

## ABSTRACT

Community Matters: How Social Embeddedness influences Tolerance

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The act of having tolerance has become a topic that needs reconsidering because of the discrimination and prejudiced actions performed towards certain religions, homosexuals, and various ethnic and racial groups that have occurred in America. It is known that these acts are not performed by all Americans but by small numbers in American society. Using Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis on the community level, the present study seeks to understand what makes an individual more tolerant of others through the lens of social embeddedness. Tolerance is a general measure that combines numerous types of individuals in the variable. A total of five social embeddedness measures were included in the model. Using measures of social embeddedness, the study expects employing ordinary least square regression models that those who have more levels of social embeddedness will be more tolerant of others than those with none or little levels of social embeddedness.

Tolerance and Social Embeddedness

by

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A Thesis

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

Tolerance is a topic in sociology that needs revisiting. Tolerance can be defined differently by a number of disciplines. One general definition is the understanding or engagement for beliefs or practices different from or conflicting with one's own beliefs or attitudes. Researchers have found that tolerance can be defined as the valuing and celebrating of difference, the absence of prejudice, and the putting up with something that one disapproves of or is prejudiced against (Robinson, Witenberg, & Sanson, 2001). In the present study tolerance is defined as the extent to which individuals feel warm or cold toward people groups of not like them. This definition is derived from the codebook used in the study.

In each definition above there is an implied negative emotion toward the out-group. Toleration is associated with disapproval: individuals only tolerate groups that they object to (Jones, 2006). If there was no negative view of the groups of our toleration, we would have no occasion to tolerate them (Jones, 2006). This study seeks to understand what influences individuals levels of tolerance.

To be tolerant of others requires commitment; tolerance is not just a virtue as it once was thought of in prior studies. It is the "deliberate choice not to interfere with conduct or beliefs with which one disapproves" (Hancock and Matthews, 2001, p.99). In this action, or "deliberate choice," there must be some sort of relationship between the person that is tolerant and the person being tolerated (Bannister & Kearns, 2013). The relationship is one where at least one individual is aware that they are different from the

other individual in the interaction. The commitment and act of tolerance can be one sided. The behaviors and beliefs that are to be tolerated must be considered important for both people involved (Galeotti, 2001). Overall, all Americans have likes and dislikes, but a large number do have a commitment to tolerance that is imperfect and limited, yet genuine (Sniderman, Tetlock, Glaser, Green, & Hout, 1989).

Because America is an ideally pluralistic society, the possibility that the beliefs and actions of others will adjust the way we view our culture that are unwanted (Weithman, 2004). This can be threatening by many people because the change occurs in the social world where we are comfortable (Weithman, 2004). If there is proper change in the mind of the individual then tolerance will occur. If not, intolerance will occur.

“Tolerance is vitally important because of the inevitability of diversity and the apparent inevitability of stereotyping, bias and prejudice. But discrimination and persecution are not inevitable. Tolerance keeps negative attitudes and beliefs from becoming negative actions (Vogt, 1997, p.xviii).”

Just as being tolerant requires action and commitment, being intolerant can also involve action and commitment. The negative actions mentioned above are acts of discrimination that stem from prejudices. In order to discriminate, one must be intolerant of the group that they are discriminating against. As tolerance increases individual’s prejudices and discriminating acts will decrease. Individuals can express either implicit or explicit prejudices (Whitley & Kite, 2009). Implicit prejudices can be difficult for individuals to describe or express to others but explicit prejudices are within an individual’s control. Individuals can suppress them or choose to be more tolerant of that group of people. Explicit prejudices are more directly linked to discrimination (Whitley & Kite, 2009).

Researchers have examined ways to reduce prejudices in our society. The contact theory developed by Gordon W. Allport (1954) and expanded by other researchers attempt to uncover ways to reduce discrimination. Using Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis on the community level, it is proposed that those who have contact with individuals not like them are more likely to be tolerant than those who do not have such contact. Individuals that are more involved in the community are more likely to encounter individuals that are not like them. They could encounter individuals with different religious views, political leanings, and sexual orientations. This contact, if meets the criteria outlined by Allport (1954) has positive effects and reduced prejudices and in the present study increase tolerances.

In the present study, social embeddedness is the extent to which an individual is implanted socially within the community in which they live. Social embeddedness is the mechanism through which the contact theory can occur. According to the contact theory, the closer one is to those not like them in a mutually beneficial way, the more tolerant of others they will be towards those not like them. Although not the only way to increase tolerance, social embeddedness is one way.

Individuals that are embedded in any organization are thought uphold the beliefs of that organization. The same should be said for those who are embedded into the community and community oriented organizations. Especially in community oriented organizations tolerance can be decreased because the organization is geared toward helping the community flourish by cooperation between members of the community.

The belief that social embeddedness affects tolerance comes from the theory that social embeddedness in the community assists individuals to be more committed to the



values of the groups of which they are involved (Marsden and Friedkin,1993). In most community organizations the values support building a better community. In order to achieve a better community, tolerance of individuals not like yourself is involved.

The present study seeks to understand what makes an individual more tolerant of others through the lens of social embeddedness. The study expects to find a positive correlation between tolerance and social embeddedness. The more dimensions of social embeddedness one reports, the higher on the tolerance scale that individual will be predicted to score. Tolerance is a general measure that combines numerous types of individuals in the variable: Muslims, Hispanic Americans, the wealthy, liberals, and others were included. A total of five social embeddedness measures were included in the model: volunteering, giving to charity, number of friends, group involvement, and generalized trust.

Using the above-mentioned measures of social embeddedness, the study expects that those who engage in the above social embeddedness measures will be more tolerant of others than those who do not. The data used to calculate the effects of social embeddedness on tolerance of others came from the Faith Matters Survey, conducted on behalf of Harvard University by the International Communications Research in 2006. The study uses the ordinary least squared model to complete this analysis, including various control measures.

The study further explores if these expected effects are found in solely women, men, Caucasian, and Minority Americans separately. There is prior knowledge that some demographic characteristics are correlated with tolerance. The present study seeks to discovery if these results are supported.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

Currently intolerant acts are performed towards certain religions, homosexuals, and various ethnic and racial groups in America. The most prominent acts of discrimination have occurred towards various ethnic groups. Examples include discrimination towards Muslims after the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, Hispanics immigrant workers, and homosexuals being denied rights in certain institutions in America. Americas have varying levels of tolerances and prejudices towards social groups in our society.

The literature states that there must be a way to increase tolerance in our society. The current study examines one possible way to reduce prejudices through social embeddedness. The literature will guide us through what it means to be tolerant and what affects tolerance in individuals. Next, the literature review will give an overview of the contact theory and how it relates to tolerance. Lastly, social embeddedness will be introduced, what social embeddedness is and how it is expected to increase tolerance in individuals.

#### *Tolerance*

Tolerance is understanding or engagement of beliefs or practices different from or conflicting with one's own beliefs or attitudes. Researchers have found that tolerance can be defined in numerous ways, which includes valuing and celebrating differences, the absence of prejudice, and putting up with something that one disapproves of or is

prejudiced against (Robinson et al., 2001). In the present study, tolerance is the extent to which respondents “feel warm” toward groups of individuals not like them; using a “feeling thermometer” to measure warmth or coldness toward different people groups.

The common link between each definition above is that the social group is one in which you do not belong. Tolerance has a way of supporting the boundaries of in-groups and out-groups in our society. In-groups are social groups in which an individual personally identifies with. Out-groups are social groups that an individual does not personally identify with. Both in-groups and out-groups are types of social groups and are formed most often around characteristics that cannot be changed such as, race, gender, and age cohorts. Groups can also be formed by voluntary membership such as a social club in a metropolitan city.

When we, as individuals, do not belong to a certain social group it can be easier for us to dislike that group or disapprove of them more readily. We only tolerate groups we object (Jones, 2006), therefore, toleration is associated with disapproval. If a negative view of the individuals of our toleration did not exist, we would have no occasion to tolerate them (Jones, 2006). A large number of American citizens, despite the array of likes and dislikes, have been found to have a commitment to tolerance, that is imperfect and limited yet genuine (Sniderman et al., 1989).

Toleration has moved from “old” meaning to the “new” meaning. The old meaning was centered around moral disagreements (Jones, 2006). The old definition of tolerance asks: “Should we allow people of other religions the right to practice freely?” or “Should African Americans be able to marry Caucasians?” New toleration is not concerned with liberties to certain groups, because this has already been achieved, but

rather equal recognition to those who carry these identities (Jones, 2006). In this setting recognition are essentially acknowledgements of the proper status of the person. New tolerance says that all people are “equally entitled to be taken into account in defining what our society is and equally entitled to participate in determining what it will become in the future” (Scanlon, 2006, p.190). Questions now ask: “Should I respect my homosexual neighbor?”

It is recognized that tolerance is a challenging concept to define. There are multiple dimensions and lens that it can be viewed through. Tolerance can be defined in a political stance (Eliseev & Ustinova, 2011; Froese, Bader, & Smith, 2008) or philosophical concept of moral virtue (Galeotti, 2001). A politically tolerant person believes that all civil liberties should be extended to all people groups even if their ideas are not consistent with your own (Froese et al., 2008). Those who believe that it is philosophical concept will say that tolerance is “sacrificing one’s moral beliefs for the sake of a higher principle” (Galeotti, 2001, p. 274). Both are correct and there are many more that can contribute to the dialogue on tolerance. The focus of this paper is narrower in that it focuses on tolerance as a scaled attitude toward specific people groups.

Research demonstrates that there are numerous ways not only to define tolerance but also ways to operationalize, or concretely measure, it. For example, a distinction can be made between positive and negative tolerance (Lofland, 1983). Positive tolerance is the ability to maintain a relationship with another and have a “mild appreciation” of their behavior and personal differences. Negative tolerance is “putting up with differences between individuals” (Lofland, 1983). Both types are beneficial in the community. Positive toleration can lead to friendships and negative toleration can lead to cooperation

between organizations for growth in the community. Positive and negative tolerance are used in the present study because of the use of the feeling thermometer. The feeling thermometer measures coldness and warmth toward a group, which can be seen as various levels of positive and negative tolerances.

The operationalization of intolerance is discrimination that stem from prejudices or intolerances. As tolerance increases prejudices and therefore discriminating acts will decrease. Prejudices can stem from emotional or gut reactions to the individual or the social group (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007). Prejudiced individuals can express either implicit or explicit prejudices (Whitley & Kite, 2009). Implicit prejudices can be difficult for individuals to describe or express to others but explicit prejudices are within an individual's control. Individuals can suppress explicit prejudices or choose to be more tolerant of that group of people. Explicit prejudices are more directly linked to discrimination (Whitley & Kite, 2009).

### *The Value of Tolerance*

In the school setting, there are clear benefits to reducing prejudices and increasing tolerance in students. Reductions in prejudices produce more positive relationships among diverse groups of students, but also greater learning, more frequent and accurate communication, better social perspective-taking, and greater mutual influence (Johnson & Johnson, 2000). When these behaviors are learned early on, children have more practice being tolerant and are able to suppress intolerant actions earlier on in life. This benefits the child but also the community as a whole; these lessons can be taken with the child throughout his/her lifetime into their communities.

Increasing tolerance in individuals is beneficial for the out-group as well. For individuals who experience intolerance there are real social and psychological consequences. Individuals that experience intolerance may develop *minority stress* caused by being in the out-group or having minority status. Minority stress occurs when stigma, prejudice, and discrimination create hostile and stressful social environments that later lead to mental health problems in the minority group. This stress is sometimes caused by a conflict between what the individual perceives their life to be and how others perceive their life (Meyer, 2003). Minority stress has been found in homosexual populations (Meyer, 2003), African American populations (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999), non-Caucasian minority freshman (Smedley, Myers, & Harrell, 1993).

There are three assumptions that can be drawn from those who experience minority stress. Minority stress is unique, chronic, and socially based. Minority stress is unique from other types of stress because it is additive to general stressors that are experienced by all people. Out-group individuals are required to adapt in ways in-groups members do not experience. Minority stress is chronic because it is related to social institutions and cultural experiences that are not dynamic in but rather relatively static in nature. Lastly being socially based sets minority stress apart, because it stems from social interactions that are not connected to other stressors such as, biological or genetic characteristics (Meyer, 2003). All three assumptions show that this is clearly a social countenance that can be reduced if tolerance can be increased among in-group members.

Some argue that the out-group cannot be prejudiced toward those in the in-group (Scheffler, 2012). In-group/out-group status can change depending on the setting. It has been found that that minority individuals can be intolerance towards one another (Jo,

1992). In communities that are consistently and historically one out-group, that out-group then becomes that in-group in that community setting. Intolerance plays out when other out-groups are introduced. More recently, it has been found that being territorial about your community does not relate to ethnic prejudices (Prezza, Zampatti, Pacilli, & Paoliello, 2008). The analysis, to be discussed later, will study the tolerance of minorities toward other groups.

In the present study tolerance is a general measure operationalized to include homosexuals, various races, liberals, conservatives, various religious, and economic positions within society. There are different factors that influence how and why Americans tolerant each group above. The literature review explains what factors influence Americans to be tolerant of these people groups separately below.

### *Tolerance of Homosexuals*

As homosexuals are consistently in the spot light of political agendas in America, there are stark differences in the amount of tolerance towards these individuals. Interpersonal contact with someone who is homosexual highly predicted attitudes towards homosexuals more than any other demographic characteristic, even among the highly religious (Herek & Glunt, 1993). In general, individuals with more contact with those that are not like them are more likely to tolerate those individuals (Pettigrew, 1998). As found in with other studies (Aguero, Bloch, & Byrne, 1984; Burdette et al., 2005; Herek & Capitano, 1995; Herek, 1984; Irwin & Thompson, 1978), those who are highly educated, politically liberal, female, and younger are more positive towards homosexuals. In addition heterosexual Americans that believe that sexual orientation is absolute and

cannot be changed are more tolerance than those who believe that homosexuality is a choice (Hegarty, 2002).

### *Tolerance of Race/Ethnicity*

Historically, racial tolerance has been an issue within American society. The first Americans had issues with Native Americans after their arrival. Fast forward a couple hundred years when Irish and Italian immigrants were not accepted into society. Currently, Mexican Americans are stigmatized as not being truly American. The ultimate act of intolerance is enslaving of African Americans for hundreds of years on American soil.

The racial composition of America is diverse; along with Caucasians and African Americans, other racial groups include Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans. Research shows that individualist cultures (e.g. Anglo Saxon American culture) have higher levels of interpersonal prejudices and collective cultures (e.g. most Asian and African cultures) have higher levels of intergroup prejudice (Fujimoto & Härtel, 2004). Collective cultures value the group more than the individual. Decisions are based on what is best for the group and not the individual in collective societies. In other words, a majority Anglo Saxon society such as America would have more interpersonal prejudices which would reduce tolerance of others. While some Asian and African cultures will have more intergroup prejudices. Studies have been performed that show racial intolerances of Caucasian Americans on other races but little research has been done the other way around. The present study will observe the tolerance levels of racial minorities towards other groups.



## *Tolerance of Religion*

The United States prides itself on the freedom of religion yet Christians and Non-Christians are often intolerant of one another. History has shown that certain religions that were once on the fringes of our society are now mostly accepted as the norm. Included in the groups that were once on the fringes are Catholics, Jews, and Mormons (Modood, 2003). Intolerance towards individuals in the Jewish faith is called anti-semitism. Anti-semitism was at its height in America between 1900 and 1924, intolerance led to discrimination in many social institutions at that time. The same is true for Catholics in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Catholicism and Judaism are now accepted as mainstream religions for the most part. There are still levels of intolerance towards Mormons in our society. This intolerance could be seen in the presidential election of 2012. Mitt Romney, the republican candidate, is a Mormon and there was some backlash toward him for this religion choice.

The number of individuals practicing some form of Non-Judeo-Christian faith has grown three to four fold from 1970 until 2000 (T. W. Smith, 2002). Despite this growth the total number of Buddhist, Muslims, Hindus, etc. is still minimal compared to Christians in American society. Muslims in America have been under scrutiny after the extremist attacks in September of 2001. Muslims have since then encountered individual and institutionalized discrimination.

There is a history of religious intolerance in America that continues to exist. For example the Sikh religion has grown in America but not all tolerance has been formed. As with the hate crime committed in the Sikh Temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin in 2012.

There were six Sikhs killed in the incident and national and cross-national politicians spoke out against such intolerance.

### *Tolerance of Income Groups*

Sociologists state that framing, which is a social construction of a social situation by media, can shape how the world is seen and then how individuals react to the world. It has been found that media frames and truly effects the way we view the wealthy and impoverished in our country (Kendall, 2011). Media places frames on how we view different classes of people: the upper class is often glorified despite the incidents in which they are accused of wrong doing (Kendall, 2011) and all other classes are viewed in less pleasant lights.

Research has shown that those who believe highly in the Protestant work ethic were the most against welfare payments (Furnham, 1982). These same people believed that unemployment was contributed to more individualized explanations (Furnham, 1982). Similar results were found in a study of undergraduate college students (Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001). Undergraduate students overestimate how many Americans are poor, believed to be because of the skewed definition of poverty (Cozzarelli et al., 2001). They also found that the attributions for poverty are related to American values like work ethic and a just world rather than socioeconomic differences. Stereotypes against the poor were found to be significantly more negative than those against the middle class (Cozzarelli et al., 2001).

Unlike attitudes towards the poor as discussed above, little research has been done on the attitudes individuals have towards the wealthy. Therefore, few conclusions can be made toward whether or not Americans will be more tolerant of the wealthy over the

poor or middle class. In the present study both measures are included in the dependent variable.

### *Tolerance of Liberal/Conservative*

Unlike most other characteristics in the model, the characteristic of being liberal or conservative is based on somewhat fluid symbols, meaning that the symbols can change as society around us changes. Liberalism is a philosophy centered around equality. While conservatism is a philosophy centered around tradition in social institutions. Liberalism and conservatism can be portrayed in political, religious, or social settings; for some this is one and the same. For example, someone who is liberal politically may believe that all people should be allowed the right to healthcare, but religiously be conservative and believe that woman cannot be preachers. Individuals that believe this way are fluid in their relationship with the continuum of liberalism and conservatism.

According to Brady & Sniderman, (1985), Americans are accurate at presuming the position liberals and conservative groups hold on certain issues. This means that stereotyping based on this one characteristic of an individual is easily done in American society. These stereotypes can in turn lead to intolerance of that group because they do not think or behave the way you do. In the present study respondents were allowed to define liberalism and conservatism on based on his/her own understanding of the concept.

### *Contact Theory*

Individuals that are more involved in the community are more likely to encounter individuals that are not like them. They could encounter individuals with different religious views, political leanings, and sexual orientations. This contact, if it meets the criteria outlined by Allport (1954), has positive effects and reduced prejudices and in the present study should increase tolerances. According to Allport (1954), the four criteria that increase tolerance and reduce prejudice in individuals are: 1) equal group status within the situation; 2) common goals; 3) intergroup cooperation; and 4) the support of authorities, law, or custom. To Allport, equal status must be held within the situation. For example, his research on World War II veterans showed that those who fought with individuals that were not like them had less discriminating thoughts towards the out-group when they returned home compared to those who did not go to war. In the World War II example, the common goal is winning the numerous battles in the war. The intergroup cooperation was the soldiers working together to fight the enemy. Lastly, member of the military forces had the support of the United States and those with higher ranks to work together, which fulfills the fourth requirement that Allport uses.

As another example, freshman students in the university setting meet new people and can become more tolerant of individuals using the contact hypothesis. Equal group status, the first criteria, is achieved because each person that enters is a freshman student and somewhat new to the campus setting. Each student has a common goal of passing classes and graduating with a Bachelor's degree; this is the second criterion outlined by Allport (1954). Intergroup cooperation, the third criteria, is satisfied because many times students work together on class projects or study for test together which allows them

cooperate with the groups they have formed. The last criteria of the contact theory, support of authorities, law, or custom; is met because each student has in some cases explicit support of faculty and staff and implicit support from the social norms of the college campus to be social with one another.

After more empirical evidence Pettigrew (1998) found that there is a fifth criteria of the contact thesis and influences not taken into account by Allport. The fifth criterion according to Pettigrew (1998) is that those in the situation should be presented opportunities to become friends. Friendship adds to the contact theory because it increases empathy and people are able to take the perspective of the out-group (Pettigrew, 2008) that they were not able to do before. Individual and societal level influences are not taken into account in the original, Allport version, of the theory. There is no mention of how space, that is the social setting in which the contact occurs, can affect the four criteria listed above. Pettigrew (1998) says that there must be an understanding of the society in which the contact is to take place, such as on the community level, to ensure that there are no conflicting views of the out-group in society.

The extended contact theory developed by Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp (1997) and supported by Turner, Hewstone, Voci, & Vonofakou (2008) indicates that friendships between people of in-group and out-group status provide reductions in prejudices (Pettigrew, 1997; Turner et al., 2008; Wright et al., 1997) using three mechanisms (Wright et al., 1997). The first is that the in-group member shows positive affect toward the out-group member which produces more tolerance of other in-group members. Secondly, the out-group member shows characteristics that combat the negative expectations of the in-group towards the in-group. The last mechanism is that

the out-group member through the closeness of the friendship leads to partial inclusion of the out-group member.

Further support for the contact thesis shows that superficial contact is not sufficient to reduce prejudices. When contact is brief and superficial negative intergroup attitudes can occur. Negative intergroup attitudes lessen and dissipate when at least one of the above criteria are put into practice (Liebkind, Haaramo, & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Lastly, contact theory works best in voluntary interactions. Meaning when individual are forced to interact with others it is better that it is in an environment where mutual respect can be built upon.

The original contact theory was formed as concept to explain and increase race relations in the United States. Since then, there have been replications and revisions of contact theory in and outside of the United States (Binder et al., 2009; Bullock, III, 1978; Emerson, Kimbro, & Yancey, 2002; Heitmeyer, 2004; Miller, 2002). It seems that the earlier the contact the better. It was found that previous exposure to interracial neighborhoods or schools increases one chances of having interracial friends, going to an interracial place of worship, or be married interracially (Emerson et al., 2002).

Race relations are not the only in-group/out-group relationships affected by the contact theory. There are proven to be age effects also with the contact theory. In preschoolers that were educated in an age integrated school that included the elderly were more positive towards the elderly than preschoolers that were not (Caspi, 1984). In addition, prejudices towards the homeless have been proven to be reduced by exposure and contact (Lee, Farrell, & Link, 2004). Using the same “feeling thermometer” rating as used in this study, contact with homosexual in non-southern states has been proven to

produce “warmer” attitudes towards lesbians and gays (Barth & Overby, 2003). These findings show in-group/out-group relations can be improved with the contact theory for in-group/out-group relationships other than race.

Like most other sociological theories, the effects of the contact hypothesis are limited in nature. The effects are observed mostly in the dominate group (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2005) or the in-group of the situation. The out-group rarely changes it’s attitudes towards the in-group. In addition, there is evidence that not all criteria have to be met for a change in attitude to occur in the in-group (Lee et al., 2004). There have been cases where the in-group is able to generate empathy without friendship, like in volunteering where attitude change can occur. Contact must be positive (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Negative contact such as intergroup anxiety can lead to the opposite effects of in-group/out-group tension. Lastly, certain groups of people are benefit more from the contact theory than others. Contact reduces prejudice but prejudice also reduced contact (Binder et al., 2009). Younger and more educated people are found to be affected more by the contact hypothesis (Heitmeyer, 2004). Furthermore certain categories of people, such as elderly and authoritarians, avoid contact with out-groups altogether (Heitmeyer, 2004).

### *Social Embeddedness*

Using the contact theory of social interaction, it is commonly understood that the closer one is to others not like them in a mutually beneficial way, the more tolerant of others they will towards those not like them. Social embeddedness is the mechanism through which such interaction can occur. In the present study, social embeddedness is extent to which an individual is implanted socially within the community in which they

live. In the scope of this paper volunteering, monetary giving to charity, the number of friends one has over to visit, group involvement, and trust are used as a proxy for social embeddedness. For example, an individual who volunteers at church or is a member of a social club is considered to be more socially embedded than individuals that are not.

Although not the first to introduce the term, Granovetter (1985) made embeddedness a scholarly topic of discussion in the essay *Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness*. In this essay, he portrays embeddedness as an economic term that relates economic action to the social structures surrounding it. He used the term to show economists that economic action is not separate from social relationships within society. Human action is “embedded in structures of social relations” (Granovetter, 1985). The original term relates to the present study because it is a foundation piece that explains that individuals are social beings that interact with our social environment.

Embeddedness is an integral part of life in society. Whatever activities and organizations we as individuals are embedded in, we embody. When individuals are embedded in the negative networks and organizations there are negative consequences associated with it. The same is true when individuals are embedded in positive networks and organizations. Individuals grow and learn with help from our surroundings.

The contact that occurs through social embeddedness is significant; merely hearing information is not enough to change attitudes. When a community of Caucasian, Roman Catholics were interviewed before and after hearing a sermon on racial injustice, there was no significant difference in their attitudes towards integration (Crawford,



1974). There must be active engagement to change attitudes. Social embeddedness is a measurable and concrete concept of active engagement.

Embeddedness can affect every part of our lives including religion. Individuals in religious circles have been found to stay in these circles because of their embeddedness within them not the previous thought of rational choice (Ellison, 1995). Despite whether the individual believed in the religion itself or not, they were found to stay apart of the group. The embeddedness and connection to the group makes them stay a part.

All of the above examples show that individuals that are embedded in a certain environment take on the goals and character of that environment. This means that when individuals are involved in community oriented activities, they are more likely to be community oriented and therefore, ideally be more tolerant of those within the community.

One mechanism that allows social embeddedness to change attitudes is social influence. Social influence occurs when conformity, compliance, or obedience occur in a social situation. Conformity refers to outside influences on individuals to behave in ways that are viewed as suitable in society and by distinct groups. Some people conform because that is the norm, as in the expected or desired behavior, for that setting. Compliance refers to the same pressure involved in conformity except the efforts are direct. Obedience occurs when one or more individuals are told to behave in a manner that is pleasing to another individual. When an individual is socially embedded into the community they are consistently engaging in one of the above actions. Individuals that are involved in groups or volunteer will comply or obey the rules of the organization. On

the other hand if an individual is involved in organizations that support hate and discrimination there can be an disposition toward intolerance.

The present research studies the effects of social embeddedness on tolerance broadly but also in differences between gender and race. There have been differences found of levels of social embeddedness based on race, with African Americans being more socially embedded than Caucasians in the community (Snowden, 2001). Further, using these results as a model, the present research seeks if this difference affects tolerance between races. The current study also seeks to understand if there is a difference based on gender.

### *Volunteering*

For the current research project volunteering is a representation of social embeddedness and can be defined as: *the unpaid work you've done to help people besides your family and friends or people you work with* (codebook). Researchers have found many benefits to volunteering on the volunteer (Wilson & Musick, 1999). One benefit found is citizenship. Those who volunteer help to build and maintain a civil society. Researchers say that the civil society is a place “where people feel free to organize groups engage in public debate, and where norms of mutual respect and toleration protect groups within the society” (Wilson & Musick, 1999). From this observation and benefit of volunteering, it would seem that those who volunteer are more likely to be more tolerant of other groups within the community.

A second benefit is the prevention of anti-social behavior by those who volunteer (Wilson & Musick, 1999). The reason outlined is that volunteering is somewhat of a catalysis for interpersonal trust, toleration, and empathy for other (Wilson & Musick,

1999). In this example a direct connection of volunteering and tolerance of others is made.

In order to volunteer, there must be some sort of capital present, human, social, or cultural. Different volunteer work calls for different capital within the individual (John Wilson & Musick, 1997). Differences in the rates of volunteerism can be attributed to the differences in self-understandings, human capital, and social resources to who volunteers, not age, gender and race (Wilson, 2000). Human capital aids in volunteering in the *dominant status model* for those who volunteer; the model states that people that have “higher-resources” compete better in the volunteer labor market because they have more knowledge, organizational skills, and discretionary time (D. H. Smith, 1994). Individuals that compete better in the market are able to gain the resources that come along with volunteering mentioned above.

### *Giving to Charity*

Giving to charity is not the same for all people. Some individuals conceptualize giving to charity as giving clothes, while other believe that giving time or money are giving to charity. Both are types of giving. In the scope of this study, giving to charity is measured as giving money *to non-religious charities, organizations, or causes* (codebook). Similar to volunteering, the amount of money given to charity requires capital, in this case financial capital. It should be included separately because there are groups of people that give momentarily but do not give time through volunteering.

Many studies examine the motivation of those who give to charity (Bennett, 2003; Furnham, 1995; Harbaugh, Mayr, & Burghart, 2007; Sargeant, Ford, & West, 2006; Sargeant, 1999; Yu-Kang Lee & Chun-Tuan Chang, 2007). Socioeconomic differences

(Bennett, 2003; Sargeant, 1999; Yu-Kang Lee & Chun-Tuan Chang, 2007), cohort effects (Sargeant, 1999; Yu-Kang Lee & Chun-Tuan Chang, 2007), and gender (Sargeant, 1999; Yu-Kang Lee & Chun-Tuan Chang, 2007) are some of the demographic variables that are associated with giving to charity. This study shows who give to charity, separately from those who volunteer, or how this group behaves in other areas of their lives as measured by levels of tolerance.

### *Friends*

Friendship has been used as a measure for social embeddedness by many scholars (Snowden, 2001; Stroebe, 2012; Wenger, Dykstra, Melkas, & Knipscheer, 2007). The number of friends one has increases the amount of time one spends with people and the number of organizations they are associated with (Pearce, 1993). Friendships tend to be more voluntary relationships compared to those with family members. According to Wenger et al.(2007), this implies that there are less external pressure to keep the relationship together. Informal interactions, such friendships, positively affect the amount that one volunteers (JohnMusick Wilson, 1998). Individuals with more friends have more opportunities to be influenced socially and conform or comply with those around them.

Sometimes our friends are very similar to us. In those settings the number of friends we have will reinforce our attitudes towards certain groups and individuals. As with social embeddedness in general, the networks in which people are involved in will affect the level of tolerance one has. The present study adds to the literature, as prior research is limited in at the relationship of the number of friends to tolerance. In addition, friendship is used as a representation for social embeddedness in this study.

### *Group Involvement*

In the community setting, various aspects of being socially embedded are active goal oriented efforts. For this reason, group involvement is used as one proxy for the contact theory and social embeddedness in the current study. When individuals are involved in community groups, they are actively promoting through their involvement commitment to the group's mission. Embeddedness in the community helps an individual be more committed to the values of the groups of which they are involved (Marsden and Friedkin, 1993). The member is frequently reminded of these values as they continue to be a part of the group and associate with others within the group (Hechter 1988; Marsden and Friedkin 1993). This closely relates to the view that common goals must be achieved by intergroup cooperation that does not have competition (Pettigrew, 1998). Individuals that are involved in more groups are more likely to volunteer because most organizations use volunteerism to gauge how committed the individual is to the organization as seen earlier those who volunteer are more likely to be tolerant of others. It is expected in the present study, that those who are involved in groups will be more tolerant of others.

Henderson-King & Kaleta (2000), found that college students who were affiliated with organizations on campus that focused on diversity were more likely to be more favorable towards Hispanics, Asians, African Americans, women and homosexuals. This study confirms, in undergraduate students, that social embeddedness within your community can and does have some effect on how individuals view others within our society. The present study seeks to confirm these findings for the general population.

## *Trust*

Trust can be conceptualized as “a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the word, promise, oral or written statement of another individual or group can be relied on,” as written by Julian Rotter (1980). This type of trust is known as generalized trust and is known to be relatively stable over time (Uslaner 2002). For the present study generalized trust is the measurement of trust used. Generalized trust benefits the community as a whole. In so doing, trust encourages solidarity, cohesion, consensus, and cooperation (Suttles 1968, Rotter 1980, Fukuyama 1995, Myszta 1996, Yamagishi 2001), which reduces transaction costs (Putnam 2000) and promotes health (Kawachi et al. 1997), happiness (Rotter 1980, Yamagishi 2001), safety (Sampson & Raudenbush 1999), the development of mutually beneficial, cooperative relationships (Cook et al. 2005), economic prosperity (Fukuyama 1995), and democracy (Brehm & Rahn 1997, Putnam 2000).

Usually, trust is measured through the interactions of two people. In the community setting, trust can be groups of people affected by a third- party. The community setting itself drew three conclusions when studying third-party relationships and trust. The first is that trust is associated with relationship strength (Burt & Knez, 1995). In the context of social embeddedness, the more embedded you are in the community the more likely you are to trust those within that community. The last conclusion states that: indirect relationships that occur between both parties are what increase or decrease trust between those two parties. In other words, mutual relationships between the third party and the dyad will produce positive effects and more trust. This means that all individuals involved, trust will increase. In the community setting,

individuals that are a part of out-groups could be friends with those in in-groups and then raise the trust between the groups.

The neighborhood context matters for the development of generalized trust. It allows for dissimilar neighbors to be included in social interaction that lead to knowledge-based trust, which lead to trusting those people (Smith 2010). Neighborhoods are where in-groups and out-groups interactions occur that shape whether one disposition is to trust or not (Smith 2010). It is expected that respondents that exhibit generalized trust will be more tolerant of others.

### *Hypotheses*

The present study seeks to understand how individual level tolerance is affected by the social embeddedness of the individual. The tolerance variable is created from all of the tolerance measures included above. There are a total of five social embeddedness measures that are included in the models for analysis. The literature review supports seven hypotheses:

H<sub>1</sub>: Individuals who volunteer will be more tolerant of others.

H<sub>2</sub>: Individuals who give to charity will be more tolerant of others.

H<sub>3</sub>: Individuals who have more friends will be more tolerant of others.

H<sub>4</sub>: Individuals who are involved in more community groups will be more tolerant of others.

H<sub>5</sub>: Individuals who trust more will be more tolerant of others.

H<sub>6</sub>: Women will be more tolerant of others than men.

H<sub>7</sub>: Minorities will be more tolerant of others than Caucasians.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Data and Methods

#### *Data Set*

The data used to assess how social embeddedness affects tolerance of others is from the Faith Matters Survey, conducted on behalf of Harvard University by the International Communications Research in 2006. The national survey interviewed 3,108 participants about their religious beliefs and habits, social and political engagement to aid researchers determine their relative stability among different sub-populations and as compared to nonreligious beliefs and behaviors. Data collection for the Faith Matters Survey was gathered from June 2006 to August 2006 based on random-digit dial (RDD) sample to achieve a national cross-section of respondents. The survey was administered in both English and Spanish using the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system to eliminate question bias. Respondents were not told the survey focuses on religious matters and were rewarded for their time.

#### *Tolerance Measure*

Based on the information presented in the literature review, differences are examined in what accounts for tolerance of other specific groups of people. Tolerance is being measured by “feeling” thermometers-cold to warm. The dependent variable was constructed using the average of thirteen “feeling” thermometers. Feeling thermometer are used to determine and compare respondent feeling towards a given group or issue. A rating of 0, very cold, indicates that a respondent does not like a given group or issue at



all; a rating of 100, very warm. The question was phrased: "I'd like to get your feelings toward a number of well-known groups. I'd like you to rate that group using something we call the feeling thermometer. How do you feel toward...?" The respondents were asked about: gay men and lesbians, that is, homosexuals? blacks? Caucasians? Asian Americans? Latinos or Hispanic Americans? Jews? Catholics? Muslims? Mormons? Poor people? Rich people? Conservatives? Liberals? The tolerance variable has a Cronbach alpha score of .89, with an overall mean of 53.95.

### *Social Embeddedness Measures*

There are five measures of social embeddedness constructed from the Faith Matters Survey. Volunteering is the first measure in the model. Volunteering is a dichotomous variable based on whether or not the respondent volunteered in the last 12 months. The question is phrased "Some people volunteer, others don't. Did you happen to volunteer in the past 12 months? By volunteering, I mean any unpaid work you've done to help people besides your family and friends or people you work with." The response choices are "No" coded as 0 or "Yes" coded as 1. "Don't know/No opinion" was eliminated from the measure.

The second independent variable is giving to charity and is a dichotomous variable based on whether or not the respondent gave money to charitable causes in the past 12 months. The question is phrased "Some people contribute money for a wide variety of causes while others don't. During the past 12 months, did you or your household happen to give any money to any charitable or religious cause?" The response choices are "No" coded as 0 or "Yes" coded as 1. "Don't know/No opinion" was eliminated from the measure.

The number of close friends respondents have is the third independent variable in the models. The survey question is phrased “Now, how about friends? About how many close friends do you have these days, if any? These are people you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, or call on for help. Would you say that you have . . .?” Respondents were given choices five choices on a scale. The choices were “No close friends” coded as 1, “1-2 close friends” coded as 2, “3-5 close friends” coded as 3, “6-10 close friends” coded as 4, “More than 10 close friends” coded as 5. The answer choices were recoded so that no close friends =0 and more than 10 close friends =4.

Social embeddedness can also be measured by group involvement. Group involvement is a created scale ranging from 0 to 6 depending on how many groups or clubs the respondent report being a part of. The group portion of the scale question asks “Have you been involved in the past 12 months with this kind of group. How about....” “A service, social welfare, or fraternal organization?;” “A professional, trade, farm, or business association?;” and “A neighborhood, ethnic or political association?” The responses were “No” coded as 0 and “Yes” coded as 1. The club portion of the question asks “About how many times in the past 12 months have you...” “attended a club meeting;” “attended any public meeting?;” “chaired a meeting or gave a presentation or speech?” These three questions were recoded into a dichotomous “No” coded as 0 and “Yes” coded as 1 to match the group portion of the scale. The newly created scale of group involvement has a Cronbach alpha score of .659.

Generalized trust is the last social embeddedness measure examined.

Respondents were asked “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” The responses were

1= “People can be trusted,” 2= “You can’t be too careful,” and 3= “Depends.” The neutrality of “Depends” does not add to the analysis and therefore was removed from the analysis for clearer interpretation.

### *Socioeconomic Status Measures*

Income is measured in categories with 1= “\$20,000 or less,” 2= “Over \$20,000 but less than \$30,000,” 3= “Over \$30,000 but less than \$40,000,” 4= “Less than \$40,000 unspecified,” 5= “Over \$40,000, but less than \$50,000,” 6= “Over \$50,000 but less than \$75,000,” 7= Over \$75,000 but less than \$100,000, 8= \$100,000 or more, and 9= “Over \$40,00 unspecified.” Categories 4 and 9 were removed from the analysis because it does not contribute to the overall analysis. The number of individuals in each category was minimal and therefore unnecessary to keep in the analysis. Due to this change, the data were reordered in the following manner: 1= “\$20,000 or less,” 2= “Over \$20,000 but less than \$30,000,” 3= “Over \$30,000 but less than \$40,000,” 4= “Over \$40,000, but less than \$50,000,” 5= “Over \$50,000 but less than \$75,000,” 6= Over \$75,000 but less than \$100,000, 7= \$100,000 or more.”

Education is measured in attainment categories where 1= “none, or grade 1-8”, 2= “High school incomplete (grades 9-11)”, 3= “High school graduate,” 4= “GED,” 5= “Business, technical, or vocational school after high school,” 6= “Some college,” 7= “College graduate,” and 8= “Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college.” For the purposes of this analysis, education was recoded into a dichotomous variable where 0= More than a high school diploma and 1= all else.

### *Control Measures*

The control measures in this study include: age, marital status, gender, race, the number of children the respondent has, whether or not the respondent lives in an urban area, region of county the respondent lives in, church attendance, political party, and whether or not the respondent owns a home.

Age is assessed by the categories “18-29”=1, “30-39”=2, “40-49”=3, “50-59”=4, “60-69”=5, and “70+”=6. Categories were chosen for this analysis based on the assumption that there may be generational effects on tolerance. Dichotomous variables were used for marital status (1=married), gender (1=male), race (1=Caucasian), region (1=South), urbanity (1=Urban), political party (1=democratic), and home ownership (1=own home).

The number of children in the home is also a dichotomous variable constructed from the question “How many children, aged 17 or younger, live in your household?” If the respondent answered 1 or more children, they were coded as 1. If the participant answered 0, they were coded at 0.

Church attendance is measured by the survey question “How often do you attend religious services?” Respondents had nine answer choices: “Several times a week,” “Every week,” “Nearly every week,” “2-3 times a week,” “about once a month,” “Several times a year,” “About once or twice a year,” “Less than once a year,” and “Never.” Responses were recoded to create a scale that ranges from 0-2. Answer choice “Never” was recoded to 0. Respondents that went to church between once a year and about once a month were recoded to 1. All those who go 2-3 times a month or more are recoded as 2.

In all variable cases mentioned in the control section answer choices “Don’t know/No opinion” or “No answer/refused” were recoded as missing variables.

### *Analytical Strategy*

This study first examines levels of tolerance by conducting a Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model. These models include the independent variables listed above being added and subtracted in various systematic ways within the model.

The same patterns from the first set of models was then repeated for smaller populations of women only, men only, Caucasian Americans only, and lastly minority Americans only. The purpose of the separate models is to examine any differences based on gender or race on tolerance and what variables recorded in the models contribute to these differences. All models are recorded in the result section, Chapter Four.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics- Independent Variables

Variable	N	Percent/Mean
Age	2951	
18-29		14.06%
30-39		15.15%
40-49		21.52%
50-59		20.77%
60-69		15.08%
70+		13.42%
Marital Status, Married=1	2995	55.26%
Gender, Male=1	3001	46.72%
Race, Caucasian=1	2957	73.82%
Children under 17, Children=1	2999	37.01%
Region, South=1	3001	36.02%
Urban, Urban=1	3001	77.91%
Church Attendance	3001	
More than Once a month		14.50%
Up to once a month		33.36%
Never		52.15%
Political Party, Democratic=1	3001	35.62%
Home Ownership, Own Home=1	2969	75.24%
<u>Socioeconomic</u>		
Income	2781	
Less than \$20,000		16.11%
\$20,000-\$30,000		16.11%
\$30,001-\$40,000		10.25%
\$40,001-\$50,000		10.64%
\$50,001-\$75,000		21.22%
\$75,001-\$100,000		10.86%
More than \$100,001		14.81%
Education, High School or More	3001	64.15%
<u>Social Embeddedness</u>		
Volunteering, Volunteered=1	2995	57.66%
Give to charity, Give to charity=1	2977	81.09%
Number of Close Friends	2987	
No close friends		4.25%
1-2 close friends		18.68%
3-5 close friends		41.71%
6-10 close friends		21.76%
More than 10 close friends		13.59%
Group Involvement, Range 0-6	1646	1.79
Trust, People can be trusted=1	2867	40.70%

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Results

Several ordinary least squares models were created in order to fully understand how social embeddedness affects tolerance of Americans. Table two include the entire population, table three include only women, table four include only men, table five include only Caucasian Americans, and lastly table six is Minority Americans. To better understand the results explanations will be given variable by variable rather than model by model starting with the control/demographic measures.

#### *Control Measures*

Age is the first variable in all of the models. In the entire population age is insignificant and in the negative direction, which suggest that there is a generations effect going on with older generations being less tolerant. The same is not true for women. Age is significant and positive in table three model one where no social embeddedness variables are present. Age becomes insignificant thereafter for women. Men are similar to the whole population in significance and direction of the variable. Age is negative and insignificant in all models except in table four model six and seven where age becomes significant. The difference in these models is the presence of the trust social embeddedness variable. When trust is added to the model the standardized beta of age is larger. Age has no effect based on race or ethnicity; this can be seen in tables five and six.

The second control variable placed in the models is marital status. In the total population marital status is negative and significant except in table two model seven. Marital status has no effect based on gender; this can be seen in tables three and four. Not surprisingly, Caucasian Americans perform similarly to the entire population, marriage is insignificant. For Minority Americans, marriage is significant. Those who are married are predicted to score from 3 to 4 points lower on the tolerance scale compared to those who are not married. This finding is significant at the .05 level in all models except table six model eight where it is significant at the .01 level.

Gender has a large effect on how tolerant individuals are. This effect is seen in table two. Women are expected to score at least 2.5 points higher than men on the tolerance scale. All of these are significant at the .001 level. A paired t-test was performed to check the validity of this finding between the intercepts in tables three and intercepts in table four. The results of the t-test show that women score higher on the tolerance scale consistently, significant at the .001 level. In tables five and six there are consistent results. For Caucasian Americans, women are predicted to score at least 2.2 points higher than men are all results are significant at the .01 level or higher. Minority women are predicted to score at least 3.2 points higher than minority men. All findings are significant at the .05 level or higher.

Race has a significant effect on tolerance also. In total population, Caucasian American are more tolerant of others than Minority Americans. Caucasian Americans are expected to score about 2 points higher than Minority Americans. This is seen in table two. In women, there is a similar pattern. In table three models four, five, eight, and nine Caucasian Americans are more tolerant than Minority Americans. This finding is



significant at the .05 level in each model. When men are compared to other men, the same pattern is seen. In each model Caucasian American males are expected to score higher on the tolerance scale than minority American men. These findings are significant at the .01 or .001 level. To check the validity of these results a paired t-test was performed between the intercepts of Caucasian American and Minority American tables similar to the t-test performed for gender. The results of the t-test are not consistent with those of the regression models. The t-test show that there is a significant difference in how tolerant Caucasian and Minority Americans are.

The next demographic variable included in the model is the presence of children under the age of 17 in the home. In the full population this variable is significant at the .05 level in table two models one, two, three, five, and nine. In these models the presents of children makes one significantly less tolerant by about 1.5 points on the scale. The presence of under aged children in the home is only significant in one other model in the research table three model one which is the base model in table three. The presence of children is significant at the .05 level. In all other models the presence of under aged children in the home is in the negative direction and insignificant.

In this study, region is always in the negative direction but not always significant. In actuality region is only significant in Caucasian men in table five models eight and nine. In these models there is only one social embeddedness measure in each of the models. These results make it hard to say that individuals that live in the south are less tolerant of others, as general stereotypes suggest.

Political party does effect in some populations how individuals score on the tolerance scale. In the entire population there is not effect based on political party. These

results are mirrored in the women and men populations. For Caucasian Americans, political party does matter. Those who consider themselves democrats are predicted to score higher on the tolerance scale by at least 1.5 points in all models except in table five model six. It seems that the effects of political party are washed out when all social embeddedness measures are included in the model. The opposite is true for Minority Americans. Minority Americans that self-chose democratic as their political status are predicted to score lower on the tolerance scale than all others by about 2.7 points. This finding is significant at .05 level only in table six models five, eight, and nine. It seems that the democratic label have different meaning to different populations.

The last demographic/control variable in the model is home ownership. In the total population, home ownership matters in at the .05 level in table two models one, two, eight, and nine. It seems that the effects on home ownership are washed out by other social embeddedness measures in the models. Home ownership is not significant in any other population represented in the models.

### *Socioeconomic Measures*

Next the socioeconomic variables income and education are included in the models. Income is significant at the .001 level and positive in the original models. For every level on income a respondent goes up they are predicated to score between .7 and 1 point higher on the tolerance scale. Income has similar effects on all other populations in the study except for men. In women, income is significant at the .001 level in all models. Each income category a respondent goes up they are predicted to score at least 1.3 points higher than the category below. In Caucasian Americans, income is predicted to increase score on the tolerance scale by at .4 points. For Minority Americans, income is

significant at the .01 level in all models. Respondents are expected to score at least 1.1 points higher for each income category they go up.

Education works in the positive direction in all models but does not have as consistently significant results as income. In the total population education is significant in table two models one, two, and eight. Like in previous models there may be a washing out effect when social embeddedness measures are added. The same exact pattern is found in women. Education is significant in the models with less social embeddedness measures included (table three models one, two, and eight). In model ten education is significant at the .01 level and women with more than a high school education are predicted to score 2.4 points higher than those with a high school education or less. In models eleven and seven the effect is significant at the .05 level. In men and Minority Americans education has no significant effect on tolerance. In Caucasian Americans education impacts seem to diminish when the loading of many social embeddedness measures.

#### *Social Embeddedness Measures*

Lastly, the social embeddedness measures are added in each model. Volunteerism is added first and as seen in table two, the complete population, that those who volunteered at least once in the past twelve months are predicted to score at least 2.1 points higher on the tolerance scale. This finding is significant at the .01 level in table two models five and six and at the .001 level in all other models. In women, volunteerism is not significant expect in table three model four at the .05 level. More women volunteer so there is less likely to be a difference in how women volunteerism affects tolerance. In men, as can be seen in table four; volunteerism is significant in every model that it is

present in. Men who volunteer when all other control variables are accounted for are estimated to score 3.3 points higher on the tolerance scale, significant at the .001 level. In the Caucasian American population it seems that those who volunteer are more tolerant than those who do not but only when other social embeddedness measures are not included in the model. As other measures are included, volunteerism fades away. This finding is only significant in table five models two through five. In the Minority American population, those who volunteer are expected to score at least 4.1 points higher on the tolerance scale. This finding is significant at least the .01 level in every model. It is safe to say that volunteerism is correlated with how tolerant one is of others in some form in every population.

In the total population, those who gave to charity at least once in the past twelve months are predicted at the .001 level to be more tolerant of others. Those who give to charity are estimated to score at least 2.8 points higher than those who do not give to charity as seen in table two. In women, although volunteerism is not always found to be always significant, giving to charity is. Women who give to charity are predicted to score higher on the tolerance scale by at least 2.8 points than those who do not. This finding is significant at the .01 or .05 level. The same is true for men and Caucasian Americans. In men, giving to charity is predicted to add at least 2.6 points more to the tolerance scale score and this finding is significant at the .05 level. Caucasian Americans that gave to charity are predicted at the .001 level to score at least 3.7 points higher than Caucasian Americans that do not give to charity. This same finding is not true for Minority Americans. Minority Americans that give to charity are predicted to score no different than those who give to charity.

The number of close friends one has effects how tolerant Americans are of others. This is seen in the total population. Every categorical increase in the number of friends one has they are predicted to increase on the tolerance scale by an estimated 1.4 points as seen in table two model eight. In every other model in the table, the number of close friends does follow the same pattern of being significant. In women, the number of friends one has effects how tolerant women are compared to other women in table three model eight when it is the only social embeddedness measure in the model. This significance does not show up in any other model, in the table. When men are compared to other men, patterns are similar to those of the total population. For every categorical increase in the number of friends men have they are predicted to score at least 1.5 points higher on the tolerance scale. All findings are significant at the .05 level or above. The number of friends one has similar affects Caucasian American as the total population. Every categorical increase causes an estimated 1 point increase in the amount Caucasian Americans tolerance score, significant at the .01 level in all models. The effect of friendships for minorities is similar as it for women. In table six, model six, minority Americans are expected to score 2 points higher for each categorical increase in the amount of friends one has. This effect seems to wash out when other social embeddedness measures are added to the model.

Group involvement has minimum effect on how tolerant Americans are towards other Americans. For the total population, men, and Caucasian Americans group involvement is significant when placed alone in the model. The effects are eliminated by other social embeddedness measures. Group involvement is not significant for in women and Minority Americans. Similar to the number of close friends this insignificance could

be attributed to the amount of groups women and minorities report to be in compared to other groups.

For all populations except Minority Americans, trust is predictor of tolerance of other individuals. In the total population, believing that people are able to be trusted is predicted to add 3 points to the tolerance score of that individual compared to those do hold this belief to be true. This finding is significant at the .001 level in both models. Women that believe others can be trusted are predicted to score about 2.2 points higher than women who do not believe this. This finding is significant at the .05 level. Men that trust are predicted to score 3.7 points higher at the .001 level of significance. Trust is significant at the .001 level for Caucasian Americans. Caucasian Americans are predicted to have 3.4 points higher when they believe that people can be trusted compared to Caucasian Americans who do not have this belief. Minority Americans are not only the only populations where there is no significance, but the coefficients are also the lowest of any population at 1.3 and 1.2. Minority Americans are less likely to trust overall than Caucasian Americans and this could be one possible explanation for the insignificance.

Table 2: OLS Regressions of the Tolerance of Individuals

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<u>Controls</u>									
Age	-0.137	-0.119	-0.206	-0.28	-0.279	-0.432	-0.437	-0.235	-0.107
Married	-1.255	-1.086	-1.067	-1.051	-1.04	-1.368	-1.383*	-1.312	-1.053
Gender	-2.618***	-2.572***	-2.533***	-2.688***	-2.747***	-2.875***	-2.810***	-2.747***	-2.77***
Race	2.871***	2.737***	2.595***	2.382**	2.528***	2.099**	1.981**	2.384**	3.168***
Number of Children	-1.475*	-1.516*	-1.459*	-1.375	-1.432*	-1.212	-1.171	-1.256	-1.436*
Region	-0.663	-0.822	-0.769	-0.68	-0.693	-0.872	-0.85	-0.626	-0.751
Urban	-0.384	0.045	-0.099	0.015	0.003	-0.146	-0.136	-0.191	-0.128
Church Attendance	0.252	-0.264	-0.772	-0.788	-0.837	-0.577	-0.55	0.106	-0.115
Political Party	0.599	0.632	0.631	0.65	0.591	0.706	0.769	0.554	0.598
Home Owner	1.767*	1.702*	1.473	1.417	1.425	1.466	1.464	1.840*	1.642*
<u>Socioeconomic</u>									
Income	0.976***	0.868***	0.752***	0.732***	0.720***	0.688***	0.694***	0.924***	0.865***
Education	2.024**	1.586*	1.286	1.316	0.977	0.864	1.144	1.923**	1.345
<u>Social Embeddedness</u>									
Volunteering		3.217***	2.793***	2.595***	2.254**	2.123**	2.365***		
Give to Charity			3.546***	3.372***	3.252***	2.869***	2.970***		
Number of Friends				1.029***	0.950**	0.779*	0.849**	1.352***	
Group Involvement					0.282	0.189			0.685***
Trust						3.085***	3.018***		
Intercept	48.843***	48.092***	47.446***	45.835***	46.026***	46.627***	46.442***	46.818***	48.367***
R- Square Value	0.048	0.056	0.062	0.0672	0.067	0.072	0.072	0.054	0.052
N	2729	2723	2713	2708	2673	2574	2605	2720	2691

Table 3: OLS Regressions of the Tolerance of Individuals for Women

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<u>Controls</u>									
Age	0.125***	0.091	0.041	0.012	0.059	-0.047	-0.098	0.084	0.146
Married	-1.568	-1.587	-1.476	-1.419	-1.385	-1.431	-1.49	-1.501	-1.439
Race	2.655	2.588*	2.344*	2.065	2.085	1.432	1.42	2.264*	2.667*
Number of Children	-1.525*	-1.645	-1.432	-1.227	-1.188	-0.85	-0.936	-1.278	-1.52
Region	-1.088	-1.163	-1.04	-1.005	-0.973	-0.838	-0.862	-1.053	-1.062
Urban	0.374	0.484	0.28	0.32	0.346	0.267	0.222	0.433	0.487
Church Attendance	-0.25	-0.495	-0.901	-0.986	-1.031	-0.809	-0.779	-0.406	-0.48
Political Party	0.381	0.426	0.446	0.445	0.325	0.194	0.34	0.372	0.224
Home Owner	1.03	0.946	0.769	0.683	0.611	0.802	0.876	0.926	0.996
<u>Socioeconomic</u>									
Income	1.337***	1.307***	1.191***	1.160***	1.186***	1.152***	1.139***	1.288***	1.295***
Education	2.409**	1.965*	1.585	1.521	1.379	1.027	1.156	2.262*	1.925
<u>Social Embeddedness</u>									
Volunteering		2.125*	1.742	1.587	1.33	1.302	1.516		
Give to Charity			3.662**	3.518**	3.521**	2.902*	2.888*		
Number of Friends				0.866	0.831	0.686	0.728	1.051*	
Group Involvement					0.121	0.078			0.439
Trust						2.394*	2.192*		
Intercept	47.645***	47.314***	46.259***	45.062***	44.989***	45.688***	45.786***	46.175***	47.424***
R- Square Value	0.056	0.062	0.064	0.067	0.067	0.066	0.065	0.06	0.059
N	1441	1439	1432	1430	1410	1355	1372	1437	1421



Table 4: OLS Regressions of the Tolerance of Individuals for Men

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<u>Controls</u>									
Age	-0.235	-0.232	-0.32	-0.439	-0.474	-0.666*	-0.642*	-0.373	-0.246
Married	0.067	0.169	0.13	0.123	0.074	-0.276	-0.234	-0.012	0.08
Race	3.919***	3.762***	3.68***	3.663***	3.804***	3.483**	3.367**	3.687***	4.196***
Number of Children	-0.493	-0.633	-0.752	-0.799	-0.921	-0.878	-0.763	-0.456	-0.545
Region	-0.61	-0.688	-0.682	-0.538	-0.607	-1.067	-0.99	-0.491	-0.715
Urban	0.965	1.355	1.305	1.591	1.568	1.346	1.392	1.367	1.193
Church Attendance	0.497	-0.021	-0.496	-0.502	-0.52	-0.24	-0.226	0.362	0.176
Political Party	0.523	0.452	0.447	0.443	0.42	0.725	0.724	0.445	0.51
Home Owner	1.891	1.91	1.585	1.599	1.774	1.792	1.618	2.047	1.979
<u>Socioeconomic</u>									
Income	0.465	0.331	0.255	0.226	0.183	0.139	0.175	0.402	0.318
Education	1.727	1.451	1.218	1.452	1.098	1.065	1.364	1.86	1.054
<u>Social Embeddedness</u>									
Volunteering		3.319***	3.049***	2.76**	2.42*	2.094*	2.368**		
Give to Charity			3.06**	2.932*	2.823*	2.608*	2.721*		
Number of Friends				1.276**	1.199**	1.013*	1.085*	1.533***	
Group Involvement					0.275	0.235			0.692**
Trust						3.736***	3.827***		
Intercept	45.405***	44.788***	44.331***	41.798***	42.085***	42.400***	42.119***	42.525***	45.009***
R- Square Value	0.032	0.042	0.047	0.056	0.056	0.072	0.073	0.043	0.038
N	1288	1284	1281	1278	1263	1219	1233	1283	1270

Table 5: OLS Regressions of the Tolerance of Individuals for Caucasian Americans

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<u>Controls</u>									
Age	0.004	-0.008	-0.132	-0.151	-0.175	-0.356	-0.337	-0.03	-0.055
Married	0.039	0.098	0.121	0.213	0.153	-0.069	-0.019	-0.199	-0.27
Gender	-2.646***	-2.558***	-2.442***	-2.452***	-2.556***	-2.604***	-2.489***	-2.221**	-2.276**
Number of Children	-0.413	-0.606	-0.642	-0.448	-0.472	-0.435	-0.433	-0.341	-0.632
Region	-1.266	-1.249	-1.166	-1.118	-1.153	-1.039	-0.978	-1.511*	-1.540*
Urban	1.194	1.314	1.114	1.218	1.256	1.111	1.061	0.532	0.584
Church Attendance	0.413	0.111	-0.414	-0.578	-0.649	-0.371	-0.314	0.327	0.193
Political Party	1.636*	1.6172*	1.625*	1.570*	1.550*	1.447	1.479*	1.944**	2.045**
Home Owner	1.449	1.363	0.989	1.009	1.197	1.319	1.121	1.59	1.644
<u>Socioeconomic</u>									
Income	0.776***	0.710***	0.602**	0.544**	0.490*	0.449*	0.503*	0.773***	0.692**
Education	2.259**	2.017**	1.657*	1.750*	1.319	1.005	1.376	2.127**	1.129
<u>Social Embeddedness</u>									
Volunteering		2.05**	1.775*	1.503*	0.939	0.772	1.243		
Give to Charity			4.152***	4.093***	3.992***	3.717***	3.796***		
Number of Friends				1.133**	1.079**	0.967**	1.018**	1.075**	
Group Involvement					0.437	0.364			0.868***
Trust						3.411***	3.389***		
Intercept	49.580***	49.199***	48.112***	45.960***	46.254***	46.144***	45.875***	47.639***	49.725***
R- Square Value	0.036	0.04	0.047	0.051	0.052	0.065	0.063	0.041	0.043
N	2060	2058	2055	2054	2029	1952	1974	2059	2035

Table 6: OLS Regressions of the Tolerance of Individuals for Minority Americans

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<u>Controls</u>									
Age	0.009	-0.034	-0.059	-0.307	-0.181	-0.367	-0.484	-0.527	0.02
Married	-3.258*	-3.152*	-3.190*	-3.242*	-3.161*	-3.234*	-3.313*	-4.318**	-3.432*
Gender	-3.288*	-3.259*	-3.302*	-3.668**	-3.733**	-4.309**	-4.259**	-4.324**	-4.061**
Number of Children	-2.041	-1.951	-1.852	-1.975	-2.001	-1.51	-1.456	-2.367	-2.601
Region	-0.045	-0.431	-0.399	-0.194	0.053	-0.838	-1.086	1.009	0.883
Urban	-2.268	-1.446	-1.432	-0.831	-0.953	-1.196	-1.09	-3.226	-2.993
Church Attendance	-0.583	-1.102	-1.394	-1.034	-0.872	-0.752	-0.873	-0.206	-0.558
Political Party	-2.637	-2.661	-2.663	-2.535	-2.725*	-2.265	-2.088	-2.901*	-2.871*
Home Owner	1.375	1.504	1.473	1.198	0.826	1.093	1.478	2.269	1.468
<u>Socioeconomic</u>									
Income	1.174**	1.136**	1.074**	1.137**	1.249**	1.194**	1.091**	1.139**	1.123**
Education	1.732	0.785	0.614	0.598	0.69	0.831	0.785	1.32	1.922
<u>Social Embeddedness</u>									
Volunteering		4.450***	4.169**	4.117**	4.648**	4.633**	4.195**		
Give to Charity			1.573	1.044	1.075	0.124	0.104		
Number of Friends				1.066	1.011	0.744	0.806	2.036**	
Group Involvement					-0.445	-0.381			0.23
Trust						1.358	1.24		
Intercept	53.667***	52.182***	51.990***	49.964***	49.902***	51.493***	51.511***	52.212***	54.151***
R- Square Value	0.048	0.062	0.063	0.078	0.072	0.071	0.071	0.081	0.076
N	669	665	658	654	644	622	631	661	654

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examines the effects of social embeddedness on the amount of tolerance one has for others. Most previous research points to demographic characteristics, such as race, religion, and gender as factors of how tolerant individuals are of one another. These characteristics are, for the most part, external to the individual and cannot be changed. The present study examines tolerance through the lens of social embeddedness as the individual engages with their community voluntarily.

In the present study, tolerance is the extent to which individuals feel warm or cold toward people groups not like them. Past studies show that tolerance has moved from large moral dilemmas toward smaller scale attitude and belief differences. It is less challenging to tolerate of groups of people we agree with or in which we belong. The concern with tolerance over all is that individuals must be disapproving of the group of people. Yet, a large number of American citizens have been found to have a genuine commitment to tolerance (Sniderman et al., 1989).

Social embeddedness is the extent to which an individual is implanted socially within the community in which they live. Social embeddedness is an effective concept to correlate with tolerance. When individuals are socially embedded behaviors they interact with those in their community that are not like them. Individuals that are embedded in a certain environment take on the goals and character of that environment. Therefore, when individuals are involved in community oriented activities they are more likely to be community oriented and this, ideally be more tolerant of those within the community.

Social embeddedness and tolerance can be connected by the contact theory. Social contact, if meets the criteria outlined by Allport (1954), has positive effects, reduced prejudice, and in the present study, will increase tolerances. Contact theory states that there must be equal group status between the people and common goals within those people. Social embeddedness measures such as group involving and volunteering hold this to be true.

In the present study, seven hypotheses were presented. Based on the results presented in the previous section, the first hypothesis is acceptable. There is clear evidence that individuals that volunteer are more tolerant of others. The same is true for the second hypothesis; those who give to charity are more predicted based on our models to be more tolerant of others. The hypothesis in the general population for hypothesis three is supported. The number of friends one reports having correlates with how tolerant of others that individual is. There is some evidence provided that rejects the null hypothesis of hypothesis four. Those who are more involved in the groups are more tolerant of others but the effect seems to fade. Therefore, a definite conclusion cannot be made based on the models presented. Hypothesis five states that those who trust more will be more tolerant of others, clear evidence that allows support for the hypothesis. Hypothesis six and seven predict that there is some difference based on gender and race were both supported. In conclusion, there is a difference in the level of tolerance Americans have based on the amount of social embeddedness they employ in their lives.

It is important to note that these results do not continue to be supported when the populations are split by gender or race. There are many consistencies in the models.

However, but some variations in these models further support that there are individual and community characteristics, that affect who is more tolerant of others.

The control measures in the study concluded somewhat surprising results. The age variable in the model includes all ages. There was no consistent grouping of whether older people were less tolerant as previously thought. If this were a longitudinal study, there could be an investigation of whether there is rather a cohort effect of tolerance, in that people born later will be more tolerant, each generation will be more and more tolerant.

There is a stereotype that those who live in the south are less tolerant than those who live in other regions in the county. According to the present study this is not the case. There is no significant difference based on the region in which individuals live on their tolerance of others. The stereotype should be further explored.

Also it is important to note that our friends are generally more like us than different. Yet in the present study those who have more friends are more tolerant of others. The reason may be because it takes tolerance of the differences between individuals in order to be friends with that person. This means in the broader context of non-friends, individuals are more likely to be tolerant because they understand how to deal with differences. Someone who lives in isolation and does not have friends has less practice in this area.

Overall results of this study lead to one general conclusion; social embeddedness correlates with tolerance on the community level. Those who participant in community levels of social embeddedness are predicted to be more tolerant of others. According to these results it would improve tolerance if social embeddedness increased.

There is more to be done on the applied nature of this project. Diversity training is usually geared towards Caucasian in American society, yet based on the models in tables two-four, it seems that Minorities need to have lessons in diversity because they are significantly less tolerant of others. All groups could benefit from diversity of sensitivity awareness.

Similarly, diversity training is not all that is needed. The contact theory shows us that merely knowing about a culture other than our own will not increase the amount of tolerance that one has for other groups. Diversity training alone will not solve all problems. The present study points to community involvement and social embeddedness as ways to increase tolerance. Therefore diversity training to be exposed to a new religion is as effective as say volunteering along side that person. Community involvement and social embeddedness can be a method to increase tolerance and therefore a more healthy community.

As with all data sets, there are limitations with the Faith Matter Survey. The data was collected in the year 2006. There have been shifts in cultural trends in society since that time. Although American culture seems to be more liberal now, this does not necessarily mean that there is a shift in tolerance towards certain out-groups in our society. Second, tolerance was formed as a general measure that is not specific to any group. The group involvement measure was not as strong as it could have been based on the measures provided in the study. This can lead to the inconsistencies. Giving to charity was a dichotomous variable in the data set. If the variable were a percent of income or amount of money giving, it would have added more depth to the current study.

However, there are benefits to this data set. The broad nature of the tolerance variable insures a truer measure of acceptance of others in general. There is not one social group that is left out because of the measure. Faith Matters was appropriate for the study because of the presence of so numerous social embeddedness measures in the data set.

Future research on this topic should focus on more specific people groups and demographic characteristics. There may be stronger effects found just for race, income groups, religions, etc. Certain measures of social embeddedness may lead individuals to be more tolerant to these specific people groups. In addition, future research can investigate different measures of social embeddedness and how these affect tolerance of others. This project could be examined by the demographics to asses the affects of social embeddedness separately.

Overall, the present study illustrates that social embeddedness is positively correlated with tolerance. Individuals who are socially embedded within a community are more likely to be tolerant of others. These results suggest that communities should promote activities that include social embeddedness in order to increase the tolerance levels of those who live within the community. Higher levels of both tolerance and social embeddedness will aid in building a better community.



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