

IB TOK Essay

Sample

Citation Style:
APA

TOPIC:

Why is it so difficult to identify a clear line between accepted and disputed knowledge within a discipline?

written by Writing Metier

WRITING
METIER

YOU CAN ORDER A CUSTOM

**IB
TOK
ESSAY**

**AT OUR
WEBSITE:**

<https://writingmetier.com>

WRITING
METIER

TOK Sample Essay

Topic: “Why is it so difficult to identify a clear line between accepted and disputed knowledge within a discipline? Answer with reference to two disciplines, each taken from a different area of knowledge.”

Over the time period of their lives, human beings are exposed to many different things, and it is due to that that they are easily able to learn different things. By way of experience and theoretical learning, human beings are able to develop a sound understanding of things. It is this understanding that helps them grow and mature over the time period. This essay is one that talks about accepted and disputed knowledge. Accepted knowledge is the knowledge that is known to be widely agreed upon by most schools of thought, whereas disputed knowledge is the knowledge in which there are certain issues with regard to people disagreeing over it. This essay is one that talks about how it is now extremely difficult to distinguish between accepted and disputed knowledge. This mainly stems from the fact that there is a very fine line in different areas of knowledge that helps distinguish between the two. In line with this, reaching a consensus about knowledge within a certain discipline is indeed something that becomes very hard to do. The main knowledge question that I aim to answer as part of this research is ‘why exactly is it so difficult to differentiate between accepted and disputed knowledge in a particular discipline?’ To answer this, I shall be making use of two areas of knowledge which are natural sciences and religious knowledge systems.

When we talk about religious knowledge systems, it can be seen that religious knowledge is knowledge that is related to that of the unseen. Despite that, there are so many different schools of thought that have different opinions with regard to things. While they may worship the same god, so many differences lie within those areas of knowledge. That is what makes it very hard to look at this from the point of view of accepted and disputed knowledge. An example that can be seen here is that of the religion of Islam. Within the religion, there are so many different schools of thought like shias, Sunnis, ahmedis, Barelvis, etc. With all of these different schools of thought, what they believe in is also very different. So while they worship one god, their differences come in line with the sectoral differences they have (Hafez, 2018). So even within one religion, it becomes so hard to find out what

knowledge is widely accepted and what knowledge is disputed knowledge. With so many sectorial differences between the two, it becomes extremely difficult to agree upon which knowledge is disputed and which knowledge is accepted. Despite all of these branches of the same religion, it becomes hard to differentiate between them, which is the root cause of all issues here. The way of knowing that I have used to come to this conclusion is faith. Faith is something that doesn't require a lot of intervention, since it is something that is extremely personal to everyone. Even with the religion that I follow, I see that there are so many internal disputes between people of different schools of thought, that it becomes so hard to find out what the real situation is with regard to what different people think. For a layman, it can become very hard to find where the line is drawn between accepted and disputed knowledge.

A counterclaim to this can be seen in the fact that when we talk about religion, the essence of religion lies in belief that is strong enough to not be shaken by things. So, people who have a strong belief in their religion can easily understand the difference between right and wrong. This can easily be attributed to the knowledge they have gained with regard to things. These are people who are well-read, and who understand the dynamics of their own religion in the best of ways. It is seen that there are so many people around us who have beliefs that are very deep rooted. These people are the ones whose beliefs cannot be shaken at all, since they believe in religion with staunch effect and they believe that there can be no doubt when we talk about divinity. So for people who are staunch rooted believers, drawing the line between accepted and disputed knowledge is definitely something that they do not struggle with at all.

I will now be moving on to another area of knowledge: natural sciences. The knowledge question that I aim to answer here is how we can explain the difficulty that we face when we want to reach a scientific conclusion when trying to justify knowledge? Despite the fact that sciences as a subject is one that is backed by authentic claims, what can be seen is that there is so much dispute within this subject too. An example that we can see here is that of the theory of evolution. This theory was put forward by Charles Darwin, and it talks about how human beings evolved from apes. This means that the descent of human beings can be traced back to the ages of apes. It talks about how evolution happened from then on to us now being human beings, the type that we see today. While there is so much that is talked

about with regard to this, we can still see the debate that goes around with this theory. There are many people who do not agree with this because they are unable to draw a logical connection between how this evolution can possibly take place (Barras). They do try to understand, but they fail to be able to comprehend these things. They talk about the so many missing links in their theory. It is criticisms like these that weaken the foundation of such theories, further putting a strain on accepted and disputed knowledge, which is again something that tends to confuse people greatly. So from here, we can see how even areas of knowledge like the natural sciences can be heavily criticized. The way of knowing that I have used to come to this conclusion is reasoning. I read about the theory of evolution and the criticism of this theory and that is how I was able to understand this.

A counterclaim to this can be seen in the fact that there are so many theories of evolution that are given. These include the Lamarckism theory, Darwinism, Mutation Theory of Evolution, etc. The one thing that is common in all of these is there are many different factors that affect human evolution. That is why there are differences with regard to it. All of these have underlying assumptions that are different, and in line with what suits people, they are free to choose what goes with their beliefs. So it all depends on the way that people perceive things and the different explanations that they have about all of these then.

So, on the whole, what can be seen is that there are so many different schools of thought in different areas of knowledge that it makes it extremely hard to differentiate between things. The line between accepted and disputed knowledge becomes so blurred, that it leads to people becoming confused with things. It is only people whose belief system is strong and who have great command over knowledge who remain unshaken. The rest get confused and are unable to understand the real situation. Even when we talk about one area of knowledge, there are so many underlying beliefs in all of these that it becomes extremely hard to understand things with regard to that. So in line with all of this, we can conclude that accepted and disputed knowledge cannot be differentiated based on different factors. It depends entirely on the perceiver how they choose to see things.

References

Barras, C. (2017). We have still not found the missing link between us and apes.

Hafez, F. (2018). Schools of Thought in Islamophobia Studies: Prejudice, Racism, and Decoloniality. *islamophobia Studies Journal*.