

## Tolerance as a Social Phenomenon in the Education of Humanities Students

### ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to identify the specific features of how tolerance is perceived by students in humanities disciplines within the educational process. The research addresses four key aspects: (1) the sociological and psychological dimensions of tolerance; (2) the level of understanding and interpretation of tolerance among humanities students; (3) the main barriers that hinder the development of tolerant attitudes; and (4) recommendations for fostering tolerance in educational settings. To achieve these objectives, the study combined theoretical analysis with an empirical investigation. A survey was conducted among 80 humanities students at Jusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University (40 women and 40 men, average age 19.4 years). The questionnaire was designed to assess students' understanding of tolerance, emotional regulation, reactions to criticism, and interpersonal trust. Data were collected using Google Forms, while descriptive statistical analysis was used to identify prevailing patterns and key challenges. The findings show that tolerance is essential for intercultural social integration and harmony. Such attitudes are fostered via intercultural competency, critical thinking, and emotional regulation education. If relevant activities are constantly integrated into the learning environment, educational institutions can encourage tolerance. The development of a tolerant worldview among students was influenced by educators who appreciate multiple opinions, highlighting their vital role in this process. The poll found that 15% of respondents had trouble managing their emotions in severe situations and 47.1% couldn't stay cool, emphasizing the need for stress resilience and self-regulation. The majority of students saw tolerance as an external standard rather than an internalized virtue, highlighting the need to cultivate mindful attitudes towards cultural diversity and integrate these principles into personal beliefs. Theoretical study and poll data suggest including intercultural interaction, educator training, and extracurricular activities into education. The findings showed that educational tolerance must be promoted through multicultural competency, emotional regulation, and practical interpersonal skills.

**Keywords:** socialization, education, intercultural interaction, emotional regulation, extracurricular activity, stress resilience

## 1. Introduction

The 21st century's increasingly transnational, multicultural, and globalized societies can only achieve and sustain peace when moral, ethical, and cultural principles like tolerance, harmony, mutual understanding, and multiculturalism are upheld. In this situation, tolerance needs to be ingrained in social interactions and used as the cornerstone of public relations campaigns that support harmonious coexistence and growth. The need to recognize and address the multicultural issues that are arising in society has increased due to globalization, increased population mobility, open labor markets, and migration flows. The problems posed by these processes call for the development of multicultural competence, which is based on a system of attitudes, values, motivations, and views and is cultivated at the individual level. As a result, fostering tolerance in learning settings becomes essential to adjusting successfully to a varied society. Tolerance education is now one of the top concerns for the country's educational system due to the increasing number of foreign students studying there. Reevaluating the legal frameworks that specify the goals, duties, and purview of different social institutions is necessary to address the current educational issues. Additionally, a detailed examination of Kyrgyzstan's educational system's current situation is required. Fostering tolerance, pursuing peace, and being able to cohabit peacefully are all made more difficult by the multicultural and multireligious nature of society (Efremov, 2025a). Here, tolerance is shown to be not just a desirable quality but also a prerequisite for the peaceful advancement of society.

Such scholars as Brooks and Weber (2021), Akmagambetova et al. (2023), Gafurova (2020), Hjern et al. (2020), Dong et al. (2024), Efremov (2025b), Spytska (2023a) and others have explored tolerance from sociological, psychological, and pedagogical perspectives, emphasizing its dependence on both institutional factors, such as inclusive education and intercultural engagement, and individual qualities like empathy, emotional regulation, and self-reflection. However, their studies largely overlook how tolerance develops among humanities students, whose academic focus on ethics, communication, and culture makes them uniquely positioned to internalize tolerant values. Empirical research examining how emotional intelligence, self-reflection, and interpersonal trust influence tolerance in university contexts remains limited, particularly within Kyrgyzstan's multilingual and multicultural environment, where promoting tolerance is both an educational and societal priority.

The scope of the study includes a theoretical reflection on tolerance, an examination of the factors influencing its development, an analysis of the barriers to its cultivation, and a survey of humanities students to gather empirical data. The study addresses both the practical and theoretical dimensions of tolerance, aiming to bridge the gap between academic research and educational practice. To achieve this purpose, the following research tasks are formulated:

1. Identify the specific features of how tolerance is perceived by students in humanities disciplines.
2. Analyze the sociological and psychological aspects of tolerance.
3. Assess the level of understanding of tolerance among students in humanities-related disciplines.
4. Provide recommendations for fostering tolerance among students.

By combining theoretical reflection and empirical data, this research contributes to closing the identified gaps. It offers a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that shape tolerant attitudes and provides practical recommendations for educators and policymakers. The findings will support the design of educational programmes that promote intercultural competence,

emotional regulation, and stress resilience, enhancing both academic and personal development in diverse educational environments.

## 2. Literature Review

The study of tolerance has long been central to sociological, psychological, and educational theory. Scholars have conceptualized tolerance as both an individual disposition and a social norm that enables coexistence and cooperation in pluralistic societies. This section examines theoretical and empirical studies on tolerance, focusing on sociological and psychological perspectives, pedagogical approaches, and persistent barriers to its development. The discussion draws upon and expands sources previously mentioned in the introduction, integrating theoretical reflections and empirical findings into a cohesive analysis.

Liberalization, education, and political tolerance are all intertwined, as seen by the importance that educational programs have in fostering democratic values and societal tolerance. Unless accompanied by focused educational efforts, liberalization procedures do not always result in more tolerance, claim Brooks and Weber (2021). Critical thinking skills and an appreciation of the value of equality are directly enhanced by higher education, which in turn promotes more tolerant views (Rakhimberdinova et al., 2022). Furthermore, Golebiowska (2019) investigated the mechanisms underlying the association between political tolerance and education, finding that the most important elements were information literacy and critical thinking. Notwithstanding these benefits, not enough research has been done on how educational initiatives can best foster the growth of political tolerance.

In the context of Central Asia, Akmagambetova et al. (2023) and Gafurova (2020) emphasized that pedagogical systems must integrate pragmatic, culturally contextualized approaches to cultivate tolerant attitudes among students. Hjerm et al. (2020) developed a multidimensional model of tolerance comprising acceptance, respect, and appreciation of diversity, demonstrating that tolerance is shaped not only by individual moral values but also by broader social institutions and interactional contexts. These insights underscore that tolerance is a socially conditioned construct, influenced by both macro-level (institutional) and micro-level (interpersonal) dynamics. Thus, educational institutions play a crucial role in fostering tolerance (Dong et al., 2024). Studies have demonstrated that incorporating intercultural activities like national holiday celebrations and collaborative academic projects fosters experiential engagement with cultural diversity. However, Stein et al. (2024) pointed out that without sustained institutional commitment, these initiatives run the risk of becoming tokenistic and failing to generate meaningful intercultural understanding. These findings align with broader sociological views that sustained institutional and interpersonal efforts are necessary for tolerance to take root within educational environments.

From a psychological standpoint, tolerance includes emotional self-regulation, empathy, and resilience in navigating differences. Efremov (2025b) identified emotional states, particularly fear responses, as critical determinants of openness to others. Spytska (2023a) and Ternov et al. (2024) further connected tolerance to moral reasoning and identity formation, suggesting that it represents not merely passive acceptance but an active internalization of fairness and respect.

Chen (2021) and Velthuis et al. (2021) emphasized empathy and a positive self-concept as fundamental psychological foundations of tolerance. Lin and Chung (2024) supported these

findings by demonstrating that educators' multicultural beliefs and empathetic engagement significantly predict students' intercultural competence and tolerance. Likewise, Suryani and Muslim (2024) confirmed that teacher empathy acts as a key mediating factor between instructional methods and the development of tolerant mindsets. Collectively, these studies frame tolerance as a cultivated psychological capacity requiring reflection, emotional awareness, and consistent reinforcement through educational practice. The development of emotional intelligence has been identified as central to building tolerance. Empathy-based activities, mindfulness, and self-reflection exercises have proven effective in strengthening students' ability to manage emotions and engage constructively in diverse settings (Constantia et al., 2025). This body of research highlights that tolerance is inseparable from emotional maturity and psychological resilience.

Recent educational studies have explored methods for embedding tolerance into formal and informal learning environments. Ash et al. (2020) introduced anti-racist pedagogical models that aim to transform institutional culture through critical engagement with systemic bias. Vertelyte and Staunæs (2021) proposed the "pedagogy of discomfort", wherein students encounter and reflect upon challenging emotional responses to difference, thereby fostering self-awareness and openness. Both approaches advance tolerance as a transformative educational outcome rather than a passive value. Investigations into religious tolerance and intercultural interaction demonstrate the importance of reevaluating educational approaches to cultivate respectful attitudes towards cultural diversity. Permata Sari and Indartono (2019) identified shortcomings in conventional teaching methods that often fail to account for the diversity of religious beliefs, making it more difficult to nurture respectful perspectives towards individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Manoppo et al. (2019) concluded that tolerance must be developed from an early age, particularly within the context of ongoing digital transformation.

Similarly, Chekal (2022) and Strelnikov and Vytkaľov (2023) advocated for experiential learning formats, such as scenario-based exercises and group projects, as means to develop practical tolerance skills. These methods promote direct engagement with diversity and cultivate interpersonal communication competencies essential for multicultural harmony. Despite these innovations, Tyas and Naibaho (2020) and Al Majali and AlKhaaldi (2020) found that tolerance education often remains declarative rather than experiential, resulting in limited behavioral change. This gap highlights the need for pedagogical frameworks that prioritize emotional involvement and reflective learning, ensuring that tolerance evolves from theoretical knowledge into lived practice.

Tolerance education continues to face multiple structural and psychological barriers. Afriadi (2020) identified the absence of unified methodological frameworks as a central limitation that prevents the institutionalization of tolerance as a consistent educational goal. Cultural isolation and limited exposure to diversity impede students' ability to form tolerant perspectives (Abacioglu et al., 2023). The influence of mass media and social networks, which often perpetuate stereotypes and polarization, exacerbates this problem (Stein et al., 2024). Psychological obstacles such as low empathy, poor self-regulation, and rigid self-concept further hinder tolerance development (Efremov, 2025b). Inadequate teacher training and insufficient emotional preparedness among educators compound these issues. Studies emphasize that teachers who lack intercultural competence may unintentionally reinforce biases or fail to model inclusive behaviour (Lin and Chung, 2024). Addressing these barriers requires systematic training programmes, supportive institutional policies, and curricular designs grounded in both cognitive and emotional development.

Integrating the sociological and psychological perspectives discussed above, this study adopts a dual conceptual framework. From a sociological perspective, tolerance is understood as a social construct sustained through interpersonal interaction, institutional practices, and community norms. From a psychological perspective, it is viewed as a personal disposition developed through empathy, emotional regulation, and reflective learning. Together, these perspectives offer a multidimensional understanding of tolerance as both a collective social process and an individual psychological capacity. This integration informs the present study's approach to examining how humanities students perceive and internalize tolerance in the university environment.

Existing scholarship provides substantial theoretical grounding for understanding the mechanisms of tolerance formation but reveals notable fragmentation across disciplinary boundaries. Sociological research often neglects individual emotional dynamics, while psychological studies may overlook the influence of institutional and cultural factors. Moreover, the regional context of Central Asia remains underrepresented in empirical tolerance studies. The current research addresses these gaps by synthesizing sociological and psychological frameworks and applying them to the experiences of humanities students in Kyrgyzstan. By linking theoretical concepts to practical educational strategies, this study contributes to the advancement of tolerance education as both a scientific field and a tool for fostering intercultural coexistence.

To clarify the structure and focus of the study, a conceptual map was developed to illustrate its theoretical foundation, empirical components, and practical outcomes (Figure 1).

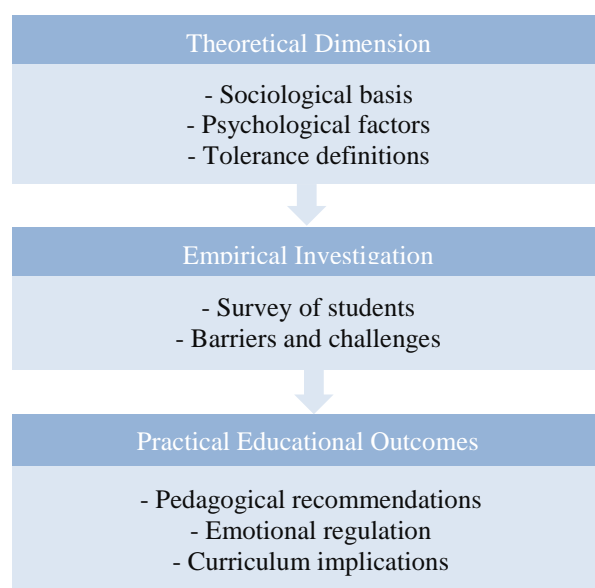


Figure 1: Conceptual map of the study on tolerance education

Source: compiled by the author.

This diagram visually represents the progression from the sociological and psychological theorization of tolerance (theoretical dimension) to the collection and analysis of empirical data through a student survey (empirical investigation), culminating in actionable educational strategies and policy-oriented recommendations (practical educational outcomes). This integrated approach highlights the dual focus of the study: on the one hand, to address gaps in

the academic literature concerning the development of tolerance among humanities students; on the other, to inform the implementation of targeted pedagogical practices that foster intercultural competence and emotional regulation. By presenting the study's components in this structured way, the diagram reinforces the coherence between its objectives, methodology, and intended impact on educational environments.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

At the initial stage of the study, tolerance was defined and its key elements analyzed. These elements include the presence of a value system grounded in respect for the individual, the recognition of rights and freedoms, and the liberty of choice in fundamental life matters. The Declaration of Principles on Tolerance (1995) was considered, and the following influencing factors were explored: socio-psychological and cultural dimensions; the level of cultural awareness, including the role of educational institutions in developing students' intercultural competence and the impact of the social context on the formation of tolerant attitudes; the influence of the social environment and interpersonal interaction on the level of support for tolerance; and the importance of academic and extracurricular activities in cultivating tolerance among students. The role of pedagogical engagement was examined, particularly in terms of modelling tolerant behaviour and creating conditions for discussions around diversity and inclusion.

An analysis of the challenges and barriers encountered during the development of tolerance showed several key issues: the absence of a unified methodological framework for promoting tolerance; the cultural and social isolation of students; insufficient pedagogical training; and low student motivation towards the development of tolerant values.

#### ***Participants***

As part of the study, a survey was conducted among students at Jusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University. A total of 80 students participated in the survey, comprising 40 women (50%) and 40 men (50%). The average age of respondents was 19.4 years. The sample was formed using a non-random, voluntary sampling method, involving students from humanities faculties who expressed willingness to participate. While appropriate for exploratory research, this approach limits generalizability due to potential self-selection bias. Nonetheless, it enabled targeted access to a relevant population for examining tolerance in educational contexts.

#### ***Measurements***

The study was conducted in accordance with all ethical and legal standards governing studies involving student participants. All respondents were informed of the purpose and objectives of the study and of their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was guaranteed, and the results were used exclusively for academic purposes (Table 1).

Table 1: Questions aimed at assessing the level of tolerance and the factors influencing its development

Question	Answer options
What is tolerance?	Polite and tactful behaviour Understanding and forbearance Acceptance
How do you cope with difficulties?	Unable to deal with difficulties patiently Unable to remain calm in challenging situations Difficult to answer
How do you respond to criticism?	I dislike it It depends on who is criticising or the situation I remain silent
What would you do if a classmate let you down?	I would no longer trust them I would perceive it as a lack of respect I would ignore it
In your opinion, does intolerance exist within your academic group?	Yes No Difficult to answer

Note: The proposed answer options clarify that “Polite and tactful behaviour” refers to external expressions of tolerance manifested through courteous communication and avoidance of offence, “Understanding and forbearance” denote emotional restraint and readiness to endure discomfort in interactions with others, while “Acceptance” implies an internalised recognition of diversity and the conscious inclusion of differing viewpoints and values.

Source: compiled by the author.

### ***Data collection procedure***

The survey was conducted in February 2025 and lasted two weeks. It was carried out online using the Google Forms platform. This tool was selected to ensure accessible participation and maintain respondent anonymity.

### ***Data analysis procedure***

Following data collection, the results were exported into Microsoft Excel for further processing and analysis. The analysis enabled the identification of key challenges and trends in the development of tolerance among students. The findings were synthesized, allowing for the formulation of practical recommendations aimed at improving educational strategies and the level of tolerance within the academic environment.

The questionnaire was developed based on theoretical constructs identified in the literature related to tolerance, emotional regulation, intercultural competence, and social interaction. Each question was formulated to reflect specific aspects of these constructs: the question “What is tolerance?” assesses cognitive understanding and the degree of internalized values; questions about coping with difficulties and responding to criticism measure emotional regulation and stress resilience; the question regarding a classmate’s unreliability addresses interpersonal trust and respect; and the question about the presence of intolerance in the academic environment helps assess perceptions of intercultural sensitivity and group dynamics. This operationalization enabled the interpretation of respondents’ answers within a multidimensional model of tolerance.

## 4. Results

### *Theoretical reflection on tolerance: its sociological and psychological aspects, and the analysis of challenges and barriers to its development*

Tolerance has taken on different connotations over time. Respect and acceptance of people regardless of ethnicity, culture, or social background. Tolerance means letting everyone live fully without discrimination or constraints. At the 28th General Conference of UNESCO Member States in 1995, the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance stated that mutual tolerance, solidarity, dialogue, and understanding should guide all individuals, social groups, and political movements. Tolerance was both a concept and a prerequisite for peace and socioeconomic growth.

Tolerance requires respect for the individual, recognition of others' rights and liberties, and the freedom to make important life choices (Spytska, 2023a). This view requires personal accountability and fairness in relationships. Tolerance helps people integrate socially, develop morality, and strengthen relationships (Ternov et al., 2024). It boosts national self-awareness, minimizes negative influences, and reduces emotional suffering. Modern tolerance is different from forbearance, which is tolerating discomfort without complaint. Tolerance means accepting other people's opinions and actions (Zelenin, 2023). It is more than forbearance since it involves acceptance without internal conflict and is a personal trait rather than a conscious deed. Tolerance is important for personal and social life, according to several researches (Chen, 2021; Velthuis et al., 2021; Jain and Pareek, 2019). It helps people overcome cultural barriers and see the world differently. Compromised, mutually understanding, and respectful behaviour is needed because different social groupings have different interests and requirements (Sheryazdanova et al., 2024). The diversity of perspectives, beliefs, and tastes in society often hinders tolerance.

Higher education institutions must aggressively employ varied methods and technologies to improve learning and extracurricular activities (Adylbek kyzy et al., 2023). Extracurricular programs that include national holidays like Nowruz or the Chinese New Year promote cultural participation and awareness. Students learn about Kyrgyz hospitality, holiday meals, national costumes, and more during Nowruz. International students may find this interesting and enriching. Kyrgyz students can learn about Chinese New Year customs, including costumes and other symbols, through extracurricular activities. Humanities extracurriculars foster interest and tolerance, reducing intolerance. Future professionals must learn critical thinking, self-organization, and self-expression to participate respectfully with society without causing conflict (Singson et al., 2024).

Tolerance's role in forming a value-oriented attitude to human existence has made it a vital condition for a harmonious community. The educational process should prioritize tolerance to promote acceptance, respect, and well-roundedness. Many socio-psychological and cultural elements affect tolerance (Efremov, 2025b). It is influenced by social, cultural, educational, and interpersonal factors. Globalization and increased migration flows are shaping cultural awareness and openness to various traditions as people adjust to multicultural contexts. Schools are crucial to student intercultural competence (Shujuan, 2023). Exposure to cultural variations promotes learners' tolerance. Diverse cultural experiences widen perspectives and diminish the tendency to dislike unfamiliar habits and traditions.



Social environment influences tolerance development. How well society promotes tolerance affects how well pupils learn it. Diversity and inclusion policies in schools are crucial. Intercultural events and programs promote respect for people of diverse ethnicities and origins. Another important component is social interaction. Positive student interaction from varied ethnic and social groups promotes tolerance (Burnell et al., 2021; Baidyldaeva, 2022). Communication and teamwork among students increase tolerant viewpoints. Academic and extracurricular activities foster positive dialogue and cooperation, making them crucial. Students learn to accept different perspectives through group projects and discussions. Academic faculty and student mentors matter. Teachers can foster tolerance by modelling inclusive behaviour and leading diversity and inclusion discussions (Wu, 2024). Evidence demonstrates that instructors who respect many ideas and cultures can be role models, encouraging tolerant worldviews (Lin and Chung, 2024; Suryani and Muslim, 2024; Döring et al., 2024).

Psychological aspects of tolerance education help shape people who can recognize and accept social differences. Understanding the psychological mechanisms of tolerance helps establish successful techniques for teaching it to students. Empathy, a positive self-image, and less fear and stereotyping promote tolerance. The development of empathy is essential to tolerance. Understanding and empathizing with others improves understanding and decreases conflict. Structured psychological exercises, training, and active engagement in group discussions and intercultural exchanges promote empathy. These strategies help children understand others, which is key to tolerance. Positive self-image is another important psychological element. Self-worth and self-respect help students appreciate others' differences. Students who feel safe and affirmative about themselves are less likely to react aggressively or defensively to cultural or social diversity. A supportive educational environment where students feel appreciated and can share their views and ideas without judgement is needed to foster this aspect.

Addressing bias and stereotyping is crucial. To eliminate stereotypes, which often lead to prejudice and intolerance, needs conscious and consistent work. One useful method is critical reflection on one's views and their roots. Psychological training to detect and reinterpret prejudices helps pupils see their irrationality and become more accepting. Psychological therapies that reduce stereotyping boost student understanding and tolerance. Emotional regulation also helps increase tolerance. Students must learn to cope with unpleasant emotions in culturally diverse situations and turn them into positive interactions to foster tolerance. Mindfulness, breathing, and relaxation can help you stay calm and objective in difficult situations. Identifying hurdles and obstacles in cultivating tolerance might assist educational institutions shape tolerant attitudes in pupils. Given the complexity of this process, which is influenced by many external and internal factors, researchers believe that such difficulties stem from ineffective pedagogical methods and the characteristics of the social environment and individual students.

One of the biggest obstacles in tolerance education is the lack of a clear methodology. Some educational methods are ineffective. The lack of a common strategy hinders systematic and deliberate tolerance instruction. Therefore, educational curricula may not include enough activities to foster intercultural competence and tolerance in pupils. Cultural and social isolation hinders tolerance. Without exposure to diverse cultures and social groups, kids may develop stereotypical and prejudiced views (Abacioglu et al., 2023). Isolation from cultural diversity also limits pupils' worldview and chance to tolerate cultural differences (Stein et al., 2024; Dong, 2024). Intercultural engagement must be integrated into schooling to avoid reinforcing intolerance. Insufficient teacher qualifications are another issue. Not all educators know how

to encourage tolerance. Teachers may carry biases or assumptions that hinder inclusive and fair learning environments. Professional development programmes for educators in intercultural engagement and tolerance education are needed to overcome this hurdle. Low student motivation to cultivate tolerance is a major concern. Intercultural communication and diversity may seem irrelevant to many students, especially if they don't encounter them regularly. Individual traits and a lack of understanding of tolerance in modern culture may explain this lack of motivation. Addressing this issue requires constructing educational experiences that emphasize tolerance. Case studies, intercultural initiatives, and direct connection with diverse people can help attain this goal.

Public opinion and the media hinder tolerance. Youth are influenced by negative preconceptions and prejudices in mass media and social media. Tolerance is harder to establish when public speech supports unfavorable cultural or social attitudes. Educational institutions must balance this by providing students with factual and objective information that fosters critical thinking and independent opinions. Rural and urban people from different countries and social groupings live within diverse rules, norms, conventions, and traditions. These values are expressed in languages, behaviors, faiths, aesthetics, and social institutions. In Kyrgyzstan, as in other multi-ethnic and multicultural nations, one social group has always had mixed feelings about another. Kyrgyz society needs more active attempts to promote tolerance. Primarily socialized people develop national tolerance consciousness throughout their lives. In addition to the family, education is vital to socialization. The conceptual framework guiding the empirical part of the study is presented in Table 2. This model reflects the assumed causal and correlative relationships among the core constructs.

Table 2: Operationalisation of key constructs and their measurement

Construct	Operational Definition	Measurement Approach	Related Survey Item(s)
Tolerance (general)	A socio-psychological attitude encompassing acceptance, understanding, and respect for diversity.	Multiple-choice definition question	What is tolerance?
Emotional regulation	The ability to manage emotional responses, especially under stress or provocation.	Self-reported behaviour in stressful contexts	How do you cope with difficulties?
Response to criticism	An indicator of openness, self-confidence, and social resilience.	Preferences and reactions to feedback	How do you respond to criticism?
Trust and conflict behaviour	The extent to which individuals perceive and handle violations of mutual expectations.	Attribution of meaning to betrayal	What would you do if a classmate let you down?
Perceived group intolerance	Awareness of interpersonal tensions and perceived discriminatory attitudes in the group.	Perception-based self-report	In your opinion, does intolerance exist within your academic group?

Source: compiled by the author based on Hjerm et al. (2020), Golebiowska (2019), Lin and Chung (2024).

### ***Empirical study on the level of tolerance among humanities students and analysis of the results***

University students represent a distinct social group that, in the context of contemporary social transformation, is often particularly vulnerable from economic and social standpoints. Social dissatisfaction among students frequently manifests in protests, many of which are centered around ethnic and migration-related issues. This creates favorable conditions for the spread of various forms of xenophobia. Young people, lacking sufficient life experience and education, may sometimes attribute the causes of their instability and challenges to perceived outsiders – “newcomers” and “migrants”. The first question posed in this study was: “What is tolerance?” (Figure 2).

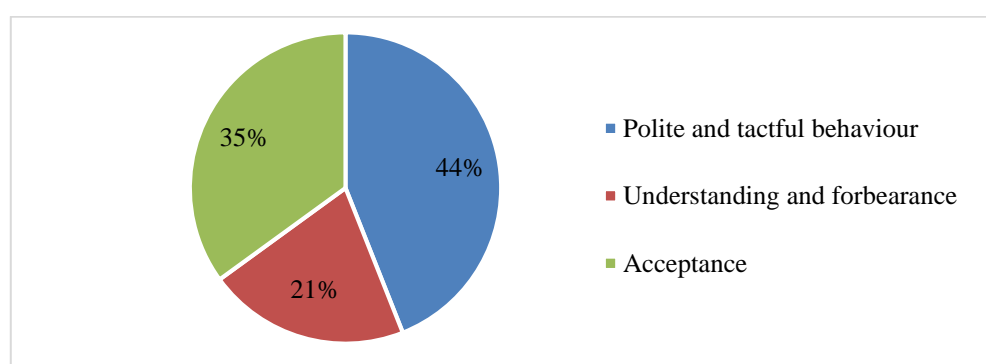


Figure 2: Humanities students' understanding of the concept of tolerance  
Source: compiled by the author.

The distribution of responses demonstrated that students predominantly perceive tolerance through the lens of external social norms. This suggests that, for many respondents, tolerance is primarily associated with the observance of formal behavioral codes. A smaller proportion of students associated tolerance with forbearance and understanding, indicating a limited awareness of the deeper dimensions of the concept, particularly in the context of interpersonal and intercultural interactions.

These findings underscore the need for greater emphasis on the internal dimensions of tolerance, including acceptance and respect for cultural differences within the educational process. The development of these aspects may support students in moving beyond mere adherence to formal norms, fostering empathy and deeper understanding, which are especially critical in culturally diverse environments. The survey also indicated that “tolerance” remains only partially understood by humanities students. It is essential to convey that tolerance encompasses not merely passive forbearance but also active acceptance, engagement with differing perspectives, and efforts to comprehend them. Tolerance should be a conscious and meaningful commitment that transcends stereotypes and entails a sense of social responsibility. Understanding tolerance as a value and a personal stance enables students to find individual meaning in each interaction and make deliberate decisions that contribute to the cultivation of tolerant qualities. Responses to the question regarding how students cope with difficulties indicated a low level of stress resilience and a lack of emotional regulation skills among humanities students (Figure 3).

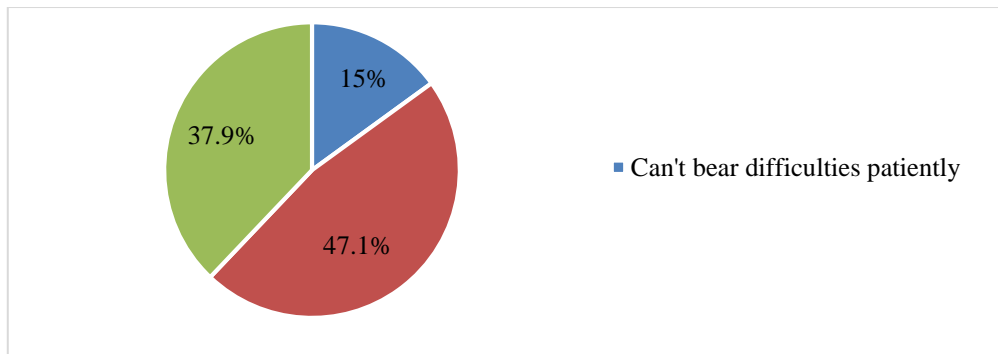


Figure 3: Responses to the question on how students cope with difficulties  
Source: compiled by the author.

15% of students reported an inability to endure difficulties with patience, while nearly half indicated they struggle to remain calm in challenging situations. These findings highlight issues in emotional regulation and stress management. Such difficulties may stem from individual upbringing and the lack of structured preparation for managing emotions under pressure. The considerable proportion of students who found it difficult to answer this question further reflects a limited awareness and understanding of their own emotional responses. A possible explanation lies in students' insufficient experience in self-reflection and recognizing their emotional capacities, which constitutes an important indicator. These results suggest the need for incorporating emotional learning components into the educational process to develop resilience and self-regulation skills.

The data indicate a clear demand for enhanced efforts to strengthen emotional regulation and stress management skills among humanities students. The introduction of programmes focused on emotional intelligence and self-regulation strategies would likely increase students' capacity to cope effectively with difficulties. Such developments are crucial for successful adaptation in professional and social environments. The distribution of responses to the question on how students respond to criticism showed that the majority of humanities students tend to avoid conflicts (Figure 4).

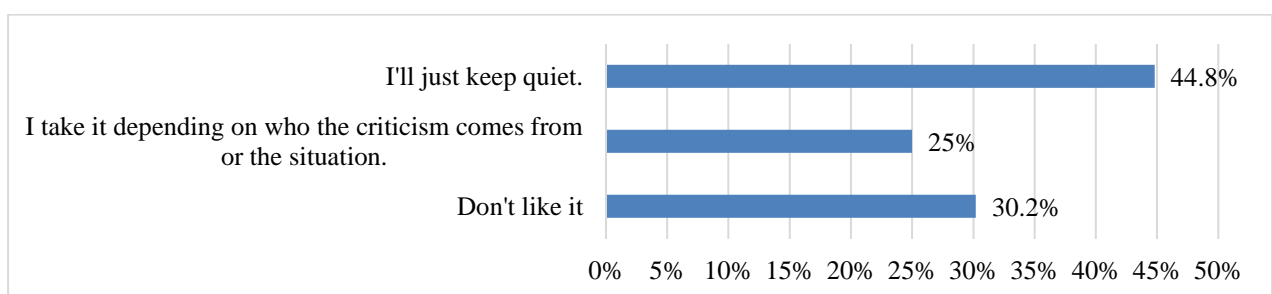


Figure 4: Distribution of responses to the question on how students respond to criticism  
Source: compiled by the author.

The results demonstrate a general preference among students for avoiding conflict, reflecting a tendency to maintain peaceful relations and prevent escalation, which may be influenced by a desire to reduce tension and avoid confrontation, particularly within multicultural contexts. While this approach helps foster harmonious interaction, it may also indicate a lack of confidence or difficulty in articulating personal viewpoints during disputes. A second notable group of respondents (25%) stated that their response to criticism depends on the identity of

the critic or the specific context. This suggests a selective perception of criticism and may be linked to the level of trust placed in particular individuals or to the nature of situations where criticism is seen either as constructive or threatening. Such responses point to the important role of interpersonal relationships and context in shaping how criticism is perceived. One-third of students expressed a dislike for receiving criticism. This attitude may reflect a low tolerance for constructive feedback and a lack of skills necessary to view criticism as a tool for personal growth. Such reactions are often associated with low self-esteem and fear of negative judgement, both of which can hinder the development of self-reflection and personal improvement.

These patterns point to continued efforts to cultivate students' ability to process criticism constructively. Developing the capacity to listen to criticism without avoidance or defensiveness is a vital component in forming a mature and tolerant personality. The introduction of communication training, assertiveness development, and self-acceptance workshops could contribute to a more balanced perception of feedback, which, in turn, would support both personal and professional growth. The question regarding students' reactions to a lack of support from classmates indicates a diversity of approaches to interpersonal conflict and trust issues (Figure 5).

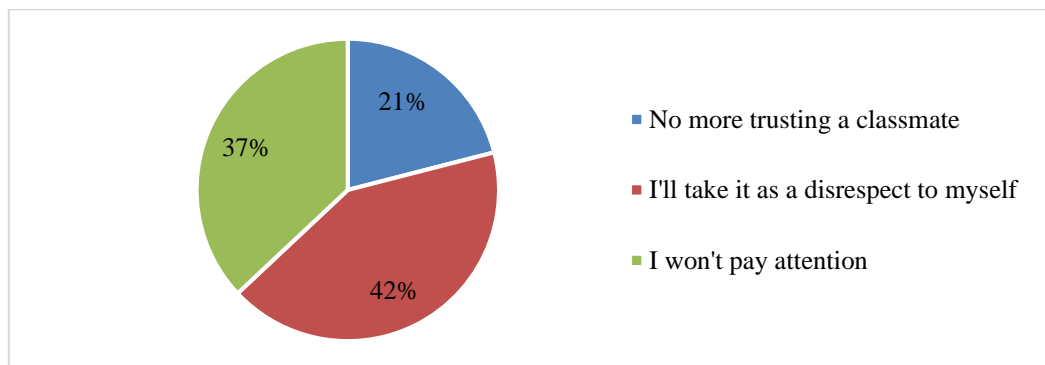


Figure 5: Distribution of responses to the question on students' reactions to the unreliability of a classmate

Source: compiled by the author.

Specifically, one-fifth of respondents indicated that they would lose trust in the classmate. This may reflect the high value placed on reliability and support within the academic environment, in addition to personal vulnerability in situations where trust is compromised. The responses suggest that perceived betrayal in collaborative tasks is interpreted as a violation of a core relational element – mutual respect and support. The majority of students regarded such a situation as a sign of disrespect, highlighting the importance they place on being treated respectfully and on maintaining reciprocal regard within the group. Participation in collective work involves a sense of responsibility from all members, and failure to fulfil one's obligations is seen not only as disregard for the task, but also for the contributions of fellow participants. This mindset appears to be linked to an expectation of fairness and equity within the educational context, where all group members are expected to pursue a shared outcome. Importantly, 37% of students stated that they would simply ignore the situation. This response may be interpreted as a conflict-avoidance strategy, potentially aimed at minimizing emotional distress caused by disappointment and breaches of trust. It could also reflect apathy or a limited sense of the importance of collaborative work for this subgroup of students.

The general tendency towards reduced trust following such experiences might indicate that students begin with a baseline level of trust toward their peers, but when expectations are not met, the resulting disappointment leads to a reluctance to continue engagement. Conflict resolution skills, assertive behaviour, and the principles of tolerance within academic activities could assist students in navigating unreliability while maintaining a healthy group dynamic. The distribution of responses to the question concerning the presence of intolerance within student groups demonstrated a rather concerning picture (Figure 6).

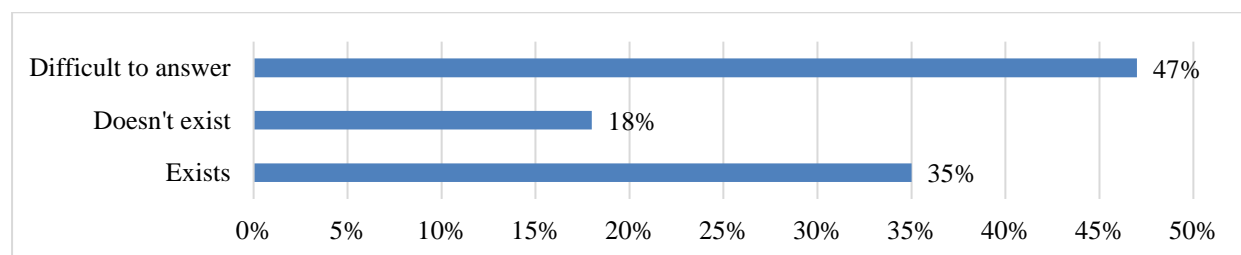


Figure 6: Distribution of responses to the question on the presence of intolerance in student groups

Source: compiled by the author.

More than one-third of students confirmed the existence of intolerance toward others, indicating ongoing issues in interpersonal relations within groups. This outcome may be influenced by factors such as cultural differences, varying levels of academic performance, or students' social backgrounds. The presence of intolerance points to a need for efforts aimed at strengthening mutual respect and improving the overall atmosphere in academic groups. Only 18% of students reported that intolerance was not present within their groups. This relatively low percentage may suggest that a positive atmosphere is uncommon and that students often perceive their environment as fragmented or conflict-prone. In such settings, effective communication and respectful interaction tend to be the exception rather than the norm.

Of particular note is the fact that nearly half of the respondents were unable to answer the question. The high proportion of uncertain responses may indicate that students had not previously considered the issue or lacked a clear understanding of what constitutes intolerance. This ambiguity may also point to a passive perception of conflict situations, in which students are disinclined to analyze or evaluate the behaviour of their peers, thereby hindering recognition and acknowledgement of problems within the group. The results emphasize the need for educational initiatives aimed at increasing students' awareness of the importance of tolerance, alongside the development of skills for analyzing their social environment. An open and supportive setting in which students can engage in discussions around tolerance and practice expressing their viewpoints could represent a vital step towards addressing intolerance and fostering respectful peer relationships.

Table 3 summarizes the key stages of the study, from the research objectives and methods to the findings and their implications for educational practice. It illustrates how the survey and theoretical analysis contribute to understanding tolerance among humanities students and highlights the practical recommendations for fostering tolerance in educational settings.

Table 3: Overview of study objectives, methodology, results, and educational implications

Research Objective	Methods	Findings	Implications
Identify features of how tolerance is perceived by students	Survey of humanities students	Students perceive tolerance as external norm rather than internal value	Need for deeper integration of tolerance into personal beliefs
Analyze sociological and psychological aspects of tolerance	Theoretical analysis, Student survey	Students struggle with emotional regulation and stress resilience	Focus on incorporating emotional regulation and self-regulation training in education
Assess the level of understanding of tolerance	Survey of students, analysis of responses	Limited understanding of tolerance as an internalized value	Develop more robust pedagogical interventions to shift tolerance from external norm to personal value
Provide recommendations for fostering tolerance	Practical recommendations, survey data	Recommendations include intercultural interaction, emotional regulation, and educator training	Implement these recommendations in curricular and extracurricular activities for sustainable tolerance cultivation

Source: compiled by the author.

### ***Practical recommendations for the development of tolerance among humanities students: educational strategies and methods***

According to the survey's results, students majoring in the humanities still exhibit inadequate tolerance, especially when it comes to emotional control and stress tolerance. It is imperative to address these inequalities by putting in place a variety of training programs, curriculum interventions, and policy changes meant to promote a more accepting learning environment. First and foremost, intercultural communication and tolerance should be explicitly addressed in curriculum interventions. Modules that concentrate on conflict resolution, emotional control, and empathy-building activities ought to be included in courses. Courses in psychology, communication, and cultural studies can incorporate this kind of material, encouraging students to interact with different viewpoints and develop tolerance via hands-on exercises. Students should be taught the value of tolerance in both their personal and professional life, as well as exposed to global challenges. Through scenario-based activities and real-world case studies, these academic modules should give students the chance to apply what they have learnt rather than just being theoretical.

The professional development of educators is another important factor. Since teachers have a significant influence on students' views towards tolerance, it is imperative that they receive mandated training in multicultural competency, emotional control, and inclusive teaching methods. To help teachers effectively manage diverse classrooms, these training modules may include role-playing, scenario-based learning, and workshops. Teachers should be able to provide an environment where all students are encouraged to politely express their opinions and participate in critical, productive discussions. Teachers set the tone for the class by acting tolerantly themselves, which affects students' attitudes and actions both within and outside of the classroom.

Extracurricular activities are essential for encouraging tolerance among students, in addition to adjustments to the curriculum and professional development. International exchange programs, multicultural events, and group student projects should all be incorporated into the extracurricular activities offered by educational institutions. By giving students firsthand exposure to a range of cultural backgrounds, these programs promote cross-cultural communication and comprehension. A key element of these extracurricular activities should be scenario-based exercises, in which students address actual problems pertaining to tolerance and cultural diversity. In addition to improving academic knowledge, these exercises foster critical thinking, decision-making, and intercultural communication skills.

Furthermore, in order to instill tolerance as a core value in the classroom, educational institutions must change their policies. Policies requiring the inclusion of issues linked to tolerance in all departments' curricula and extracurricular activities should be implemented by institutions. All members of the academic community should be informed of the institution's unambiguous position on diversity and inclusion, which is backed by a zero-tolerance policy for intolerance and prejudice. From formal instruction to student social interactions, such regulations will guarantee that the promotion of tolerance is constant and widespread throughout the educational process.

Institutions should implement frequent evaluations to monitor students' growth in tolerance in order to gauge the success of these programs. Both official tests and informal evaluations like group discussions, peer reviews, and reflective essays may be a part of these assessments. By identifying areas for improvement and modifying teaching tactics accordingly, the data collected from these assessments will assist educators and administrators in maintaining the cultivation of tolerance as a top priority in the school setting.

The results of the poll, which showed that many students have trouble controlling their emotions and view tolerance only as a formal social standard, should be a useful tool for developing focused solutions. Workshops on stress management and emotional intelligence modules, for instance, might be created and added to already-existing humanities curricula. These interventions will assist in transforming tolerance from a theoretical idea to an internalized value by attending to students' practical needs, such as enhancing their capacity to handle difficult circumstances and constructively respond to criticism.

Educational institutions can establish an atmosphere that encourages the growth of tolerance by incorporating tolerance education into the official curriculum and extracurricular activities, offering focused professional development for teachers, implementing institutional policies that place a high priority on diversity and inclusion, and methodically tracking progress. In addition to giving students the tools they need to interact politely in a variety of societies, these initiatives will help them grow as responsible, caring people on both a personal and professional level.

## **5. Discussion**

This study aimed to explore the sociological and psychological dimensions of tolerance, assess the challenges to its development, and examine student perceptions via a survey. The findings confirm that tolerance is a core value that supports both personal and societal growth, facilitating social integration and intercultural engagement. However, the majority of students regarded tolerance primarily as adherence to formal social norms, rather than as an internalized



value. This highlights a significant gap in fostering deeper, more conscious attitudes toward cultural diversity within the educational context.

The importance of tolerance lies not only in forbearance but in actively embracing cultural and social differences, which in turn promotes social harmony and conflict reduction. Within educational settings, tolerance plays a vital role in developing students' interpersonal skills and their ability to engage constructively with others (Gonçalves, 2024). Additionally, intercultural competence helps students form meaningful relationships across cultural boundaries, contributing to their personal and professional development. This study supports the perspective that tolerance education, when systematically embedded within curricula, not only strengthens students' interpersonal relationships but also cultivates national identity based on respect and solidarity (Utomo and Wasino, 2020; Bidenko, 2021).

According to sociology, tolerance builds a foundation for the peaceful coexistence of various social and cultural groups by promoting social integration and lowering tensions. It makes it possible to establish a social framework in which differences are seen as chances for development rather than as reasons for conflict. In order for pupils to view cultural variety as a positive asset, psychological traits like empathy, self-reflection, and emotional control are crucial in forming resilient attitudes of tolerance. Tolerance is valuable because it can help people understand others and actively seek out points of agreement, which lowers the likelihood of conflict and strengthens social cohesion (Spytska, 2023b). Students' ability to connect constructively and fully engage with cultural variety may be limited if the sociological and psychological aspects of tolerance are not given enough consideration. According to the findings of Nasir and Rijal (2021), encouraging moderation through educational programs in Islamic colleges helps students develop tolerant attitudes and fosters respect for cultural differences. As a component of tolerance, moderation promotes the preservation of intercultural communication and the avoidance of conflict (Buribayev and Khamzina, 2025). The study by Sattrup and Knudsen (2024) emphasized the significance of informal educational situations for the development of tolerance. In informal, non-school settings, the authors found that adopting a tolerant approach increases student involvement and cultivates a more positive attitude towards learning. These circumstances foster a more open forum for discussion and idea sharing, which is consistent with research showing how crucial emotional control and empathy are to successfully fostering tolerance.

The development of tolerance is greatly aided by educational programs that promote intercultural competency and critical thinking abilities because they motivate students to actively engage with and respect cultural diversity (Strelnikov and Vytalov, 2023). Extracurricular activities, innovative teaching strategies, and scenario-based exercises were found to be beneficial approaches (Chekal, 2022). These techniques foster an atmosphere that encourages candid conversation and positive engagement, assisting students in examining and appreciating diversity. Despite these initiatives, there are still a number of obstacles in the way of fostering tolerance. These include inadequate training for teachers, a lack of a methodical approach, and a dearth of educational resources created especially to foster tolerant views. Such problems can seriously impair the efficacy of tolerance teaching and jeopardize its durability and consistency. Comparing the study by Sirry et al. (2024) shows that both Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia share obstacles and strategies that affect the growth of tolerance. According to the writers, tolerance instruction in Indonesian schools frequently consists solely of declarations that are not put into practice.

Despite their recognition of the need of promoting tolerance, educators usually encounter obstacles pertaining to methodological training and a dearth of pertinent teaching materials. However, there is evidence of an attempt to use interactive and practice-oriented techniques to foster tolerance, which is in line with the wider understanding of the necessity of scenario-based activities and innovative strategies. The notion of tolerance is present in textbooks, although its treatment is formalistic and superficial, according to Alhashmi et al.'s (2020) analysis of Islamic education materials in the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, students who participated in the survey viewed tolerance primarily as adherence to behavioral standards rather than as a deeply ingrained attitude or an intentional acceptance of cultural diversity. This is indicative of a larger lack of a methodical approach to intercultural communication and tolerance education. Together, the examined research highlight the need for innovative methodological materials and thorough teacher preparation in order to successfully apply tolerance education in educational settings.

According to a poll of Kyrgyz students participating in humanities programs, tolerance is still not fully established. Instead of viewing tolerance as an internal value and conscious acceptance of cultural diversity, many students view it largely as formal obedience to behavioral standards, politeness, and tact (Shcherban and Samoilov, 2024). Insufficient readiness for interpersonal communication and emotional self-management was indicated by the significant percentage of respondents who reported issues with emotional regulation, low stress resilience, and insecurity in response to criticism. Students may be better prepared for life and successful participation in a varied society if they develop their abilities in self-reflection, emotional resilience, and constructive interaction (Tiwen, 2023). The survey results and Mahpudz et al. (2020) conclusions were compared, which shed more light on the difficulties in promoting tolerance in educational environments. Their research, which looked at tolerance education as a way to improve social skills, showed that teaching tolerance is not always given priority in current educational programs. Tolerance is still under-represented in curriculum, despite its critical function in fostering empathy, promoting positive discourse, and fostering acceptance of different viewpoints (Vovchenko, 2022). According to the survey results, kids frequently struggle with emotional control and constructive engagement, which may be a sign of a larger flaw in the way tolerance is taught in classrooms. These results underline the necessity of stepping up initiatives to foster tolerance as a basis for social skills and flexibility in ethnic settings.

The suggestions made for improving tolerance among students studying the humanities place a strong emphasis on incorporating a methodical approach into the curriculum. Activities that promote interpersonal and intercultural communication include extracurricular involvement, multicultural events, scenario-based exercises, and innovative teaching strategies. Enhancing students' critical thinking, self-reflection, and emotional control abilities may help them better understand and value diversity and adjust to a variety of situations. In order to promote tolerance, Korostelina (2021) suggested using an identity-based strategy, claiming that traditional approaches frequently overlook students' cultural and individual traits. The model put forth by Korostelina, which emphasizes the interplay of cultural and individual elements through the pragmatic structuring of activities, is consistent with the conclusions made about the necessity of developing an educational environment that supports the growth of intercultural competence. The study by Ning et al. (2020) emphasized the role of educators in forming students' worldview and tolerance. The authors showed that teachers have a significant impact on how pupils develop their tolerant attitudes and epistemic ideas. This research lends credence to the claim that effective tolerance promotion depends heavily on teacher preparation. Future professionals might view tolerance as a crucial component of their professional identity

and incorporate these values into their future work by interacting with capable educators who are aware of diversity concerns.

The studies examined reaffirm the importance of fostering tolerance as a core element of the educational process, aimed at developing a balanced and resilient individual. Although considerable progress has been made in the design of methodologies and programmes, gaps remain in terms of a systematic approach, insufficient teacher qualifications, and limited availability of appropriate educational materials. Future studies and educational strategies should address these shortcomings to ensure the sustainable cultivation of tolerant worldviews and the promotion of social harmony within academic settings.

This study has several limitations. The non-random sampling method and relatively small sample size reduce the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the absence of inferential statistical analyses limits the ability to confirm the significance of observed trends. Also, limitation of this study lies in the diversity of social conditions and individual characteristics among students, which influence the development and interpretation of tolerance. Future research should include a detailed analysis of the influence of individual and cultural factors on the development of tolerance to gain a clearer understanding of how social environments and personal characteristics shape tolerant attitudes. Such findings would support the adaptation of educational initiatives designed to cultivate tolerance, ensuring they are more effective across diverse educational and social contexts.

## **6. Conclusions**

This study examined the sociological and psychological aspects of tolerance among students of humanities and identified the key mechanisms underlying its development as a fundamental human value. The theoretical framework demonstrated that tolerance goes beyond mere tolerance and encompasses the active acceptance of different points of view, beliefs, and cultural manifestations. Sociological and psychological analyses showed that the cultivation of tolerance depends on social context, emotional regulation, and intercultural interaction. Empirical data revealed several challenges in this process. More than a third of students acknowledged the presence of intolerance in their academic groups, while almost half were unsure of its existence, indicating a lack of awareness of the problem. In addition, 30.2% of respondents expressed discomfort with criticism, and 44% viewed tolerance as simply adhering to social norms. These results indicate a superficial understanding of tolerance and highlight the need for educational approaches that develop deeper emotional and ethical engagement.

The study concludes that fostering tolerance among students in the humanities requires a multidimensional approach that combines cognitive understanding, emotional intelligence, and social engagement. Creating a culturally inclusive educational environment depends on the proactive role of educators and institutions in shaping tolerant behaviour and encouraging open dialogue. An emphasis on empathy, mutual respect, and intercultural awareness can significantly improve students' ability to collaborate across cultural and social boundaries. Ultimately, developing tolerance as a universal human quality based on respect for the rights and dignity of all individuals contributes to the preparation of a new generation of professionals capable of effective communication and cooperation in culturally diverse societies. Strengthening these abilities in educational institutions will not only improve interpersonal relationships, but also promote social cohesion, democratic values and global understanding.

### ***Implications***

The results of this study highlight important implications for educational institutions, teachers, students, and policymakers. Many humanities students view tolerance as an external conformity rather than an internal value, pointing to the need to create learning environments that promote reflection, empathy, and emotional self-regulation. Educational institutions should integrate tolerance education into their curricula through specialized courses and activities that develop intercultural competence and emotional intelligence, and teachers should act as role models by applying inclusive and empathetic teaching practices. Students, in turn, should be encouraged to develop emotional and communication skills through intercultural exchanges, group work and reflective exercises, transforming tolerance into a personal and professional value. Policymakers should prioritize tolerance education within higher education strategies, supporting institutional frameworks that promote diversity, civic responsibility and collaboration between universities and society.

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