so he spoke of tolerance as follows:

<https://assignbuster.com/what-is-tolerance-and-how-it-affects-us-philosophy-essay/>

2: 14. " O son of Kunti, happiness and distress are temporary experiences that arise from perception of the senses in conjunction with the mind. Heat, cold, pleasure, and pain come and go, and you, O descendent of Bharata, must learn to tolerate them."

Tolerance is required no matter how one lives, and tolerance is, after all, a virtue. Yet the virtues of tolerating are certainly greater when based on living in the bigger picture of life described in the sacred literature. The world of the mind is a small world. What is good for one may be experienced as bad for another; one's happiness is another's sadness. Ultimate reality is bigger than the mind, and this is what the sacred literature informs us about. The beginning of realizing and living in this bigger picture beyond the duality of sense perception is tolerance.

Religious Tolerance

Our country, India, is a melange of various people with different religions. For all of us to survive together peacefully, religious tolerance is of utmost importance.

Why are we Indians secular? This question becomes more demanding for an answer when we feel the heat of communal conflagrations. Edward Luce in his book, *In Spite of the Gods*, describes the modern, medieval and ancient meet in a country that is slowly shrugging off its traditional religion and caste-based divides to become more liberal. Luce describes India's complex tapestry of religion and caste and how it affects politics and development.

Racial Tolerance

In the book written by Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, he has discussed about the Tom Robinson's case. It was proved to everyone by Atticus in the courtroom that Tom Robinson was innocent. Even after being proved innocent, the jury announced him to be guilty because he was black.

Everyone knew what they were doing was wrong but no one chose to raise his voice for him because they didn't want to change their prejudiced ways.

In America, racial tolerance has become so important because of the humungous number of immigrants over there. That means that the economic future of the children of white Americans increasingly will depend on the talents of nonwhite Americans. If racial tolerance is not practiced over there, the U. S. will become a second-rate power. If they succeed in accepting the difference among the various races, America and all Americans will be enriched together.

Age Tolerance

Unscrupulous individualism, which seeks only one's own interests and leaves no room for solidarity, threatens the foundations of our community. Today's young generation, has the mentality of being much ahead of the older generations in all aspect. Because of it, there exists a lack of Age Intolerance in varied forms. Elderly people rarely report violence in the family and this result in a correspondingly high number of unrecorded cases. The spectrum of violence ranges from neglect and psychological ill-treatment, financial exploitation and restriction of freedom. The numerous number of old age homes, people being forced to take early retirements, age discrimination in

respect of the holding of public offices etc. shows the grave lack of Age tolerance in our society.

Gender Tolerance

While there are non-physical differences between men and women, there is little agreement as to what those differences are. In the book Gender Inequality and Women's Empowerment written by Pramanik, Rathindra Nath & Adhikary, Ashim, the author attempts to highlight the discrimination against women. In the urban areas, men do exhibit a high tolerance for women getting ahead of them in various arenas because of the respect that women have gained by all their achievements. But, in the urban areas, there exists high gender intolerance because of the inaccessibility of women to development facilities as well as their actual power positions in the society.

Affect of tolerance on any Organization

Tolerance is often learnt in subtle ways. Kids develop values by imitating the values of those they know the most. Parents can teach tolerance to their children and senior members of an organization can teach tolerance to their subordinates and vice versa by example. Talking to each other and respecting each other helps learn and teach about the values that each one of them has. Creating opportunities to play along with the usual official work is important as well. This lets everyone learn that everyone has something fruitful to contribute to each other.

Tolerance is not about tolerating unacceptable behavior. Tolerance means to understand that everyone deserves to be respected - and therefore should

treat each other respectfully. Tolerance, being an independent variable can have major impact on the dependent variables like productivity, absenteeism, turnover, deviant workplace behavior, OCB and Job Satisfaction. In an organization, lack of tolerance in the behavior among the colleagues, the behavior of the senior management to their junior employees and vice versa might lead to an environment that is not conducive for working. This might lead to decrease in productivity, increase in absenteeism, increase in turnover, increase in deviant workplace behavior, lower OCB and least job satisfaction.

When someone encourages a tolerant attitude, talks about their values, respects each other and treats others well, everyone else will follow in his footsteps.

Literature Review

Why the Nations Rage: Killing in the Name of God

by Christopher Catherwood

Religion is for the good for all, which is what everyone believes. But then, why in the name of religion do we see conflagrations all around. According to Christopher, it is religious nationalism. His argument is how people actually think of themselves, how they define themselves. Do they feel the environment in which they are staying is stable? When people feel their environment is economically and politically secure, their identity is also stable.

Having a secure identity influences how a group deals with internal minorities and dissent. If a group thinks it is politically secure and therefore secure with their self-identity, it is easier to tolerate the existence of minorities with different identities and different allegiances. This led to the Muslim tolerance of Jews and Christians - when Islam was predominant in the world, neither group was regarded as a threat, and because of that there was no reason for prejudice. Today, the status of religious minorities in the Middle East has changed drastically.

When it comes to determining the causes for terrorism, then, neither religion nor nationalist self-identification can be ignored. It isn't just religion that has resulted in violence. It is not just questions of national pride, because not all nationalist conflicts have resulted in violence. Instead, the way in which the two interact, results in unhealthy jingoism, worse ethnic identification and extreme religions. Nationalism and ethnicity create an identity while religion provides a explanation for a people's suffering, which leads to violent means for overcoming the humiliation and shame. If people understand this major working, they will be able to better understand the roots of terrorism caused by religion.

Catherwood's book is a nice source for the basic understanding of the violent religion and the intolerance among the various sects.

An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth

Gandhiji was a person who believed in ahimsa, love and tolerance and left us all an understanding for the dignity every man. In his life, he was always in

the search for truth. In the biography, ' My Experiments of the Truth', Gandhiji stressed his aim in life was to achieve truthfulness in thought, word and deed. Ahimsa, a form of tolerance, to him was the highest virtue. By non violence, Gandhi meant loving concern for all life. He believed that the search for truth could be possible only through tolerance and concern for others. He taught that to be non-violent required immense courage. He adopted Satyagraha based on principles of tolerance, courage, non-violence and truth. The book has revealed exceptional revelations of Gandhiji's life, his beliefs, his experiences and his career. Gandhiji's Autobiography gives a glimpse into the Indian culture and inspires us to live on path the towards Truth & Non violence, through tolerance.

ARTS-OF-LIVING: Ruut Veenhoven

The paper on art of living written by Ruut Veenhoven describes the capabilities of leading a good life. And there exists different views to what a good life is, the difference in capabilities has been discussed. Ultimately, the writer comes close to the notion that to lead a good life, you need to have a positive mental health.

The two views explained in the paper about the ways of living is the moralistic view and the hedonistic view. Other than that the aspect of Living up to the rules, Living up to an ideal, Living deliberately and Art of enjoying life have been described briefly. To cope up with the general problems in life, a person should be able to think of general capabilities like common sense, energy and some form of frustration tolerance. For the problem of living with rules, there are various aspects that need to be considered. When the rules are extreme, it is often described as the art of disciplining and it requires <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-tolerance-and-how-it-affects-us-philosophy-essay/>

overcoming the imperfection of the flesh. This requires determination and pain tolerance.

So Ruut Veenhoven in his writing has briefly touched upon how important tolerance is in transforming oneself to a better human-being and accepts a better art of living.

Empirical study to analyze tolerance characteristics in different age group

For the empirical study on the characteristic of tolerance that people exhibit, my approach has been to interview five set of people from different age group and different background. The first set consisting of children of the age of around 12 years, second group consisting of college going students of the age of around 20 years, third group consisting of working professionals in the age group of 25 - 30, fourth group consisting of housewives of the age above 30 and the final group consisting of people who are above the age of 50 and are well settled in their lives. The questions that I asked them tested their tolerance level. While asking the questions, I ensured that they were unaware of the fact that it is going to be used for this survey purpose. I interviewed around four to five people of each age group and I have listed down the general response for each specific age group below.

Interview excerpts:

Age group: 10 - 12 years, School going children.

Q. How would you react if someone talks negative about you? Will you be able to tolerate it?

Response: I will find him and hit him. Why should I tolerate someone talking like that about me?

Q. How will you react if your younger sister/brother snatches your hair?

Response: How dare she do that? I will snatch her hair too such that she never dares trying it again.

Q. Would you like to have a fair girl-friend or a dark girl-friend?

Response: Girls!! All are irritating. I don't want any girl friends.

Q. Are you comfortable to study with your enemy in your class? Will you be able to do any task collaborating with your enemy?

Response: Why should I even think of even doing anything with him? I won't talk to him.

Q. How would you react if your best friend does not approve of one of your ideas?

Response: Then he is not my best friend. I know, my best friend will approve of my idea.

Age group: 18 - 20 years, College going teenagers.

Q. How would you react if someone abuses you? Will you be able to tolerate it?

Response: I will abuse him back twice and then ask him why he abused me.

Why should I tolerate someone abusing me?

Q. How will you react if your younger sister/brother snatches your hair?

Response: I will hold her and block her from snatching my hair. Then will start playing with her/him.

Q. Would you like to have a fair girl-friend or a dark girl-friend?

Response: Obviously!!! I would like a fair girl friend, who looks like a film actress.

Q. Will you be comfortable to work with your enemy for your project? Will you be able to do any task collaborating with your enemy?

Response: No. I don't see a reason to work with my enemy. I have many other friends to work with.

Q. How would you react if your best friend does not approve of one of your ideas?

Response: Then I will prefer changing the topic and talk about something else. I will discuss my idea with someone who approve of my idea.

Age group: 25+ years, Office Professionals.

Q. How would you react if someone abuses you? Will you be able to tolerate it?

Response: Why would someone abuse me? Even if he does, I would like to ignore him.

Q. How will you react if your younger sister/brother takes out money from your purse without telling you?

Response: She/he would have needed it genuinely, so it doesn't matter. But, I will definitely like to know for what purpose he/she has taken it.

Q. Would you like to have a fair girl-friend or a dark girl-friend?

Response: If given a option, I would like to have a fair girl-friend.

Q. Will you be comfortable to work with your enemy for your project? Will you be able to do any task collaborating with your enemy?

Response: That would depend on what kind of task it is. If it requires my enemies expertise, then I will collaborate with him and complete the task.

Q. How would you react if your best friend does not approve of one of your ideas?

Response: I will ask him what is the problem with my idea and if he has any better ideas.

Age group: 30+ years, Housewives.

Q. How would you react if your husband abuses you? Will you be able to tolerate it?

Response: I won't be able to tolerate it. I would react back the same if there is no fault of mine.

Q. How will you react if your son takes out money from your purse without telling you?

Response: I would not tolerate it at all, if he takes money from my purse without telling me.

Q. If given a choice, would you like to have a fair husband or a dark husband?

Response: More than looks, understanding is what matters.

Q. Will you be comfortable to talk to one of your enemies, if by chance you meet her in a party and were asked to do something together?

Response: I won't have any problem with talking to her and completing the task but the acerbity in our relation will remain intact.

Q. How would you react if your husband does not approve of one of your ideas?

Response: I will ask him what the problem with my idea is and have a discussion over it. Then will judiciously decide what could be a better idea.

Age group: 50+ years, well settled with their office life as well as family life.

Q. How would you react if someone abuses you? Will you be able to tolerate it?

Response: I don't see any reason for anyone abusing me. Still I would like to know what is the reason for someone behaving with me in that manner.

Q. How will you react if your son takes out money from your purse without telling you?

Response: I would talk to him for what reason he took the money and if it is for some legitimate reason, then I won't have any problem.

Q. If given a choice, would you like to have a fair wife or a dark wife?

Response: Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. More than the skin colour, what matters is the compatibility.

Q. Will you be comfortable to talk to one of your enemies, if you did not have any other choice? Will you be able to tolerate him?

Response: I won't have any problem with talking to him. There nothing to gain from any enmity, so I won't have any problem with tolerating or talking with him.

Q. How would you react if your best friend does not approve of one of your ideas?

Response: Best friends are for making you think more on your ideas and come up with the best ideas. I would encourage my friend to interject all the ideas I come up with so that I can finally have the best idea with me.

Analysis of the empirical study

For doing the analysis on the varied tolerance levels in different people, I have taken the sample set which includes people of different age groups and different backgrounds. This sample set relates to people with different level of experience in their lives and different maturity level. The responses given above are the general response that does not mean that all the school going children I interviewed gave the same response. The responses given are the ones which was the general response by the group.

By observing the general responses given by the school going children we can make an inference that they have the least tolerance level. Children are not able to accept that someone abuses them, someone hurts them or talks negatively about them, they respond by retorting in the same manner. They exhibit the least tolerance to accept anything negative about them. They have least understanding of the colour differences that exists in our society along with that they generally exhibit high gender bias. It is because of the phase of their life they are going through. Children have the least collaborative skills; since they are averse of being with the people they dislike and do not accept any deviation from their way of thinking.

In case of the college going teenagers, the tolerance level are a little more developed compared to school going children but still a lot more progress is needed. Even college teenagers do not tolerate abuse or negative talks about them and prefer responding in a similar manner. They exhibit high skin colour bias; all of them prefer to have a fair skinned actress as their companions not trying to understand the aesthetic factor of being in a relationship. The college teenagers' exhibit being self-sufficient which is <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-tolerance-and-how-it-affects-us-philosophy-essay/>

good, but what they accompany along with it is the denigration of the ability of their counterparts. They don't prefer collaborating with the people they dislike for achieving better results for any task.

After gaining some work experience where you generally have to work in groups and realize the importance of collaboration, your tolerance level does improve. They do think more rationally compared to the above described samples. They generally don't revert back without analysing the situation they are in. This shows an improvement in their maturity level, but still they do exhibit a skin colour bias. Fair skin is what they still consider beautiful and prefer being with fair skinned girls. In case if they have to collaborate with people they dislike the most, for completing any critical task, they analyse the situation and decide if to join with them or not.

Housewives generally exhibit a high tolerance level towards their husbands because they know that for their conjugal bond to be sustainable, many adjustments are to be made with their partner. These days, these adjustments can be observed being exhibited from both sides which was not the case few decades before when there existed high levels of gender intolerance. Housewives cannot tolerate mischievous behaviour of their children because of the high expectation from them. Mothers want to see their children becoming an ideal person ahead in their lives. Housewives display decent collaborative skills and are open to a change in their idea.

People who are well settled with their office life as well as family life generally show a high level of maturity which in turn reflects in their high level of tolerance. If someone talks negatively about them, they prefer

knowing the reason for such negative talks and then try to settle it by talking with the concerned person. These people are the ones who are the least biased towards skin colour. They are able to tolerate varied kinds of situations as being involved with the people they dislike for completing any task. Because of having various experiences through their age, they have realised how important tolerance is for leading a hassle free life.